

The Georgian Courier

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

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[REF. 265]

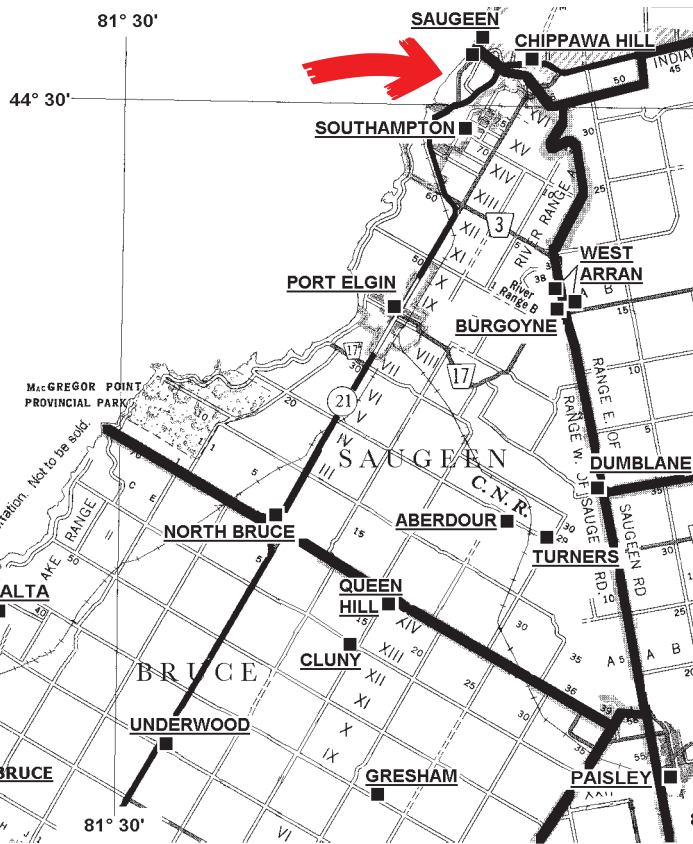
The Town of SAUGEEN SHORES

On the Lake Huron Shoreline


The Late James E. Kraemer, FRPSC, FRPSL

Before the January 1, 1999, amalgamation and re-organization of Bruce County into eight municipalities, the county had 16 townships. Saugeen Township was the smallest township in the County. The Township of Saugeen and the towns of Port Elgin and Southampton were amalgamated on the above date becoming The Town of Saugeen Shores.

Saugeen Township at the time of amalgamation had 41,242 acres. According to a 2004 report by the Ministry



GODERICH AND SOUTHAMPTON LINE.

1867  1867

Shortest, Cheapest & Most Direct Route.

THE NEW AND ELEGANT SIDE-WHEEL LOW PRESSURE STEAMBOAT

SILVER SPRAY;

CAPT. D. ROWAN,

Will Ply, in connection with the Grand Trunk Railway, between

GODERICH AND SOUTHAMPTON,

TOUCHING AT KINGARDINE, INVERHURON AND PORT ELGIN, EACH WAY,

DAILY.

Agents for the transaction of FREIGHT BUSINESS AT THE PORTS MENTIONED.

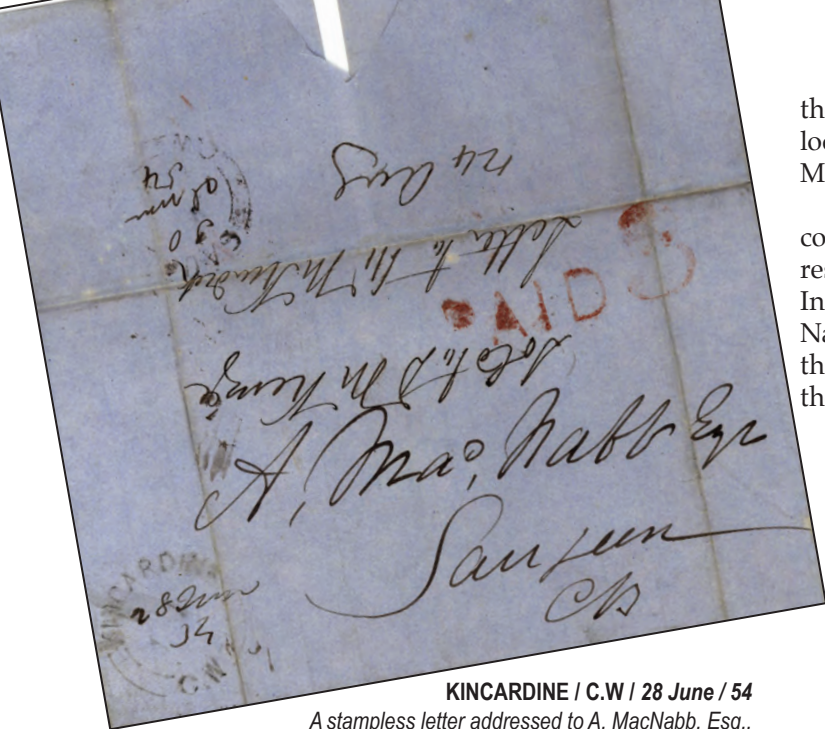
Tickets for Sale on the Boat for all Points in the Province and the United States.

JOHN V. DETLOR & SON,
GODERICH.

Promotional ad for the Goderich & Southampton Line as published in the 1867 County of Bruce Directory.

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KINCARDINE / C.W / 28 June / 54

A stampless letter addressed to A. MacNabb, Esq., Saugeen, C.W. It arrived two days later on June 30, 1854. At the time of this letter the piece would have been carried by on foot by John Urquhart from Kincardine to Saugeen. The Kincardine B2x postmark has been reported used from 1852 until 1854. The Saugeen B2x saw usage between 1852 and 1861.

COVER COURTESY OF J. Knierim

the Hudson's Bay Company's district headquarters, located on the north shore of Georgian Bay near where Massey is located today.

The early settlers envisaged Saugeen Village as becoming an important port on Lake Huron. But its progress and development were impeded by a lack of roads. In 1849 there were no roads in Saugeen Township, only Native trails through the forest. The greatest obstacle that prevented access to Saugeen Village by road was the Saugeen River. The river meanders through the township in a north-westerly direction emptying into Lake Huron at Saugeen Village.

