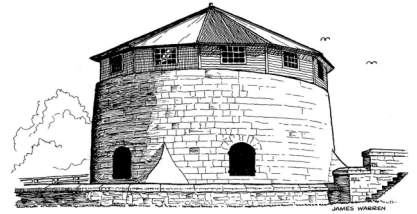


Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

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The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.



Save the Date!!

“The Heritage and KHS Awards Celebration”

This year we are planning a new event to celebrate Heritage Week. This will be an “Afternoon Tea” which will include a speaker and the presentation of the KHS Awards. This event will be held on Sunday, February 27, 2022. Further details will follow.

Past President Warren Everett writes:

The success of the Kingston Historical Society is largely dependent on the strength and dedication of the Society’s Council. This group manages the direction of the Society, it's finances, programme content, and the usual day-to-day issues that face volunteer organizations. As Past President, I am charged with the task of ensuring that the Council is up to strength. A few members of the Council are stepping down after the AGM in February 2022. Therefore, this is a call to members of KHS to consider joining the Council. Please contact me at warreneverett7@gmail.com if you are interested, or want to discuss the role of a councillor.

It is noted with regret, the death of **Helen Channen**, 20 October 2021, a long time member of the Kingston Historical Society.

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



I have recently exchanged emails with representatives of Parks Canada about the baby cradle located at Bellevue House. You may remember it – quite ornate, and had something to do with Sir John A. Macdonald. They wanted to know if we wish to renew the loan agreement with them, since KHS has ownership of the cradle, and the old agreement is long out-of-date. I couldn't find anyone who recalled such an agreement, nor that KHS owned the cradle, but a careful look through our recently-organized collection of records showed that it came our way in 1968 via a descendant of Eliza Grimason. The accession sheet states that it "Reputedly belonged to Sir John A. Macdonald and used for his children John A. Jr. and Hugh. Came down to Dr. Newlands through his mother who was a Grimason". [A Limelight article (Jan 2020, page 6) discussed the close relationship between Eliza Grimason and Sir John A. Macdonald.] He donated the cradle to Eliza; she passed it on to her daughter Elizabeth, who had married William Reid; she in turn passed it down to her daughter Teresa (Etta), the wife of Alexander Newlands and mother of William A. Newlands, a medical doctor. Dr. Newlands turned the cradle over to Lt. Col. Louis Flynn, president of KHS from 1961 to 1972. Needless to say, we are pleased to see the cradle resting comfortably in Bellevue House, and will gladly sign the new five-year loan agreement!

On behalf of your KHS Council, I want to wish you a happy holiday, and leave you with the hope that the new year will bring an end to the pandemic, and a more peaceful world.

Vincent



Down Life's Road (revisited): Heartbreak and Happiness

In 1965, I parked on Sydenham Street to sketch this pastel. When I looked down the road and saw James Reid Funeral Home and Furniture Store, two vivid events flashed back to me. One was happy and joyful—the other heartbreaking and sad.

The sad memory happened first. When I lived at 221 King Street, I played with twin girls Daintry and Audrey Small, who lived next door at 23 Earl Street. Our mothers were best friends and they were always either at my house, or Mom and I were visiting them.

One day, without any warning, Mrs. Small died of a heart attack. It was devastating! Together, Mom, Dad, and I went to the wake at James Reid Funeral Home. It was my first painful experience with death, and one I will never forget.

Now for the happy memory. We later moved to a ground-floor apartment across the street at 232 King Street. There was only one bedroom upstairs and I slept in a little space under the stairs. Later, our landlord decided to build onto the back of the apartment—which meant I was to have my very first room of my own. When it was finished, dear Mom and Dad took me to James Reid Furniture Store, where they bought me a beautiful blond bedroom set with a vanity dresser. I was thrilled!

As time went by, there have been more necessary visits to their other enterprise, the James Reid Funeral Home.

In 1854, the first James Reid came from Ireland and started James Reid Funeral Parlour and Furniture Store at this location. That was before electric lights, even before the streets were paved.

James and his wife Christiana had their home above the store, where they raised twelve children. Furniture and caskets were constructed on the premises. In those days, visitations were done in the home, and services were held in the church, so families only needed a casket and transportation to the cemetery.

James eventually passed both his knowledge and the business on to his son, Fred. He was succeeded by his son, James W. Reid, who was the present owners' father. James, working with his sons, Jim and Dave, added another furniture store and a funeral home, both located in Cataraqui Village on Counter Street, before he passed away in 1997. The downtown funeral home location moved to Counter Street in 1990. Later, when they added the beautiful Reception and Celebration Centre, they purchased a number of my Cataraqui Village paintings, all of which add to the warmth of their centre.

