



The Georgian Courier

THE GREY, BRUCE, DUFFERIN & SIMCOE POSTAL HISTORY STUDY GROUP

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[REF. 195]

POST OFFICE BUILDINGS ON POST CARDS

Nº 17 in a Series

Dalston

Simcoe County

Robt. C. Smith



The General Store & Post Office at Dalston, Vespra Township in the County of Simcoe.

This unused “real photo” postcard is identified in a pencilled notation on the back as being from “Dalston, Simcoe Cty,” but there is no confirming evidence in the picture itself. The card dates from the early years of the twentieth century, and shows a building with a sign above the verandah reading “GENERAL STORE / POST OFFICE.” Can anyone confirm that this was in fact the post office at Dalston?

The Dalston post office began operations in Vespra Township, Simcoe County on March 1, 1859, nine miles north of Barrie. One Henry A. Clifford was the

first postmaster there, and he served until his resignation in 1870. The population of Dalston is listed as 80 in 1874 and 150 in 1887. Larry Whitby and Michael Millar reported in the *List of Post Offices in the County of Simcoe: 1830 to 1967* that the early post office was located on the southeast corner of Lot 26, Concession 1 of Vespra Township. The photograph on this post card was probably taken during the term of office of John Palmer, the sixth postmaster (of a total of seven), whose service extended from 1904 to 1914. The office was closed permanently on January 31, 1915 upon the

The Origin of the Name

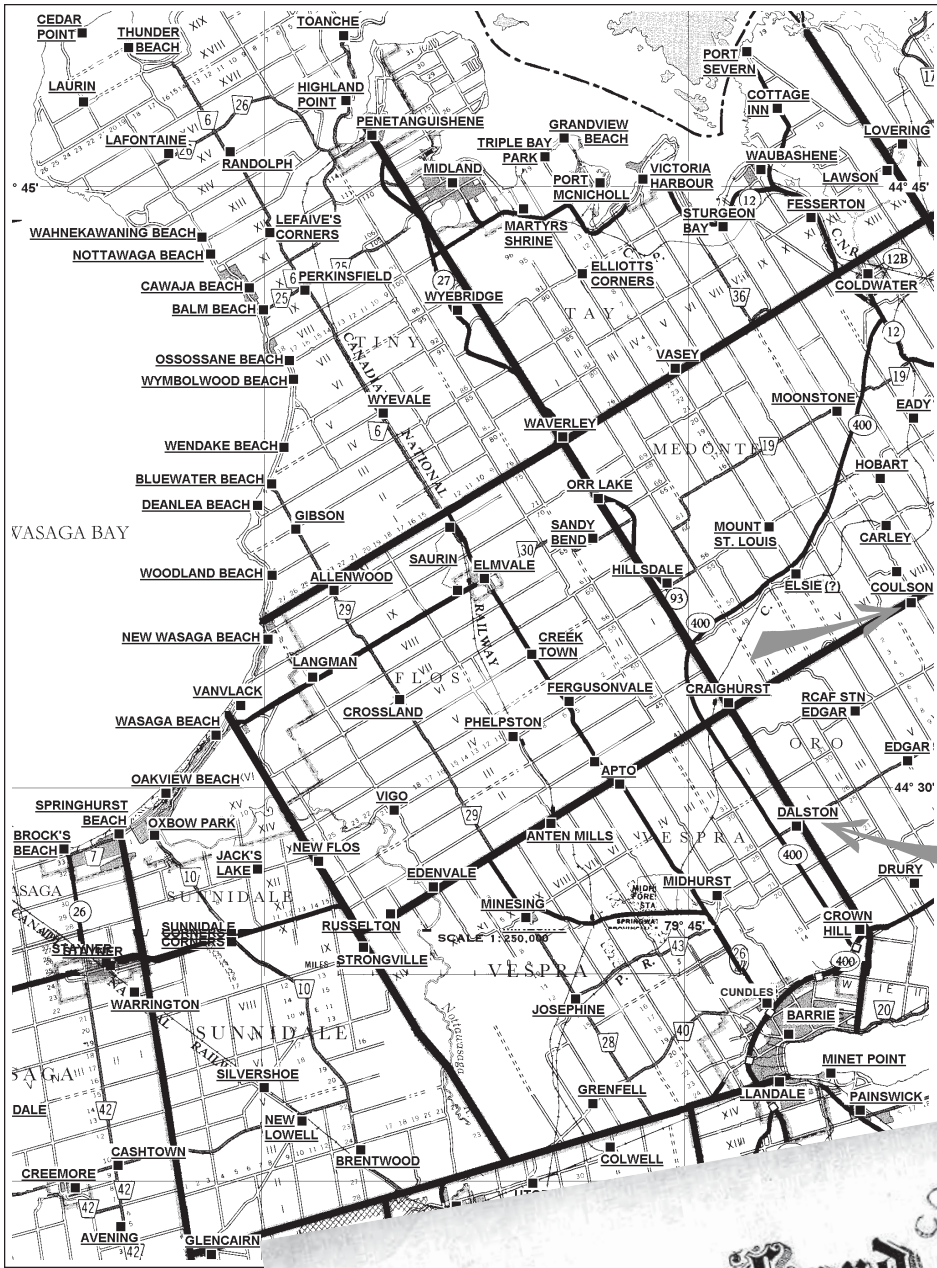
DALSTON – This office took its name from Dalston, a suburb of London, England, the native town of Henry Augustus Clifford, the first postmaster. Mr. Clifford was prominent in educational matters in the county for some years, being Superintendent of Schools for Oro Township until 1846, and occupying the position of District Superintendent of Common Schools until 1849. For many years prior to the issuing of the commission, in 1885, the village was known as White’s Corners, after Peter White, J.P., an early settler.

SOURCE – David Williams,

The Origin of the Names of the Post Offices of Simcoe County

CONTENTS – ISSUE Nº 37

	REF NO.	PAGE
Post Office Buildings on Post Cards: Dalston [R. C. Smith]	195	385
A Socio-Postal History of the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula – Eastnor Township: Spry, Pike Bay [J. Kraemer]	196	388
The Post Offices at Bruce & Malta [John Rossiter]	197	397
Postal Beginnings at Elder, Mono Township, Dufferin County [Russell B. Thompson, George Power]	198	400
From anywhere, to anyone . . . in Grey-Bruce we deliver	199	402
Barry Neil Heffer, Postmaster [Bob McCabe]	200	403
A Word from the Editor [Gus Knierim]	201	404



advent of Rural Mail Delivery, undoubtedly a route out of Barrie.

There were only two distinct postmarks known used at this office. The first was a DALSTON / U.C double broken circle with manuscript date (Scrimgeour type B2x). Bruce Graham lists only one recorded impression of this device of unknown diameter (likely about 25 mm), dated 27 / 4 / 1874. If one of the readers owns this postmark, it would be helpful if he or she would send its dimensions to the editor.

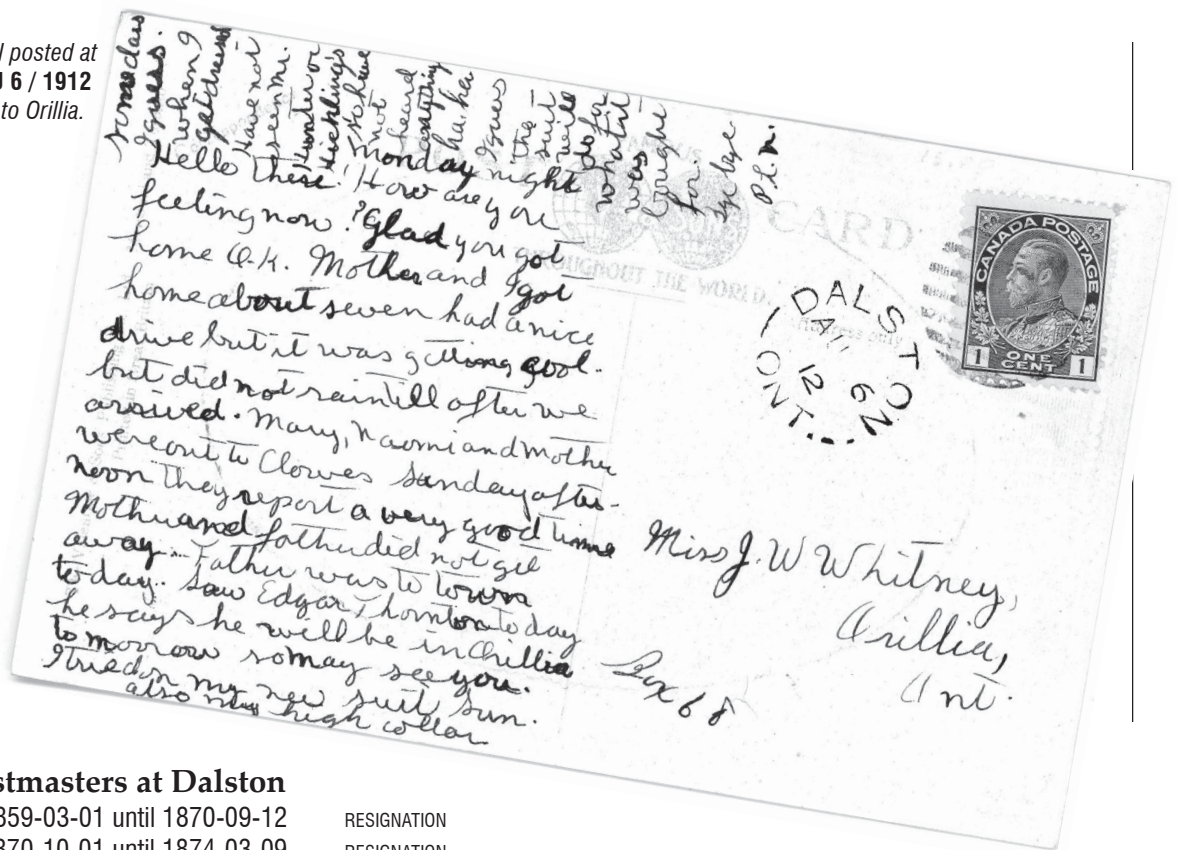
The second postmarking device used at this post office was a DALSTON / ONT single broken circle (type A1) of diameter 21 mm, with left and right arcs of 4.5 mm and 5.5 mm respectively. Its proof date is not known, but it has been observed used from JA 15 / 91 to FE 5 / 13.

A postcard from Coulson, Ontario with this device used as a receiving mark on JA 7 / 08 is shown below. ☒



COULSON ONT. / JA 6 / 1908
This post card was mailed from Coulson to a friend in Dalston Ont. / JA 7 / 1908 took one day even though the card did not leave the township.

