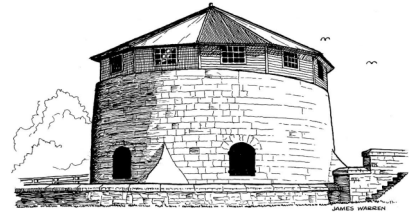


Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada



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February 2021

KHS Meeting

Wednesday, February 17, 2021@7:00 pm via Zoom

Presenter: Victoria Cosby

as part of the Society's celebration of Heritage Month in Kingston

"Kingston through Her Eyes: Harriett Dobbs Cartwright and Her Adopted Home"

Harriett Dobbs Cartwright emigrated from Dublin, Ireland to Upper Canada upon her marriage to Anglican minister Robert David Cartwright in 1832. Her voluminous correspondence chronicles her active engagement in the local affairs of her new 'home' in the colony of Upper Canada: as a wife, as a mother, and as a social activist. Cartwright played an incredibly important role in Kingston's upper class community. She volunteered in the Female Benevolent Society and Orphans' and Widows' Friend Society, through which she contributed to the establishment of such major Kingston institutions as Kingston General Hospital, St. George's Anglican Church, the Kingston Penitentiary, and Rockwood Asylum for the Insane. Harriett Dobbs Cartwright's contributions to the community have had a lasting impact on the city of Kingston as we know it today.

Victoria Cosby is a fourth year doctoral student in the Queen's History Department. Her research interests include nineteenth-century Canadian women, the British World, as well as gender and sexuality studies. She is currently working on a biography of Harriett Dobbs Cartwright.

Wednesday, Feb 24, 7 pm Another February Meeting!!

The KHS Annual General Meeting over Zoom Notice / link will be sent out.

John Morgan writes:

I thought I would pass along a link to a Youtube video on Mackenzie that I recently posted. It is an update to one I posted about 5 years ago. It contains much of the material from my presentation to the KHS but a number of adjustments/additions were made since then. I have incorporated pipe and drum music from the 48th Highlanders (an interesting connection to Mackenzie) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTT092U_ND8

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

recently released a white paper, which is intended as the "beginning of a discussion about how we – in government, in business and in our communities – can work together to ensure the medium and long-term recovery of the heritage, sport, tourism and culture industries" as we emerge from COVID-19.
http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/Reconnecting_Ontarians.pdf

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.

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

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President's Message

by Vincent Durant

A huge thank-you to everyone involved in helping launch our online lecture series on January 27. Special thanks go to program chair Dr. Duncan McDowall, membership chair Paul Van Nest, and Dr. Michelle Clarabut, who was hired to oversee our transition to the virtual world. Working together they made sure our first online offering went off without a hitch. In total, 55 people "attended" the talk by noted Canadian historian Dr. Tim Cook. He spoke on his latest book, "Forgetting, Remembering and Remaking Canada's Second World War."



Further to my mention in January's Limelight of a Whig Standard article related to the Spanish Flu, I have been asked by Dr. Jennifer McKendry to "acknowledge the 1998 contribution of our own society concerning a history of the Spanish flu in *Historic Kingston*, vol. 46, p.43-61, by James de Jonge, 'The October Crisis: Influenza in Kingston, 1918'. It includes illustrations."

Speaking of past issues of *Historic Kingston* leads into a related topic: the possible digitization of past copies of Historic Kingston. As you probably know, since October 1952, the Society has annually collected and published the transactions of the Kingston Historical Society, including the talks given at our monthly and annual meetings. These volumes are sent to current members, and past issues, available through various libraries, prove invaluable to professional and amateur researchers. During the past several years, the Society's Council has on occasion discussed the possibility of having the volumes digitized and put online. To this end, a small committee of Council will explore the possibility of making this happen. I cannot say much about it at the present, but hope to have more information for you next month. In the meantime, please let us know to what extent you feel there is a need for digitizing past issues of Historic Kingston. By the way, you may be interested in seeing some examples of historical digitizing at Digital Kingston (link below). As with our Zoom efforts, it could open us up to the world!

Best wishes.

