

# The Georgian Courier

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

No. 46 • Vol. 9, No. 4

ISSN 1481-9511

May 2012

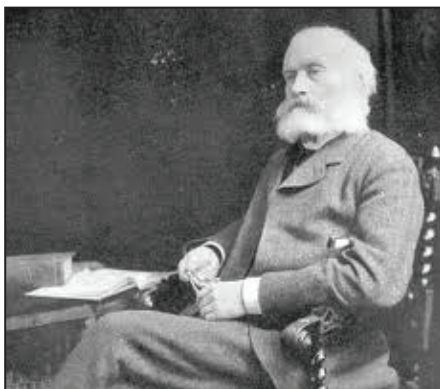


## Sir Sandford Fleming's Craigleith

Gus Knierim

**T**HE HAMLET OF CRAIGLEITH, located on the shores of Nottawasaga Bay (Georgian Bay), became a station stop on the North Grey Extension of the Northern Railway of Canada in 1872. In the late 1850s an attempt was made to extract oil from the extensive shale deposits on the shores of the bay. Throughout the latter part of the 1800s the population hovered between 50 and 85 residents. The hamlet had one general store, a sawmill, and two churches. Population peaked in the early 1900s at 100, thereafter declining until more recent times when it once again increased with the development of the ski industry. Today Craigleith is part of The Town of the Blue Mountains which came into being January 1, 2001, with the amalgamation of the Township of Collingwood and the Town of Thornbury.

Sir Sandford Fleming, (January 7, 1827 – July 22, 1915) was a Scottish-born, Canadian engineer and inventor, he proposed worldwide standard time zones, designed Canada's first postage stamp, left a huge body of surveying and map making, engineered much of the Intercolonial Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway.



Craigleith post office has a history that is perhaps more significant than many other places in Grey County. The hamlet owes its existence to Sir Sandford Fleming, Canada's celebrated railway engineer. In 1854 he settled his parents, brothers and sister on a lot originally owned by the area's first settler, John Brazier. Naming the area Craigleith, meaning rocky harbour, the Flemings established a quarry and a furniture factory and donated land for the original schoolhouse along the Township's first gravel road. The road followed an ancient native trail traveled by resident Petuns, Jesuit missionaries and traders alike in the 1600s.

A 1951 map of Collingwood Township, Grey County pinpointing the location of Craigleith and showing the railway line that began as the North Grey Extension and ending its days as a CNR branch line.



### POSTMASTERS AT CRAIGLEITH POST OFFICE

A. G. Fleming: 1857, Jan. 1 – 1879, April  
Alexander Fleming: 1879, July 1 – 1911, March 13  
George Wright: 1911, May 1 – 1934, September 17

OFFICE CLOSED

#### Seasonal Summer Office

Mrs. Florence May Ritchie, 1939, July 3 – 1945, Aug. 31  
JULY AND AUGUST ONLY

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Alexander Fleming's house, built in 1878, served as the Craigleith post office between 1879 and 1911.

In 1872, A. G. Fleming, Sandford's father, sold a parcel of land to the Northern Railway along the same road for the purpose of constructing a station for the community. By 1880 a handsome station with the very newest architectural design, a rounded turret, opened its doors to the whistle of the locomotive and promise of prosperity for the community.

In a direction quite unforeseen by the Flemings, the little station became the hub of ski trains from Toronto in the early 1940s, and planted the seeds for what was to become a year-round destination for Ontario vacationers.

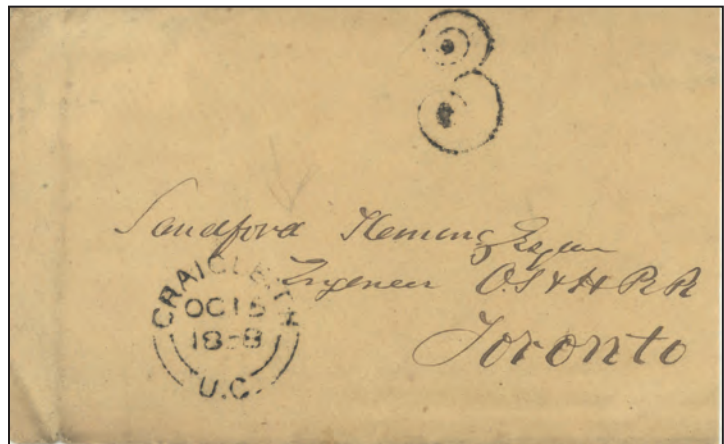
A post office was established January 1, 1857, with A. G. Fleming, Sandford Fleming's father, being appointed as the first postmaster. It should be noted that Sandford Fleming (1827-1915) at the young age of 24, designed Canada's first postage stamp, the 3d Beaver.

At first the small post office was kept in the store

operated by Andrew Fleming but later moved to his residence upon closing the store. The post office was kept at his residence until his death in April, 1879, after which the postmaster's duties were transferred to his son, Alexander. Officially his appointment began July 1, 1879, ending with his resignation on March 13, 1911.

George Wright succeeded Alexander Fleming as postmaster. He fulfilled the duties for 23 years until his resignation on September 17, 1934. At that time, postal service was replaced by Rural Mail Delivery, RR #3 Collingwood.

The story does not conclude here, for beginning on July 3, 1939 and finally ending August 31, 1945, Craigleith post office was reopened as a summer office operating for two months each summer. Mrs. Florence



#### CRAIGLEITH U.C / FE 8 / 1861

Cover addressed to Sandford Fleming Esq., Engineer Northern Rail Road, Toronto. The Ontario, Simcoe & Huron Railroad became the Northern Railway Company of Canada in August 1858. 3d rate to Toronto.



