

"O Canada, O lovely land  
This is the dream our fathers planned.  
That all may of your bounty share  
Forever free, and ever fair."

In this, the Space Age, when astronauts can circle the globe in less than ninety minutes, and travel to the moon, seems possible in the foreseeable future, it is difficult to realize that in the 1840's crossing the Atlantic was a journey involving many weeks, if not months, and many there were who died on the way.

Nevertheless, the men and women who came to our shores were stout of heart, and their hopes were high, that honest toil would bring the reward of a good life in the new land.

The courage and endurance required to clear the forests, build homes, and till the land is inestimable, but it was accomplished. The vision was bright and through determination and ingenuity they laid the foundations of our national character.

Such a one was James Hewitt, formerly a soldier serving with the Imperial Army in Ireland. The story of this man and his family is told by John J. Hewitt, third son of the fourth generation who as the result of an accident which injured his spinal cord, is now partially paralyzed and is a disabled pensioner. In his own words ... "By the help of doctors, medical science, hospital care, my own determination and perseverance and the will of God, I have made considerable recovery." Perhaps the greatest factor in my recovery has been the devoted care and cheerful encouragement of my wife, Cora. From the first hours after my accident she has been constantly at my side. Even now she never leaves me for more than a couple of hours at any time. To her I offer a heartfelt tribute .

As evidence of that 'determination and perseverance' John speaks of, he has learned to type with one hand, and to pass the time has gathered together long forgotten records, pictures etc., and has written this colourful history.

These two brothers worked together a great deal, exchanging work and making the best use of their limited equipment. They each built a house near the concession but close to each other. Their first home were made of logs and quite small.

With the knowledge gained from lumberman, trappers, hunters and the experience of living under very remote conditions with his parents, Wm. George as he grew up, became very determined to improve things for himself, and he did. Wm. George had been born in Trafalgar Township on March 16th 1850 and was ten years old when he came with his parents to Stanhope Township. So he really was one of the early pioneers of that township. By 1875 he had located for some land, cleared it, and built a log house. That same year he married Harriet Collins a young lady who was born in Somerset England and had emigrated to Canada with her parents.

Harriet bore him five sons, Albert 1876, Joseph 1877, Arthur 1879, Charles 1881, and William Henry 1886. As well as being housewife and mother, Harriet must have been a teacher, because

Wm George never went to school, yet in a few years was very active in politics, the Church and all community affairs. He became second Reeve of Stanhope township, Warden of the County, was a Justice of the Peace, belonged to the Orange Lodge, was an Anglican and a staunch Conservative. He was a very active worker for the election of Sir John A MacDonalld in 1867. He loved Canada and like Sir John A., his vision of a united Canada was bright and clear. I can well recall the treasured picture of the Fathers of Confederation which hung on the walls of his home, throughout the rest of his life.

Wm George improved his property and located more land. From this land which was well timbered, he started to get together materials for better buildings. He gathered stone, quarried limestone, burnt and produced good lime.

### The Story of One Man's Family The Hewitt History

by John J. Hewitt

It is well known to readers of Irish history that prior to the early 1850's the country was the scene of much internal struggle and strife, but in 1845 and 1846 all such matters were pushed into the background by the tragedy of terrible famine which took place. In an effort to relieve this calamity Parliament granted great sums of money, but even so, thousands died of starvation and hundreds of thousands emigrated to America. This period had often been referred to as the 'great migration' and Canada received its share of the immigrants.

James Hewitt and his wife Peggy left Ireland during the great migrations from Britain in the 1840's and came to Canada leaving next of kin never to be heard of again. By the dress of Peggy shown in the accompanying photo and her complexion, it appears she might have originally come from Spain, as history tells of Spaniards having settled in Ireland and then having to go somewhere else during the famine. This seems to be how James and Peggy met.

When first arriving in Canada, James and Peggy settled at Paris, Ontario along with many of the other immigrants. One of these, Thomas Mason, and James became life-long friends.

Thomas numbered among his friends, some surveyors who were surveying Haliburton County, about 1850 - 1860, and he was lured by the free land being granted to settlers, who would come and clear the forests and build homes. He left Paris travelling by boat from Fenelon Falls, took up homesteading in Stanhope Township. James, not to be outdone, followed his friend shortly after.

James and Peggy spent many years together as early pioneers of Haliburton County. They lived the rest of their lives in Stanhope County, where Peggy died in the 1880's. They are both buried in the little pioneer cemetery near Buttermilk Falls. Unfortunately this cemetery which is really an historic landmark has been badly neglected. I have been trying to create an interest in having it restored and cared for.

James and Peggy had six sons, George (W.G.), John, Moses, Ben, Joe, and Alex and two daughters, Mary and Lizzie. The oldest was only twelve when they all landed in Stanhope. They stayed with Thomas Mason, who assisted them getting settled on the same concession, only four lots west on top of the hill above Kushog Lake, on lot five.