Vincent

Digital Kingston: <https://www.digitalkingston.ca/>

On January 20, the Kingston Historical Society entered the era of Zoom. After a hiatus of nearly a year brought on by the Covid pandemic, the Society relaunched its lecture series, not as a live, in-person event, but as a Zoom broadcast available to its members and invited guests, some of whom tuned in from far beyond Kingston's boundaries. Our speaker was Dr. Tim Cook, a Kingston native, RMC graduate and one of Canada's leading military historians. The author of nine acclaimed books and over 80 articles, Tim is a senior historian at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, where he has overseen exhibits on the First and Second World Wars, while drawing on the research behind these traumatic junctures in our history to produce books not just on the "sharp end" of war – the men and the battles – but also on the social, political and cultural impacts of war. This written output has won Tim many literary awards and an Order of Canada.

Dr. Cook spoke on his latest book – *The Fight for History: 75 Years of Forgetting, Remembering and Re-making Canada's Second World War* (available at Novel Idea). He began by underlining the curious contrast between the overt celebration of our achievement in the Great War with the muted public celebration of what our military did in the Second World War. There were no Vimy-like memorials erected after 1945, little military history written and a marked political reluctance to honour the fallen through the 1950s and 1960s. Why? Tim explored several possible reasons for this reticence – all set out in his book, a book that analyzes disparate factors ranging from political lethargy to the dominance of American and British war movies. Finally, in 1995 only with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Canada's participation in the D-Day landings did the nation awake to the legacy of the 600,000 Canadians who served in that war. The Juno Beach Centre, a revitalized Remembrance Day and penetrating military history scholarship followed, perhaps best typified by Tim's own shining research and writing. Many stimulating questions – many from those whose families had lived through this wartime inheritance – followed Tim's remarks.

Our next lecture comes on **Wednesday, February 17th at 7:00 pm** when Queen's doctoral candidate **Victoria Cosby** will tell us about Harriet Cartwright, a fascinating and versatile mid-nineteenth Kingston artist, social activist and early feminist. Her remarks will draw our attention to the celebration of Kingston's heritage month. The lecture will again come to us on Zoom. Watch the KHS website for registration information. A Zoom invitation will be issued a few days before the lecture.

An E-Publication of the Hastings County Historical Society • January 24, 2021

We are pleased to announce that we have posted two great, local historical documentary films on YouTube for your entertainment pleasure.

The first documentary tells the story of *Ritchie's Folly - The Central Ontario Railway*. Back in the 1880s the story of the building of this railway and one man's obsession with rail travel. The second documentary is *Moving Mountains - Blairton Iron* and is the story of the Marmora Iron Works, mining, trains, entrepreneurs and the many hidden secrets of that adventure.

[Ritchie's Folly](#)

[Moving Mountains - Blairton Iron](#)

From the recent past of the Kingston Historical Society's Proceedings

Taken from THEN newsletter –

February 1993 - Beverley Lazier presented a bleak report of the financial state of our Murney Tower Museum...Increasing costs and declining attendance suggest that drastic action will be needed to keep it alive.

Not Still Standing

Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry

Although a building is shown on a map of 1850 at the corner of Princess and Victoria Streets, it was a frame structure (confirmed on the Ordnance map of 1869); that is, not the stone one, which unfortunately collapsed on December 25th. Its date has been variously given as from the 1830s and '40s but, as I note in my forthcoming book, *Kingston, the Limestone City: Stone Buildings in the Kingston Region 1790 – 1830*, the first structures – Robert Carnovsky's stuccoed house and bakery -- were "completely destroyed" in a fire of 27 April 1872 (*British Whig*). It began at two in the morning while the baker was preparing to bake the day's produce. Fire spread from the oven to wood stored overhead and then was out of control. Perhaps Carnovsky thought he was being prudent to build a replacement building in stone but that did not save it on Christmas Day 2020.