Saugeen Township was very rich in furs and as a result attracted fur traders in the early 1800s. Pierre Piche came to Saugeen in 1818 and established a fur trading post. Historians believe that the Jesuit fathers were here much earlier and established the Mission of St. Peter and St. Paul near the mouth of the Saugeen River in the 1600s.

KINCARDINE / U.C / MY 7 . 1856

A registered stampless letter addressed to Alex McNabb, Esq., Crown Land Agent, Southampton Saugeen, arrived May 8, 1856 at Saugeen. The local citizens saw their community as Southampton and it was incorporated as such in 1858, but it took the Post Office Department until 1890 to take the hint. It should be noted that the B2x postmark for both post offices had now been upgraded to a B2 with proper type dates.

COVER COURTESY OF J. Knierim

of Municipal Affairs, the new town had a population of 11,596 made up as follows: Saugeen Township 1,759, Southampton 3,065, and Port Elgin 6,772. By comparison the Canada Census of 1911 showed population as Southampton 1,685 and Port Elgin 1,235.

Ontario Hydro's largest nuclear power station was built at Douglas Point, seven miles south of Port Elgin in Bruce Township during the 1960s. As a result an influx of engineers, scientists, builders and staff swelled the population of the surrounding area. In 2007 more than 6,000 workers are employed by the nuclear station.

The name *Saugeen* goes back to the time when First Nations occupied the area. The Hudson's Bay Company opened a trading post at the mouth of the Saugeen River at Saguingue in 1827. The word *Saugeen* has evolved from the native word "Saguingue" meaning "mouth of a river". The post's master (referring to the master of the trading post) was Alexander William McKay, a fur trader, militia officer and government official representing Indian Affairs. Mr. McKay was one of the voyageurs who in 1828 moved with the British military establishment from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene. Drummond Island had been ceded to the U.S.A. by the British authorities thereby forcing the garrison to move.

Mansfield Wallace was appointed the second Master of the Hudson's Bay Company trading post in 1830. He served in this position until the Post was closed on October 20, 1832. Mail, furs and other goods were exchanged with LaCloche,



Early settlers began arriving in Saugeen in the 1840s. In 1849 it was still impossible to use wagons – only Native trails existed and they were merely footpaths. There were few options to get to Saugeen Village. Some settlers came by steamboat to Hamilton, Ontario. They would then go by stage to London and then on to Goderich. They would rest a bit and then take a boat to Saugeen Village. It was a ten-day voyage from Hamilton. After their arrival they would build a scow or a raft and go up the Saugeen River. One man would pull the raft against the current using a rope while another man would use a long pole to push and keep the raft in mid stream. Another way to reach Saugeen Village was to go from Toronto the Lake Couchiching and the Severn River to Georgian Bay, then by boat to Owen Sound – they would then go on foot via Native trails to Saugeen Village.

In 1849 sail boats began to operate between Goderich and Saugeen Village on a regular schedule. Many delays were experienced in building roads to Saugeen Village due to swamps, rock formations, but most of all the need for crossing the river. Before 1850 Saugeen Township was a wilderness with great hardwood forests.

The first mail courier, John Beck, carried the mail by horseback between Owen Sound and Saugeen Village using existing Native trails. His four-year contract called for one trip per week starting July 6, 1851, the day that the Saugeen post office was established. For the first nine months he received payment at the rate of £30 and 8 shillings per annum. On March 31, 1853, the mail route was extended from 27 to 32 miles and new tenders were called. Three tenders were received. W. A. Corbett of Owen Sound received the new contract calling for two trips per week starting on March 31, 1854. Records indicate that during this period Saugeen Township paid mail ferrying charges.

A contract to clear the native trail through the bush to Owen Sound in preparation for building a road was awarded to Mr. Gimby in 1855. In time the road became

THOMAS LEE,
POSTMASTER,
 SAUGEEN,
FORWARDER AND COMMISSION MERCHANT,
 ISSUER OF MARRIAGE LICENCES,
AGENT FOR WESTERN ASSURANCE COMPANY,
AND NIAGARA DISTRICT MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

Postmaster Thomas Lee was Saugeen's second postmaster, following Robert Reid (1851-1857). Thomas Lee was appointed to the position on July 1, 1857, and served until his death February 20, 1901.



SAUGEEN / U.C / FE 16/ 1863
A printed circular, mailed at the 1¢ rate, addressed to the Secretary of St. John's Free Masons Lodge at Cayuga, where it was received on February 19, 1863.

known unofficially as the “Gimby Trail”. Starting in the Saugeen Native village, the road went east entering Amabel Township at the “S” line and then bending southeast, just west of Elsinore. The road then went south to Allandale crossing the Sauble River, and went on to Burgoyne and Invermay. The road then went through Derby Township, Grey County, in a zig-zag fashion to Owen Sound. Road clearing contracts usually required that the road be chopped to a width of 66 feet. A road 45 feet wide was then built down the middle.

Saugeen was surveyed in 1851 by A. Vidal, P.L.S. Some years later Mr. Vidal was appointed as a senator. The first settlers in Saugeen Township were Captain John Spence from the Orkney Islands and Captain William Kennedy who was Canadian born. They found their way into the township via the Saugeen River in 1848.

Saugeen Township was organized in 1854 with Alexander McNabb appointed as the first reeve. The first white child, a son, was born in 1850 to Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Wallace.

The volume of mail increased rapidly making it necessary to increase the number of trips per week between

HELP NEEDED!

We need your contribution – large or small ... photo, scan, anecdote, or article – to keep this Study Group and its newsletter going! Please share with your fellow members. **Thank you!**

Owen Sound and Saugeen to three trips beginning March 31, 1855. William Wilson of Saugeen was the lowest of the eight tenders received, but his sureties were not willing to be responsible for the required bond. As a result James Angus of Owen Sound was awarded a four-year contract.

New tenders were called in 1859. Thomas May of Owen Sound won the contract calling for three trips per week beginning April 1, 1859, at the rate of \$479.00 per annum. Leaving Owen Sound on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, he would leave Saugeen on his return trip on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Two earlier couriers on the route were Joseph Gilbert and J. Hibbert.