Having come from a land of famine, where survival depended on a diet of a few potatoes - if such were to be had - they felt that with plenty of fish and wild life minus the poaching laws of Ireland, and no limit to the land, they were in Utopia.

Peggy was undoubtedly a sturdy resourceful wife, and took a hand in everything. A story was told about her sewing up Thomas Mason's neck when he had been thrown onto the jagged top of a stump while cutting down a huge pine. She immediately stitched it up with needle and thread and it healed perfectly. She frequently walked to Minden and back the same day, a distance of some twenty-five miles, carrying home her necessary purchases.

The family all survived under primitive conditions and as the boys grew older they became great "axe" men. Later they took up land for themselves and built log homes.

Wm George and John took up land in 1872, on lot 7 concession 6 and lot 7 concession 7 where they built home raised their families and lived there the rest of their lives.

He built the large stone house for which he took out logs, hewed them, made shingles by hand, and also dressed the lumber by hand for finishing.

In 1894, the house having been completed and much more land acquired; he built a barn, hewing the timber and making the shingles by hand. The flooring of the stables was made with cedar blocks stood on end, and of different lengths to make stalls, gutters, etc. The family by this time was old enough to do a great amount of the work and of course, the neighbours for miles around came for the barn raising. It was the largest barn ever raised in the district and all done by man power. It stood 40 ft by 60 ft with stone foundation. There was a stable underneath and a large shed attached to the front, built on four stone pillars. In a few years it was filled with grain and hay, and the stable filled with livestock. The original log barns were still used for a time after the new one was built, but were torn down later.

William George and Harriet enjoyed their life together in the new house until 1910 when she passed away. William George later married Annie Rayburn. Annie evidently had a real "green thumb" for she was an expert at growing flowers and filled the windows of the stone house with flowers of many kinds. Her garden was the envy of the community. William George died in April 1938 and Annie in September 1940. Both are buried in St Stephens cemetery at Boskung.

The latter years of Wm George's life were so filled with public affairs that he left the farm management to his son Joseph who successfully carried on until his retirement in 1945.

When St Stephens Church was built in 1901, Hewitt families all helped with the work, along with others of the community. A Mr King was the stone mason. Other masons did not like his

style, and didn't think it would stand with the stones placed on edge. However, it still remains a credit to those responsible for it. A Mrs Davies who is now in her ninetieth year can remember the building and opening service. She has been attending services and active in the church all these years. Congratulations in this centennial year to St Stephens and its active members!

John, the next son, also built a new house out of stone, getting them from the land and burning his own lime. His lime became famous as he produced enough to offer it for sale. He had no difficulty in disposing of it the quality was good. Being a very strong man, and with a great eagerness to work, he continues to cut wood and quarry stone until up in the twenties. I well remember seeing the last kiln he burned, the glow of the fire and the fumes from the hot stone. In order to get a good burn, stones had to be placed in the kiln so that the fire would be evenly distributed and the fire had to be kept burning briskly and continuously for a week. This, of course, consumed a large quantity of wood so there had to be a ready supply, while burning his kiln of stone he would split and shave cedar to make shingles. Cedar must have been good then, as there still are miles of cedar fences on these farms which were split and made in spare times. John also made axe handles of very fine quality which sold for .50¢, it would be as strong.

John, being more of a family man, and not a politician, looked after his parents who spent their last years living with him. He later sold the old home farm to Archie Coulter.

John married Clara Johnson and they raised a large family. Later on diphtheria struck them and Clara with her infant baby died, leaving him with a large family to raise. This was indeed a hardship, but somehow they managed. The older children were girls and they were able to do most of the work in the house. John worked at the camps most winters, leaving Edwin to manage at home. Edwin still lives there and grows a good garden in the same spot where his father did nearly a hundred years ago. Only last summer Eddie surprised us with a gift of seven potatoes grown on this land, which standing on end, completely filled a six quart basket.

John died in 1924 and lies with his brothers in St Stephens Cemetery. Mary went to Toronto to work, and later became Mrs Steve Middleton. She raised a family of three boys and four girls who all grew up in the city, coming back occasionally to visit relatives and bringing treats for one and all.

Lizzie married Caleb Davis. She worked at Bucks hotel for a number of years. At one of their famous parties she caught cold and died of pneumonia while quite a young woman.

By way of explanation, contrary to wide belief, winter was not a time of isolation but a time for socializing. Neighbours made long sleigh journeys to visit each other, something they had little opportunity to do during the work of warmer months. There were sports on ice-curling, horse racing; dancing and drinking in the village taverns. One New Years party at Bucks hotel at the junction near Buck's slide (where

Lizzie worked) beginning on the eve lasted four days and five nights.

