

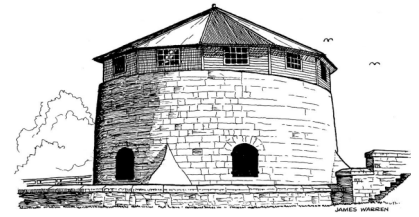
Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 21 no 8 ISSN 1488-5565

November 2019



KHS MEETING 20 November 2019 Seniors Centre 56 Francis Street
Gathering at 7 for 7:30

John Grenville: *Ordnance Survey of Kingston: Britain's Response to the American Civil War*

With concern of what might happen following the American Civil War, the British government took steps to renew the defence plan for United Province of Canada. Once the plan was confirmed, first task was detailed mapping. In the Kingston area, the mapping survey took place in the 1866, 1867 and 1868 field seasons. This series of 71 sheets, at a scale of 1:2,500, covers the area from the Kingston airport, east to King Pitt subdivision, north to Kingston Mills and south to include much of Wolfe Island. The ordnance survey (also called a fortifications survey because of the reason it was done) has been described as "the most detailed topographic maps that have ever been drawn in Canada." John has examined the original plans that are in The National Archives (UK) in London. This presentation will cover the reason for the fortifications survey, a look at the 1864 defence plan for Kingston, the people involved, and a detailed look at aspects of the map.

John Grenville has long been involved with historic sites and Kingston history, beginning at Fort Henry as a student in the Guard and later as Curator and Historical Research Officer when he first saw the 1860s ordnance survey for Kingston. John got his undergraduate degree and his MBA at Queen's and later studied history at Queen's, Dalhousie and St. Mary's. He worked for Parks Canada in program development and operations at the Halifax Citadel and then at Bellevue House as Area Superintendent. In his last position with Parks Canada before retirement he was Historic Site Program Manager for Eastern Ontario. He has been a Vice-President and Treasurer of the Kingston Historical Society and a member for as long as he can remember. Since retirement he has been enjoying the opportunity to do more research and writing even venturing out of his comfort zone in the 19th century and into the 20th century with research on the Bell Telephone Company and the development of wartime housing in Kingston. Most recently John spoke to the Kingston Historical Society about Kingston's defences during the War of 1812.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Pittsburgh Historical Society

Gore Road Fire Hall at Hwy.15

Tuesday, 26 November 2019 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Terri-Lynn Brennan: "The Land and Waters We Share"

Dr. Brennan is the founder and CEO of Inclusive Voices Inc. based on Wolfe Island. She is of Onkwehon:we and British descent through her family origins from Six Nations of the Grand River, Brantford. She will use a map of Turtle Island to elucidate the Indigenous history of the region, its waterways, travel and trade.

Kingston Branch of Ontario Ancestors

Join us 16 November 2019 for the monthly meeting of the Kingston Branch of Ontario Ancestors. Presentation will be by Peter Gower. He will be speaking on "Researching Military Records for Those Who Served from the Kingston Area"

Coffee is on at 9am. A short topic at 9:30 will be followed by a brief business meeting at 10am, and then the presentation.

Seniors Centre 56 Francis St., Kingston

Visitors always welcome. Free parking.

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

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Please forward submissions to the Editor betty.andrews@gmail.com

Reprinting of articles from the Limelight must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of the Society, the issue and date. Photo credits and by-lines must be retained.

The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors in producing Limelight.

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President's Message

The Hill 70 Memorial Project

by Warren Everett



photo Sadar Souci Globe and Mail

On 2 October 2019 a Memorial Park was completed and opened at Hill 70 near Loos-en-Gohelle, France.

The monument there, likely the last to be built for Canada, commemorates the victory of the Canadian Corps when they captured Hill 70 in August 1917. This marked the first time that the Corps was commanded by a Canadian, Sir Arthur Currie, and operated as a national army.