The Owen Sound post road known as the "The North Gravel Road" was cleared of trees in 1865. It was the same year that Denny's bridge was built across the Saugeen River.

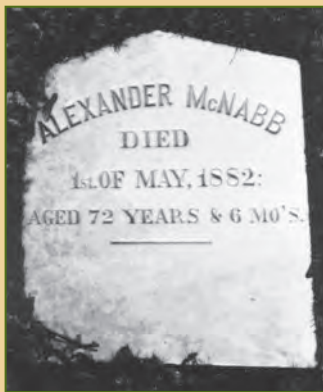
The Saugeen-Kincardine Post Road

There was no wagon road between Saugeen and Kincardine during the early 1850s. John Urquhart, the mail courier carried the mail on foot, making a trip every week. In 1854 he started calling in at Normanton, now Port Elgin, when the first store opened. In addition to the store there were only three houses in Normanton. By 1856 the courier was able to carry the mail on horseback traveling through the dense forest using Native pathways.

As the roads improved the Post Office Department called for tenders in 1865. The Saugeen-Kincardine couriers route was listed as being 28 miles in length. John McMillan of Southampton was successful with his tender. The contract was for three trips per week beginning July 1, 1865 with payment at the rate of \$439.00 per

ALEXANDER McNABB

1810-1882



Buried in family plot overlooking the river in Southampton, Ontario. Cemetery later moved.

The late Crown Lands Agent for the County of Bruce, Mr. Alexander McNabb, died at Southampton on the 4th instant, after a severe illness of some months, during which time he experienced painful bodily suffering to such an extent that his death was a relief to himself and those around him. Mr. McNabb was born at the village of the Cedars, below Coteau de Lac, on the St. Lawrence, in 1809, so that he died in his 73rd year. His parents were natives of Perthshire, Scotland. When quite young, he was employed in the Ordinance (sic) office at Bytown, now Ottawa, under Col. By, during the construction of the Rideau Canal. After this, he received the appointment of teller in the old Commercial Bank at Kingston, which he left to engage in business. In 1841, he entered the Crown Lands Department where he remained for ten years, when, in 1851, he was selected by the late Mr. Price, then Crown Lands Commissioner, to take charge of the settlement of the County of Bruce, then just acquired from the Saugeen Indians. The early settlers of Bruce can bear testimony to

Mr. McNabb's diligence, industry and solicitude in the discharge of the duties devolving upon him as Crown Land Agent. Often and often has he transacted business with the pioneers of the county at midnight, so as to let them away at daybreak, a matter of great importance in those days when there were no places of refreshment in the county, and when all journeys to Southampton were performed on foot. Notwithstanding many disputes in regard to claims in which Mr. McNabb had to decide judicially, his management was most successful and met the approbation of the Department and the settlers. No other county in Canada has ever been settled so rapidly and so successfully. Mr. McNabb was always alive to the development of the material interests of the County of Bruce and the country generally, and at a very early period interested himself in endeavoring to procure railway accommodation in the county. Mr. McNabb's sympathies were always with the suffering sons of toil. He strongly advocated immigration from the mother country, and in 1842, he, with Mr. Gunn of Walkerton, was one of a company in Kingston who published a Gaelic paper "Cuairt ar non Coille." (The Tourists of the Woods) for the express purpose of promoting immigration from the Highlands of Scotland to Canada, in which cause the little paper did good service. Although emphatically a man of peace, Mr. McNabb had much military ardour in him, and held commissions as ensign and captain in the militia service. He was always much interested in every measure tending to the development of our military services and defence of the country. He was brought up in the Church of Scotland, but came out with the Free Church Party at the Disunion in 1842, and was an active member of that body. He was a staunch teetotaler (sic) nearly all his life time, a kind husband and father, a good neighbour, and highly esteemed by all all who knew him. He leaves a widow, two sons and three daughters to mourn his loss.

COURTESY OF Tara Leader, May 18, 1882

This obituary for Alexander McNabb appeared in the Tara Leader, in 1882. It is included here to show our readers who this gentleman was, who was the recipient of so much of the early surviving mail from the area of our region.

REF. 2661

annum. Mr. McMillan's contract was amended and renegotiated, increasing mail service to six trips per week and terminating on December 21, 1869. Messrs J. Gentils and A.M. Polley, attorneys, were awarded the new contract beginning January 1, 1879.

The Saugeen-Elora Road

Work on the Saugeen-Elora Road encountered many difficulties due to swamps and meandering Native trails. As a result of these delays work was increased in 1852 in order to hasten the road's completion. The road was opened to travel in 1853 but was not declared completed until January 1855.

Twelve tenders were received for a four-year contract to transport the mail between Saugeen and Elora. Rated at 84 miles, the contract was for two trips per week beginning September 30, 1860. The tender by Thomas May of Owen Sound was accepted.

The Saugeen-Walkerton Road

A four-year contract to transport mail between Saugeen and Walkerton, rated at 32 miles, was advertised in 1857. Mr. W. Wilson of Saugeen was successful with his tender of £65-0-0 for one weekly trip starting January 1, 1859. The contract was amended the following year (1860) to two trips per week. A new contract was awarded to Joseph Gilbert and J. Hilbert at \$300.00 per annum. When the contract expired new tenders were called in June 1864 specifying three trips per week. The new contract was awarded to W. Gilbert at \$400.00 per annum.



This lengthy treatise on the postal history of Saugeen, Southampton, and Saugeen Shores, will be continued in the next issue of the Georgian Courier.

