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April

Edgar Daniel Kramer

Although she is weeping
As she treads the hills,
As she walks the meadows
With the daffodils,
While folks wisely whisper
Of her doubts and fears,
I see April smiling
Through a mist of tears.

Although she is weeping
As she shyly goes,
Where the lilacs murmur
To the waking rose,
While folks are complaining
As her white feet pass,
I hear April laughing
In the fragrant grass.

Although she is weeping
As she walks the earth,
As the clods are lifting
Into glad new birth,
While folks are lamenting
That she fares with grief,
I hear April singing
In each trembling leaf.

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HISTORY OF MT. ALBION

THE DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this bit of Hamilton history to my late father, Robert Watt, Uncle James Watt and Aunt Maude Perfcund. If it was'nt for their family stories, I would never have be able to write this true story of an area where I grew up when I was a boy.

Therefore to them this account, with all its merits and demerits, is respectfully dedicated.

This record of the events, persons and incidents of Mt. Albion and vicinity, well known to my family, is a truthful narrative which covers a period of over one hundred years.

Bruce R. Watt

MOUNT ALBION HISTORY

The village of Mount Albion is situated on the Mountain at the western side of the Township of Saltfleet, six miles south east of Hamilton and equally as old.

Ailion is the ancient and poetic name of Britain, and has been used many times for many things, in many parts of the world. Three saw-mills and grist mill accounted for the last name. Since 1880 the name has been Mount Albion, before 1880 it was known as Albion Mills. There were in other days fifty persons, all English, Irish and Scottish, in the community. For a time, school was held in the village during the winter season, the nearest public school being too far away.

Three hotels, two blacksmith shops and one general store served the district. These taverns were patronized daily by dozens of men hauling cord wood and farm produce from distant points to Hamilton.

Mail was brought every Friday afternoon by a carrier on horseback from Ryckman's Corners, four miles west, where it was received from the stagecoach running between Hamilton and Caledonia. The first Post Office was kept in the home of

the Miller, Mr. James R. Cook, whose garden was a beauty spot and where hospitality was enjoyed by many people of all classes.

Travelling by oxen, on horseback and in horsedrawn vehicles was very slow, especially in the spring, (three miles an hour, over mud roads). The main road through the settlement, was and still is, called Mud Street.

A stone and toll road to the city was built in the 1880's by Messrs. Carpenter and Waddel. This was one of the first of the country's Macadam roads, now tar macadam is named after the inventor Sir George MacAdam, later was improved by his son, The Honourable Tar MacAdam. The toll-gate keeper collected fifteen cents return for one-horse wagons and twenty cents for two-horse wagons.

A VILLAGE STORY

This village has a strong sulphur spring of blackish water pouring up from a shallow drill hole. This water does not freeze easily but it is too strong for domestic use, yet valuable for farm stock. This has continued for years, from the earliest history of the place. On the farm near by there is a small but well kept cemetery, where many of the pioneers are interred. Here in former times a church, known as the "Auld Scotch Kirk" was built of frame and white rough cast. It had a steeple, gothic windows, a heavy plank floor, pews with doors, both trimmed with walnut, a high pulpit and large sounding board above. The collection was taken in little wooden boxes on the end of a walnut staff five feet long. This Kirk, built before the disruption in Scotland in 1843, was pulled down in 1878.

In the early fifties, a survey party of engineers, for the Great Western Railway, ran a line through this community. One of the stakes was in the lawn of a friend of my fathers, for years after the present railway was opened.

It is a curious fact that four decades later, surveyors for the T.H.&B. Ry; followed almost the same route in their first survey for the line as it is today.

Half a mile west of Mt. Albion, the Hamilton North Western Railway was built in the twenty years following 1850. The road as far as Caledonia including the steep hill section, cost one million dollars. Near the top of the grade up the mountain, there is a long deep rock cutting. This work lasting almost three years, was done with hand tools by a large force of Irishmen who lived in groups of shanties called the "Patch" close to the job. Their one recreation was on Saturday

nights when paid, they cheered with gallons of village whiskey. They held a Donnybrook Fair, fighting each other like a colony of Kilkenny cats. The women added to the hilarity with sticks, stones, screams and malediction.

PASSENGER PIGEONS

The residents of this region about 1860, frequently saw vast flocks, millions in numbers, of Passenger or Wood pigeons flying from dawn till dusk, east to west, over that area between Mt. Albion and Red Hill. The flight of the birds was not high, about four hundred feet. At the corner of the mountain, above Bartonville, many of them were struck down with sticks by the residents and used for food.