The centerpiece of the Memorial is an obelisk signifying the victory of the Canadian Corps at the Battle of Hill 70. In addition to the obelisk, there is a series of walk-



ways dedicated to the six Victoria Cross awards, as well as plazas dedicated to Regiments and soldiers who figured prominently in the battle. Militia Regiments that carry the Battle Honour: Hill 70 participated in the ceremony, dedicating the six VC pathways and plazas. The RCMP also dedicated a plaza to the 2500 members of the Royal North West Mounted Police who joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force in WWI.

There were two WWI aircraft representing the Royal Flying Corps and



the Royal Navy Air Service that fought in the air over Hill 70.

The citizens of Loos-en-Gohelle have adopted the site as their own and participated in the ceremony by laying flowers at the foot of the obelisk.

It is worth noting that this accomplishment was, for the most part, a Kingston initiative. The Board that led this project, with the exception of one member, was made up of Kingstonians. Moreover, three of the Board members are also members of the KHS. So, in some part, the Society played a role in this wonderful accomplishment.

At the start of the project it was recognized that not many people would make the journey to France to view the site. To remedy this, the project has a website, hill70.ca and an App. The App, Battle of Hill 70, is available free from the AppStore or Google Play.



For the project to endure, an education program for schools was thought to be necessary. The project sent out over 4,000 education kits to schools in Canada and France. Anne and Don Richardson and Elva and Bob McGaughey were instrumental in this aspect of the Hill 70 Memorial Project.

Doug Green, Susan Everett and I are honoured to have been on the board of this remarkable project that commemorates not only the soldiers and the battle they won, but also the victory that accelerated Canada's path to nationhood.

Murney Tower

Operated by
the Kingston
Historical Society



Try-on outfits for future Murney Tower
visitor photo ops, prepared by Eva



Wanted: Researcher (freelance or hobbyist)

willing to work with the author for the purpose of publishing both a book and peer-reviewed journal submission on the history of Enterprise, Ontario, using Lennox and Addington Archives in Napanee and Queen's Archives in Kingston.
Please contact: Historian Joseph Imre 613-217-7071

**As of January 2020, KHS meetings
will be held at the Kingston
Frontenac Public Library, Central
Branch, on Johnson Street and will
start earlier: Gathering at 6:30,
Meeting at 7 p.m.**



The Commandant and His Pigeons

by Vincent Durant



(RMC catalogue photo)

Tucked away in the Royal Military College archives is a rather odd-looking letter opener. No one's quite sure about the who, why or when of the colourfully-painted wood carving, only that it's unquestionably the likeness of Donald Roderick Cameron, commandant of RMC from 1888 to 1896.

Born in Scotland in 1831, Cameron saw service with the British army in India, and retired with the rank of Major General. In 1869 he had the good fortune to marry Emma Tupper, daughter of Sir Charles Tupper, the stalwart of Conservative politics and close associate of Sir John A. Macdonald. Through his father-in-law's connections he was appointed by Macdonald in 1872 to head up the survey work on the U.S./Canada boundary from western Ontario to the Rocky Mountains (Cameron Lake and Cameron Brook in western Canada are named for him).

Major General Donald Roderick Cameron (Wikipedia.com) In 1888 Cameron got a plum job: commandant of the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario—again through Tupper's influence. He was generally regarded as a rather mediocre leader of the military college, and upon the election of the Liberal government of Sir Wilfred Laurier in 1896 was removed from the position. However, I'm rather intrigued by one aspect of Cameron's term in Kingston: his attempt to introduce messenger(carrier) pigeons as an integral part of the Canadian military. His idea was that such a move could save many lives, especially from shipwrecks off the coast of Nova Scotia. But more on this in a minute.

First, some information on Cameron's family life with Emma Tupper:

During their stay in Kingston, Emma became involved with the local Women's Benevolent Society, and was a co-founder of the home for destitute children—a forerunner to the Children's Aid Society. The Cameron's resided in a government-owned brick house located at 157 King St. East. Today it houses medical students from Queen's University; at least that's what I was told by the young man who opened the door when I inquired a short while ago!