[REF. 267]

Simcoe County's Post Office at **LAFONTAINE** Tiny Township

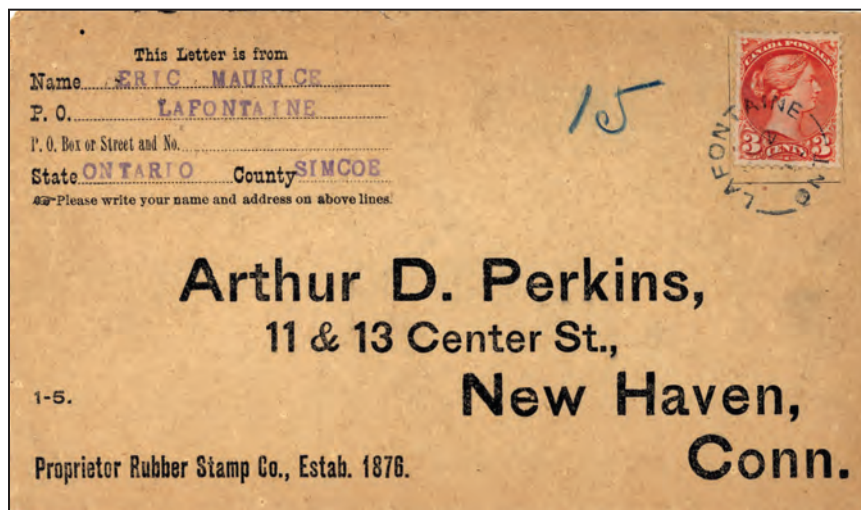
Dave Hanes, Gus Knierim

Lafontaine was originally called Sainte-Croix (French for "Holy Cross"). It was renamed Lafontaine to honour the politician Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, one of the early Joint Premiers of the Province of Canada.

The settlement came about when the British ceded the Drummond Island to the Americans, and moved a contingent of French-Canadians from the island to the vicinity of Penetanguishene in 1828. Each of these settlers were granted a small plot of land near Penetanguishene. Later



1921 Postal Route map for Tiny Township, Simcoe County.



LAFONTAINE ONT / JU 20 / 95

Letter to an American, specializing in rubber stamps, and posted by Eric Maurice of Lafontaine.

on some of them took up larger farms in Concessions 15 and 16 of Tiny Township. That area was the beginning of the Lafontaine settlement.

In time the need of a post office arose and the local citizens were able to convince the Post Office Department to grant them a post office which opened February 1, 1856. It was a small non-accounting office that did a minimum amount of business. In 1860 C. Moreau was contracted



LAFONTAINE ONT / AP 15 / 96

Wm. Rennie and his seed company attracted customers from a large area of Ontario.



Rural mail delivery service was introduced in 1931 and thereafter Lafontaine was served by RR#3 out of Penetanguishene. The post office was closed April 30, 1931.

In 2001 a new chapter was written for the Lafontaine post office when Canada Post established a "Call For" parcel pickup at Nolet's Variety Store, 347 Lafontaine Road West [see *Georgian Courier* N°36, p. 367]. Its RC number was 100077.

On November 26, 2007 Canada Post upgraded the franchise to a full type 44 rural franchise (#102824). The franchisee was the Brunelle Hardware store located at 520 Cedar Point Road, Lafontaine. Two types of postmarks have seen used. Initially the rectangular Brunelle Hardware marking which was replaced by the circular POCON postmark. The latter mark was in use until the change of franchisee.

This situation remained in effect until May 24, 2011 when the store changed ownership and was thereafter operated as Marc's Hardware with the RC number 104065. At time of writing the franchise is still in operation. Its address is now part of the Town Of Penetanguishene and as such has changed its postal code to L9M 1R0. ☒

to carry the mail once a week from Penetanguishene to Lafontaine for which he was remunerated \$40.00 per annum. The 1860 *Report of the Postmaster General* states that Postmaster Toussaint H. Moreau received a commission of \$2.60 for his duties as postmaster. He also received a \$2.00 stationery allowance. However, business did improve, and in 1887 Lafontaine paid its postmaster \$40.00 per annum on revenue of \$122.47.

On November 1, 1911, the post office was upgraded to full accounting status which allowed it to sell and redeem money orders.

The 1912 *R.P.M.G.* states that this post office declared revenue of \$293.85. They sold 91 money orders valued at \$1,750.41 and redeemed 5 money orders valued at \$27.27. The postmaster at the time received a salary of \$130.00 and was also paid a rent, fuel and light allowance of \$13.00.

The mail was still routed via Penetanguishene and F. Longpre, a former postmaster, was contracted to carry the mail 6 times per week on the 8-mile route. He was paid \$450.00 per annum for his service.

It appears that it was difficult to staff the Lafontaine post office possibly due to the low salaries offered and more lucrative work being available elsewhere. The accompanying list of postmasters shows that 15 persons served at one time or another.



The Brunelle Hardware Store, now Marc's Hardware, is the host business for the current franchise.



104065 / LAFONTAINE
 This rectangular datestamp is the postmark in use at time of writing. The number 104065 is assigned to the Marc's Hardware postal franchise.

POSTMASTERS AT LAFONTAINE POST OFFICE

Toussaint H. Moreau	Feb. 1, 1856 until Nov. 4, 1862 [R]
M.A. Pilon	May 1, 1863 until Jan. 5, 1865 [R]
H. Marchildon	April 1, 1865 until Nov. 27, 1867 [R]
Pierre Francois Moreau	Mar. 1, 1868 until Mar. 23, 1870 [R]
Charles Picotte	July 1, 1870 until Mar. 16, 1874 [R]
Joseph Marchildon	Jan. 1, 1875 until Mar. 5, 1878 [R]
Mrs. Gilbert Tessier	April 1, 1878 until June 15, 1878 [R]
Joseph Marchildon	Oct. 1, 1878 until Sep. 28, 1880 [R]
Charles Lafreniere	Jan. 1, 1881 until Nov. 30, 1881 [R]
Frank Longpre	June 1, 1885 until April 14, 1886 [R]
Miss Marjorie Beaudoin	July 1, 1886 until May 2, 1917 [R]
Mrs. Alice Toutant	May 9, 1917 until Oct. 14, 1921 [R]
P.G. McNamara	June 8, 1922 until July 12, 1926 [R]
Philius Toutant	Aug. 5, 1926 until Aug. 15, 1930 [R]
Mrs. Alice Desroches	Sep. 25, 1930 [ACTING]