#### CRAIGLEITH U.C / OC 15 / 1858

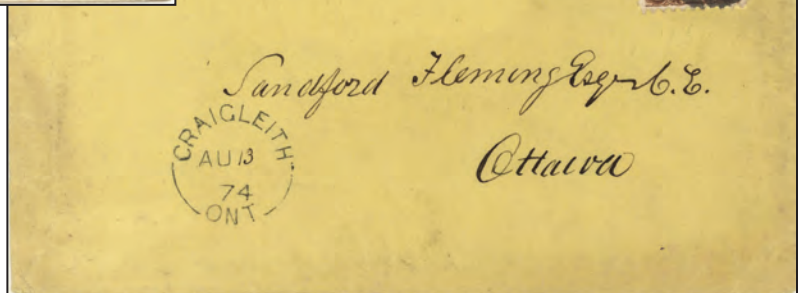
Small cover addressed to Sandford Fleming Esq., Engineer OS & H RR, Toronto. In 1852 Fleming became an assistant engineer, under Cumberland, on the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad (later the Northern Railway), which was being built from Toronto to Georgian Bay. He lived and remained in Toronto until 1864. The cover pays the 3d rate to Toronto.

#### CRAIGLEITH ONT / AU 13 / 74

Cover addressed to Sandford Fleming Esq., Ottawa.

In 1863 Fleming, as a result of his intense lobbying, was the unanimous choice of the colonial governments as well as of the Colonial Office for the post of chief surveyor. Four years later the new Dominion government appointed him engineer-in-chief of the Intercolonial Railway, a position he would hold until 1876. Fleming had moved to Ottawa in 1869.

[ex - R. C. Smith collection]







#### CRAIGLEITH ONT / AP 11 / 00

This registered letter to Wm. Rennie Esq., Cor. Adelaide & Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont. took the north train from Craigleith to Meaford where it received a transit strike at the Meaford post office. It then left Meaford on the south train to arrive in Toronto that same evening. Note the "year" is 19 instead of 00 on the RPO date stamps. This cover shows that mail leaving Craigleith was picked up by the northbound train, processed in Meaford, before departing on the southbound train. Meaford was the end of the railway line.



May Ritchie had the honours of being postmistress for those years. She operated the post office out of the same premises that later became the Brad-i-Brin Motel & Restaurant.

As far as is known the Craigleith post office was always classified as a non-accounting office. In the 1936-1937 *Canada Official Postal Guide* we are informed that the office was organized under number 78898.

The 1912 *Report of the Postmaster General* informs us that the total revenue for the year ending March 31, 1912 was just \$61.00. The postmaster received a salary that year of \$39.00. By 1915 that revenue had dropped to \$60.00, but the salary had been raised to the minimum of \$50.00. In 1912 the postmaster was also the contractor retrieving the mail from the station, six times per week, for a total distance of one-half mile, for which he was reimbursed \$48.00 for the year. As a comparison, nearby Camperdown post office had revenue of \$140.79 in 1912.

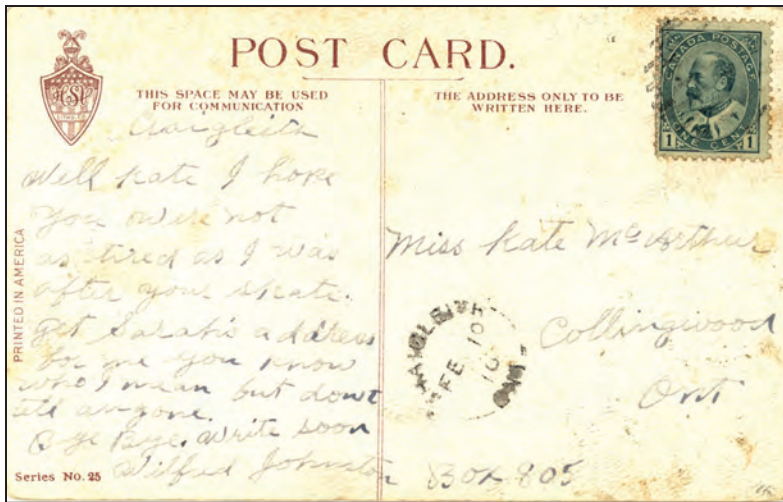
It is known that Craigleith post office utilized three



#### CRAIGLEITH ONT / NO 13 / 09

This German-printed, Stedman Bros. post card showing Collingwood's Public Library was mailed on Saturday, November 13, informing Mrs. R. Leggett of New Lowell (several stops east of Craigleith on the same railway line) of a shipment of apples to arrive that evening on the freight train.

The sender obviously trusted the post office to deliver the card before the arrival of the apples that day.



#### CRAIGLEITH ONT / FE 10 / 10

The message on this card tells it all  
... Romance is in the Air.

Craigleith  
Well Kate I hope you were not  
as tired as I was after your skate.  
Get Sarah's address for me you know  
who I mean but don't tell anyone.  
Bye bye. Write soon  
Wilfred Johnston.

I wonder if she obliged.

#### CRAIGLEITH ONT / JUL 22 / 20

This British-printed, Valentine & Sons post card showing  
Collingwood's Globe Hotel was mailed from Craigleith to Thornbury.  
[J.V 106.654]

The Globe Hotel, later the Mountain View Hotel, had a history of  
being a place of solace for local shipyard workers, even during  
Prohibition. Wives would often call up to find out if their husbands  
were still there after work.

Captain Alexander MacDougall, who owned shares in the shipyard  
in the early 1900s and was the inventor of the whaleback steamers,  
wrote in his diary that he often watched the workers in the "Yard"  
from his hotel room window to see who was slacking  
CREDIT: Collingwood Museum.



There was also a new registration box introduced that  
was proofed in May 1939.) ☒

#### REFERENCES:

- Shannon, Bill, ed., *An Illustrated History of Collingwood Township*. Township of Collingwood, 1979.
- 1912 Report of the Postmaster General.
- 1915 Report of the Postmaster General.
- *Town of The Blue Mountains, Craigleith Heritage Depot*.  
<http://www.thebluemountains.ca/craigleith-depot-history.cfm>

postal dating devices in its 77 years as a full post office. These included a Berri type B2 double broken circle ordered July 6, 1857; a 21-mm type A1 broken circle used between 1874 and 1910; and a 18.5-mm type A1 broken circle that was proofed November 9, 1911. Also known is a registration box proofed in March 1925.