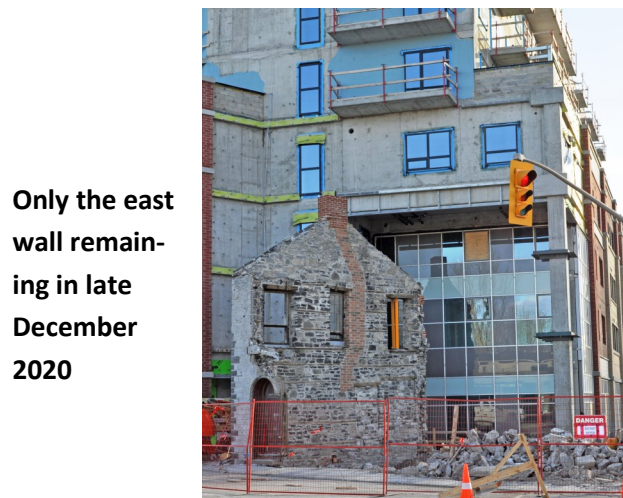
Robert Carnovsky, 1829 -1885, was a German emigrant of Polish ethnicity. A baker by trade, he first laboured in New York and then moved in 1852 to Kingston where he worked for various established bakers (*British Whig*, 3 Feb. 1885). In 1859, he went into business for himself as a baker and grocer in various locations in the city until settling in Williamsville where, in 1867, he purchased for \$800 the property now known as 668-700 Princess Street. His son Thomas also worked as a baker and grocer specializing in fruit and vegetables. The property was associated with the Carnovsky family until 1936.

Interesting aspects about the stone building include the conformation to the sharp angle along Victoria Street and, on Princess Street, the handsome panelled door with its round arch fitting into the arched stonework. Even if it is rebuilt, it will be a replica with all that implies.

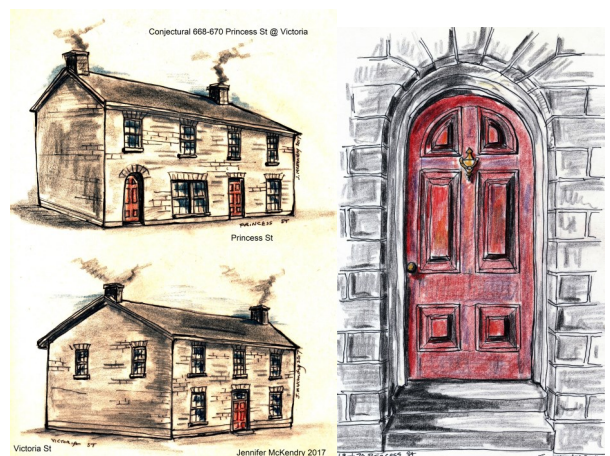
Photos and drawings by Jennifer McKendry



Stucco removed and stone infill added September 2020



Conjectural drawings of original appearance and of doorway



Iceboating began in Europe in areas where smooth ice was found in the bays of the Baltic Sea and the canals of the Netherlands. Initially iceboats were used for commerce, but soon evolved into pleasure craft—"ice yachts." Ice sailing came to North America, where the sailing craft evolved into recreational and racing versions. The first iceboats were introduced on New York State's Hudson River in 1790.

By the mid-19th century, two "ice yachting" clubs had formed, the Poughkeepsie Ice Yacht Club (1865) and the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club (1870), where wealthy boat owners sailed large iceboats with up to seven crew members. Boats were as long as 69 feet and sailed as fast as 107 miles per hour, a record exceeding any other conveyance in 1885. Races were run five times around a triangular course with one-mile legs, two of which were to windward. Iceboats were divided into four classes with sail areas ranging from less than 300 square feet to over 600 square feet.

Ice-yachting became extremely popular on the Great Lakes. In 1896, the Kingston Ice Yacht Club was formed. The members owned a total of twenty-six stern steerers, sporting from 325 to 725 square feet of canvas sail. The club established the Walker International Challenge Cup for Ice Yachts. The trophy was donated by the distiller Hiram Walker & Sons, Ltd. of Walkerville, Ontario, to promote ice yacht racing on Lake Ontario, the Bay of Quinte, and the St. Lawrence River.



One of Kingston's ice yachts, *Typhoon*, is pictured in front of the Shoal Tower, circa 1900.

A stern steerer, the center section was 25 to 30 feet long, and the outriggers about the same width. The cockpit was shallow, but large enough to hold two adults. These yachts were wooden masted and gaff rigged, with a jib boom on the headsail. The skate blades were a couple of feet long, with a tiller to the rear of the cockpit. The owner is properly dressed in shirt and tie, wearing a Tam and a long fur coat!