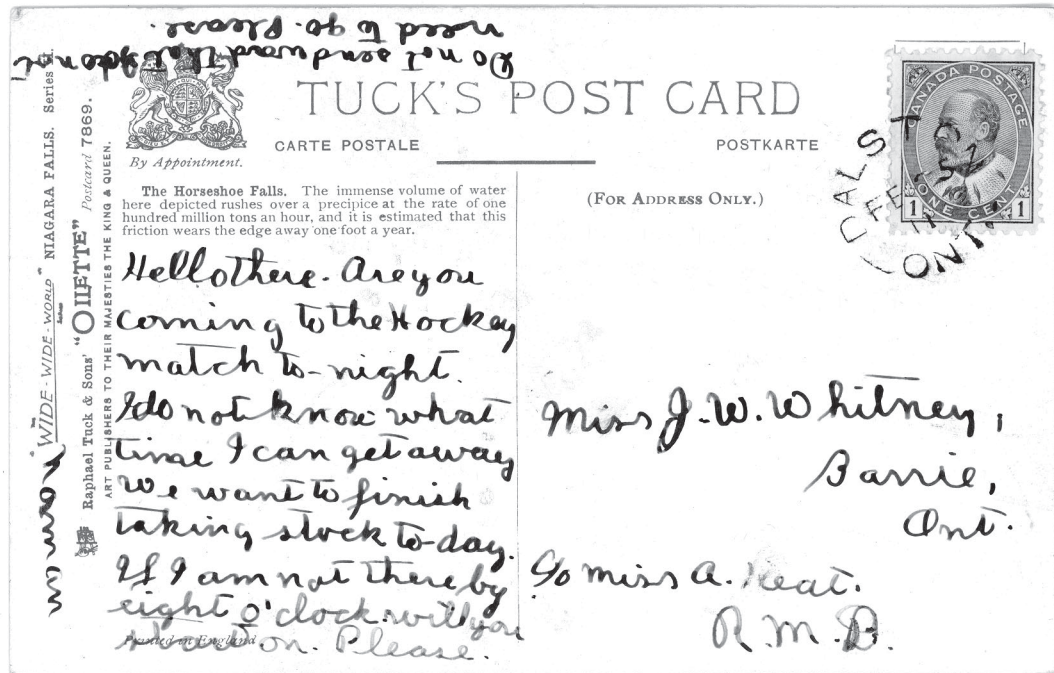
More mail posted at
DALSTON ONT. / AU 6 / 1912
 on its way to Orillia.



Postmasters at Dalston

Henry A. Clifford	1859-03-01 until 1870-09-12	RESIGNATION
George Lawson	1870-10-01 until 1874-03-09	RESIGNATION
Jesse Burge	1874-07-01 until 1880-03-06	RESIGNATION
Thomas Milbee	1880-04-01 until 1883-10-23	RESIGNATION
Thomas T. Young	1884-04-01 until 1904-06-02	RESIGNATION
John Palmer	1904-07-01 until 1914-01-20	RESIGNATION
Oscar Doan	1914-02-11 until 1915	CLOSED R.M.D.

DALSTON ONT. / FE 25 / 1911



Municipality of NORTHERN BRUCE PENINSULA

James E. Kraemer, FRPSC, FRPSL

Part VI

EASTNOR TOWNSHIP

With this issue we continue our foray into Eastnor Township that was begun in issue 35 of the *Georgian Courier*.

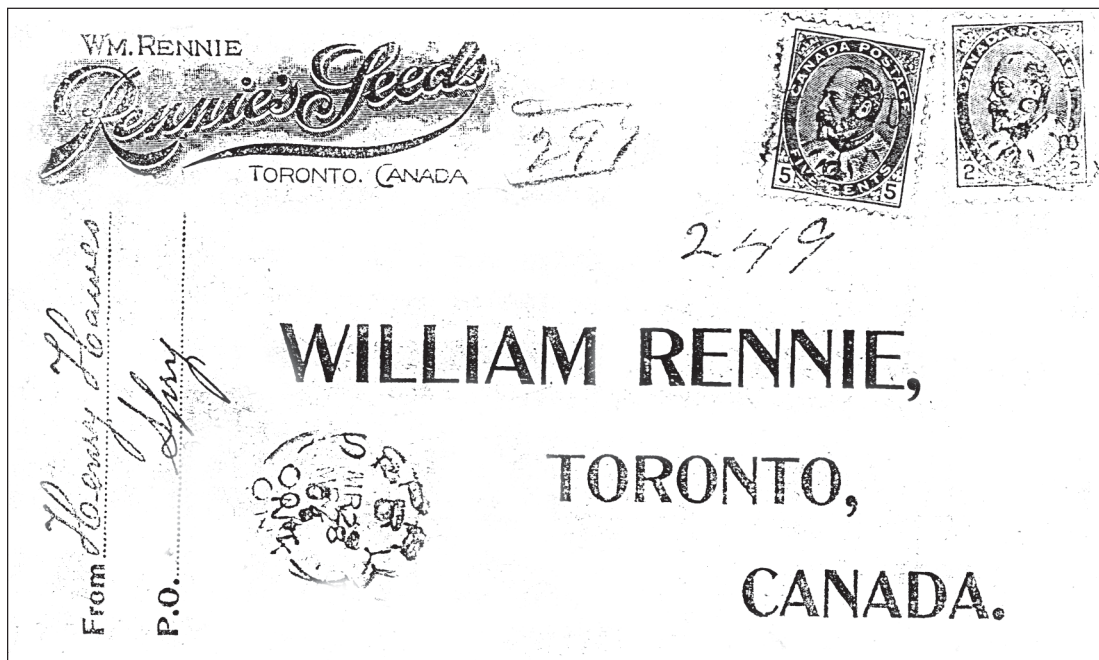
Spry

The little hamlet of Spry was one of the earliest settlements in Eastnor Township. Being on the old survey road that went north to Stokes Bay skirting the Eastnor swamp it was more accessible to the early pioneers. One of the first settlers in the area was George Jenks. Mr. Jenks was born in England in 1843 where he married Helen Cooley. Later they emigrated to Canada and settled on Lot 21, Concession 3, W.B.R. George Jenks was appointed Spry's first postmaster on January 1, 1878 when the post office was established. The post office was located in the Jenks home. The mail came to Spry by stagecoach, which went from Wiarton to Stokes Bay via Spry. The postmaster's remuneration in pioneer days was very little. For example Jenks was paid \$13.00 for looking after the post office in 1882.

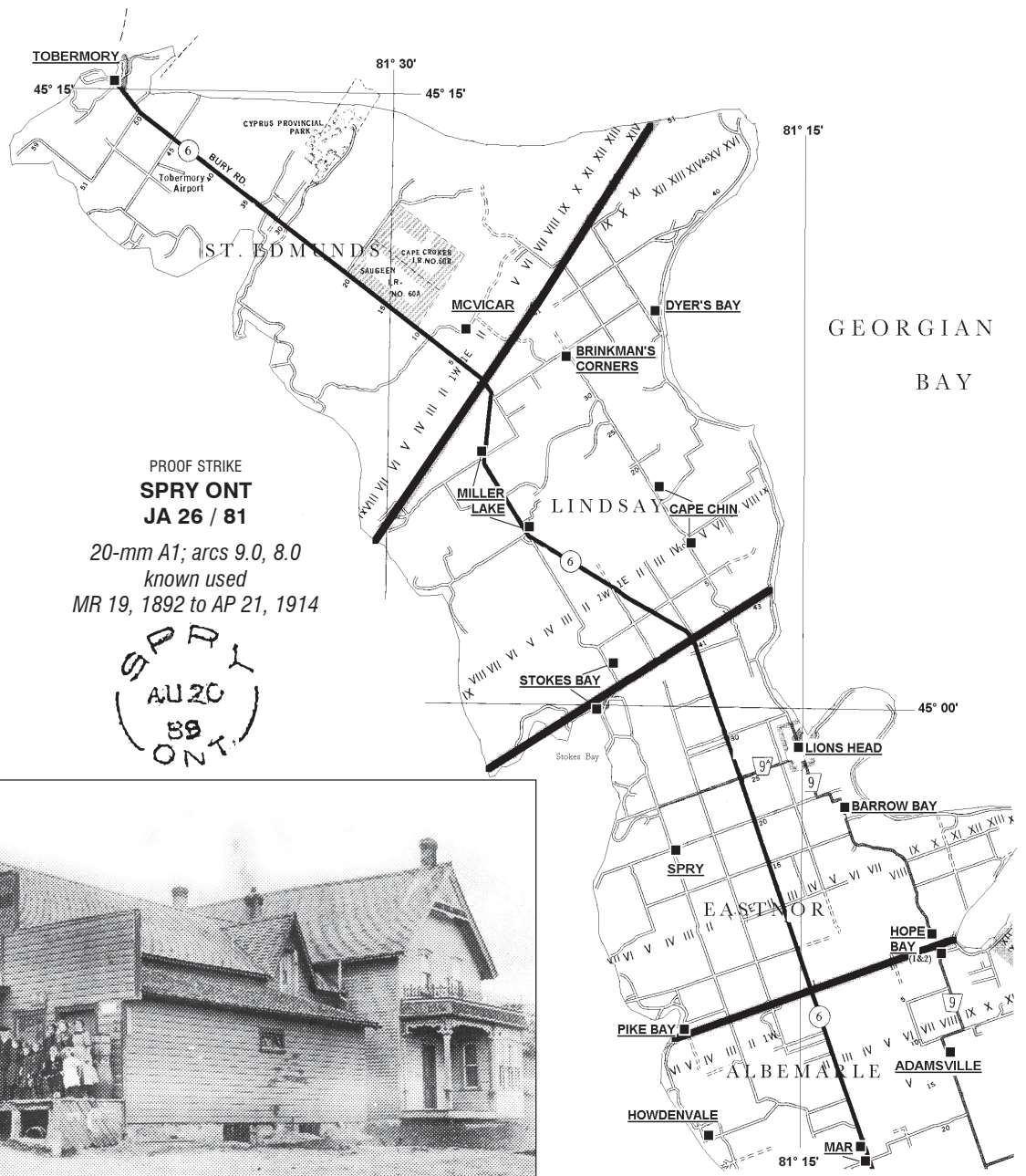
The Jenks had two older children, George and Aurellia. A third child Wallace was the 'first white child born in Eastnor Township. Spry received a noteworthy settler in 1880 when Sergeant John Pearson, V.C. emigrated from England to Canada and settled in the area. Sgt. Pearson had been awarded the Victoria Cross in 1858 during the India Mutiny where he served with The King's Royal Irish Hussars at Gwalior, India. John Pearson died in 1892 and is buried near Spry in the Eastnor cemetery. In 1887 the post Office Department required postmasters to furnish a bond. Although Mr. Jenks had been the postmaster for nine years he failed to furnish a bond when requested and was replaced.

It was also in 1887 that a small child of Mr. and Mrs. Keyes who lived on Lot 22, Concession 1, W.B.R. was sent on an errand to a neighbour in Concession 1. He arrived at the neighbours and shortly after left for home. He was never seen again. Many searches were made to no avail. His disappearance remains one of the great mysteries of Bruce County.

George P. Leith purchased Lot 20, Concession 3, W.B.R. from Robert Graham in 1887. He immediately built a general store on the northwest corner of the lot. Mr. Leith was appointed postmaster and moved the post office into his store on October 1, 1887. In 1890 the mail came to Spry three times a week via stagecoach from Wiarton. The stage went on to Stoke's Bay returning the next day. Ten years after his appointment as postmaster Mr. Leith sold the store to H.R. McCall and William Gillies. Mr. Mc Call sold his interest in the store to



SPRY ONT / MR 29 / 04
A William Rennie seed cover mailed from Spry, received a transit mark at Wiarton on March 30, 1904 and a receiver at Toronto on March 31, 1904.