Early homes were far from warm. Chill winds whistled through chinks, windows (if any), and doors in log cabins; frame houses often built with green lumber that warped and shrank in the heat of summer were little more than airtight. Even the best fireplace could not dispel the deep cold, except in the heats immediate vicinity and it was common place of a winter morning to find containers of water frozen solid in the bedroom or kitchen.

Still the settlers were a hardy lot, and there is far more joy of winter in their writings than complaints or self - pity.

Ben being a great bush man, followed lumbering and hunting rather than farming. The lumbering was mostly cutting and hewing the number one pine. It was hewn into square timber, floated to Trenton, Ontario, and shipped overseas for ship building. It had to be perfectly clear virgin pine, without a flaw, to bring a good price. It took two years for a drive to reach Trenton.

Ben married Mary Carter, Polly she was called. They moved to Belleville where he was lumbering, but in a few years came back and took up land on Lot 7 Con 4 in the township of Stanhope. He built a home near his parents, and there carried on a little farming. A few years later, in Sept. 1889 he was drowned while hunting at Peach Lake, leaving his wife and four small children. Mary was unable to provide for the children and had to let some of them go to friends to raise. The youngest, Allan, was only a few months old at the time, so Caleb Davis and his wife, neighbours of William Welch with whom Mary had lived before marriage, took and raised him.

Moses went farther north to Matheson, Ontario where he raise a large family. Now and then he drifted back south, and once came and visited old friends and relatives for a whole winter. Joe and Alex went to the United States and very little was heard of them.

So that was the end of two generations of Hewitts. By now 1967, there are six generations and no limit to the stories that could be told. A few notes of interest in more recent years follow on the next pages.

In the third generation of Hewitts that remain in this vicinity, Albert settled in the Minden area, where he farmed and did building work. William controlled the water levels in the lakes and rivers from Kennisis to Boskung which feed the Trent System.

During the war, farm prices increased so much that Charlie went to better farming land near Peterborough in 1918. Three years later, brother Arthur left his farming and lumbering at Hall Lake and followed to Fraserville where his son, Lee, is still farming. While establishing himself there Arthur and a neighbour drove two teams and wagons from Fraserville to Halls Lake. They loaded both wagons with lumber that he had left there and returned to his new home within the week.

Highway 35 had been talked about from the time of U.F.O. of government. The Hewitts worked on different projects. In 1929,

Joseph, as foreman, had one thousand dollars to link the road between Black River and Dorset. After the bridge was completed that fall, his crew were the first to get a car through to Dorset.

In 1932, during the difficult depression years, Joseph's two eldest sons, Alex and Ern bought the livery business in Minden, known as Hewitt Transport.

Before the coming of Ontario Hydro to the Minden area, the Orillia Light and Water Commission purchased an old mill site on what is now Minden Lake, and built a power plant there to supply electric power to Orillia. Hewitt Transport helped in building the plant by hauling the heavy materials using a truck and trailer. This trailer which was made from the rear wheels of a chain driven truck with solid rubber tires was also used to draw the long and heavy steel for the bridges which were built in this area during the thirties. Many long and hard days of work were experienced at this job. Our roads were not widened, snow ploughed or sanded in those days and a day's work was unlimited as to hours. You completed the job you started out to do. Sometimes with a little unforeseen trouble you might not get back until the wee hours of the next morning. The trucks had no heater, no anti-freeze, nor any modern comforts like present day trucks, not even much power. Single wheels which needed chains most of the time etc. One could write a whole book on the experiences of trucking in the Haliburton Highlands in the early thirties. Horses were often necessary to help out when one got stuck in the mud.

Ed Shier, a small pensioner from the war of 1914-18 was hostler and slept in the office of the Hewitt Bros. barn. This barn was approximately 35 feet wide by 80 feet with a hayloft on top and stable and storage below. It was built with 2x6 framework and well supported with posts. Stalls etc. were in the stable on the ground floor. It was formerly used to stable horses which were used in early days for stage coach and livery horses for the public. Doctors, preachers, commercial travellers or anyone wanting transportation could get the service they wanted.

Ed took remarkable care of the barn. He was always there at night and being an old soldier, greeted you as a friend or foe. He would greatly help if the need was great, but if he felt the need was not genuine, he knew how to treat a foe. As a hostler, great care was taken in the stable. He did not believe in hose and driver both being cold on the road so he frequently drove with whip in one hand.

Outside the office a light was installed which was run by a delco \_\_\_\_\_ inside. This was the only light shown in Minden from the beginning of the thirties until electricity was installed.