The British Whig, December 24th, 1896:

Reported an article from The New York World yesterday under the heading "Canada's Challenger". It published a lengthy article on Capt. Lee's challenge to the Hudson river ice yacht club, holder of the world's championship pennant, to sail a race for the world's championship on the Hudson river this winter. By means of private communication the World is able to announce exclusively that the name of the challenging Canadian iceboat will be the Torpedo.

Kingston, Ontario is all aglow with excitement over the coming race. Capt. Lee's new boat is now on the stocks, and the little shipyard is daily crowded with an admiring crowd of Kingstonians, who lovingly comment on the progress of its construction. As she is a boat of the first class her sail area must be over 600 square feet, but the builders are reticent when asked about sail spread. They are probably preparing a surprise, and when the Torpedo is finished her sail area is likely to be the largest known in the history of ice-yachting.



Iceboats were also used locally for transportation of goods and people. In the January 1894 “Ice Boating Notes,” the following was reported:

“From Dexter to Sackets Harbor is a distance of six miles. The run is made in six minutes. The skippers don’t give a passenger time to button his overcoat after leaving Dexter, before he is asked to step on the dock at Sackets. One man objected to ride on an ice boat as he did not desire to ride on anything that was so fast ‘that he got there before he started.’”

Today’s iceboats are nothing like the old ice-yachts. Smaller, light weight and steer from the bow, but still amazingly fast. They can be seen offshore Kingston when conditions permit.



VOICES FROM THE PAST

by Eva Barnes

Reprinted from *Historical Reflections*, St. Andrew’s Kingston, 2020

In the candlelit evening glow of Thursday, February 3rd, 1859, Agnes Maule Machar sat shivering in a linen nightdress at her upstairs writing desk in St. Andrew’s Manse. Her mother’s highland shawl, wrapped with such tenderness around Agnes’ shoulders for comfort, couldn’t warm away the sorrowful heartache of this bleak winter day. Agnes was inconsolable in her silent grief, lost in her thoughts amid the frosted patterns on the darkened window-panes.

That afternoon, her father, the Reverend John Machar, black cloak swaying gently in the wind-blown snow, had led a long and somber procession from Summerhill at Queen’s College, through the icy streets of Kingston, pausing quietly in front of St. Andrew’s Church. The great steeple bell tolled its solemn respect. Two Elders from the Kirk, two Queen’s professors, and two young medical students trudged in melancholy unison as pallbearers before the horse-drawn cart that carried a simple pine casket toward its final repose. All of the students from Queen’s, and most of St. Andrew’s congregation, gathered around the humble gravesite in the old Scottish cemetery, the Upper Burial Ground on Ordnance Street.

John Anderson, the faithfully industrious first Custodian at Queen’s College and affectionately-regarded long-time Sabbath School teacher at St. Andrew’s, had passed away a month before his forty-ninth birthday. Relentlessly hard and demanding physical labour, together with untreatable consumption, had gradually stolen away the healthy rural constitution that was his as a young farm lad in Berwickshire, Scotland.

John had arrived in Upper Canada in his twenties, alone, hoping to create a successful life for himself in the colonies. He had brought a change of clothing, a warm coat, his dreams, and four books: *Pilgrim’s Progress*, *McDuff’s Night Watches*, an old traditional Scottish psalter, and the *Bible* given to him by his father upon departure. John had asked, “Bonny Scotland, will I ever see you again?” Sadly this could not be.

In his final days, when John had asked whether some children from St. Andrew’s might care for his cat and dog, he had whispered peacefully that he was going finally to a “new and happy land”.

At graveside the Reverend Machar began his funeral address with a psalm: “O taste and see that the Lord is good ... blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

Deeply inspired by her father’s tribute to this fine and faithful man, Agnes lifted the cap to her inkwell, smoothed the fresh sheet of paper before her, and picked up her pen. Suddenly the tears came. Abundantly. And so did her written words:

Where once he dwelt, we see his face no more,
 We miss him from the paths he trod so long,
 The well-known form, the kindly gleaming eye,
 The loving heart, so full of sympathy—
 The strong and manly spirit which he bore—
 That “did the right”, unbending to the wrong!
 No more the church-bell that he loved of old,
 Hath power to call him to his wonted place,
 And when the lambs are gathered to the fold
 We miss the smile of that familiar face.