A Berri dater ordered December 22, 1856, inscribed CRAIGLEY U.C., has not been reported used and is questionable.

During the second period of operation, as a summer office, a 23.5-mm cds, proofed June 2, 1939, was used.

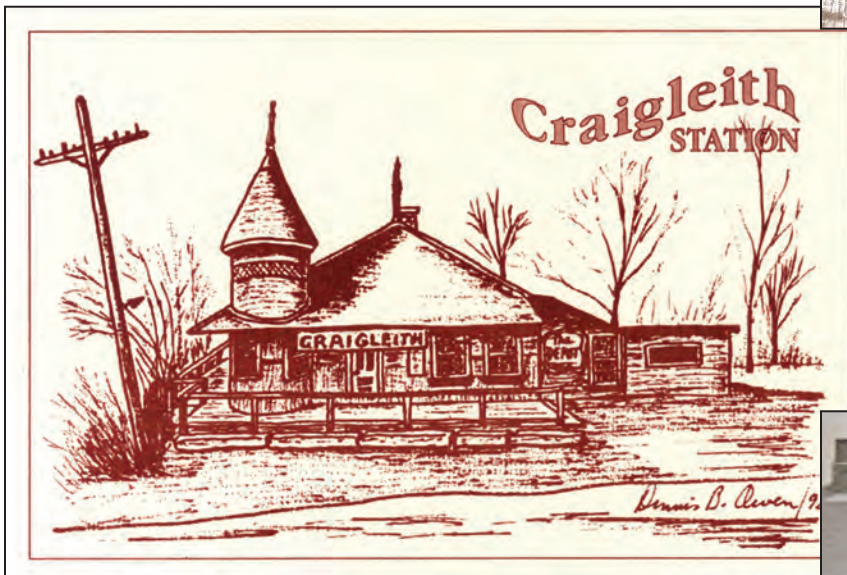




A modern reprint, made into a post card, by an unknown publisher. The station is still painted in the green and white livery of the Grand Trunk Rwy., which was absorbed by the Canadian National Railway in 1923.

The Craigleith Depot is situated on the south-west shore of Nottawasaga Bay (Georgian Bay) surrounded by beautiful and fragrant stands of lilac bushes. The original Depot was constructed in the 1870s on land donated by the great Sir Sanford Fleming. The first railway came through here in 1872. It was the Northern Railway of the Canada North Grey branch. It was eventually taken over by the Grand Trunk Railway. Then in the 1920s, it was absorbed by the Canadian National Railway. Passenger service continued until 1962. The last freight train came through here in the 1980s.

In 2008 the building was carefully reconstructed and has been turned into a museum. The Depot is located a few kilometres from Blue Mountain Ski Resort. In the 1940s, skiers from Toronto would arrive by train. A horse drawn sleigh would be waiting at the Depot to carry them to the slopes.

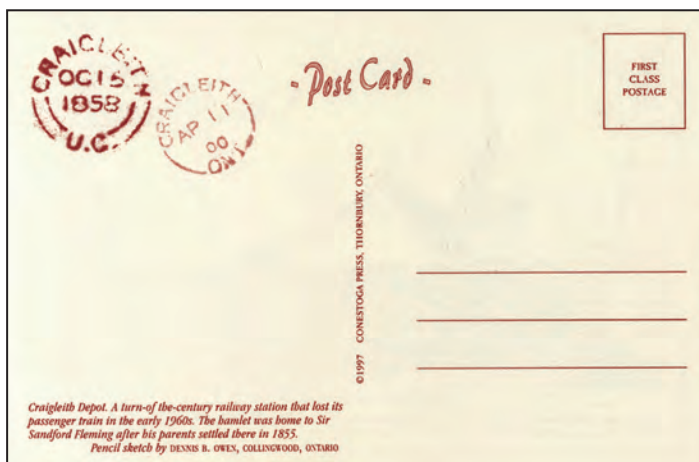


A 1997 post card showing the Craigleith Depot as seen by Collingwood artist Dennis B. Owen.

Issued November 12, 1997, by Conestoga Press, the total printing consisted of 90 post cards.



The afternoon way freight has arrived from Meaford and is stopped at the Craigleith Depot.





A 1997 illustrated pre-stamped envelope showing the Craigleith Depot as seen by Collingwood artist Dennis B. Owen. Issued November 12, 1997, by Conestoga Press, the total printing consisted of 109 envelopes. They were sold at the Clarksburg post office.

## BARRIE / Kozlov Centre RO-A

[REF. 242]

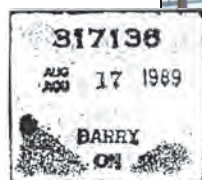
A. Dave Hanes

One of a number of Barrie, Ontario postal outlets dating back to the late 1980s, the Barrie Kozlov Centre RO-A is classified as an urban postal outlet. It was opened July 18, 1989 and operated under RC number 317136 until March 1995. The outlet was located in a small kiosk just inside the north-west door of the Kozlov Mall at 400 Bayfield Street North, Barrie. The first datestamp issued, mis-spelled the city name as BARRY. It was withdrawn and replaced with a corrected version.

In March 1995 the outlet closed and was re-established as #131229 at the Shoppers Drug Mart (#0650) in the Kozlov Mall. It remained at this location until November 26, 2003 at which time Shoppers opened a new store at 524 Bayfield Street North. The franchise continues until the present.



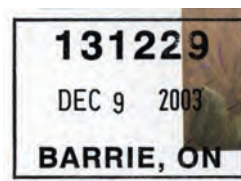
The original franchised kiosk location was renovated and is now used by Advance Tailor & Alterations / Dry Cleaners.



317136 // BARRY / ON  
The first datestamp with mis-spelled city name



A progression of modern datestamps for this Barrie, Ontario franchise.





# ALL SIGNS POINT TO Bruce

## Bruce Township Historical Society

### Unravelling the confusion ...

In Issue 37 of the *Georgian Courier* we ran an article about the early post offices at **Bruce and Malta**.