Closed April 30, 1931 and replaced with R.M.D. service: RR3 Penetanguishene

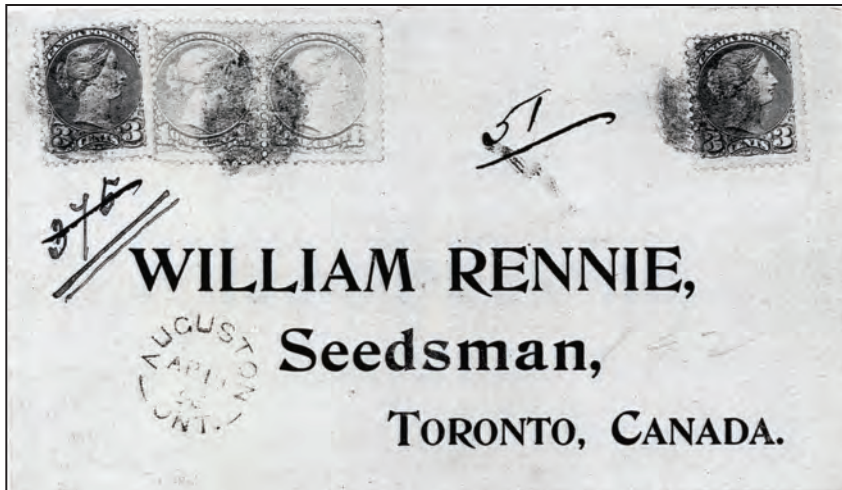
[R] = RESIGNATION



Lafontaine, Ontario

REFERENCE:

Andrew F. Hunter, *The History of Simcoe County*. The Historical Committee of Simcoe County, 1948.



[REF. 268]

AUGUSTON ONT. / AU 14 / 96

Registered letter to Seedsman William Rennie was postmarked with Auguston's 21-mm type A1 broken circle (arcs 5.0 and 3.0 mm).

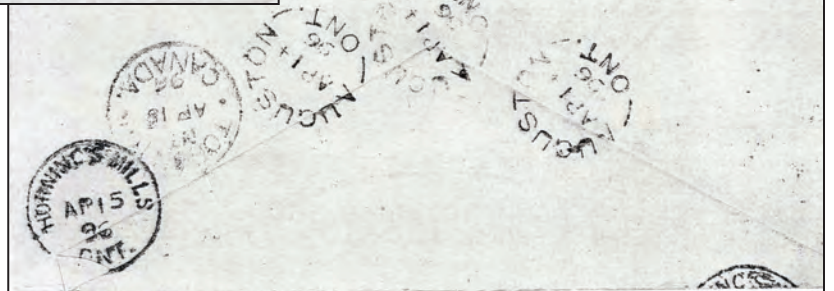
COVER COURTESY OF Don Stewart

AUGUSTON *Dufferin County*

George Power, Don Stewart

This Melancthon Township community, just two lines west of Horning's Mills was served by a non-accounting post office from April 1, 1886 until February 6, 1905.

The community was named after the first postmaster, William August who served as postmaster, as well as contractor, retrieving the mail from Horning's Mills to Auguston. Previously he had served as first postmaster of Shrigley (1865-1870), and as Deputy Reeve of the Township. He was suc-



ceeded by Francis Sleightholm on July 1, 1898. Both men served the 3-mile route twice a week. The 1903 *Report of the Postmaster General* states that revenue for the office was \$16 and the postmaster received a salary of \$16. As contractor for the route Mr. Sleightholm was paid \$46.80 in the year ending June 30, 1903. ☒

The Postal Services in the Settlements of
GIBRALTAR
and
BANKS
Collingwood Township, Grey County

Justus Knierim

[REF. 269]

GIBRALTAR

Gibraltar community is located in concessions 4 and 5 on the fourth line of Collingwood Township. At the end of the 19th century the community had two churches, a Methodist and Presbyterian congregation, a post office, a school and a blacksmith shop.

The first store in Gibraltar was built by Mr. Hutchinson on the east corner of the fifth and sixth sideroad. After a few years his sister, Hannah Hutchinson took over the operation. On Christmas night, 1915, the store

burned. However, business must have been such that it was warranted to rebuild the store and to continue operating it.

A few years later the store was sold to John McLennan who in turn sold it to James McFayden. The latter gentleman operated the store until 1947. Several more owners followed. The store once again burned in 1951 and again was rebuilt on the west side with an automobile garage added to it. Because of its location, Gibraltar was far enough away from other communities to be able to support a small business community.

On October 1, 1872, John Glenn was appointed the first postmaster at Gibraltar. The post office remained in his home (north half of lot 9, fifth concession) until 1894 when it was moved south to the Gibraltar store. According to the 1887 *Report of the Postmaster General*, John

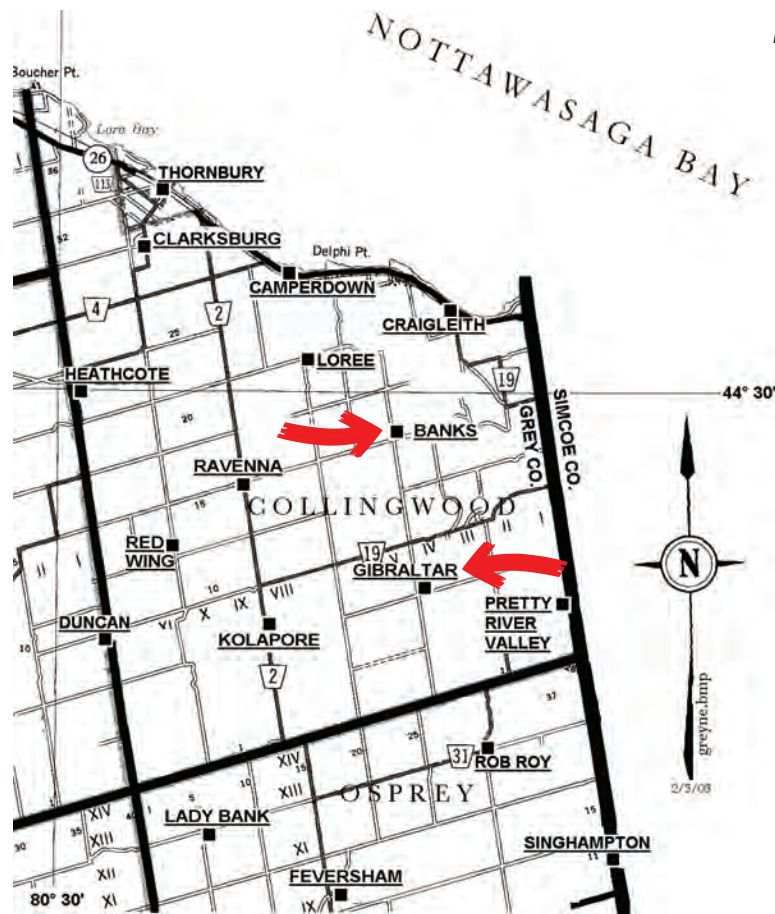


Postmaster John Glenn and his wife Jane in 1873. John Glenn was appointed on October 1, 1872 and served until 1894.