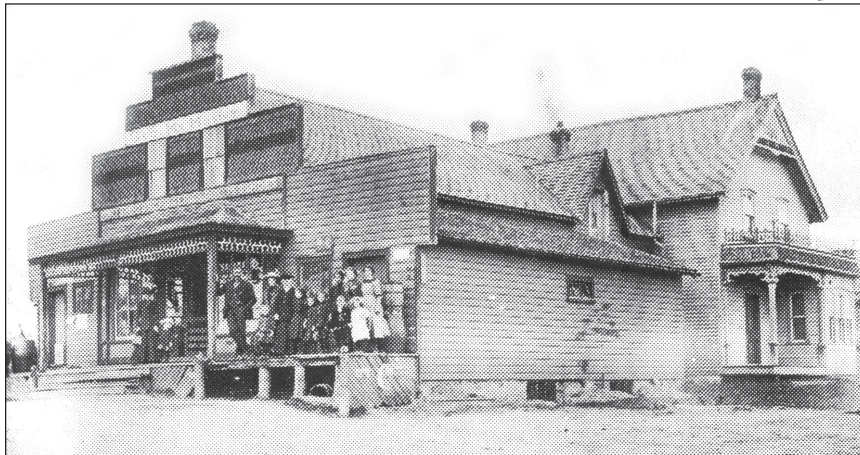
PROOF STRIKE
SPRY ONT
JA 26 / 81

22-mm A1; arcs 14.0
 - no reported strikes -



PROOF STRIKE
SPRY ONT
JA 26 / 81

20-mm A1; arcs 9.0, 8.0
 known used
 MR 19, 1892 to AP 21, 1914



Store and Post Office, c.1913.

his business partner, "William Gillies one year later, Gillies was appointed postmaster on May 1, 1898.

William Gillies organized the Gillies Telephone System in 1899. The first line was from his store in Spry to his mother's farm in Concession 5, W.B.R. He then extended the telephone system to Lion's Head and eventually to Tobermory. His wife Sadie nee Currie assisted in the store and post office. The Gillies moved to Lion's Head and George Leith again took over the store serving as postmaster from September 1, 1900 until October 23, 1902.

This time George Leith sold the store including the post office to Robert McMaster and Robert Hilditch. Robert McMaster was married to Jean Hilditch a sister to Robert. Robert Hilditch was

appointed postmaster on March 1, 1903. In January 1905 Hilditch sold his interest in the business to his partner and brother-in-law Robert McMaster. McMaster was postmaster for a little over two years when he passed away on June 19, 1907 at 44 years of age. His wife sold the store to his Robert's brother, George McMaster and his wife the former Mary Ann Harding. Mary Ann died in 1910 leaving eight children aged 15 months to 15 years. George McMaster kept the store and post office for six more years and in 1916 sold the merchandise to Mr. Bartley who operated a store in Mar. The post office closed on August 31, 1916. Rural Mail Delivery started to serve the area including the hamlet on that date.

It is of interest to note that George Leith who



General Store and Post Office, c. 1918, with the Stokes Bay Royal Mail Stage on its way to Warton. It went north one day and returned south the next.

had been postmaster from 1887 to 1897 and again from 1900 to 1902, sold his farm in 1911 and moved to the Durham area where he died in the 1940's.

The building that housed the general store and post office was attached to the residence behind it. Eventually it was demolished and the residence was re-modeled. The hamlet of Spry prospered for over 50 years serving the local and area residences. The Bury Road (Highway # 6) was constructed east of Spry, Automobiles and trucks replaced the horse and wagon. The blacksmith shop closed and later the school closed when the children started attending the Eastnor Central School. After the sawmill, the shingle mill and the church closed there was little left in the community to sustain it. Although the community has dwindled to a ghost town image it still enjoys the status of being a hamlet.

After diligent research and inquiries the author has been unable to determine the origin of the name Spry.

THE POSTMASTERS OF SPRY AND THEIR PERIODS OF SERVICE

Post office established: January 1, 1878

George Jenks	Jan. 1, 1878 until Sept. 30, 1887	FAILURE TO FURNISH BOND
George P. Leith	Oct. 1, 1887 until Jan. 28, 1897	RESIGNATION
M. P. McCall	March 9, 1897 until March 15, 1898	RESIGNATION
William Gillies	May 1, 1898 until July 16, 1900	RESIGNATION
George P. Leith	Sept. 1, 1900 until Oct. 23, 1902	RESIGNATION
Robert Hilditch	March 1, 1903 until Jan. 23, 1905	RESIGNATION
Robert McMaster	April 1, 1905 until June 19, 1907	DEATH
George McMaster	Aug. 15, 1907 until Aug. 31, 1916	CLOSED

Post office closed: August 31, 1916

Rural Mail Service started September 1, 1916

Pike Bay

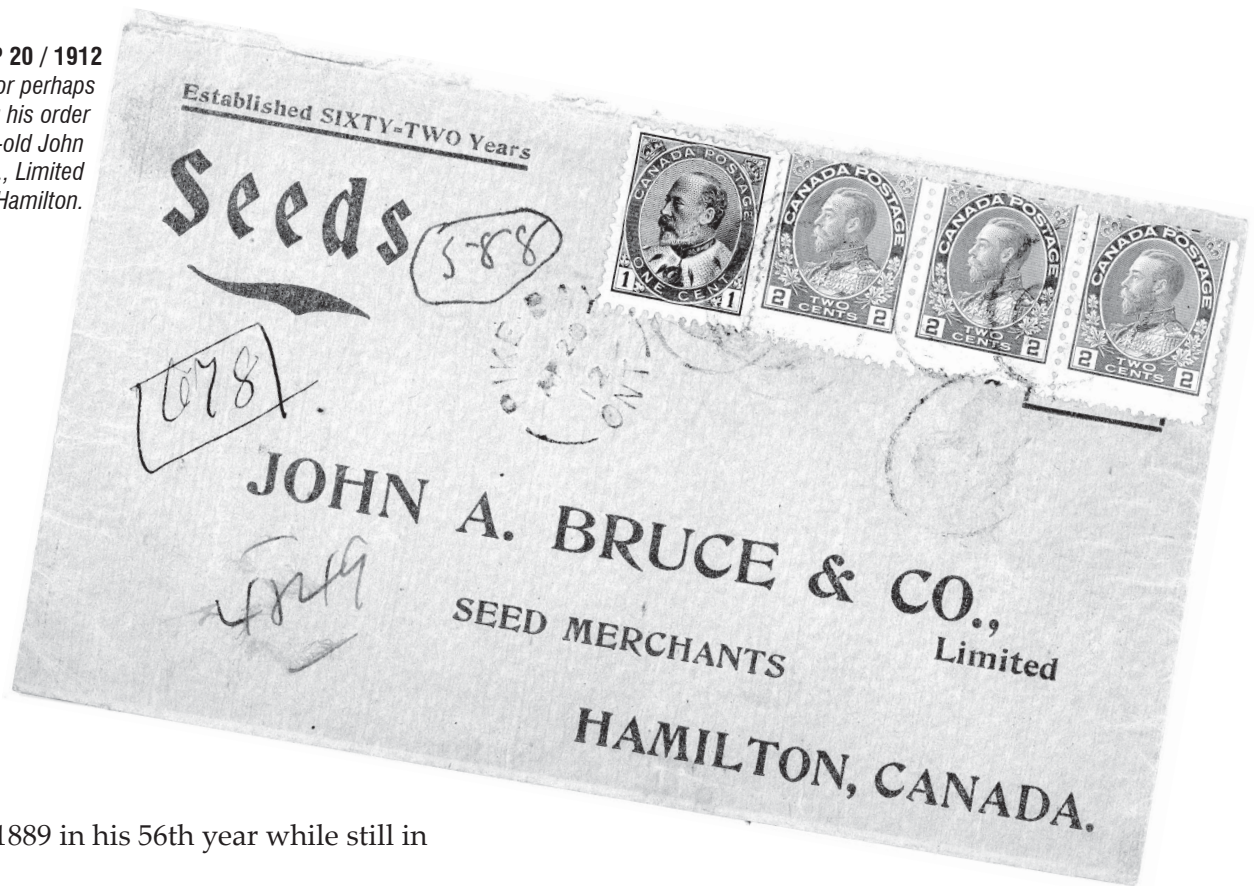
Early visitors to Pike Bay found the waters around the islands teemed with fish. Many large pike were, (and still are), found in the reeded areas. Sports fishermen were soon attracted to the area. They called the area Pike Bay since the pike were numerous and large. The name has remained popular to this day. Commercial fishing became established causing a need for homes, lumber and supplies. A village soon emerged. The *World Atlas of 1889* claimed that Pike Bay had 603 inhabitants and was the largest community in Eastnor Township.

Robert Agar, described as a lumber merchant, a mill owner and a farmer became Pike Bay's first postmaster on January 1, 1878. The post office was located in his home on Lot 2, Concession 2 WBR. (A road running north and south through the peninsula's townships was known as the Bury Road. Hence WBR was used to designate, west of the Bury Road.) The post office at Pike Bay was the second post office established in Eastnor Township. Robert Agar resigned on December 22, 1880. He sold his property and moved out of the community.

Agar's successor was Joseph Bellmore Sr., a fisherman and a farmer. His wife was the former Mathilda Abbott. They lived in a log house on Lot 1, Concession 3 WBR. The mail arrived weekly via stage coach from Warton in Amabel Township. Mr. Bellmore, with his wife as his assistant, operated the post office located in their home, for more than eight years. Joseph Bellmore died on

PIKE BAY ONT. / AP 20 / 1912

A hopeful gardener or perhaps a farmer is mailing his order to sixty-two-year-old John A. Bruce & Co., Limited in Hamilton.



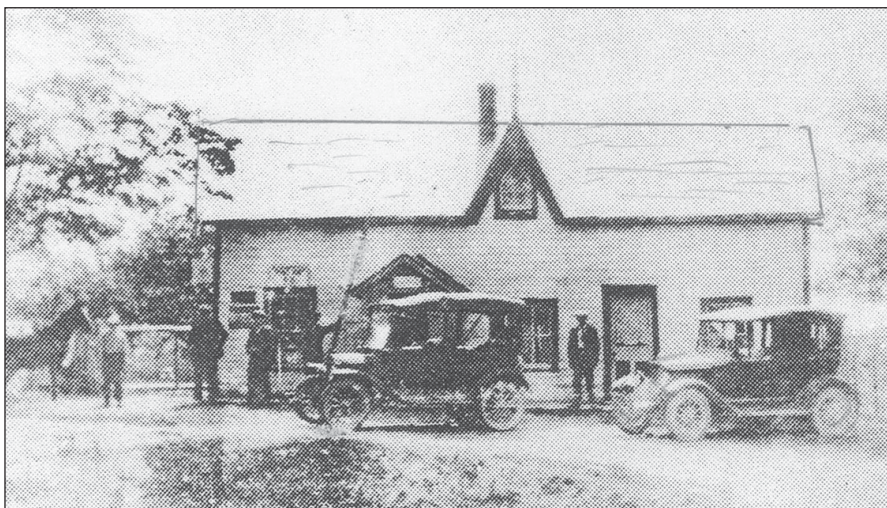
November 4, 1889 in his 56th year while still in office.