Forty years later not one of these pigeons could be found in America, although a reward of one thousand dollars was offered for a single specimen.

Their complete extinction is one of the mysteries of Natural history on this continent.

THE USE OF OXEN

From the earliest settlements these animals were employed in farm and other work as late as 1875. The standard names were "Buck" and "Bright". They were guided by drivers shouting, "Gee" and "Haw" for right and left, and "Whoa" meant stop. The yoke over oxen's harness whatever were used. Occasionally they were shod with iron shoes like horses. Their rate of motion was three miles an hour. If unruly, the tails would be tied together to prevent them from turning outward, reversing ends, and thus breaking their necks in the yoke. They could not be used on the old horse powers for threshing machines, as horses were, because travelling in a circle made them dizzy.

CANDLE LIGHT

Candle light was used till the oil lamps came into general use around 1880. For making candles every home had a tin frame with twelve tubes in which wicks were inserted, then filled with melted tallow. A pair of iron scissors with a little wax on one blade and the lid on the other was used for trimming the candles. If these were lacking the good housekeeper could make a "cruse" in a few minutes. This was simply a piece of wick laid across a saucer with grease poured over it. Many times a small boy went off to bed with this wee light as his only protection and defence from great black shadows, ghosts, spooks, apparitions and yowling banshees.

CHEYNE CHURCH

The Reverend George Cheyne, M.A. Scotsman from Aberdeen about 1840, founded and ministered for thirty years to this Presbyterian Church that bears his name.

Mr Cheyne was the first public school inspector in the Township of Saltfleet.

The Church was one mile east of the village of Mount Albion and near the No. 6 School house.

In the service of worship no musical instruments were allowed. Tuning forks were used in the singing.

The women brought their babies in arms, who, when the sermon exceeded sixty minutes, made a vigorous protest.

Dogs followed their masters into the sanctuary and in spite of many admonitions of neighbourly love occasionally fought fierce battles until, like evil spirits, they were cast out.

The congregation built a new church in Stoney Creek in 1918. The original building was sold and moved to Hannon, where it is used as a public hall today.

APPLE PARING BEES

The drying of apples for home use every fall season found many young people attending paring bees. The apples were peeled by hand, quartered, cored and strung with a large needle on yards of white cord which was hung in festoons around the kitchen and dried in the smells of cooking, the smoke of the iron stoves, clay pipes and open fire places.

The apples, shrunk to one third their former size, were of a light brown colour and would keep for years.

Later, hand peeling machines came into use and the quartered apples were placed in wooden racks suspended over the kitchen stoves and thus dried in a shorter time and more sanitary manner than formerly.

A LOYALIST FAMILY

Near the village of Mount Albion was the fine estate and home called Harmony Hall of Mr. Jonathan Davis, whose Loyalist Grandfather, Mr. William Davis of Welsh descent, came to Canada in 1792, from North Carolina with his seven young children and a few faithful slaves. For the family losses in the south caused by the Revolutionary War, the British Government gave them a large tract of land near Albion Mills. Mr. Jonathan Davis's share of this property contained two hundred acres, much of it virgin forest of hard maple, red oak, white pine and black walnut. This farm had a distillery, a tannery, and orchard, a never failing spring and a prize herd of Ayershire cattle.

Mr. Davis was the Secretary of the Central Fair of Hamilton, inspector of hotel licenses in South Wentworth for many years, and a highly respected gentleman.

A nephew, Mr. James Alfred Davis, taught in local schools for a generation. He was a fine teacher, penman, advisor, friend and citizen to everyone.

Other members of this family have been prominent in farming, finance, manufacturing and Parliament.

THE PICTURE OF THE MILL

The first known picture of the Mill at Mount Albion was taken about April, 1900, when the mill was owned and operated by my Great Uncles Robert and George Grassie.

The location was at the head of the ravine, which is two hundred feet wide and nearly as deep.

At the base of the tall smoke stack was the steam power plant. The small stream of water is from the turbine driving the machinery. The workmen discovered gas when making this wheel-pit. A repair shop is shown at the end of the building where the millstone picks were sharpened. Lover's Leap is opposite the falls, and above, the roadway formed the bank of the mill dam. Nearby is the old storehouse. The highway to Mt. Albion, a quarter of a mile to the left, is visible in the middle of the picture. A few steps from the falls on the right was the toll gate, post Office and general store.