Glenn was contracted to carry the mail once a week, between Collingwood and Gibraltar, a distance of 10 miles, for which he was paid \$52.00 per annum. The post office had the status of non-accounting and in the year ending June 30, 1887, it declared revenue \$64.37 out of which the postmaster received a salary of \$20.00.

William Hutchinson took on the duties of the post office December 1, 1894, at which time the facility also moved to the Hutchinson store, located at the east corner of the fifth and sixth sideroad. He served until his death July 3, 1900. On September 1, 1900, his sister Hannah Hutchinson assumed that position.

The 1903 *R.P.M.G.* shows that Gibraltar now had service three times a week between Collingwood and Gibraltar and the route had been lengthened to 12½ miles to include the northerly settlement of Banks. The contractor was I. Hutchinson. In the 1906 *R.P.M.G.* we have John





McLean fulfilling the contract at \$235.00 per annum. Thereafter John and Hugh McLean held the contract jointly.

On October 31, 1914 the post office was closed, Rural Mail Delivery service having started on May 2, 1914.

Gibraltar was now served by RR#2 Ravenna and

Postmistress Miss Hannah Hutchinson in front of her store and Gibraltar post office. She served the post office until it was closed in 1914, continuing with the store until about 1920.

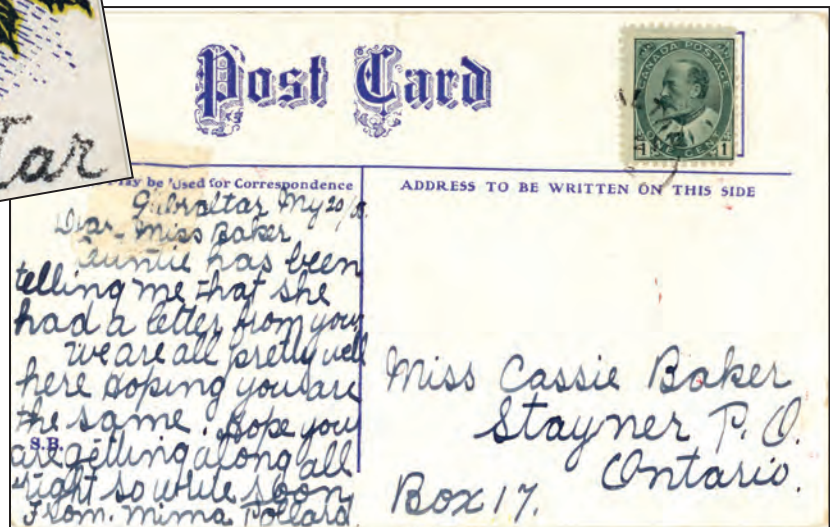


GIBRALTAR / ONT. / MY 20 / 05
Who would have thought that there would be a patriotic card just for little Gibraltar. Written by Mima Pollard – the Pollard's were a long-established family in Gibraltar.



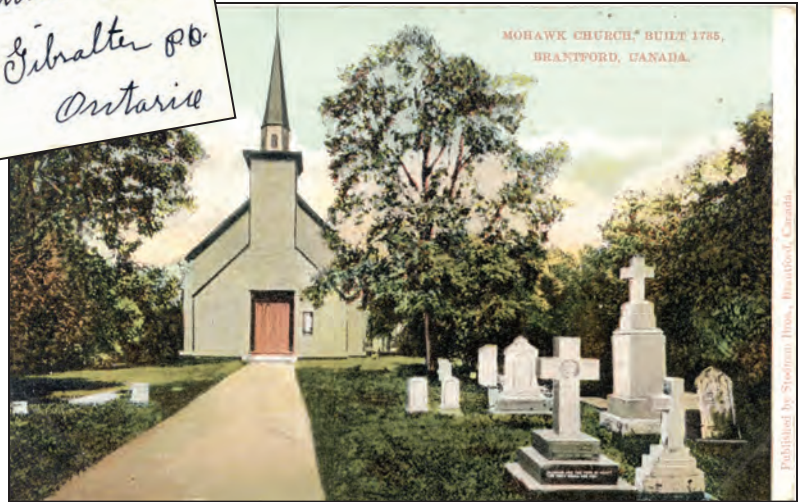
GIBRALTAR / ONT. / MY 23 / 73

Gibraltar's post office first opened October 1, 1872. This cover mailed to the Crown Lands Department, Toronto, is the earliest known Gibraltar cover recorded having been posted just 7½ months after opening.

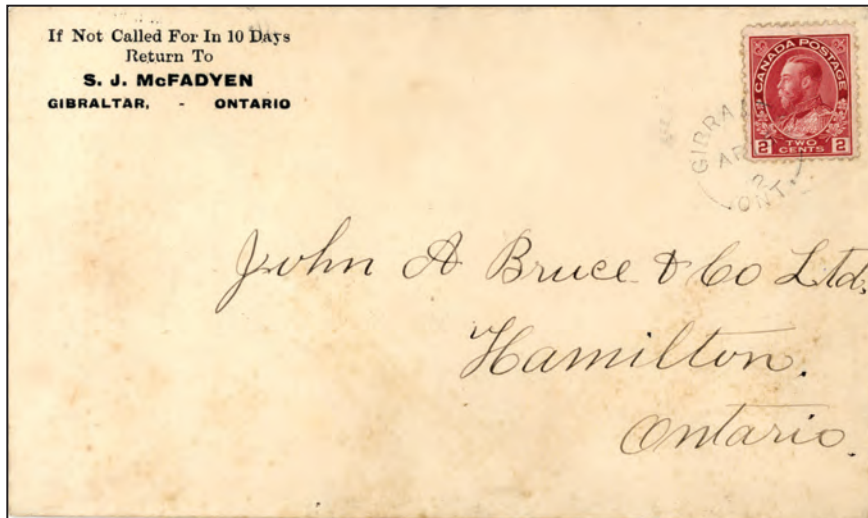




Card posted at Arthur on the **ORANGEVILLE&TEESWATER M.C. / N°2 / OC 17 / 07** and received at Gibraltar October 19, 1907. The post card showing the Mohawk Church, built 1785, at Brantford, Ontario, was published by Stedman Bros., Brantford, Canada



S. J. McFadyen's letter to the John A. Bruce & Co. Ltd., at Hamilton, was despatched from Gibraltar April 16, 1912, received a transit mark at Collingwood on the same day, and more than likely would have arrived by train from Collingwood in Hamilton later in the same day. It was cancelled with the broken circle hammer proofed on August 26, 1908.