Robert McMaster was appointed postmaster on March 1, 1890. McMaster, his wife Jane and family, arrived in Pike Bay from Southampton, Ontario aboard their sailboat, *The Blackbird* in 1870. They were one of the first settlers in Pike Bay. Shortly after their arrival they purchased the property including a dwelling on Lot 2, Concession 4 WBR from Robert Agar. The post office was located in their home. Before the year ended Robert McMaster resigned as postmaster.

The next person to serve as postmaster was Louis Sutter. He came to Pike Bay in 1876 when he was 22 years old. On February 5, 1896 he married Jane (McMaster) Detwiler, a widow with three

children. Mr. Detwiler had lost his life at sea. The Sutter's lived in a house on Lots 2 and 3, Concession 3 WBR. They had the post office for almost four years. The mail contractor would leave Stokes Bay early in the day, change horses and have lunch at the Waverley Hotel, a halfway house one mile south of Pike Bay on the west side of the government road. It was located on Lot 4, Concession 3 WBR in Albemarle Township. The courier would then proceed to Wiarton where he would stay overnight and return to Stokes Bay the next day.

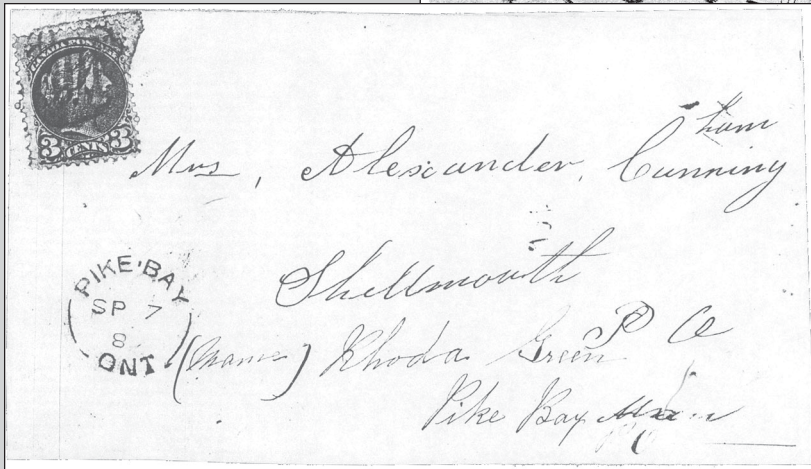
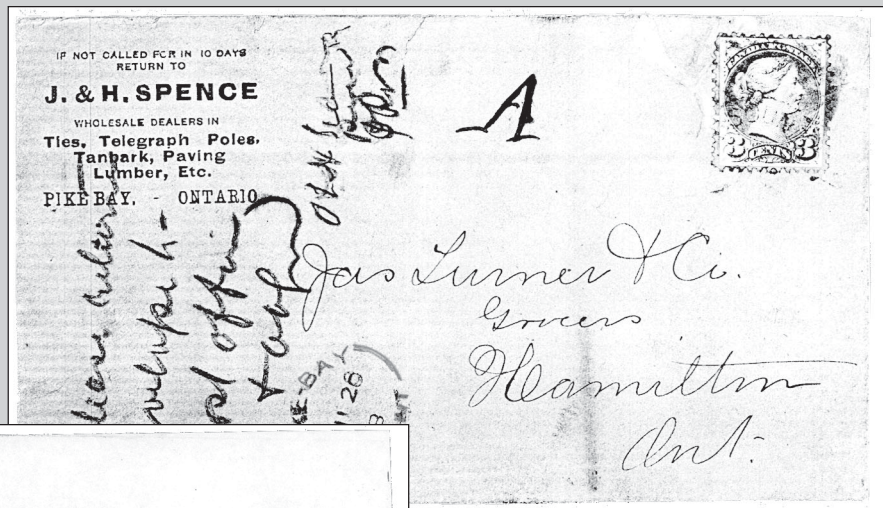
Harry H. Harding and his wife the former Susanna Burt lived on Lot 4, Concession 4 WBR in a home owned by Mr. Harding's father Samuel. When Mr. Harding received his appointment as postmaster on August 1, 1895 he moved the post office to this home. The Hardings had the post office for almost eight years until Mr. Harding resigned effective March 2, 1903. His



Hayward's General Store (1920). Proprietor and Postmaster was George Hayward. Post Office was located here from April 1, 1903 until July 27, 1935.

Pike Bay – 1889

The covers shown here are from a judicial source. They indicate that in 1889 an individual in Pike Bay attempted to use stamps previously used thereby defrauding the post office of revenue. An enquiry took place and these covers were pinned to documents and used as evidence.



3¢ stamp was previously used. Cover is backstamped Warton, Sept. 7, 1889. The following note added to cover (Mame) Rhoda Green, Pike Bay P.O.

Pike Bay – In manuscript, “Please return envelope to post office & oblige”. Also, “Stamp used PM”. “A” marking is for Exhibit “A”, probably used in Magistrates Court.

[Stamps used previously] Notation, “See 2¢ stamp within”, was likely added by the Warton postmaster. Cover is backstamped Warton, SP 7 / 89. The 2¢ hinged to the cover was found inside the cover. Pin holes on the left indicate that it was pinned to another document.

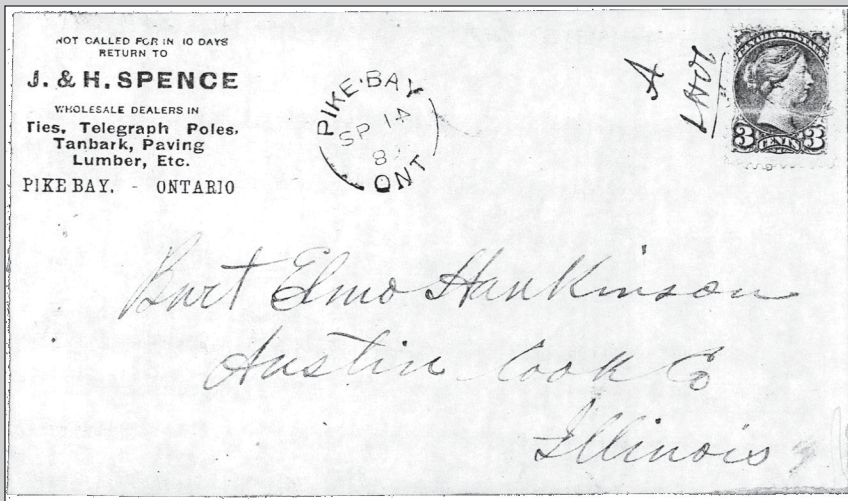


wife Susanna, as his assistant had handled most of the postal work.

William Mowat purchased the McCutcheon Hotel in 1895. It had been built in Pike Bay on part of Lot 4, Concession 3 WBR by William and Isabella McCutcheon in 1882. Mr. Mowat’s widowed mother, Mrs. Williamina (Geddes) Mowat and her four daughters moved into the hotel or halfway house shortly after it was purchased. Mrs. Mowat

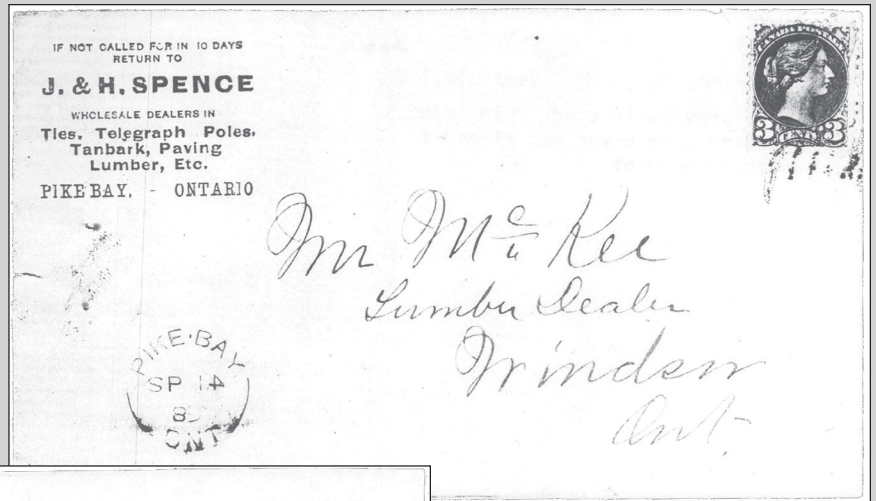
was appointed postmaster on April 1, 1903 and moved the post office into the hotel. Four years later Mrs. Mowat sold the hotel and resigned on November 13, 1907. The new owner of the hotel was George Edward Hayward of Woodstock, Ontario.

George Hayward was married to Dorothy Mathilda Bellmore. As soon as the Hayward’s took possession of the hotel they changed its name to

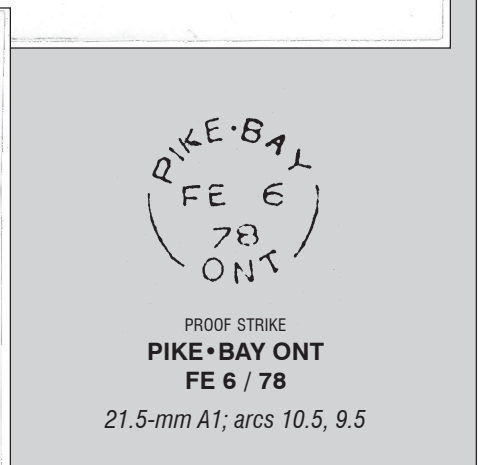
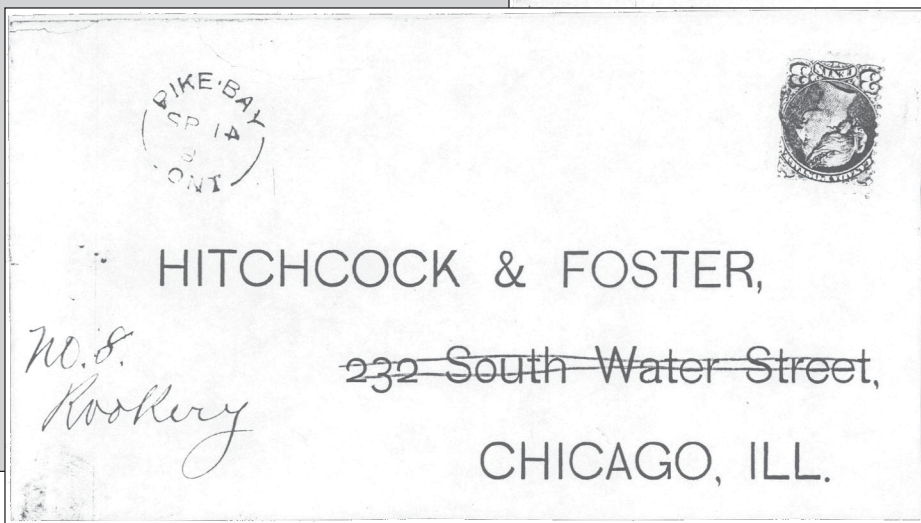


Letter delivered and returned to postal authorities for use in Magistrates Court. The "A" and initials denote that the cover is exhibit "A". Pinholes denote that cover was attached to other documents. Backstamped Austin, Ill. Received Sept. 18, 1889.

