

ELLIOTT'S AT THE NARROWS LOT 6, CONCESSION 13

Submitted By: J. Elliott

The original bridge across Oxtongue leading to Algonquin Park was located at the narrows near the North end of the Lake. This single lane plank structure spanned about 100 feet of open water from the western shore (which is now Algonquin Outfitters Road) to Island "C". A causeway was then built linking island "C" to the eastern shore (near the end of what is now Elliott's Road) and the remainder of the logging road leading to Algonquin Park. A hunt camp was built on Island "C" sometime between 1890 and 1907 at about the same time that the Pattersons' camp was established at the north end of the bay. The earliest known occupant of "Camp Grumblenot", as this camp was sometimes called, was J.E. Johnston, the editor of the Leamington Post & News. The Johnston party is shown at Camp Grumblenot in a 1907 photo. If you look carefully, you will note that the entire area surrounding the Camp, and in fact the entire north end of the lake and beyond had recently been logged. It is evident from additional photos taken around 1914, that there was little more than scrub growth for as far as the eye can see. One of the young lads in the 1907 hunt camp party pictured below was Foster Jackson, who returned to visit the area in 1988 at the age of 96 (shown with Jack Hayden and the Elliott's in 1988 photo).

In 1927, James Ernest Mosley purchased Island "C" from the crown. The Mosley family was from the Huntsville area and was later connected with a car dealership in town.

James Elliott emigrated from Ireland and immediately began work at Eaton's in the General Office in 1908, eventually rising to the position of Secretary Treasurer and Director. James always enjoyed the outdoors. A friend of his, C.P. Bishop, who worked in the Treasury department at Eaton's and was related to the Eaton family by marriage, owned a cottage on what is now the site of the Blue Spruce Inn. Old C.P. introduced James to the excellent hunting and fishing in the region in the late 1930's and James subsequently bought Island "C" from James Mosley in 1940 for the princely sum of \$900.00 (annual property taxes were \$6.00). James kept mostly to himself when at Oxtongue, frequently guided by his good friend and local forest ranger, Tom Parris, on hunting and fishing trips. His son, Richard William "Bill" Elliott often joined them. Bill inherited the cottage in 1952, and joined by his wife, Lois, made the cottage at Oxtongue a regular 3 season destination for the family, which soon included sons Richard and Jim. About this time, hydro arrived on the island, and the wooden bridge, adjacent to the current highway and concrete bridge over the Oxtongue replaced the bridge at the narrows.



Johnson family with guest at camp Grumblenot - 1907

The "60s" were a lively time on Oxtongue. By now the Kennedys (Bill Elliott's sister and her husband) were cottaging at the sandy point (the Carton/Woods place), and the Patterson, Kennedy, Elliott, Hayden get together became legendary. Joining the fun, were the Siegfrieds from Chape-Inn at the

south end of the lake, the Blackmans from Georgia, and many other friends and residents from the Oxtongue area. Jim spent many summers working with Ray Smith and his son Don, and the entire family was active in both summer and winter activities, including the winter and water capers, and the cottagers' association. More recently Richard has made Oxtongue a regular summer destination for his wife and family (Joan, Mike, Steven and Katelyn), and Jim and his wife Sonya make annual visits for the canoe regatta weekend each summer.

A brief listing of many of the memories of Oxtongue shared by the Elliott family and their friends especially during the "60s"& "70s" follows:

- sitting on the front porch listening to nature stories from Tom Parris
- hiking up to Tom's ranger lookout tower
- an 18HP Peterborough "phantom" two seater runabout that moved like the wind, and the 5hp "bathtub"
- climbing to the lookout at the top of the cliff
- snowmobile safaris with the Pittmans, Haydens, Gowers, Lomaxs to Carlton clearing, Camp Lake, along the Harris road and onto Dorset and the Tall Pines
- Bill Kennedy's Bren Gun Carrier and other ATV's
- the girls at Hayden's (back when they ran a dining room staffed by a bevy of summer help)
- New Years Eve at Blue Spruce where everyone gathered
- the aborted charcoal plant behind Timber Trial
- boating hazards of Pattersons bay (the shoal and crib from the original bridge)
- Mac Patterson's Rolls Royce and chauffeur of course
- almost daily summer afternoon regattas including water skiing and dinking
- picnics at the Hogs Trough (a white water portion of the lower Oxtongue River) and High Falls (above Ragged Falls)
- Blackmans' annual chicken fry, corn roasts on the beach at Haydens



Foster Jackson (age 96) chatting with Lois Elliott, Bill Elliott & Jack Hayden - 1988



Bill Elliott and sons Rich & Jim, dog Chipper - 1955