PROOF STRIKE
Type A1
20.0 mm diameter
(arcs 8.0, 5.5 mm)

located in the home of its postmaster, William Johnston, on the southeast quarter of lot 16, concession 5. Johnston soon started a store and moved it and the post office across the fourth line. William Johnston served until his resignation effective January

the contractor for that route was none other than John Mclean. The 1916 R.P.M.G. states that the route was 27½ miles in length, and service was provided 6 days per week, for which he was paid \$883.83 per annum.

BANKS

Banks is a small agricultural settlement south of Craighleith, separated by a very steep escarpment rising 700 feet above Georgian Bay. It was named by the first postmaster of the community, William Johnston, after a village in England.

The post office first opened February 1, 1876 and was

24, 1902. He was succeeded in his post by Alexander Park whose appointment was effective March 1, 1902. He served for 3½ years resigning October 26, 1905. Prior to accepting the postmastership at Banks, Mr. Park was the contractor for carrying the mail from Collingwood to Banks, a 12½-mile route, that he covered three times a week. He was paid \$120.00 per annum in 1902. The contract was terminated on December 31, 1902. Thereafter Banks was included as a stop on the Collingwood-Gibraltar route.

The 1912 Report of the Postmaster General states that Banks declared revenue of \$85.40 out of which was paid

a salary of \$47.00. By 1915 postal business had improved and the declared revenue was \$98.50. A salary of \$46.52, based on the previous year's revenue, was paid the postmaster.

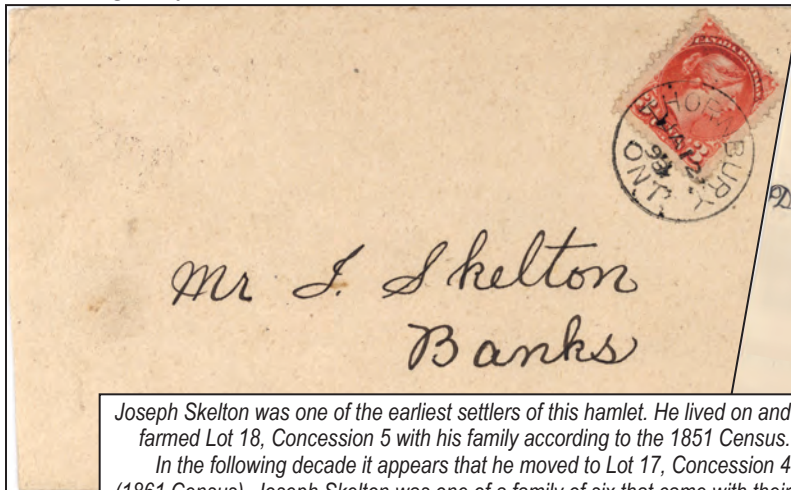
A 1878 *Postal Map of Grey County* shows that Banks was served by a postal route originating out of Collingwood. It appears that this route continued until the end of 1902. Various pieces of mail carry a Collingwood transit strike.

The 1915 *Report of the Postmaster General* indicates that mail was carried to Banks by J. and H. McLean on the 12½-mile Collingwood-Gibraltar route. The route was covered three times per week. This arrangement was in effect until May 2, 1914. Thereafter Banks was served by a 20¾-mile route, six times per week. This route was listed as RR#1 Banks in the 1915 R.P.M.G. Further changes were in order and as of March 1, 1915, Banks was included and served as part of RR#2 Ravenna.