Unfortunately at that time there was still some confusion about the location of Bruce. Along the shores of Lake Huron we had two settlements, Port Bruce and Malta. A post office was opened at Malta on January 1, 1856 to serve both settlements. It was not the first post office in the township. That honour went to the post office at Sinclair's Corners, which went by the name of **BRUCE**, since it was the first post office in the Township. It was customary at the time to often name the first post office in a township with the name of the township. Mistakenly many placed Bruce (Sinclair's Corners) at the location of Port Bruce rather than on the mail route from Goderich to Southampton. Thanks to the research done by the **Bruce Township Historical Society** we can now correct the matter.

Please also note that there is a Port Bruce in Elgin County. Its post office opened April 1, 1855. – ED.

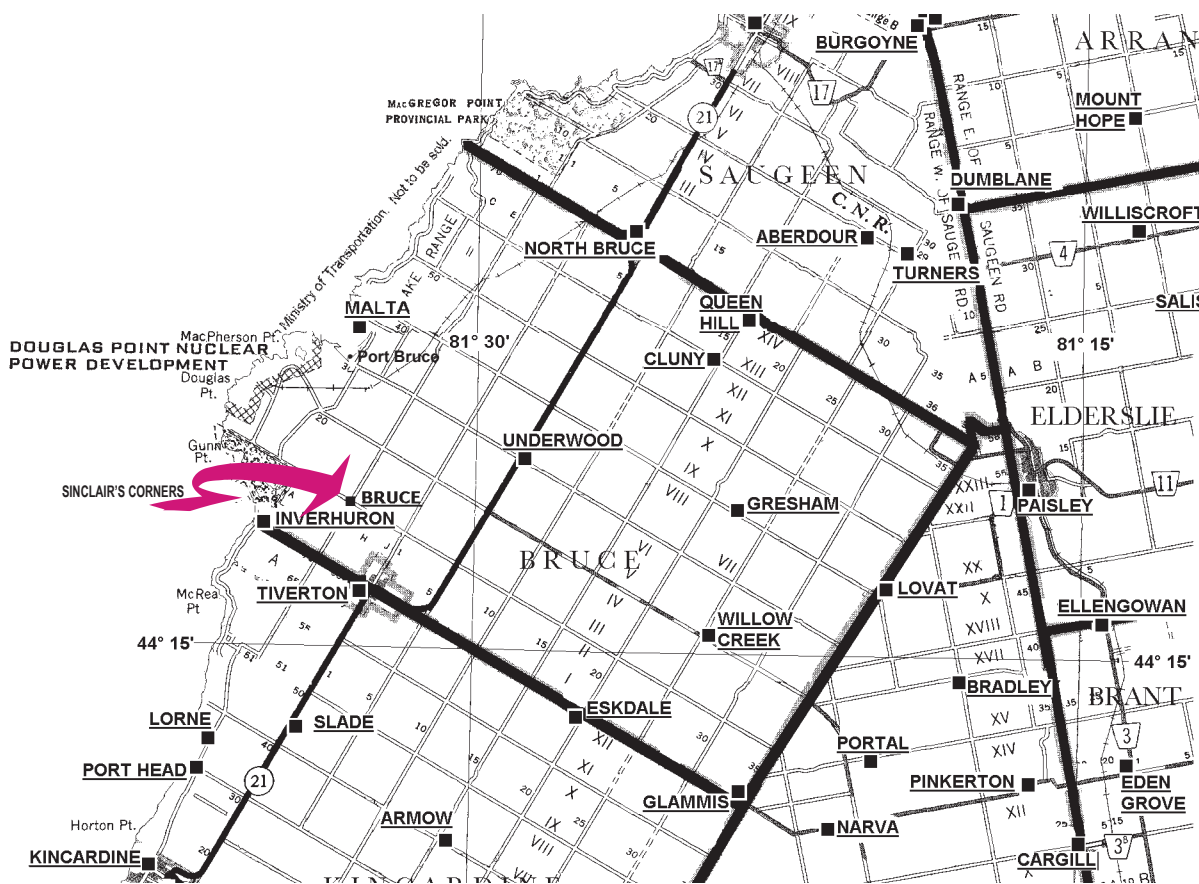
**SINCLAIR'S CORNERS** was the first settlement in the Township of Bruce that was to get a post office, and as so often was the case it would have the same name as the township.

In 1852, Archibald Sinclair sold his farm in Kincardine Township and moved to Lot 1, Concession 2, Bruce Township. This property is at the crossroads of Concession 2 and what was then the main trail to the south. There was a strong creek flowing across the northern portion of the farm. Sinclair built his house near the northwest corner, and erected a sawmill on the creek south of the house. Shortly after, he set up a grist mill, the first in Bruce Township.

The Township's first post office was opened there in 1853. It was located in the Sinclair's home and Archibald's son, Peter, was appointed as the first postmaster.

In 1853, the government engineer David Gibson was letting out contracts for the cutting out of the Saugeen to Goderich Road. Until it reached Concession 2, the road followed Bruce Township's #5 Sideroad.

Because of the location of the mills, and also no doubt, his friendship with Sinclair, the engineer allowed the new road to jog west at Concession 2 for a mile and a quarter, then south to Kincardine Township boundary. This brought all the north-south traffic through the Sinclair's Corners settlement.