Cook's Castle stood on the hill close to the barn, and behind it are the two little lakes still to be seen. The Table Rock, near the foot of the falls (large pieces of it are scattered below) underlies the country southward and dips seven feet to the mile. Under this very thick layer are strates of soft shale, red and green slate.

The banks of the ravine were once heavily timbered. This property is now in the King's Forest Park of over 600 acres and extends northward for a mile and one - half towards Bartonville. Kings Forest is now a residential place. Bartonville is now included in Hamilton.

THE MILL

The grist mill was of three stoies, built about one hundred sixty years ago, and was constructed of huge timbers and fine pine lumber by the best of tradesmen. The active power was a large over - shot water wheel thirty feet in diameter and forty inches wide. A small wheel below the first, used the water a second time. This water came from a dam nearly three acres in extent above the mill, and was fed by a spring creek. Many years later the big water wheels were supplanted by a sixteen inch turbine which gave excellent power and service. During the middle of the last century stream power, for use when the water was low, was installed. The boiler was fired by pine wood, later mixed with cord wood, and finally by soft coal.

The mill stones for grinding wheat were sixty inches in diameter. They were made of many pieces of very hard French Burr Stone cemented together and bound by wide bands. One stone was secured in the floor, and the other turning above, ground the wheat which was then sifted by a long wooden, silk covered, revolving cylinder. This separated the two grades of flour, shorts and bran. Farmers brought their wheat and received these products in return. The charge, or toll fixed by law, was one-sixth when steam power was used, and one-seventh by water. These mill-stones required to be dressed by the miller with mill picks, several times a year. This was a careful operation.

The second stone called a "chopper" ground coarse grain for feeding farm stock. It had a capacity of fifty bushels an hour. On one occasion a farmer brought very poor grain, chaff, straw, nails and trash. Said the miller when returning the chop to the owner, " What are you going to do with this stuff?" "Feed it to the pigs", said the farmer. "Well," returned the miller, "the pigs will laugh when they see this stuff coming."

The mill owners and operators were all Scottish, directly or indirectly. As far as is now known they are Mr John Secord in 1814, Messrs. Ness and Reid, Messrs. Donaldson and Cook, Messrs. Cook and Robb, and the Grassie Bros; covering a period of over a century.

This flour mill serving a large farming district was a busy industry in 1900. Today the traveller can scarcely find any evidence that it ever existed.

Well might he say in the gloomy words of Cowper: "Change and decay in all around I see."

Will continue in the May issue

For your information

TROY WEIGHT

1 Grain..... = .0648 Grams
 1 Ounce..... = 31.1035 Grams
 = 480 Grains
 1 Pound = 373 Grams
 = 12 Troy Ounces
 = 5760 Grains
 = 822 Pounds Avoirdupois

AVOIRDUPOIS WEIGHT

1 Grain = .0648 Grams
 1 Ounce = 28.349 Grams
 = 437.5 Grains
 1 POUND = 453.6 Grams
 = 16 Avoirdupois Ounces
 = 7000 Grains
 = 1.216 Pounds Troy

9K = 37.5%, 10K = 41.7%, 14K = 58.5%, 18K = 75 0%, 22K = 91.6%

Once to every man and nation
 Comes the moment to decide,
 In the strife of Truth and Falsehood,
 For the good or evil side.

— James Russell Lowell



NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS

NORTH YORK COIN CLUB C74

On Feb. 26th; 1980 the North York Coin Club celebrated its Twentieth year as a coin club. Harvey Farrow had all the bulletins issued for the twenty years, pointing out that early ones were mailed for 2¢, while to-day it costs 17¢. George Fraser distributed souvenir notes to commemorate the 20th; year, and a decorated cake was served during the coffee break.

The highlight of the evening however was Dr. Marvin Kay's presentation of " Medicine In Numismatics " Dr Kay showed colored slides of medical medals, coin, tokens and bank-notes, illustrating his interesting talk on Physicians on Medals and others who made contributions to medicine. Louis Pasteur, the bacteriaologist, Pierre & Marie Curie, pioneers in research on radio-activity, Alexander Graham Bell, whose invention of the telephone came from his efforts to help deaf people, Dr. Kay's facinating subject revealed medals commemorating hospitals, nurses medals, Red Cross medals, Life-saving medals, Coins with medical themes, Bank notes with Portraits of Physicians, Chiropractors, Druggists, Radiologists, War medals, and private hospital medals, all with a medical theme. Dr Kay also displayed many of the medals from his collection.