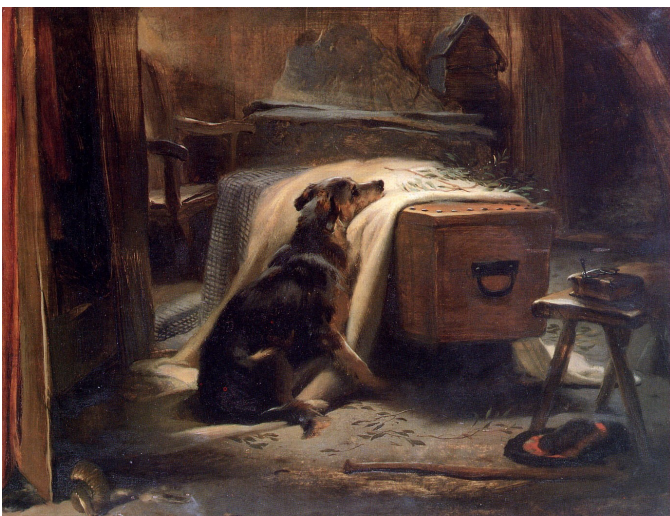


British Victorian artist Thomas Brooks painted this graveside portrait of a young lady in mourning in 1857. The original was sold in London, England into an un-named private collection by Christie's Auction House in 2013.

Agnes was only 22 years old when this lovely poem was penned. John Anderson's passing touched the depths of her artistic, creative spirit so profoundly that, shortly thereafter, she wrote a complete book about his life. *Faithful Unto Death* was published in 1859, the first of many extraordinary literary works.

The voices of Agnes and her father, the Reverend John Machar, still speak to heart and mind across the centuries through their written words. Their remarkable books have been saved and reprinted recently as works of precious Canadian cultural significance.

British romantic artist Edwin Henry Landseer painted *The Chief Mourner* in 1837. Queen Victoria collected many of his animal paintings, which are now part of the Victoria and Albert Museum Fine Art Collection.



Artist James Guthrie painted this depiction of a Presbyterian highland funeral during the late Victorian era. This canvas is now part of the Glasgow Art Gallery Collection in Scotland.

Machar, Agnes; ***Faithful Unto Death***, Creighton Press, Kingston 1859

Machar, John, D.D.; ***Memorials of the Life and Ministry of the Rev. John Machar, Late Minister of St. Andrew's Church, Kingston***; James Campbell and Son, Toronto 1873



Murney Tower

Operated by the
Kingston Historical Society

The continuation of Murney Tower's digitization project in the summer of 2020 led to some interesting discoveries about artifacts in the MTM collection. One example was this 1820 bank note from the Bank of Upper Canada. There were actually two institutions called

the Bank of Upper Canada in the nineteenth century. One was established by government charter at York in 1821. The other was established in Kingston in 1819 and was unchartered — in other words, it operated illegally.



Dated January 1, 1820, this banknote would have been produced by the latter institution, and it tells an interesting story about Canadian economic history. In the early 19th century, there were calls for the establishment of a bank in Upper Canada. In 1817, the Legislative Assembly approved a bill that would allow for the establishment of a bank in Kingston, which was the largest economic centre in Upper Canada at the time, on the condition

that the motion was approved by the Colonial Office and commenced its operations by January 1, 1819. However, the Colonial Office did not give its approval until May, 1819, five months after the prescribed deadline. Frustrated with this delay, an independent group of merchants decided to establish its own bank, which issued banknotes like the one shown here. While the institution appears to have been initially successful, issuing approximately £19,000 worth of notes in its short tenure, internal corruption led to the bank's failure after only three years, and its notes became worthless. The failure of this bank, and of another attempt at establishing a chartered bank in Kingston, preceded approval of the chartered Bank of Upper Canada at York. One might argue that had the "pretended" Bank of Upper Canada succeeded, Kingston might have remained the economic powerhouse of the province and Ontario as we know it today might be very different.

(See HK Vol 14, p 20, for reference to a first Kingston founder, Christopher Hagerman. ed.)



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