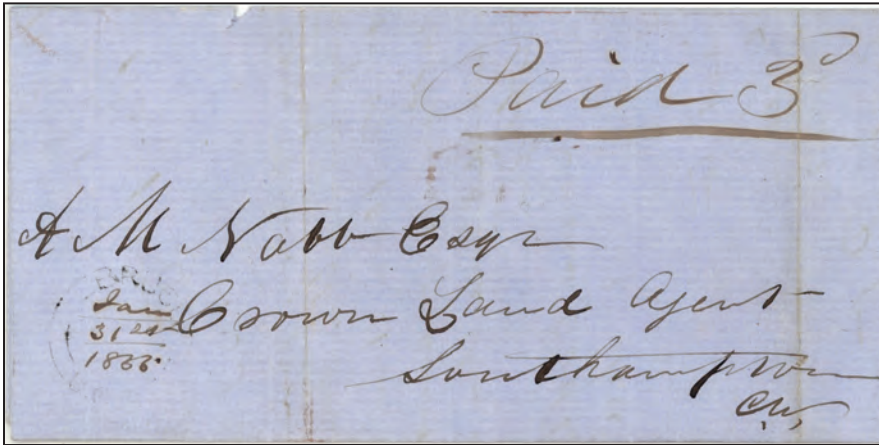


By 1857 the little community had a Presbyterian Church, a school, two small stores, run by Granny Cameron and Alex McIntosh. Granny Cameron was also a midwife, as was Granny MacIntosh.

Besides the mills, Sinclair's Corners also boasted a pearl and potashery, housed in a two-storey building. This provided a market for the huge mounds of ashes in the pioneers' clearings. David MacBane was the best remembered owner; he lost his life by accidentally falling into a vat of boiling ash.

The little settlement was prospering. Then in 1857 an enterprising Kincardine businessman, Norman McInnes, opened a general store on the boundary, one-and-a-quarter miles south. In 1860, the Presbyterian congregation had outgrown their log building, and built a new church near the McInnes store. Post office operations were transferred to the McInnes establishment, under the new name Tiverton.

From that point, trade increasingly went to Tiverton and Sinclair's Corners declined.



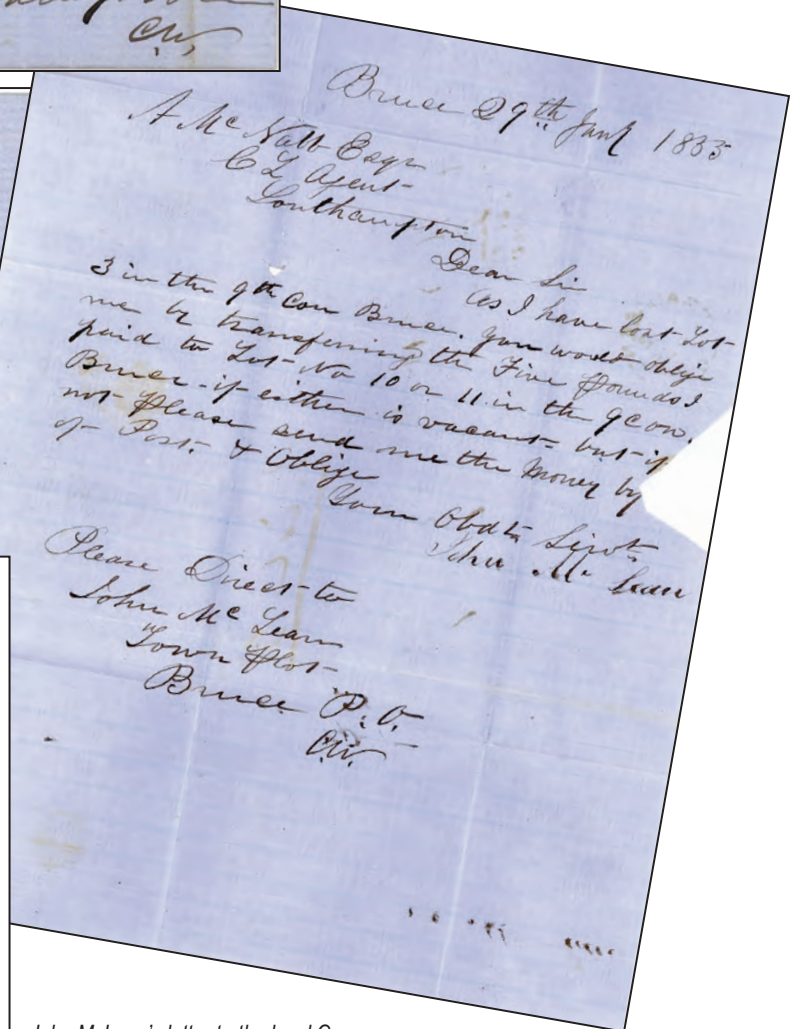
**BRUCE / U.C / Jan / 31st / 1855**

A folded letter addressed to A. M. Nabb, Esq., Crown Land Agent, Southampton, C.W.

As indicated by the letter, it was mailed by John McLean. Receiver strike indicates that it was received at

**SAUGREEN / U.C / FE 2 / 1855.**

Postage of 3d was paid by sender.