In 2013, I went back and looked down that road again to paint the award-winning restored James Reid Furniture at 252 Princess Street. The James Reid Furniture and Funeral Home proudly celebrated 165 years as a family business in Kingston on May 3rd, 2019.

74 TREASURED MEMORIES



Shirley Gibson-Langille Art Show "Romancing Downtown Kingston"

November 15 to December 31 - 99 paintings. 40 of the paintings are on display at Martello Alley, 203B Wellington Street and all 99 paintings appear online with size, medium, and price for each.

View at: https://www.martelloalley.com/search?q=Shirley*+Gibson*+Langille*&submit=&view=ls&type=product

Still Standing

Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry

252 & 254 Princess Street: models of successful restoration



254 Princess in the late 19th-century with signage as an undertaker and upholsterer



2011 Photo by Jennifer McKendry

Amusements. Seating for 700 was provided for live shows, as well as “fine moving picture films.” The construction was modern, namely steel and concrete, but the style echoed that of the Classical past with Ionic pilasters, dentils and pediments.

James Reid purchased his property at 254 Princess in 1862 from James Morton. In the 1857-58 city directory, Reid was identified as a chair maker on Princess opposite Montreal Street. Constructed from traditional stonework, 254 is a two-storey, mid-19th century, stone building but its



252 & 254 Princess in 1970

In 1992, the Frontenac Heritage Foundation presented an award for the restoration by Inglis and Downey Architects of the facades of two Princess Street stores located opposite Sydenham Street. 252 and 254 Princess are now Reid’s furniture store but past functions included a theatre and funeral parlour.

Historic photographs and drawings show the evolution of architectural ideas to the present appearance.

The three-storey façade of 252

Princess, owned by W.J. Baker, was built in 1908 as the Orpheum Theatre by architect Ernest Beckwith for a chain of vaudeville theatres and was under lease to Griffin



252 & 254 Princess in the 1940s, when furniture was added to upholsterer in the signs

Princess, owned by W.J. Baker, was built in 1908 as the Orpheum Theatre by architect Ernest Beckwith for a chain of vaudeville theatres and was under lease to Griffin



Where long time service is required, Reid's Furniture Proves its Economy. FOR SERVICE PHONE 147.

Everything for the Home, a Reid newspaper ad in 1921

Fortunately, the clock turned back and, influenced by old photographs, both buildings reclaimed their original designs c1990. The stone building is particularly interesting with a wooden enclosed addition topped by a railing.

A Young Turk Goes to Ottawa

Kingston has a very political geography. Names like Macdonald, Simcoe, Mowat and Cartwright adorn its streets. Most Kingstonians could give you a thumbnail sketch of the role of any of these men as pivotal movers and shakers. But ask them who Norman McLeod Rogers, for whom our airport and an arterial street are named, and they will be stumped. At the Society's November lecture, Halifax historian Barry Cahill went a long way to filling that void. A seasoned biographer and archivist, Cahill has just completed a biography of Rogers (1894-1940) and argues that Rogers was "an intellectual in politics" whose brief career as a federal cabinet minister opens an instructive window on depression- and wartime-Canada.

Born in Amherst, Nova Scotia, Rogers initially aspired to be a lawyer, studying history and political economy at Acadia University before flirting with the law as a vocation at Dalhousie. A Rhodes Scholarship took him to Oxford and brought him back to his love of colonial Canadian history. Despite success as a department head at Acadia, Rogers grew restless in Maritime Canada and itched to join the inner circle of Ottawa politicians and bureaucrats. His penetrating analysis of the Canadian constitution brought him to the attention of Liberal prime minister Mackenzie King, who saw in him a questioning mind and a progressive view of the nation. King saw Rogers, with his mixture of academic skills and ability to pinpoint Canada's structural problems, as a reminder of his own journey out of academe and into the world of labour policy making. In 1927, King hired Rogers to oversee the crucial Cabinet Relations Committee in Ottawa.

King's defeat in 1930 forced Rogers to retreat into academic life, now as a political economist. But in 1935 he obliged King by running for a federal seat in the Commons for Kingston, and winning. Sensing Rogers' impatient young Turk personality, King gave Rogers the challenging post of labour minister, where he set about tackling the Depression's horrendous unemployment. He championed a task force on unemployment and argued that Ottawa should take a more interventionist role in the economy. When war came in 1939, King tagged Rogers with readying Canada's armed forces for war as defence minister. King confided to his famous diary that he sensed that Rogers was to be his natural successor – a progressive Liberal who might push Canada into a new age of reform. Cahill argued that Rogers had the potential to be "an English Canadian version of Pierre Trudeau."