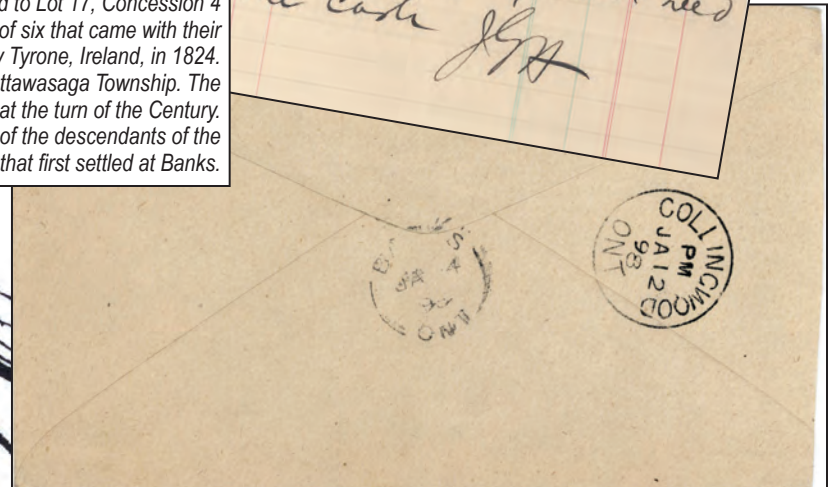
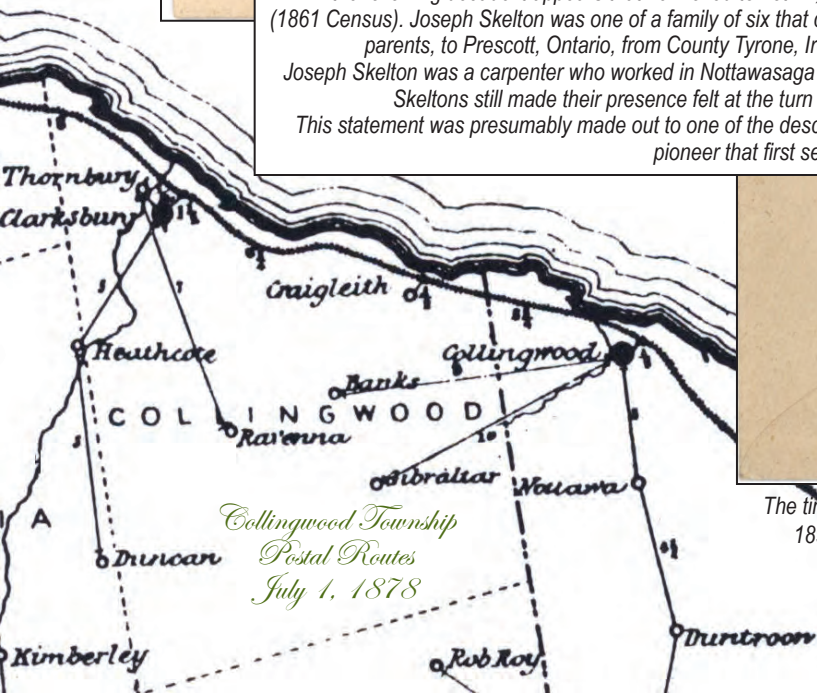
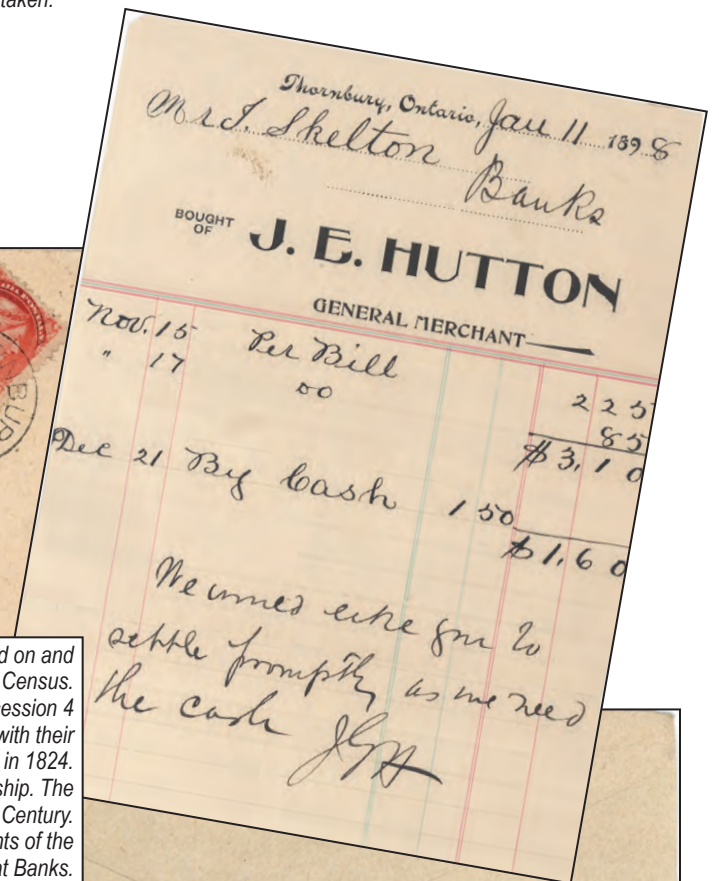
The once thriving community of Banks with two churches, a store, a school, three sawmills, and an arena, has now been reduced to a crossroads and a small art gallery. ☒



A real photo post card showing the Banks post office and general store. Card is unused, so can not place an actual date when photo was taken.



Joseph Skelton was one of the earliest settlers of this hamlet. He lived on and farmed Lot 18, Concession 5 with his family according to the 1851 Census. In the following decade it appears that he moved to Lot 17, Concession 4 (1861 Census). Joseph Skelton was one of a family of six that came with their parents, to Prescott, Ontario, from County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1824. Joseph Skelton was a carpenter who worked in Nottawasaga Township. The Skeltons still made their presence felt at the turn of the Century. This statement was presumably made out to one of the descendants of the pioneer that first settled at Banks.



The time stands still at Banks. J. E. Hutton, Thornbury, invoiced Mr. Skelton on January 11, 1898. The invoice was posted at Thornbury on Jan 12, 1898; received a transit strike Collingwood later the same day, and appears to have been received on January 4 ... yes, it probably was the 14th.



BANKS/ ONT / JUL 29 / 13

Grand Trunk Railway Agent, R. W. Thom, notified by mail, Mr. I. Sketton [sic] that there was a 50 lb. separator to be picked up at the station. It had been shipped from Toronto.

FREIGHT ADVICE
GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY SYSTEM (FORM 200)

No. No. _____ Station, _____
 The following described property has arrived at this station consigned to you in Car No. _____ Initial _____
 From **Toronto** here entirely at the owner's risk (from any cause whatever) and expense.

DESCRIPTION AND ARTICLES	WEIGHT	RATE	ADVANCE CHARGES	TOTAL
1 separator	50	S	50	50

The tolls prescribed by the Canadian Car Service Rules shall be payable upon any car held beyond the free time allowed and, together with the freight charges, shall be a lien upon the contents of the car.
 Consignees will sign this card below as an order for delivery to bearer, and bill of lading or shipping receipt issued at point of shipment must also be surrendered. When to Order, bill of lading must be endorsed.

CONSIGNEE, **R. W. THOM**, AGENT.



Banks, Ontario – A beautiful setting for this hamlet on top of the Blue Mountains Escarpment. Travelling east, one will descend the escarpment and enter Collingwood. Just a short distance north of the hamlet, one can look down at Georgian Bay and the settlement at Craigeleith. Heading west the road will lead to Ravenna. A photo card looking at Banks 100 years ago.

REFERENCE

- *An Illustrated History of Collingwood Township*, ed. Bill Shannon, Municipality of Collingwood Township, 1979.
- *Report of the Postmaster General, 1887, 1903-1916.*

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Members participation required to make this newsletter a viable proposition. All contributions, no matter how small, will add value to the research. It's the small things that count!

The ONTARIO POST OFFICE Atlas

Eric Manchee
 – 2003 –

from the Editor

\$30.00
 (+ shipping)

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