Bruce 29th Jan 1855

A. McNabb Esq.  
C.L. Agent  
Southampton

Dear Sir

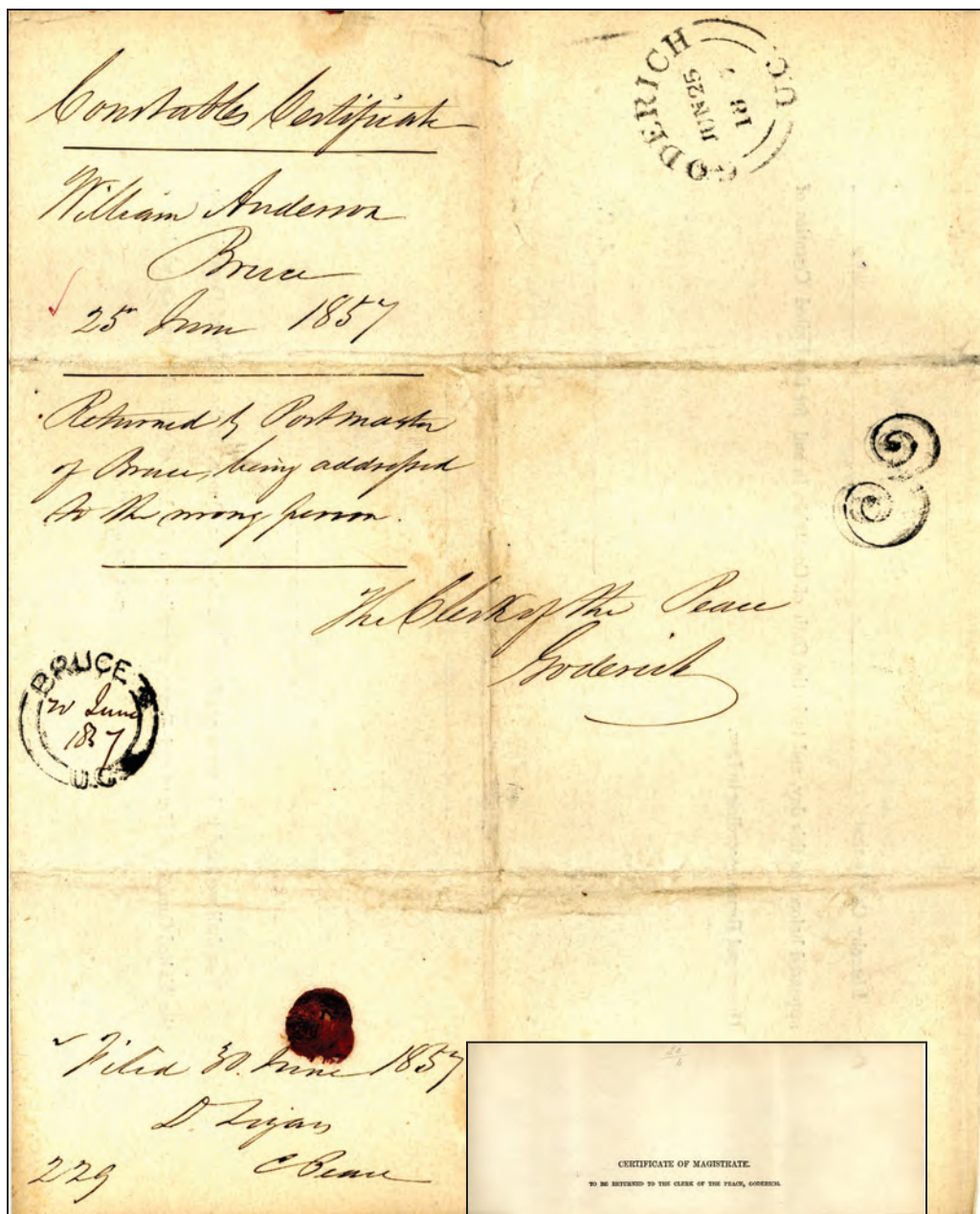
As I have lost Lot 3 in the 9th Con. Bruce. You would oblige me by transferring the Five Pounds paid to Lot No. 10 or 11 in the 9 Con Bruce - if either is vacant, but if not please send me the money by (?) Post & oblige.

Your Obedient Servt.  
John McLean

Please direct to  
John McLean  
Town Plot  
Bruce P.O.  
C.W.

John McLean's letter to the local Crown Lands Agent, A. M. Nabb requesting his help in settling a land ownership conflict. What was the outcome of this matter. Did John McLean ever get title to his lot?





# **BRUCE / U.C / 20 June / 1857**

This Constable's Certificate was originally addressed to one Wm Anderson, Bruce. It is being returned to The Clerk of the Peace at Goderich where it was received June 25 / 1857.

A handwritten message by the Postmaster at Bruce states "that there not being a Wm Anderson in Bruce I sent it to one Alex Anderson, who returned it."

A further endorsement notes that it was "Returned by Postmaster at Bruce being addressed to the wrong person."

Postage rate was 3d.

## **BRUCE TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Annual Meeting  
June 1, 2012 – 5:30 p.m.**

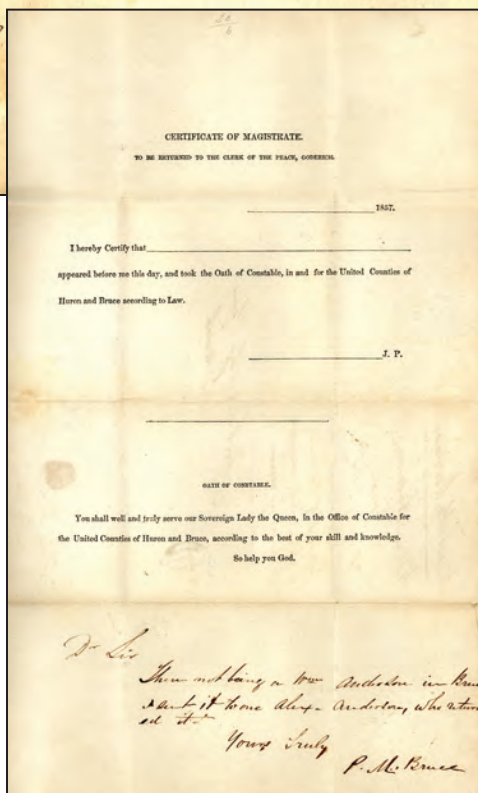
### **THEME**

### **Post Offices in our Past**

This year, our annual meeting theme is "Post Offices in Our Past." Long ago, we had 13 post offices scattered throughout our township, but today only Tiverton remains.

Tickets will be available on May 1st from your directors, or if you have difficulty contacting one, from Herb Henkenhaf (519-368-7458, [henkenhaf@bmts.com](mailto:henkenhaf@bmts.com)).

Closing day for ticket sales is May 22.



With many thanks to the Bruce Township Historical Society for allowing us to reprint the account of Sinclair's Corners as found on page 138, Bruce Township: Tales and Trails.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Bruce Township: Tales and Trails. Bruce Township Historical Society, 1984.
- Bruce Township Historical Society website <http://www.bruce township.ca/tt.htm>

# The Settlement at KEY JUNCTION

## *Parry Sound District*

[REF. 244]

Gus Knierim

**K**ey Junction and Key Harbour may have never evolved where it not for a mine far way. That mine was the Moose Mountain mine at Sellwood, some 15 km northwest of Capreol. The mine was developed in the early 1900s and the challenge was to get the ore out to the smelters. William Mackenzie and Donald Mann who controlled the Canadian Northern Railway were looking for just such a challenge to bring freight to their railway. They invested in the Sellwood mine, achieving a controlling interest by 1905. The mine was a short distance west of the Canadian Northern railway line from Sudbury to Foleyet. They were also deeply involved in bringing the James Bay Railway from Parry Sound to Sudbury. In 1907 the railway's name was changed to Canadian Northern Railway. This line to Sudbury was completed in 1908.