Backstamped WINDSOR ONT. / PM / SP 18 / 1889. Stamp previously used. Pinholes indicate that cover was pinned to another document.



Pinholes in cover indicate it was attached to other documents. Stamp suspected as being used previously. Note that the Pike Bay postmark is same as in above cover.

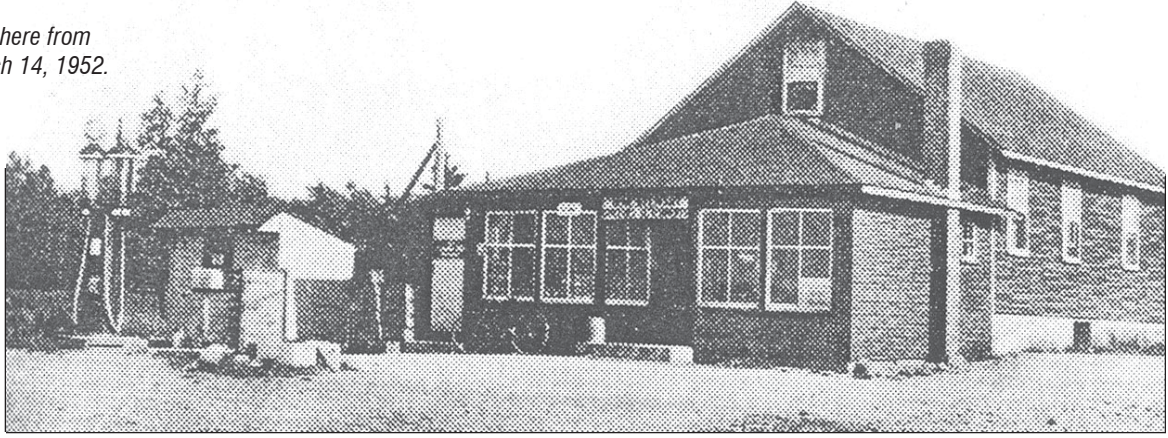


Park House. Mr. Hayward applied for the postmaster's job and received the appointment on December 10, 1907. He opened a general store on the site as well as a mattress factory. The post office moved into the general store. Mr Hayward was a very successful business man. He was postmaster for almost eighteen years until the post office closed on July 27, 1935. The postal authorities had

planned to re-open the post office as a summer office. Since Mr. Hayward was 67 and of retirement age a new postmaster, Norman McLean Stewart was appointed effective July 29, 1935. (In 1938 the old Hayward store was destroyed by fire.)

Norman and Daisy Stewart had purchased property on Lot 4, Concession 1 WBR, in Albemarle Township in 1931. They built a home on the

Norman Stewart's General Store and Post Office (1936). Post Office was located here from July 29, 1935 until March 14, 1952.



property using the living room for a store and later in 1934 adding a front addition to the building.

When the Pike Bay post office moved into the Stewart store in 1935 it was no longer in Eastnor Township. Daisy Stewart, the postmaster's wife, was sworn in as an assistant.

In 1945 the Stewarts sold the business to Eric John and Pearl Makela of Simcoe, Ontario. The Pike Bay post office opened for the summer on June 15, 1946 with Esko Makela, Eric's brother, as postmaster. The store operated under the name, *Makela Brothers General Store*. Both Eric Makela and his wife Pearl, were sworn in as assistants. Mail was exchanged with Mar R.R. # 1.

By 1952, Esko Makela was spending little time, if any, looking after the post office. The Post Office Department considered that Esko Makela had abandoned the post office and decided to appoint a new postmaster. Esko Makela was advised on March 14, 1952 that the post office would be closed.

D. B. Blue, M.P., consulted with Ross Whicher, M.P.P. and recommended Sydney William Monck for postmaster. Due to a small indiscretion on Monck's part the appointment was not made and the post office remained officially closed for the 1952 summer season. Mr. W. E. Pearson of London, the District Inspector, reported on July 29, 1952 that

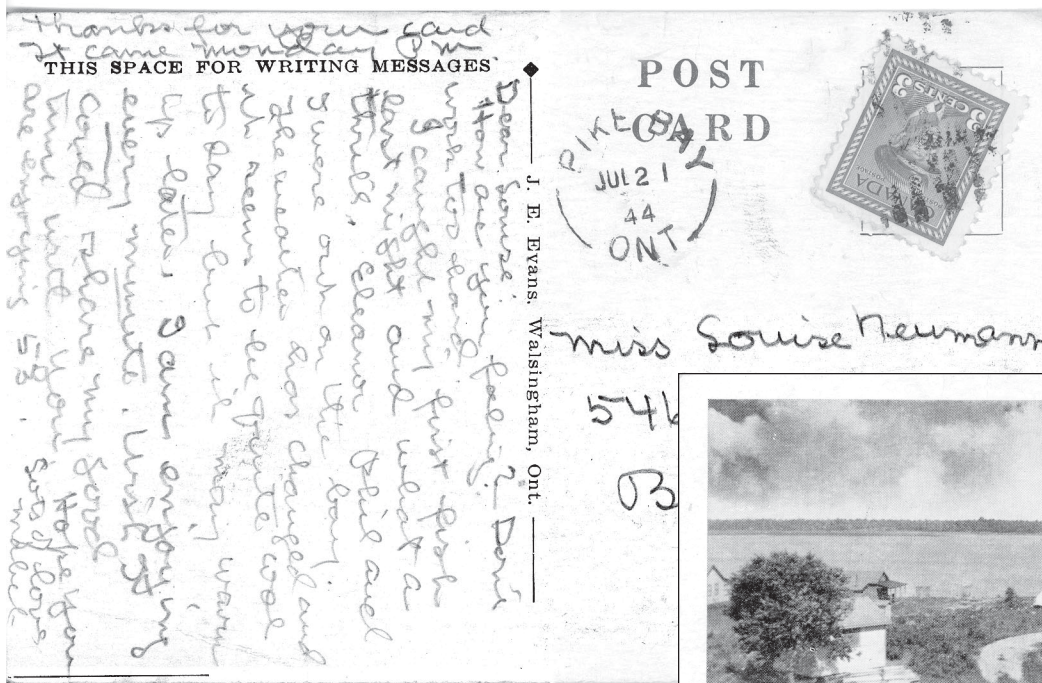
over 40 cottage owners depended on a post office. He ascertained that their mail was being delivered to Makela's store and outgoing mail was also being left at the store.

Sydney Monck who had been born in Australia, operated the barber shop across the road from the Makela store. On June 25, 1953 the post office reopened on Part Lot 2, Concession 5 WBR, in Eastnor Township with Sydney Monck as postmaster. Mr. Monck's wife, Hattie Pearl, was sworn in as an assistant. Sydney Monck died on August 23, 1953. He was in his 67th year and had been postmaster for only two months. The post office was transferred to his wife Hattie Pearl on an acting basis until a new postmaster could be appointed. Warren Hermann Lawrence and Mrs. Monck both applied for the postmaster's position. Mr. Lawrence was the successful candidate and received the appointment. The post office opened for the summer season on June 15, 1954 in the Lawrence store.

Dorothy, the postmaster's wife, was named as his assistant. The Lawrence property known as *Lawrenceville* and also as *Anchor's Landing* had been taken over by Warren Lawrence in November 1947. Lawrence built a new modern home and a store on the property as well as greatly improving the tourist cabins that were on the property. The location was Lot 1, Concession 2 WBR, in Albemarle Township. Due to ill health Mr. Lawrence decided to resign as postmaster effective



Makela Brothers General Store, formerly owned by Norman Stewart, continued to house the post office within enlarged premises (1950).



PIKE BAY / ONT / JUL 21 / 44
 J. E. Evans, Walsingham, Ont., published this b/w post card with a Pike Bay view.
 The post card is cancelled with the second known A1 hammer (20.5 mm, arcs 9.0) which is known used from April 24, 1903 and at least until July 25, 1974.



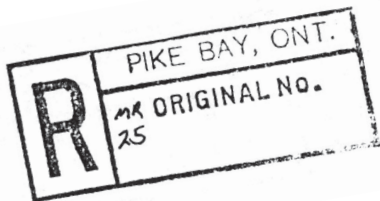
May 6, 1983 – A fire at the General Store & Post Office owned by Thomas and Sharon Field. Post Office was located in this building from June 15, 1954 until the fire destroyed the premises.

May 1, 1968. Mrs. Dorothy Mary Lawrence, the former postmaster's wife was appointed postmaster when the post office opened for the summer on June 15, 1968. Due to ill health Mr. Lawrence decided in 1975 to sell his property.

Donald (Dan) and Betsy Stewart purchased the Lawrence property on May 1, 1975. (Warren Lawrence passed away at Gateway Haven in Warton on December 24, 1989.) Dan and Betsy Stewart, along with their sons Jeffery and Timothy, operated a successful tourist business known as, *Pike Bay Tourist Resort & Marina*. Dan was appointed postmaster effective June 16, 1975. In May 1978 the Stewart's sold the business to Thomas and Sharon Field. Sharon Field became

A panoramic view of Pike Bay made up from two photo cards, c. 1930s.





**396125
PIKE BAY
14 IX 1984

ONT.**

*Acting Postmaster's letter of understanding.
Note the five-digit non-accounting office number
[MOON] that was replaced by the six-digit POCOM as of
April 1, 1973.*

P O S T O F F I C E

District Post Office Inspector,
London, Ontario

This is to advise that I understand perfectly that the transferring of the PIKE BAY Ontario, Post Office to my charge as Acting Postmaster was made on a temporary basis, subject to change at any moment, and that any major expenditure undertaken by me will be my own responsibility and will not involve the Post Office Department at Ottawa in any way.

Date 81606

Acting Postmaster.

Stamp

150/19-3-53

Pike Bay's 15th postmaster when the post office opened for the summer on June 15, 1978.

Her assistants were her two daughters, Cathy and Wendy. Sharon Field served as postmaster for 7 years until the end of the summer season on September 15, 1985.

The Field's experienced a sudden disaster on May 6, 1983 when the Field home and store were destroyed by fire. Fortunately the post office equipment was saved and Mrs. Field was able to operate the post office from another building. On April 1, 1986 the Pike Bay post office was officially declared closed.

October, 2002 – By The Bay General Store, Pike Bay. This is the same building as is seen in the earlier photo shown on page 394. Post Office had its home here from 1935 until 1952.