It was not to be. In June 1940, an RCAF aircraft ferrying Rogers to a speaking engagement in Toronto plummeted to the ground on a flight from Ottawa, killing all on board and leaving many to ponder what might have been had Rogers lived. For Cahill, Rogers' loss left Canada "for the worst" in that his drive for a more progressive nation was not inherited by post-war leaders less willing to question the *status quo*. We should therefore remember him not just as an airport name but more as an ongoing inspiration for what Canada might be.

Welcome, new members

Barry Cahill

Brendan Edwards

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

Taken from THEN newsletter – February 1994

We have 233 memberships in the Kingston Historical Society...bringing in a total of \$6000.60 in membership fees. Also: Graham Thomson has claimed the honour of being our longest-serving member...since 1933.



I've never met the descendants of Canadian soldier William Gibbs Garrett, who fought in World War I – yet his memory will be with me forever. Why? Well, his parents will be my neighbours for all time. How can this be? The answer lies in Kingston's picturesque Cataraqui Cemetery with its ancient oaks. Our family plot lies on top of a shady knoll, surrounded by old-fashioned monuments. In the four decades that my husband and I have been tending our plot, I have gravitated to a nearby stone, a square grey granite monument erected to the memory of Dr. Richard W. Garrett and his wife Minnie Kirkpatrick, who both died in the 1920s. That is not what is so poignant, however.

On the stone, the elder Garretts added a touching memorial to their son, who died at the Battle of Passchendaele on 30 October 1917. He was just 22, and is buried far away, in St. Sever cemetery in Rouen in Northern France. This year, as a biographer by profession, I resolved to find out more, convinced that his story should be remembered as his grieving parents wished. So I went to the on-line attestation records held at Library and Archives Canada, to Queen's University Archives and to the laudable publications and plaques of local historians and institutions which chronicle some of the fallen.

He was Pat to his friends, not William, and he was a quiet, athletic, popular young man, one of the privileged in his upper-middle class world. He grew up in a comfortable brick house on Johnson Street, in Kingston's limestone heart, the elder of two boys and a girl born to the Garretts. Another little girl, Helena, had died at age three in 1895, the year Pat was born. Their father was a well-known physician, a Queen's graduate who had joined its fledgling medical faculty soon after graduation in 1882. Dr. Garrett became a well-known professor of obstetrics and gynecology, the author of a much-used medical textbook. Pat attended the St George's Anglican Cathedral with his family. His British-born clerical grandfather, Reverend Richard Garrett, had been the rector of St Mark's Church in nearby Barriefield, built in 1843 to serve the British military, which still dominates the Kingston skyline. Pat did well at Kingston Collegiate, and enrolled in civil engineering at Queen's in 1913, even as his 60-year-old father was obliged to retire due to ill health.

Pat himself was the picture of health: smooth-skinned, good-looking: 5-feet 7-3/4 inches tall, weighing 150lb. He had thick dark hair and a neatly-trimmed mustache. Queen's, like many Canadian universities, was soon caught up in war fever. Lads of British heritage like Pat were often especially keen to defeat the Kaiser. Students at the university actually proposed changing the lyrics of one school song to read:

*"The Kaiser's not invincible, he trembles at the news
Of Queen's College Colours, and he's shaking in his shoes"*

at wanted to fight: as a member of the Class of 1917, he enlisted in the officer reserves, securing his commission in the Queen's Battery, taking time from his studies and the football field. In the university yearbook, he wrote of his "hopes some day to help render the Queen's yell in the shade of the linden trees on the 'Unter den Linden' " in Berlin as part of victorious British and Empire Forces. Plucky words, but the war news steadily darkened, and the need for fresh troops was remorseless on the battlefields of France and Belgium. In February 1916, one year short of graduation, Pat enlisted in the regular army for overseas service as a Lieutenant in the 50th Queen's Field Battery. Pronounced medically fit, he trained at Camp Petawawa. In November 1916, he sailed on a troop ship out of Halifax, docking in Liverpool on November 11.