The 1891 federal census shows the Camerons with their six children ranging in age from 21-year old Sophie to 11-year old William. (Later in 1891 Sophie would elope with Christian Hamilton Gray, a Scott she had met in England but of whom her father disapproved. Their nuptials at St. Paul's Church in Kingston would be featured in the *San Francisco Call*, a California newspaper.)

The pigeons: Midway through his appointment as commandant at RMC, Cameron wrote a lengthy document on the viability of developing a messenger pigeon (aka carrier pigeon) service. The seven-page paper, with a covering two page memo was presented to the House of Commons by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and Cameron's brother-in-law. In it Cameron proposes the development of a messenger pigeon service. He first draws on the historical significance of such a program in time of war and peace; switches to fascinating detail on how the pigeons can find their way through rain, fog and snow; and also goes into detail on how micro-photography could permit one pigeon to carry up to 200 messages per trip, at a vast savings on postage costs. It makes for compelling reading, and is [available for download as a PDF at this website](#)¹. Cameron, noted for being somewhat dull and intransigent by nature, comes across in the paper as being truly fascinated with the potential of the carrier pigeon service.



Built in 1882 by Joseph Power for Dr. Edward Horsey, 157 King St. East was purchased by the government in 1887 for the use of military personnel and their families. It was home to the Cameron family during their stay in Kingston.

Here he is describing his astonishment at the "homing" instincts of the birds:

The writer of this article purchased two birds at Toronto, eastward of which place they had never been flown. From Toronto they were conveyed to Kingston, 150 miles eastward, and there kept prisoners in a breeding cage. Through an oversight they were subsequently sent northward forty-seven miles to be flown from Sharbot Lake. Instead of returning to Kingston they went westward 150 miles direct to their old loft at Toronto. These birds had been sent from Toronto to Kingston, and thence to Sharbot Lake, in a closed basket, and they had not previously seen the intervening country. Neither sight nor a combination of all five senses could have helped to guide them."

Cameron suggested that a trial program be set up between Halifax, NS and Sable Island, some 190 miles to the southeast. Known as the Graveyard of the Atlantic, the waters around Sable Island made for treacherous sailing. The idea was to have carrier pigeons on board ships and trained to head on to Halifax for help should the ship get into difficulty.

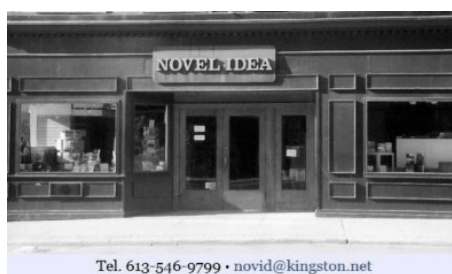
Parliament gave approval to Cameron's request, and a pilot project was inaugurated in 1891. The mainland loft was set up at the Halifax marine wharf, and some 24 birds were imported from Liverpool, England.

Unfortunately, the pilot project didn't work out and the program was discontinued in October of 1895. One of the stumbling blocks involved sea gulls. As described by a seamen on the government ship Newfield, "The birds seem to be put off their course, and much worried with sea gulls, these latter fly up to and circling round with the pigeons."

A year after the pigeon program was scrapped, Cameron's stint as commandant ended. He and Emma would move for a while to Halifax—like her parents she had been born in Nova Scotia. By 1911 they had relocated to Britain, and the census from that year shows Emma as head of a household at Bexley Heath just outside London. Living with her were her parents, two grown daughters, a niece and nephew, a cook and four servants!

Donald Cameron died in his home district of Dingwall, Scotland, two days before Christmas 1921, aged 90. Emma passed away in England in 1925. And daughter Sophie, who defied her father's wishes and married Mr. Gray? She would see the ripe old age of 96, passing on in 1966 in London, England.

¹ http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.9_08052_24_7/222?r=0&s=1



Red Barons in the News

In 1969, a team of female hockey players was formed in Kingston. The Red Barons became a team to be reckoned with in a local league and at the top level tournaments in the '70s. By 1983 the team had more or less disbanded but not before several members took their experience to the newly formed Frontenac County Girl's Hockey Association and elsewhere. On Saturday October 19, the Kingston Red Barons claimed an oak tree at the Memorial Centre grounds on York Street and unveiled a plaque to celebrate the team's inception in 1969. Kingston City Councillor Bridget Doherty presided at the event.