THE POSTMASTERS OF PIKE BAY AND THEIR PERIODS OF SERVICE

Post Office established: January 1, 1878

Robert Agar	Jan. 1, 1878 until Dec. 22, 1880	RESIGNATION
Joseph Bellmore Sr.	June 1, 1881 until Nov. 4, 1889	DEATH
Robert McMaster	Mar. 1, 1890 until Dec. 30, 1890	RESIGNATION
Louis Sutter	June 4, 1891 until April 6, 1895	RESIGNATION
Harry H. Harding	Aug. 1, 1895 until Mar. 2, 1903	RESIGNATION
Mrs. Williamina Mowat	Apr. 1, 1903 until Nov. 13, 1907	RESIGNATION
Geo. Edw. Hayward	Dec. 10, 1907 until July 27, 1935	P.O. CLOSED

Post Office re-opened as a summer office: July 29, 1935

Norman McLean Stewart	July 29, 1935 until Feb. 19, 1946	RESIGNATION
Esko Makela	June 15, 1946 until Mar. 14, 1952	P.O. CLOSED

Post Office re-opened: June 25, 1953

Sydney Wm. Monck	June 25, 1953 until Aug. 23, 1953	DEATH
Mrs. Hattie Pearl Monck	Aug. 24, 1953 until Sept. 14, 1953	ACTING
Warren Herman Lawrence	June 15, 1954 until May 1, 1968	RESIGN.
Mrs. Dorothy Mary Lawrence	June 15, 1968 until Sept. 14, 1974	RETIRED

N. Donald (Dan) Stewart June 16, 1975 until Sept. 15, 1977 RESIGN.

Mrs. Sharon K. Field June 15, 1978 until Sept. 16, 1985 P.O. CLOSED

Post Office officially closed: April 1, 1986

Post Office Money Order Office No.: **81606**

and as of April 1, 1973: **396125**

Postal Code: **N0H 2B0**

The Pike Bay post office was located in Albemarle Township from July 29, 1935 until March 15, 1952 and from June 15, 1954 until closure on September 15, 1985.

BRUCE & MALTA

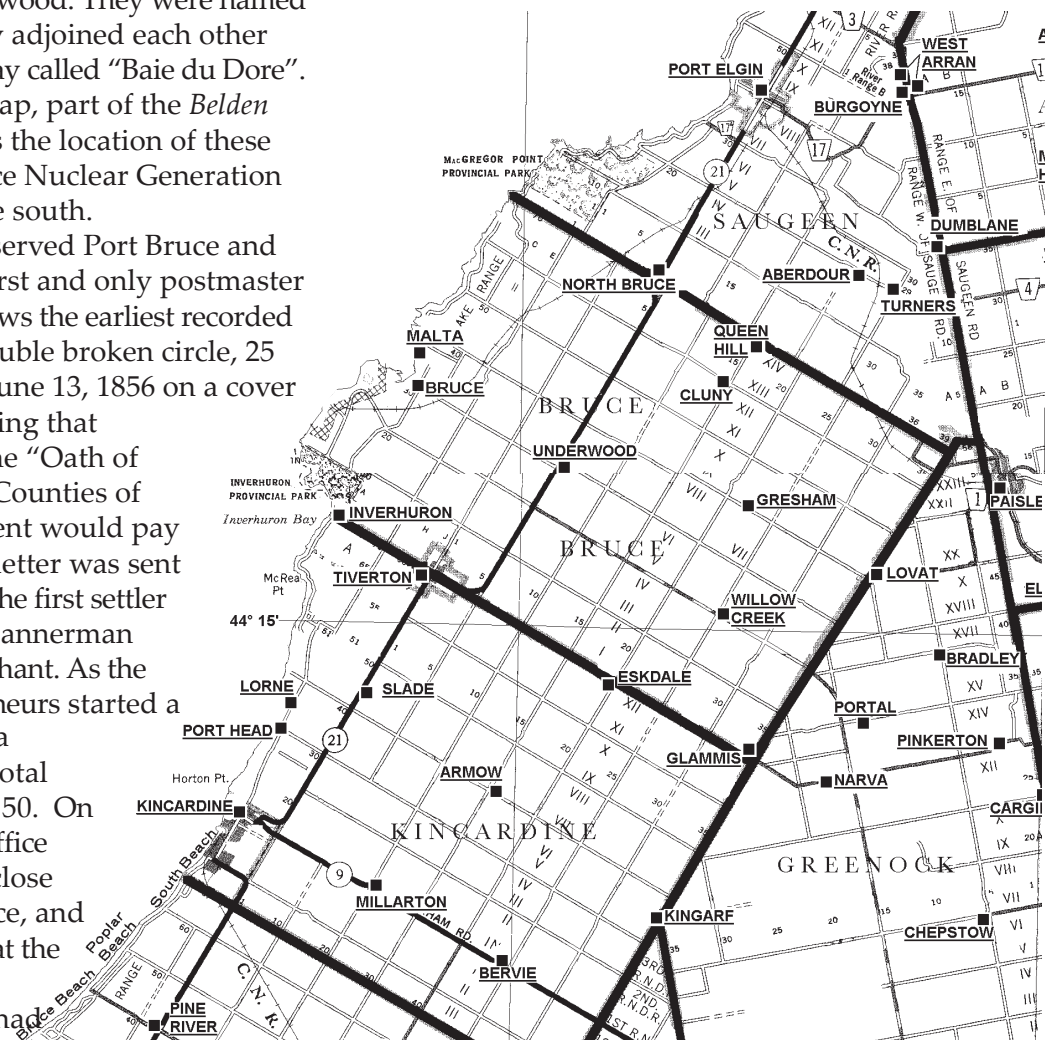
John Rossiter

On April 1, 1853 the first post office in Bruce Township was established along the shore of Lake Huron. The name of this post office was Bruce. It was located approximately 15 km south of Port Elgin. To date, I haven't been able to find a map or written description, to state with certainty the exact location of the Bruce office. It is possible this office was located some distance further south along the shore. We can say with certainty that in 1855/56, at or near this same location, two town plots were surveyed. These two town plots were located mainly within Lots 29 to 39 of the Lake Range directly west of the Village of Underwood. They were named Port Bruce and Malta. They adjoined each other and surrounded a natural bay called "Baie du Dore". The old Bruce Township map, part of the *Belden Atlas* of 1880, clearly shows the location of these town plots. Today, the Bruce Nuclear Generation Station is located just to the south.

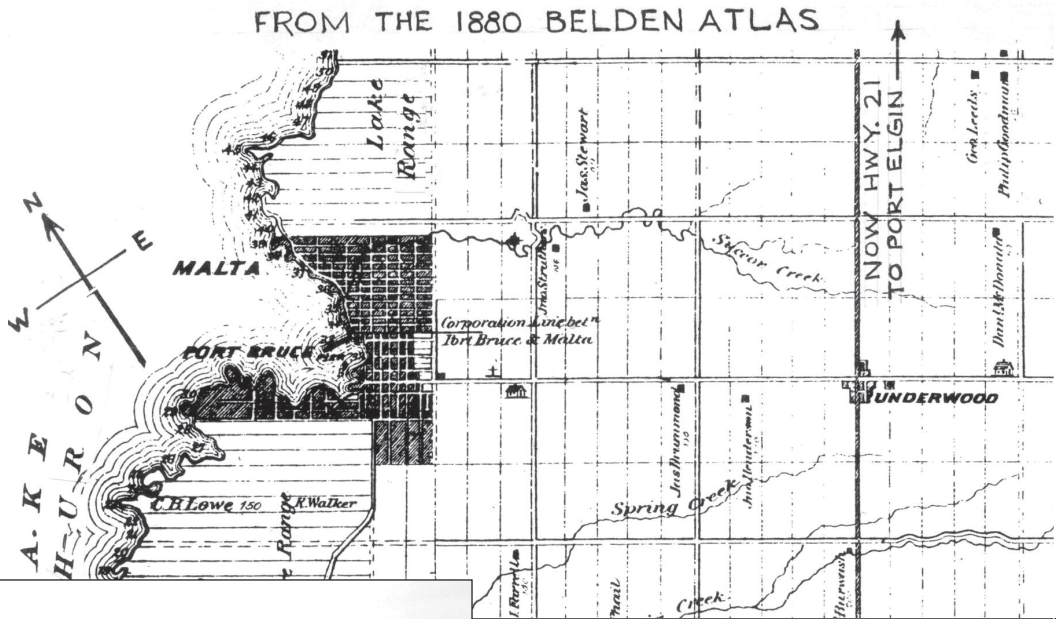
The "Bruce" post office served Port Bruce and the surrounding area. Its first and only postmaster was Peter Sinclair. Fig. 1 shows the earliest recorded strike of the Bruce, U.C. double broken circle, 25 mm hammer script dated June 13, 1856 on a cover mailed to Goderich, certifying that Michael Green has taken the "Oath of Constable" for the United Counties of Huron & Bruce. The recipient would pay the 3 pence postage as the letter was sent un-paid. It is recorded that the first settler at Port Bruce was Duncan Bannerman who was also the first merchant. As the village grew, other entrepreneurs started a hotel, tavern, sawmill and a conveyance business. The total population grew to about 150. On July 1, 1860 the Bruce post office closed, probably due to its close proximity to the Malta office, and the opening of a new office at the Village of Tiverton.

At Malta the post office had

opened just across the boundary line on June 1, 1856, with William Chisholm as postmaster. Bruce Graham records a Malta, U.C. strike, script dated April 29, 1859. Fig. 2 shows a late date (and unrecorded) strike of the Malta, C.W. broken circle, 20-mm hammer script dated Aug. 18, 1866. The 5 cents postage was paid in cash. On July 1, 1858 Murray McGregor replaced Mr. Chisholm and on January 1, 1862, Walter McFarlane assumed the postmaster duties. The first sawmill to be built burned in 1858. Evidently the sawmill was rebuilt as two brothers George and John Foard started a



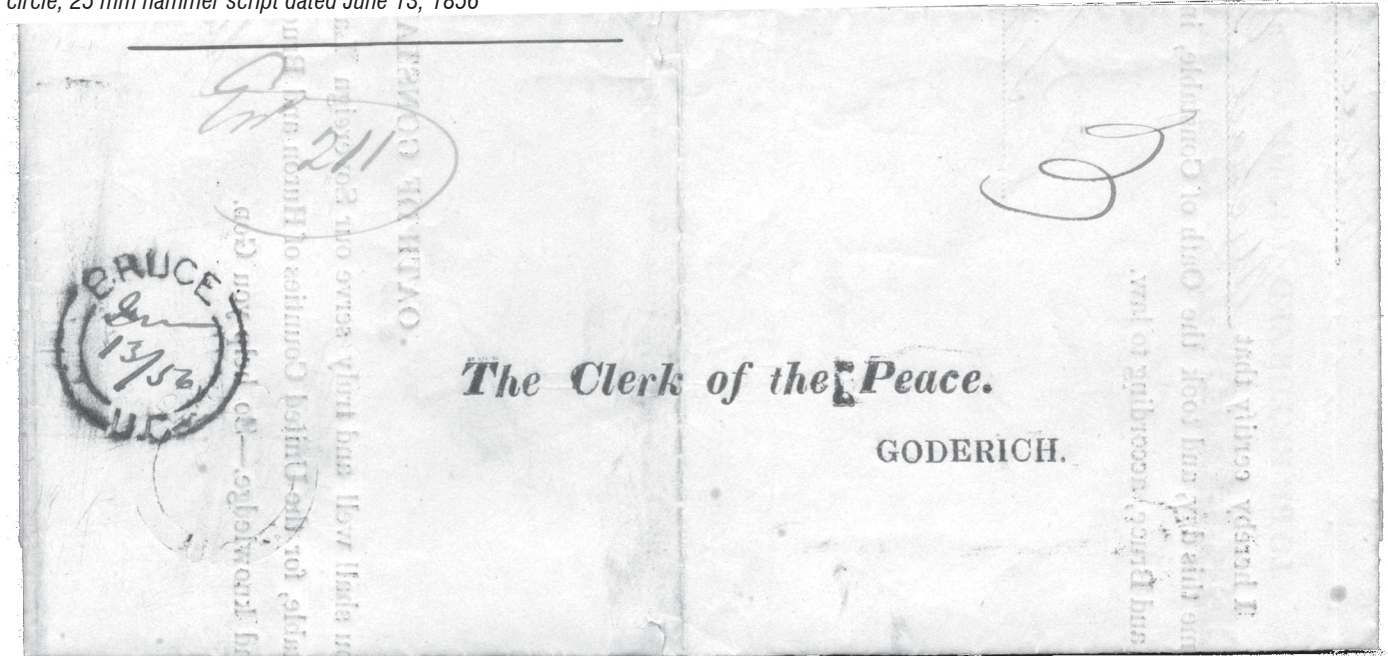
Baie du Dore plaque.