To complete the picture the railway required a deep water port to ship the iron ore from Sellwood. The ideal location was found to be the mouth of Key Inlet and thus Key Harbour came into existence. By 1908 harbour and trans-shipping facilities were completed. To connect Key Harbour to the main line required a 7-mile branch line which connected to the main at Key Junction.

Both locations attracted workers and their families

and soon small villages sprung up around both points.

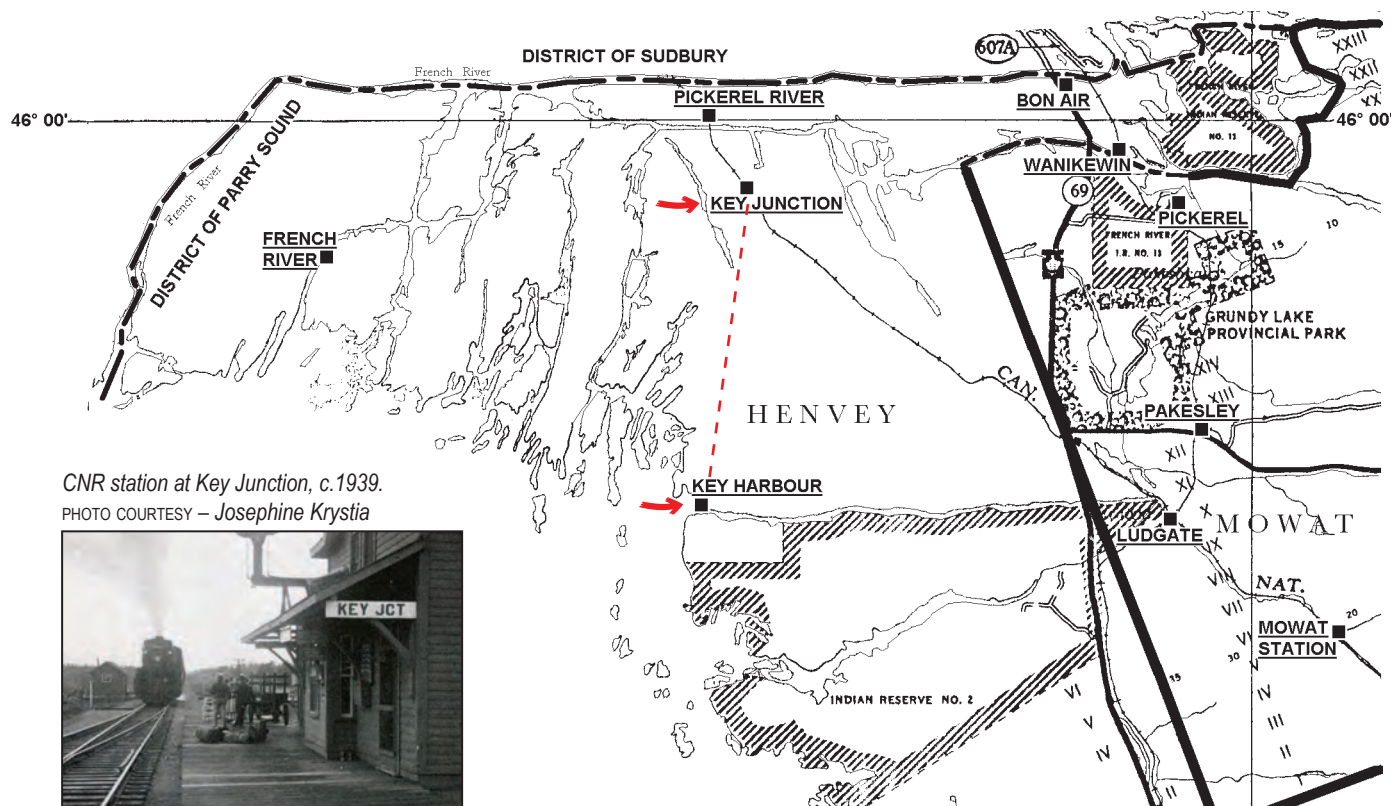
The economics of mining and processing ore did not favour Mackenzie and Mann's operation resulting in poor returns on their investments. Their problems were exasperated by World War I. First shipments from Key Harbour were made in 1909; the final ore shipment was in 1916.

A new lease on life came in 1928 when coal was being shipped into Key Harbour and moved out with what was now the Canadian National Railway. The coal dock was shut down in 1938 and the branch line was abandoned in 1950. By 1960 all rails had been lifted and Key Harbour and Key Junction became changed communities.

Aside from the industrial activity at Key Harbour, Key Inlet, was a great attraction for the cottagers and for sports people. Many of the remaining locals turned to serve the incoming tourists many of whom originated from Pennsylvania and Ohio. This can be determined from some of the post cards that were mailed.

The post office often mirrors the health of the community and this is certainly the case for Key Harbour and Key Junction.