Harvey farrow thanked Dr. Kay and presented him with an honourary membership.

The Annual Show that was held on March 1st; was a big success. There were visitors from, Peterborough, Waterloo, Oshawa, Woodbridge, Hamilton, Wainfleet, Woodville, Angus and Aurora.

The draw prize winners were Jean Orr, Fred Stamper, Fred Jewett, Carl Anderson and Olaf Sorra.

STRATFORD COIN CLUB C20

There were 30 members and guest attended the March 10th; meeting. The meeting was called to order at 8:08 P.M. by the President Wilf. The membership draw for a 1978 SILVER DOLLAR was won by Jim Jung.

Winners of last month's major draws were - 1968 P.L. Set Mike Ogilvie and the O.N.A. Membership - Barb. Savile.

Dave Luna gave an interesting talk on Mexico with its history, present politics, agriculture, natural resources and coins and currency.

A Auction was held, followed with coffee, Chocolate milk and cookies to close off the meeting.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION of WOODEN MONEY COLLECTORS C83

The Canadian Association of Wooden Money Collectors will hold a get-together meeting on Saturday May 24th: 1980 4:00 P.M., at the O.N.A. Annual Convention at the Downtown Holiday Inn, Ottawa.

OSHAWA & DISTRICT COIN CLUB C35

The regular meeting of the Oshawa & District Coin Club was held on March 23rd; 1980, at 2:00 P.M. The meeting was called to order by the President Henry Burke with 42 members and guest present.

There was a presentation of O.N.A. slides of the Hurst Castle in San Francisco .

There was a lively Auction held followed by coffee and Donuts.

You cannot run away from a weakness; you must some time fight it out, or perish; and if so, why not now, and where you stand?

— Robert L. Stevenson



SHOW AND BOURSE

April 27th; 1980

Chatham, Ontario.

KENT COIN CLUB's Spring Show
Wheels Motor Inn,
Chatham, Ontario.

For information ... Lou Wagener
27 Peter St;
Chatham, Ontario, N7M 5E2

May 10th; 1980

Peterborough, Ontario.

PETERBOROUGH COIN CLUB's Annual Show
Holiday Inn,
Peterborough, Ontario.

For information... R. Trustham
P.C. Box 1870
Peterborough, Ontario

May 23rd; to 25th; 1980.

Ottawa, Ontario.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION's
18th; Annual Convention
Downtown Holiday Inn Tower
100 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

For information ... Host Club ... City of Ottawa Coin
Club

P.O. Box 6094, Sta: "J"
Ottawa, Ontario

June 21st; 1980

Cannington, Ontario

VICTORIA SIMCOE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION's
21st; Annual Coin Show and Banquet
Cannington, Community Centre

For information... Elmer Workman
Cannington, Ontario, L0E 1E0

June 29th; 1980
 Brantford, Ontario...

BRANTFORD NUMISMATIC SOCIETY'S
 20th; Anniversary Coin Show.
 Brantford & District Civic Centre, Auditorium

For information . . . John Barchino
 P.O. Box 953
 Brantford, Ontario,
 N3T 5S1

July 22nd; to 26th; 1980
 Montreal, Quebec...

C.N.A. 1980 CONVENTION

For information . . . Guy Lestrade
 P.C. Box 114,
 Station "B"
 Montreal, Quebec,
 H3F 3K9

October 4th; 1980
 Hamilton, Ontario

HAMILTON COIN CLUB'S Annual Fall Show
 Centre Mall, Barton & Kenilworth Streets,

For information . . . Lou Henderson
 1861 Main Street, East,
 Hamilton, Ontario.

October 19th; 1980
 Tillsonburg, Ontario

TILLSONBURGE COIN CLUB'S Annual Coin Show
 Tillsonburg Community Centre,
 Tillsonburg, Ontario

For information.. Doug Mitchener
 1 Myrtle Street,
 Tillsonburg, Ontario,
 N4G 4G4

October 26th; 1980

Stratford, Ontario

STRATFORD COIN CLUB

4th; Annual Coin and Stamp Show

Stratford Legion, St. Patrick and Church Streets

10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Show, Bourse and Auction

For information Stratford Coin Club

Box 262

Stratford, Ontario,

N5A 6T1

Membership

Up to press time I have not received a membership report from the Membership Committee.

Bruce R. Watt.

Lost Treasures

Alvin Hutfler

He that forever dreams of a brighter tomorrow
And finds no happiness today,
Has overlooked the beauty in this world
Somewhere along his way.

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