These two adjoining villages seemed to be thriving, and there was even speculation that between them they could rival Kincardine as a port and commercial centre. However, on July 4, 1862 a disastrous swamp fire engulfed both villages to the extent that the residents had to take to their boats and flee the bay. The two villages simply disappeared as their residents had lost everything and did

not have the means to rebuild. I can find no record of any loss of life resulting from this terrible event. The Malta post office must have survived or more likely was relocated to a nearby farm house or fishing shanty, as it remained open

shipbuilding company. One merchant owned a warehouse that stored 10,000 bushels of grain. The population grew to approximately 125.



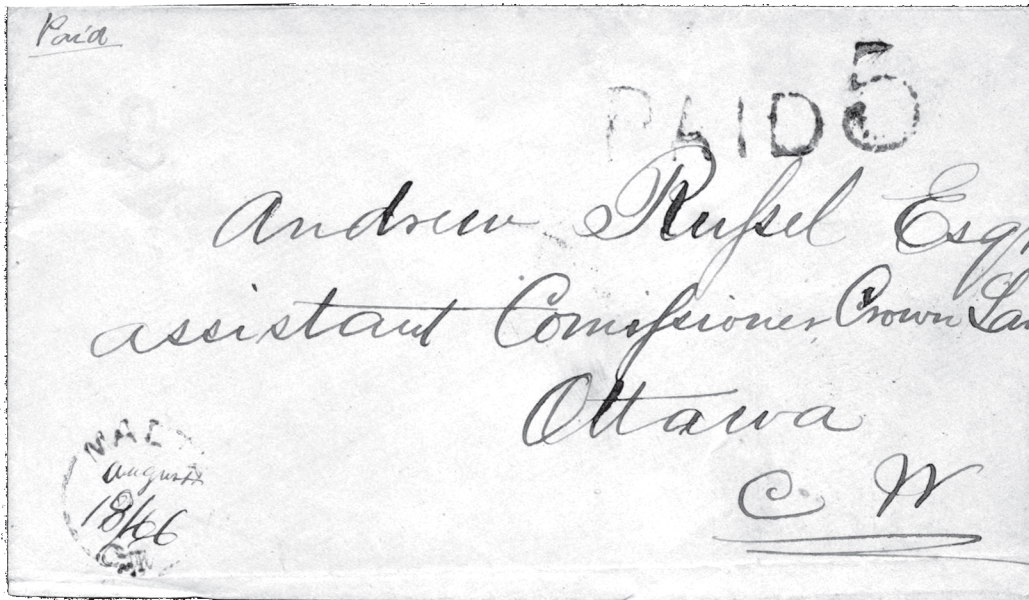


Fig. 2
MALTA C.W / August 18/66

for some years. Post Office records show the Malta office as closing on July 19, 1866. However, as shown in Fig. 2, the office must have remained open beyond that date. Robert C. Smith records the office as closing December 31, 1866.

The more County history I read, the more I realize how often many homes and businesses were destroyed by fire in the 1800s. In the case of Port Bruce and Malta, only one building remained standing after the fire.

The University of Toronto established a research station at Baie du Dore in the 1960s. There was also co-operation from the National Research Council, the Meteorological Branch of the Dept. of Transport and the University of Waterloo. Scientists and students used two floating towers to measure water movement, turbulence, wave height, and wind speed along with fish studies to determine what effect the extra heat from the nuclear plant would have on aquatic life. This project was completed in the 1960s or early 70s.

On October 13 my wife Gwen and I visited this location. Along the main road, between Concessions 6 and 7 running west from the Village of Underwood, the Town-ship of Bruce has erected a

plaque in memory of the loss of these two villages. The plaque is a bit difficult to locate, as it is partly concealed by tree branches. As noted above, the Bruce Nuclear plant is located to the south. Nearby, also to the south and inland from

the lake, are five huge wind generators. Looking to the north (where most dwellings were located within the two villages), are cottages and homes. One owner has dredged out a canal from the bay to his cottage. To see this peaceful scene today it is hard to imagine that over 140 years ago families were running for their lives as fire destroyed all they had worked to build.

P.S. – For most post offices you can obtain the names of the postmasters by logging on to the archives website: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivanet/020109_e.html However this is not the case with all post offices and once again Bob Vogel has come to my rescue with information on the Bruce and Malta post-masters. Thank you, Bob.

CREDITS:

The History of the County of Bruce by Norman Robertson. First Published in 1906 by William Briggs, Toronto and republished twice.

The History of the County of Bruce by Norman McLeod, Copyright in Canada, 1969 by The Bruce County Historical Society.

Bruce County Broken Circle Postmarks by W. Bruce Graham.

Ontario Post Offices by Robert C. Smith.

Reprint of the *Belden Atlas for Grey & Bruce Counties of 1880*, Cummings Publishers, Stratford, Ontario.

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From anywhere . . . to anyone

in TIVERTON and the

surrounding area . . .





Elder Post Office was located in the home of Postmaster Courtney Conn on Lot 25, Concession 5, Mono Township.

This early postal route map indicates that Elder received its mail through Sheldon in neighbouring Adjala Township. However, our story also indicates that it may have come from Mono Centre at some other time.

[REF. 198]

The Postal Beginnings at **ELDER** Mono Township County of Dufferin

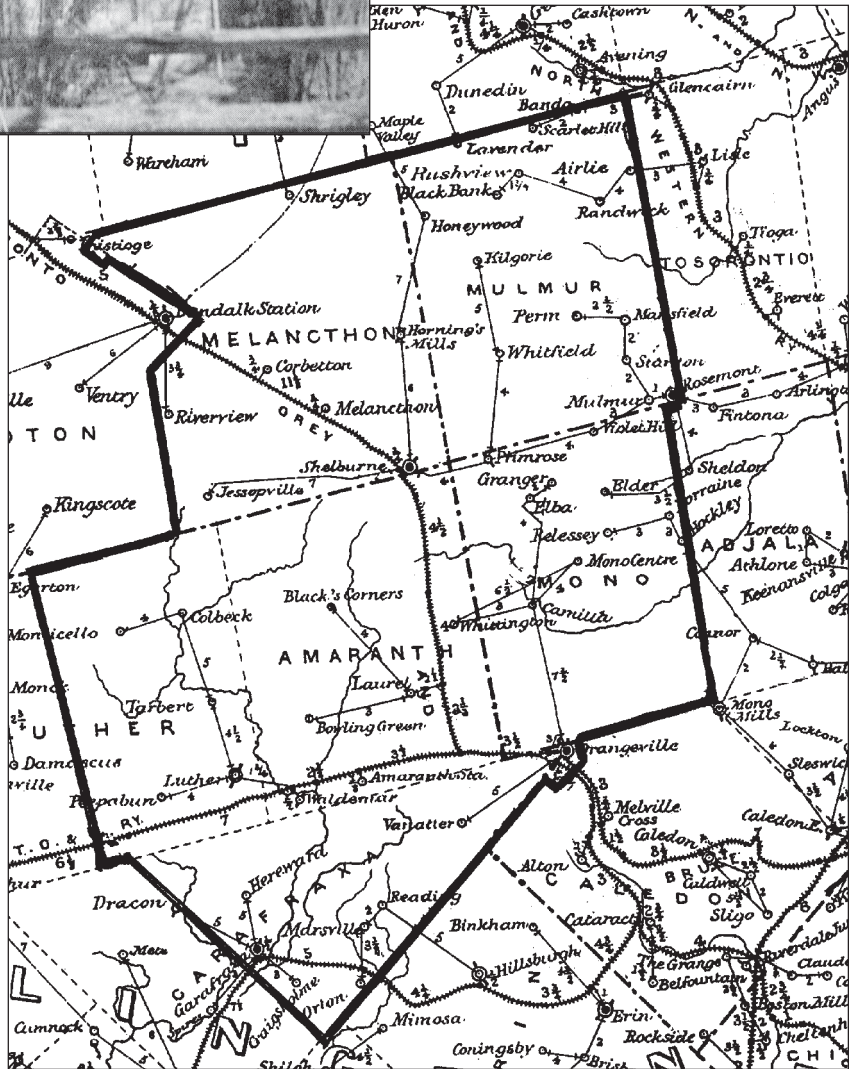
Russell B. Thompson
George Power

Hidden in the hills of Mono Township are the remnants of the pioneer community of Elder. The cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment protect the still and silent fields and brood over the lively past of an empty church, a school that's gone, and a vanished post office.

The community took its name from one Thomas Elder, native of County Tyrone, Ireland. Thomas Elder was 27 when he left Ireland to bring the 26-year-old Mary Anne and their two small boys, John aged five, and three-year-old Thomas James, to Canada. The third boy, Samuel, was born in 1843, but there is no record of whether he travelled overseas as a babe in arms, or was born here.

Like other Irish immigrants, there is little doubt that the Elders were driven from their homeland by the great potato famine and depression of the 1840s.

Elder post office opened in 1854, just eleven years after Thomas Elder and his family arrived in Canada. The post office was in the home of



Courtney Conn and his wife Lucinda, who lived in a loghouse on Lot 26, Concession 5. Courtney Conn was the postmaster during the entire time the Elder Post Office as in operation – 60 years! In 1865 his salary was ten cents a year plus a seventeen-cent stationery allowance. By 1914 the salary had risen to \$42.50 a year, the stationery allowance having been discontinued in 1871.

When Russell Thompson was a boy, the mail was



ELDER ONT. / OC 8 / 1895

This is the earliest recorded date for this hammer.