Fellow Historians

Kingston Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society

by Nancy Cutway, Editor, Kingston Relations

The Ontario Genealogical Society was established in 1961 by a meeting at the University of Waterloo of individuals interested in family history. By 1966 the Society had reached membership of 250 and received Letters Patent from the Minister

of Citizenship of Ontario. The Society has recently adopted the brand "Ontario Ancestors" for advertising purposes, but retains the original legal name.

As numbers grew, branches were set up in specific areas for ease of meeting and working together to preserve records. Twelve people met in March 1973 to sign a petition to establish Kingston Branch. Currently Kingston Branch OGS has 325 members; our local members may have no family history in this area but appreciate having a forum to discuss research, whereas our distant members join because historically their families lived in Frontenac or Lennox & Addington Counties. The first responsibility requested of our branch by OGS was to locate and transcribe all cemeteries located within Frontenac/Lennox & Addington Counties, even if just one stone in a century farm field. As those have been completed, attention turned to church registers since births, marriages and deaths are milestones commonly used in genealogical research. With permission of several denominations, we have transcribed, indexed and published a number of Congregational, Presbyterian and United Church records. We also compiled census transcriptions and indexes from microfilm, long before they became available in digital format.

We still offer publications for sale, and of course all our publications went into our library, along with many other purchased or donated volumes of methodology, newsletters exchanged with numerous genealogical societies located across Canada and elsewhere, family histories, indexes to wills ... every type of book that assists genealogists do their research. Our holdings – now some 2000 items – are housed as a reference collection on the second floor of the newly renovated Central Branch of Kingston Frontenac Public Library [KFPL]. Anyone may use them in the reading room whenever the library is open.

We meet eight times a year, on the third Saturday of the months September to November, January through May, at the Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street. The coffee's on from 9:00 am, and we start at 9:30 with a brief presentation by a member on some practical topic such as a website they've found useful or perhaps a demo of genealogy software. A very brief business meeting ensues followed by a break for refreshments and time to chat. It's surprising how often folks learn they share an interest in a small English village or that their grandfathers fought in the same regiment. Our main speaker could be a professional genealogist from Toronto or a blogger from Montreal, with topics ranging from DNA to Quebec notarial records to English wills to Quaker meetings. We've often had local speakers on topics such as "The Crawfords of Kingston" and "Frontenac County Schools Museum." Our meeting on Nov. 16, 2019 will see Peter Gower speak on "Researching Military Records for Those Who Served from the Kingston Area." We frequently invite members to talk about "My Black Sheep Ancestor" or "My Favourite Artifact" – with family history attached. Visitors are always welcome. Newer members have a standing invitation to join ongoing projects as a way of getting to know their fellow members. We've also been assisting Local History Librarian Joanne Stanbridge of KFPL this year by providing volunteers for genealogical drop-in sessions on Tuesday evenings at Central Branch. And watch for notices of upcoming Beginner Courses our members will be teaching through the auspices of KFPL.

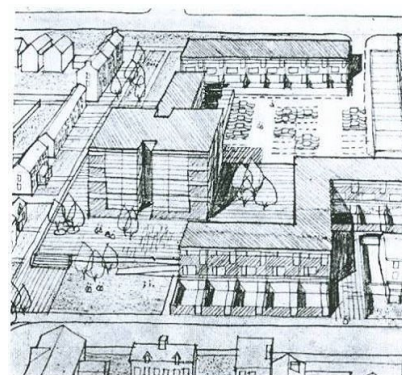
UELAC Kingston St. Paul's Anglican Church Hall 137 Queen Street Saturday, November 23, 2019, at 1:00

UELAC Honorary Fellow Nathan Tidridge (appointed 2018), published author and historian, will talk on "Exploring Kinship Through Her Majesty's Chapels Royal." These very special chapels were established by Queen Anne among Indigenous Loyalist settlements. Open to anyone interested in Canadian history.