Just previous to Hewitts purchasing the 'barn' some of the stable was taken to make room for cars and trucks which were replacing horses. This continued with the ever growing need for motor equipment and less horse-drawn vehicles and finally all the innards were removed and the ceiling raised to accomodate larger trucks. The building now became a shell

and in a few more years got a bad lean on it from the lack of supports. It was finally torn down and another old landmark gone.

The luck of the Irish still holds good within the Hewitt family, "Lo and be gorra" when the Irish sweepstakes was run in 1963 Arnold held the lucky ticket and now he can live the life of an Irish man. Congratulations!

Now we come to my parents, Joseph and Margaret Hewitt, both of whom were born in township of Stanope. They were married in 1903 in the Anglican Church in Minden and settled down on the Hewitt homestead in Boskung opposite St Stephen's Church. Joseph was a quiet man and didn't care to follow the road of public and political activity as his father had done. Both he and Margaret found their joy in things of the land. Together they established their married life on the principle of the golden rule "Do unto others as you would have them do to you". All through their lives they served their church faithfully and worked hard for the betterment of others in the surrounding community, while never neglecting their home and family. They believed firmly that what one soweth, so will he reap and this was borne out by the high regard felt for them by friends and neighbours. Their home was a place where anyone in trouble could come for help and encouragement.

They were a methodical couple and believed there was a proper seed time and harvest. They enjoyed seeing things grow and come to maturity and when all was gathered into storage for the winter, they liked to feel there was a little extra in case the crop would not be so good in the next year.

Dad was practical, and turned his hand to any job, large or small, a supply of hand made utensils like, a fork and shovel handles, whiffle trees, etc., a lumber pile in the yard too, in case something of the kinds would be needed in the neighbourhood. He took pride in keeping the animals well cared for, and did his veterinary work, as well as for neighbours. One time a neighbour's beast had broken its leg and Dad was called in to lend a hand. The animal was too thin to kill, so Dad made some splints, then gathered pitch from the ends of some pine logs and used it as adhesive to put on the splints, it worked fine.

He also did butchering, and it was not unusual for him to drive cattle to Dorset and butcher the beef for the lumber camps in the vicinity. He was allowed to bring the hides back and these he sold. Sheep and deer skins were tanned and used for shoe laces, repairing harness and so on.

Mother too had many activities in addition to her regular household chores. She made her own vinegar, grew hops and made yeast, and like most other women in the community made the soap used for the family washing. She had a "green thumb" and grew all kinds of flowers. Knitting was one of mother's special accomplishments and it was not uncommon for her to begin a pair of mitts for one of us in the evening and in the morning there they were, all finished and ready to wear. She knit some underwear for the family. Dad's were special -- they were red. For all this knitting she teased the wool, then took it to Minden

to be carded in the carding mill which used to be there. After bringing it home came the spinning and making it into skeins. Mother also served as a midwife in the community, as rarely, if ever, was there a doctor available. As a matter of fact her own children were all born without a doctor in attendance. How she found time for all these things, I'll never know, but she did, and helped with the church affairs besides.

We were a family of five and from our earliest years were taught to be practical, to face reality, and to realize the value of honesty and truth. I was in the centre, two older and two younger, so of course I was always "Johny on the spot" in the middle of everything good or bad. When differences arose, I, of course had to take a neutral position. I found out early that being in the middle often worked out to be quite an advantage.

We were a closely knit group, and shared with Mother and Dad all the joys and sorrows that came our way. As we grew older and were given responsibilities we were taught that even though things seemed hard sometimes we must do our best to complete what we set out to do. We were told that 'man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow' so we must never shirk any task given us.

The social side of life was not neglected in our family. Sunday being observed as the day to rest, it was the time for visiting, exchanging ideas, making plans, etc. Our door was always open for friends and they would be served something to eat and drink when they came. Festivals and holidays were enjoyed by exchanging gifts, making merriment at parties -- mostly friendly house gatherings.

Dad had always been fond of sports, and as we grew older, we shared his pleasure in swimming, fishing, playing ball, horseback riding in summer, in winter skating, snowshoeing and sleigh riding.

As parents, I think my mother and father were about as perfect as two people can be. The honour and respect I have felt for them since childhood is hard for me to put into words, but it is there, and will be with me always. Perhaps the brief outline of their life in these pages will show something of what I feel.

Their teachings have stood us in good stead, even though they have seemed irksome to us at the time, we have prospered because of them. My parents lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary and a reception was prepared in their honour. Surrounded by their family with grandchildren and great grandchildren they were able to look back in retrospect over sixty happy and fruitful years together.

The Hewitt tree has many branches, their roots are planted deep in the soil of Haliburton County. Their seeds are scattered far and wide in many parts of Canada and flourish in various occupations.

As an Irishman would say... "Sure and begorra, tis all over the country our name is heard". Every Saturday on "Hockey night in Canada".