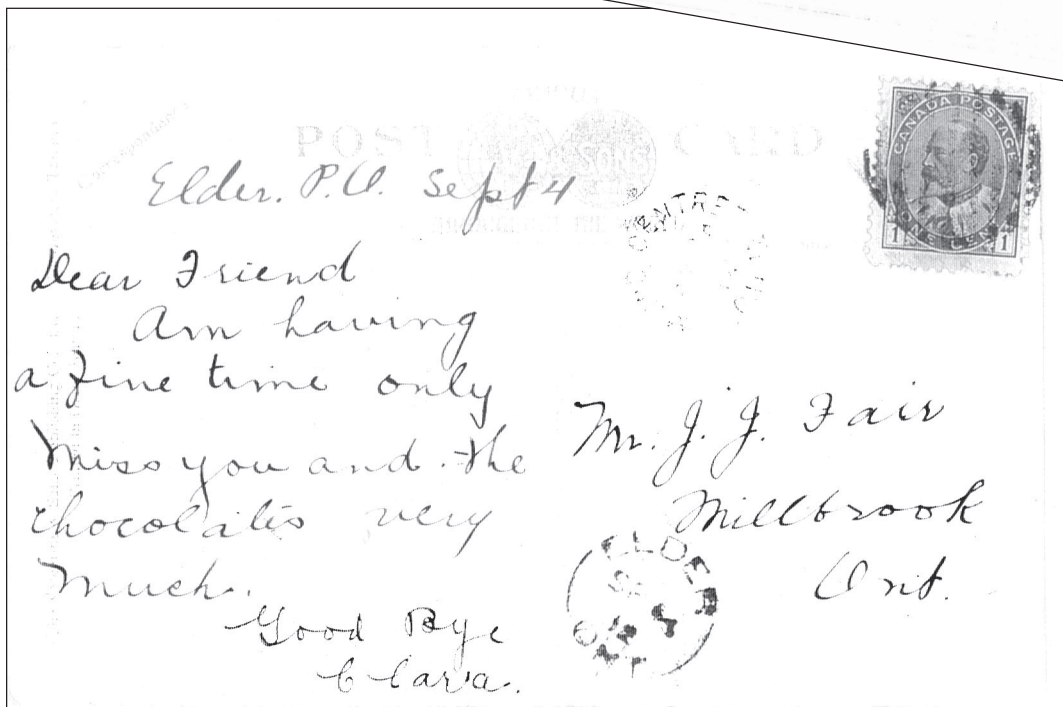
COURTESY Robt. C. Smith



ELDER ONT. / JU 30 / 1908

This post card from Elder appears to have been written on July 2nd, yet is postmarked June 30. It received a transit mark at Mono Centre on July 3 and arrived at its destination in Horning's Mills on July 4th – all offices located in Dufferin County.

COURTESY OF Don Steward

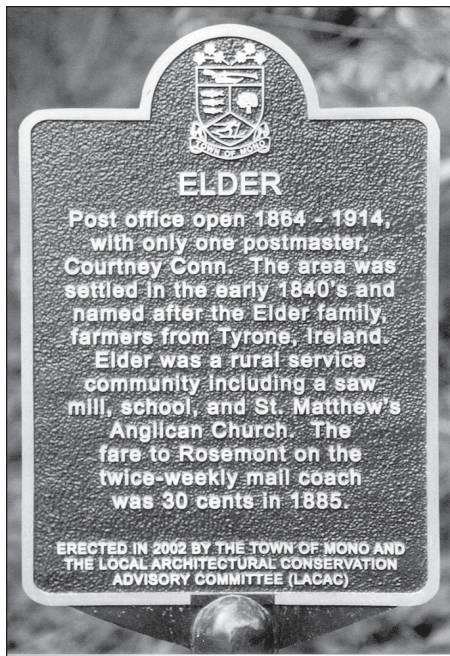


brought in locked leather bags from Mono Centre (Lot 20, Concession 2 East, Mono), by the Conns. After school was out, boys and girls ran down the hill to the Conns and waited in tittering, giggling rows in the spotlessly-clean kitchen, mud, snow, or sand dribbling on the clean maple floor. Then they ran in scuffling shouting groups out the door, taking the letters and papers that opened the world for their waiting parents.

During its 60-year life Elder post office utilized

at least two different cancelling devices. Having opened its doors in 1854 one would assume that a broken circle with either a UC or CW at its base (A2) was used. This was replaced at a later time with a 19.5 mm A1 hammer with 9.5 mm arcs. This later hammer has been recorded in use with an earliest date of October 8, 1895 (see above illustration) and a latest date of April 22, 1912. There are possibly other hammer waiting to be discovered.

Elder post office closed in 1914. Rural mail delivery



A commemorative plaque celebrating Elder's past glory was erected in 2002 by the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee.
COURTESY OF George Power.

from Mono Centre started in 1914. In 1914, this area became a part of the Orangeville mail delivery system, and now receives mail addressed to RR1 Orangeville. ✉

REFERENCE:

This story of the Elder Post Office is part of a larger book entitled *Elder and The Pioneers*, written by Russell B. Thompson. We thank George Power for sharing it with us.

Tales from the Olden Days

I remember when we used to go into Conn's post office [Elder] for the mail, we sat on a mohair-covered couch which was very slippery. Carman McKelvey sat on one end of it, and Emerson Holmes sat at the other end. When we would be putting our mail into our satchels, Emerson would give a little shove just for fun and Carman would go on the floor. Mrs. Conn would scold him, asking him why he couldn't sit up like the rest of the boys, much to our amusement, because she never blamed the right person.

✉

The people were so glad to get No. 11 school down on 25 Sideroad that Mr. Courtney Conn started the fire the first winter and supplied kindling, all free.

✉

One day when Mrs. Conn had put a new oilcloth on the table, her husband Courtney threw the old leather mailbag on the table. Mrs. Conn scolded him with her squeaky voice, and he looked over at us children and stuck out his tongue. We all started to laugh, and this made Mrs. Conn even more cross.

✉

After supper, the old neighbouring farmers would meet at Conn's post office for the mail, which came three times a week. Strong arguments would start over politics. Conn was a strong Tory, and William Elder and J. P. Steward were just as strong Liberals, and they would argue into the middle of the night.

[REF. 199]

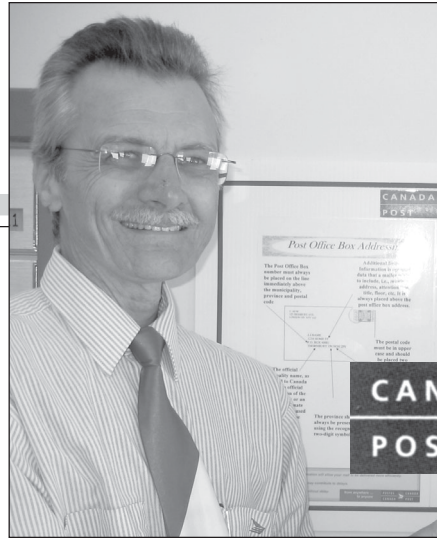


**From anywhere . . . to anyone
in Grey-Bruce we deliver!**

2004 (CP) – It looks like the team from Owen Sound is checking out ways on improving rural delivery in the vast stretches of these two counties. The already established and proven next-day delivery for local service in the two counties can only possibly be improved by introducing all-up air service.

However, the local gentry objected to receiving their bills sooner than necessary and the air service was postponed for another time. They felt that next day delivery was perfectly acceptable. Needless to say the postal officials were very happy with the response from the citizenry.

Postmaster Barry Heffer, at the centre of the front row, keeps the team in line.



COURTESY of The Courier-Herald

Barry Neil Heffer, Postmaster 1951 – 2005

BARRY NEIL HEFFER of Clarksburg, born in Wingham on March 19, 1951, a son of Clifford and Jean (Welwood) Heffer, passed away peacefully on Friday April 8, 2005 in his 55th year. Barry attended Barber College in London and was employed at his father-in-law Maurice's barber shop in Listowel from 1969 until 1974.

Barry began a career in postal service when he joined the Listowel post office in 1974 where he remained until 1977 when he and his family moved to Clarksburg. Barry was Postmaster there from 1977 until 1985 when he transferred to Thornbury Post Office as the Postmaster of the facility there. Wherever Barry worked he was respected by his co-workers and the community he served for his work ethic, and loved for his tremendous sense of humour, his twinkle in the eye and his friendly smile. Stamp collectors and postal historians will miss him and his patience, for the many requests that he received. He was a true servant of the people who served the Royal Mail well and with style!

Barry enjoyed woodworking and particularly lathe turning; he crafted furniture for his family. Barry and his family enjoyed many camping trips and adventures in Ontario and the East Coast.

Barry was a very versatile and multi-talented individual. There was no subject that he would not explore, whether it was computers, old tractors, plumbing. Barry was the man behind the scenes when it came to keeping the computers and presses running at Conestoga Press. We are forever grateful. He was an avid reader and especially books of historical nature. He even came around to liking postal history and enjoyed this newsletter.

Barry and his loving wife Judy Cowen would have celebrated thirty years of marriage this October. He will be remembered always as a loving father by their children Melissa Anne Heffer and her husband Jason Bodrog of Dundas; Matthew of Alberta, and Mark (Lindsay Marynewich) of Brampton.

He was a dear brother of Douglas (Judy) of Bright's Grove; Paul (Gail) of Wingham; Robert (Shannon) of Swift Current, Saskatchewan; David (Susan) of Wingham; Timothy (Jilda) of Didsbury, Alberta; and Jamie (Lori) also of Wingham.

Barry was a special son-in-law to Maurice and the late Louise Cowen and he will be fondly remembered by his sister-in-law Betty (Tom) Haugh of Kincardine and brother-in-law Gary (Jeannette) of Cambridge and by his many nieces and nephews and their families.

Family received friends at Ferguson Funeral Home, The Valley Chapel in Thornbury, on Sunday afternoon and evening. Funeral and committal services, officiated by Reverend Frances Savill, were conducted at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Thornbury on Monday April 11, 2005 with interment at Thornbury-Clarksburg Union Cemetery following.

Serving as pallbearers were long-time friends Harold and Doug Ardiel, Dave Hammond, Ed Rebel, Justus Knierim and brother-in-law Tom Haugh. Honorary bearers were Don Leeson and Al Taylor.



Barry Heffer
Clarksburg, ON
NOH 1J0



In the two weeks preceding his 54th birthday, Barry was overwhelmed by a deluge of 200+ postcards from friends throughout southwestern Ontario.



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A WORD from the Editor! [REF. 201]

We welcome with this new issue two new members. The Bruce County Museum and Archives has elected to be part of our group. The *Georgian Courier* and all past issues are available for reading to all visitors to the Museum and Archives. It is a great place to do research on your favourite post office.

Our second new member is Don Slaughter, a well-known postal history dealer who serves the collector from London, Ontario. Check out his website and be pleasantly surprised. *Welcome to all of you!*

The cry of every editor in the land that I have talked to recently is the lack of material to publish. All of us like to read about our favourite post offices. Most of us do have stories that would be of interest to others. There is so much to share! So what is holding us back. Are we bashful, are we humble . . . that can not really be because when we meet collectors at shows such as the recent RPSC Royal in London I heard many tales, I saw many displays of fine

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The "**Georgian Courier**" is the printed forum of the **Grey, Bruce, Dufferin & Simcoe Postal History Study Group** affiliated with the Postal History Society of Canada. It is currently published 4 times a year: February, May, August, and November. Copy deadline is 3 weeks before the 1st day of the above-mentioned months.

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postal history. People were proud of these acquisitions . . . proud enough to talk about them. So how about it, write a paragraph or two about that latest bit of postal history, make it happen. The end result will be a better *Georgian Courier* that can be shared with others.

Your submissions are always welcome . . . they can be full-length articles or an illustration of a cover to fill half a page.

Consider also the impact on a study group or the Postal History Society itself, when you invite a friend to join and share this wonderful hobby. We will send a complimentary copy of the *Georgian Courier* to anyone that writes, calls or emails us.

Last, but certainly not least, I thank all those that have submitted material over the past years. Without you this newsletter would not be the same!

I wish you all a great summer and hope that you have some time to take in a stamp show, or visit a favourite post office. – Gus Knierim

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of your postal history knowledge by joining the **POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF CANADA** and subscribing to an award-winning **Journal** – 76 pages every three months!

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