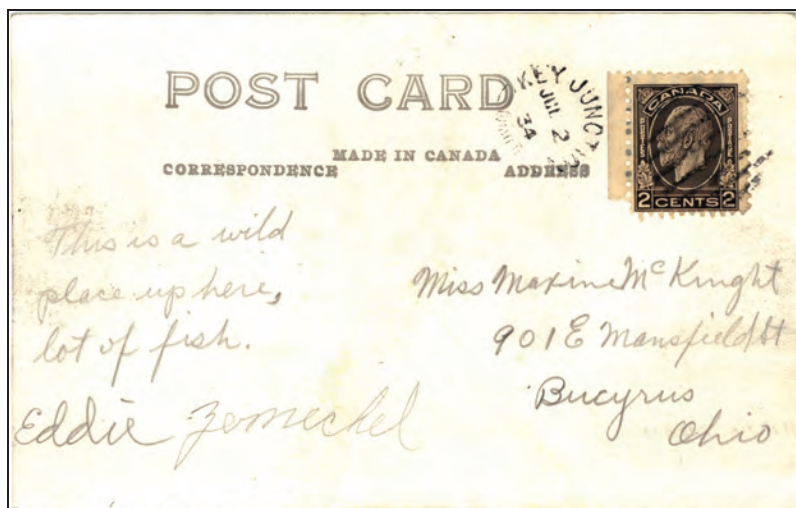
A community grew up quite early around Key Junction and a post office was opened March 1, 1915. Little is known about the early postmasters at Key Junction other than their names. H. J. Craig was appointed as the first postmaster serving until Oct. 30, 1916. It should be noted that at this time most of the workers at Key Harbour lodged in railway cars or bunkhouses. Those that had families resided at Key Junction where they were they did not feel the isolation as much and where they were connected to the outside world by daily Canadian Northern trains.



CNR station at Key Junction, c. 1939.

PHOTO COURTESY – Josephine Krystia





PROOF STRIKE  
Type A1 Broken Circle  
19-mm (arcs 4.5)  
Reported used 1915-1934

#### KEY JUNCTION / ONT. / JUL 2 / 34

A photo post card depicting rapids on the nearby Wahnapiatae River, send to Miss Maxine McKnight, Bucyrus, Ohio. Many of the early vacationers to this area of Ontario came from the United States to enjoy our wilderness. The post card is post-marked with the latest reported strike for Key Junction.



F. J. McCarroll succeeded Postmaster Craig, being appointed on April 21, 1917. He resigned from the position August 27, 1923. It also appears that he was the station agent for the Canadian Government Railway (CNR). Between 1916 and 1929, the year that the iron ore shipments stopped and the coal imports began, many of the local folks turned to commercial fishing and trapping resulting in some trade with the outside. Russell Green was the next in line to serve the post office. He was appointed November 28, 1923 and served until December 15, 1925. He was followed by Mrs. Sarah Larocque, who held the post from March 1, 1926 until June 2, 1930. She married Arthur Gropp who operated a jitney service between Key Harbour and Key Junction. After their marriage they moved to the Moon River area south of Parry Sound where Arthur owned and operated a sawmill.

Lastly we had Josephine Rusin as postmistress beginning her service November 26, 1930. In 1931 she married John Krystia who had emigrated from the Ukraine in 1926 to work on the CNR. He had been transferred from the Capreol to Key Junction in 1930 where he met Josephine. As was the custom at the time in the Post Office Department, a female postmistress, when marrying had to resign her position. This was the case with Josephine who resigned November 27, 1931. However, on February 26, 1932, Josephine – now Mrs. Josephine Krystia – was reappointed as postmistress and served in that position until (Aug. 18, 1947) shortly before the closure of the post office on November 29, 1947.

John and Josephine Krystia operated a small store alongside of her duties as postmistress. Her salary was \$10.00 per month plus an additional \$5.00 a month for taking the mail from the post office to the nearby railway station. That may not sound so bad but she had to be present when the train arrived which was often 5-7 hours late during the winter months. If she missed the train than she forfeited the monthly \$5.00 stipend.

In 1948, because of a decline in population, the school closed. At that time Krystia decided to close the store

and the Post Office Department saw no reason to seek a replacement. Thereafter mail service was transferred to nearby Pickerel River post office which was just 1½ miles north of Key Junction.

In the 32 years that the Key Junction post office was

Mrs. Josephine Krystia  
(nee Rustin), postmistress,  
1930-1947, Key Junction.



Krystia's  
store and post office  
at Key Junction.





Art Gropp was the originator of the "Jitney" service linking Key Harbour to Key Junction providing a local service with permission from the railroad.

A load of gas drums and fish leaving Key Harbour.

PHOTO COURTESY – Agnes Trott.



A load of iced fish on way to Key Junction. COURTESY – A. Gropp

operating, a single broken circle cancelling device was used. It has been reported in use from 1915 until 1934 although there should be reports later than the 1934.

#### REFERENCES

- William A. Campbell, *Northeastern Georgian bay and its People*, 1984.
- <http://www.ontarioabandonedplaces.com/keyjunction/keyjunction.asp>
- <http://www.ghosttownpix.com/ontario/towns/keyjct.html>

## POSTAL HISTORY

Ontario Counties & Canada available online at

**[www.donslau.com](http://www.donslau.com)**

thousands of covers scanned – have a look!

Parry Sound District webpage shows 100+ covers

**Don Slaughter**, Box 8002, RPO Sherwood Forest  
London, ON N6G 4X1

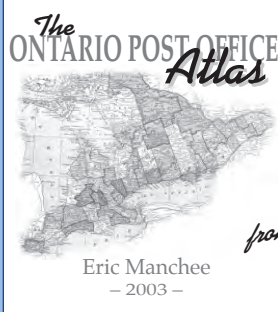
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### Back Issues, Binders, and Bound Volumes

Periodically there is an interest in back issues. We should point out that all issues are available at \$2.50 each. We also have available white D-ring display binders with appropriate inserts for the front cover and the spine, title pages, and index separators for each volume. Binder 1 will hold all issues from 1-34 inclusive (Vol. 1-6); Binder 2 will hold issues starting at 35 with room to expand for the coming years. The binders, including inserts, index separators with tabs, cost \$6.00 each plus shipping.

Presently a complete set of back issues (1-44) with binders costs \$85.00, shipping included. Available from the editor (see address below).

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The *Georgian Courier* and its predecessor, the *G.B.D. & S. Newsletter*, are 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.

Membership costs \$15 per year (4 issues). An electronic e-mailed pdf version (no printed copy) is available for \$6.00 per 4 issues. Cheques should be made payable to the editor J. (Gus) Knierim. We can also accept PayPal using the email address. Please add \$1.00 to defray PayPal charges. Thank you!

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