Optional sandwich 'n squares lunch before the meeting, 11:30 for noon seating. We ask for a \$4.00 donation for those not providing food for the lunch.

From "Slum" to Desired Enclave: Sydenham Ward, 1945-1970

On the evening of October 16, urban planner David Gordon of the Queen's School of Urban and Regional Planning presented a wonderfully-illustrated analysis of Kingston's infatuation with the notion of urban renewal in the decades after the Second World War. Supported in his research by graduate student Ellen McGowan, Gordon described the descent of downtown Sydenham ward into post-war decay – handsome nineteenth-century homes were chopped into crowded apartment warrens, commercial establishments infiltrated an otherwise residential neighbourhood and the industrial waterfront began a slow and ugly decline into decay.



The City tackled this challenge first by commissioning studies by outside experts, who tended to advocate root-and-branch urban renewal – the demolition of existing homes, the introduction of arterial traffic patterns, a surrender to cars and a reliance on modernist architecture around the city's famous City Hall. Gordon argued that this dramatic prescription was unrealistic and went against the grain of the city's intrinsic heritage, however deteriorated it had become. Slowly, another, more locally-generated, movement of spontaneous urban renewal emerged, led by local crusaders such as Margaret Angus. Heritage homes were returned to their original beauty. The celebration of Canada's 1967 Centenary and Kingston's 1973 Tercenary accelerated the resurgence. Traces of the earlier plans did, however, surface in the remaking of the waterfront with parks and marinas. Gordon concluded by admitting that the draconian notions of the post-war urban planners were a "dark hour" for his profession, but that the emergence of local initiative more in tune with heritage sensibilities had made Sydenham ward today one of Canada's most habitable residential city core districts.



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Canadian Heritage Dinner

Sponsored by the Kingston Historical Society



ANOTHER WONDERFUL EVENING...SAME GREAT PRICE!

This coming year we will be holding the second annual Canadian Heritage Dinner sponsored by the Kingston Historical Society. The guest speaker for this very special event is **Dr. Laura Brandon**. Her presentation is **"Paint and Paper: The Group of Seven and the First World War"**.

Dr. Brandon is a freelance writer, curator, and lecturer specializing in international and Canadian war art. She was the historian of Art & War at the Canadian War Museum. She has written and lectured internationally for nearly 40 years, curated more than 45 exhibitions, and is currently an Adjunct Research Professor in the School for Studies in Art and Culture in the History Department at Carleton University.

Dr. Brandon will speak about the artists who first exhibited as the Group of Seven in 1920. She will highlight the critical and popular success of the 1919 war art in London, England, and explain how burgeoning notions of Canadian identity, along with the artists' own experiences in World War I as soldiers, painters and commercial artists, placed the conflict at the centre of their post-war success.

Date: *Saturday, February 29, 2020*
Time: *6:00 pm with dinner commencing at 7:00 pm*
Cost: *\$70 per person*
Location: *Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College*

Our meal will consist of the following: pretzel buns (gluten free buns available), butternut squash soup, your choice of entrée, lemon broccoli vegetable, tea or coffee, and raspberry cheesecake for dessert. Please choose from the entrée options below on the registration form.

Entrée Options: Braised beef short rib/red wine jus/garlic parmesan mashed potatoes
Fresh salmon filet/lemon beurre blanc/wild rice pilaf
Four cheese ravioli/herbed tomato sauce/reggiano parmesan

Please fill out the tear-off portion of the registration form and send it along with your cheque to the address below. **ALL** registration forms must be received **no later than Friday, February 13, 2020.**

Anne Richardson Kingston Historical Society
c/o 750 Amaryllis Street, Kingston, Ontario K7P 0A9

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Anne Richardson at: richanne@hotmail.ca

NAME(S): _____
TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Number of BEEF SHORT RIB Dinners: _____

Number of SALMON Dinners: _____

Number of VEGETARIAN Dinners: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

PLEASE LIST ANY FOOD ALLERGIES: _____