Four days later came assignment to yet more training and drill at Shornecliffe Military Camp, near the Cliffs of Dover – a sprawling British-built camp which the troops dubbed 'the Gateway to the Trenches'. Conditions were crowded, drafty and unhygienic in the wet and dismal English winter. The training fields and practice trenches were a sea of mud as thousands of troops drilled within sound of the big guns across the Channel. By June 1917, the young lieutenant, now plunged into the antiheroic reality of military service, had contracted a groin infection – an infection brought about by the grueling training and by unsanitary billeting in Risborough Barracks. We know this because his military record carefully noted that his hospitalization was not due to venereal disease but to military conditions; by contrast, scores of soldiers with venereal disease were being treated in Shornecliffe wards and were stigmatized and docked 40% of their pay. The young lieutenant

recovered after surgery, enjoyed a bit of leave in London, and did artillery training at the Larkhill military camp in Wiltshire, near Stonehenge, before returning to Shornecliffe.

Then – just when Pat would have been starting his graduating year back home – his orders came through. Lieutenant Garrett was posted to France on 16 September as “Relief from England” for the battlefield. He was attached to the 22nd Howitzer Battery. He did not have long at the guns. On October 30, during the Battle of Passchendaele, a relentless destroyer of men on both sides, he was shot in the head, right arm and hand. Treated at a field hospital, he was listed as “seriously wounded” and transferred to No. 2 British Red Cross hospital in nearby Rouen. His worried father, who had contacts in England from a trip there a decade earlier, wired Lady Drummond, head of the Canadian Red Cross Information Bureau in London, for more news. The Canadian High Commission was initially assured that the young lieutenant was ‘improving’. Vain hope. Infection was the real enemy in the age before antibiotics. William Gibbs Garrett died on 9 November 1917 of wounds received in action.

The heartbreaking finale is outlined in the files of the Canadian military, which includes a notation about his place of burial in France, and records pay outstanding of \$50 – scrupulously calculated to the end of the month in which he died, as was the policy. On 28 November, a cheque was mailed to his mother, Minnie Garrett, the next of kin listed on his enlistment papers. In 1921, the Canadian government posted a memorial scroll and plaque to his father; his mother was subsequently sent the Cross of Sacrifice medal to mark the loss of her son. His university memorialized the boy, who never got to graduate in its new Student Union, as one of the Queen’s men and women who died in military service.

The memorial message which haunts me was engraved on his father’s headstone after the latter’s death in January 1925: Sleep well in France, Pat Garrett, never to march in the Berlin victory parade that you boyishly dreamed of. Your death stands for that of so many in the Great War – on both sides. Each November, we seek out your name in the shady rest of Cataraqui.

Dr. Sandy Campbell is a Kingston historian and biographer of Lorne Pierce, the Canadian publisher.

The Garrett house is now the head office of Homestead on Johnson Street.



Lt. William Gibbs Garrett
Photo-Queen’s Archives

The Kingston Historical Society Award is given to individuals, groups and institutions in recognition of their contributions to the preservation, understanding and interpretation of local Kingston history. Kingston Historical Society members are asked to nominate those they believe meet the award criteria. Please send nominations by letter or email, and include the nominee’s contact information and the reasons for your nomination. Nominations by mail can be sent to Chairperson, KHS Awards Committee, Box 54, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4V8. If submitting by email send your nomination to Paul J. Charbonneau, KHS Awards Committee Chairperson, at bearsden1017@hotmail.com The deadline for nominations is January 7, 2022.

The awards will be presented at the Heritage and KHS Awards Celebration (February 27, 2022).

Please Renew Your Membership for 2022 before 31 December

RENEWAL of Membership in the KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY: As a credit to our 2021 members for their support in a difficult year and because our expenses were lower due to COVID-19, we are discounting the fees for renewals by 25%. Don't get used to this please. ☐ **\$37.50 for a personal membership**; ☐ **\$45 for a family**; ☐ **\$20 for a student**; and ☐ **\$45 for an institution**. ☐ **\$300 for a sponsor**.

For New Members to the KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Dues remain unchanged: ☐ **\$50 for an individual membership**; ☐ **\$60 for a family**; ☐ **\$25 for a student**; ☐ **\$60 for an institution**; and ☐ **\$300 for a sponsor**.

Questions? Contact the Membership Chair Paul Van Nest, 613-544-6802 or email pvan nest@cogeco.ca

Membership includes the annual journal 'Historic Kingston' and 9 issues of the newsletter 'Limelight'. Some sponsors offer discounts to members.

Send this completed application form, along with a cheque made out to the 'Kingston Historical Society':
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from KHS webpage > Membership

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Additional donation: The Society would sincerely appreciate any additional donation that you may wish to make.

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