

# HISTOIRE POTTON HISTORY



**Mansonville, mars 1960**

Collection Lorraine Rouillard

**Association du  
patrimoine de Potton**

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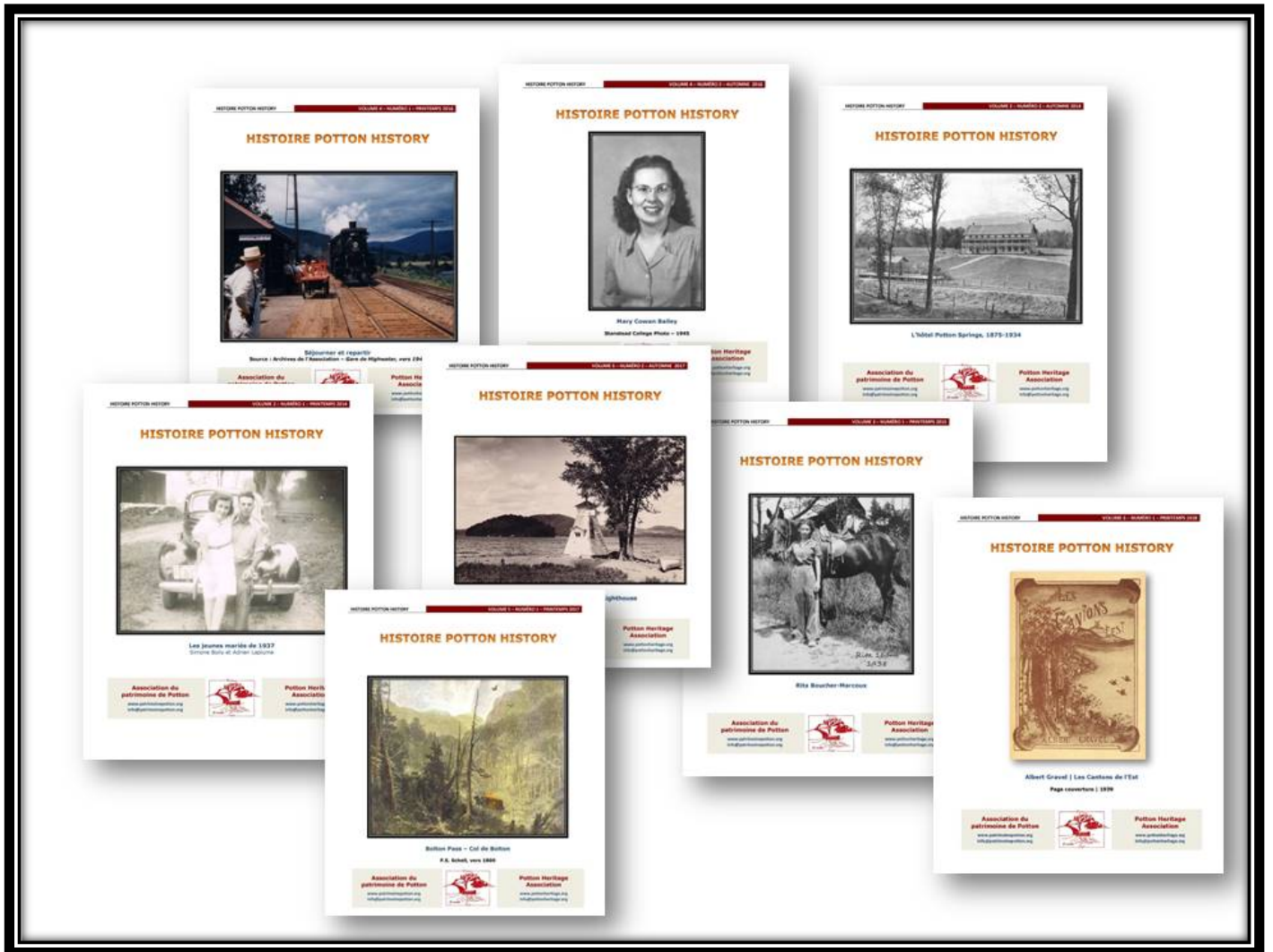


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# HISTOIRE POTTON HISTORY

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## Histoire Potton History

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Association du patrimoine de Potton

### RÉDACTRICES EN CHEF

Chantal Ethier | Sandra Jewett

### COMITÉ ÉDITORIAL

Chantal Ethier | Sandra Jewett  
Serge Normand

### RÉVISION | TRADUCTION

Marie Joli | Sandra Jewett

### GRAPHISME | ÉDITION WEB

Serge Normand

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## A Word from our President

I am so pleased to present a short summary of what you'll find in this issue of Histoire Potton History in which we are welcoming new contributors. We're happy to have their help and look forward to continued input!

Lorraine Rouillard shares her memories of the Mansonville of her youth with us in a delightful yet somewhat wistful article entitled *Ah! que mon village a changé!*. At this particular time, with many important investments coming into our region, I share many of Lorraine's memories, and her obvious love of the village in which she grew up! I'm proud of our little village too! Welcome aboard and thank you, Lorraine!

Another new contributor in the person of Rachel Bégin tells us about the history of our post office, which has always been of great importance in this community. The times may have changed, but the staff at the Post Office have always shown a warm welcome and a willingness to go the extra mile for their clientèle. Thank you Rachel and thank you to the Post Office staff, current and past.

Gérard Leduc reminds us of a milestone in our community. No-one in our community today can remember a time without the equally friendly faces found in 'Giroux's Store', truly another fixture of Potton. Deserving of hearty congratulations is Giroux & Giroux – a business which celebrates 100 years of fine service to Mansonville and environs, by generations of the Giroux family. Our Association extends warm congratulations to the family.

To have finally witnessed concrete action on October 23<sup>rd</sup> to begin the restoration of the Round Barn was a red letter day! Truly! Soon our building will stand straight and proud on a new foundation – ready for another century. To remind us that these unique structures once dotted the local countryside, our web master, the tireless Serge Normand, has combed our archives and presents a pictorial essay attesting

to a bygone era in our agricultural history. Chantal Ethier has met with members of the Messier family who wanted to remind us that one of these barns once belonged to their family. It was situated at the corner of Traver road and Route 243. I remember it very well.

Jean-Louis has sent us another, and final, episode in his chronicle of the history of democracy in Potton. This article includes an interesting time in our early community, the 'troubles' of 1837-38. Edgar Barnett, arguably Potton's first historian, chronicled the events, from interviews with witnesses to the time. His rendition is reprinted here, along with three other pertinent articles by Matthew Farfan, M.G. Peters, Audrey Martin McCaw, all courtesy of the Brome County Historical Society archives.

For years now, Edouard Cloutier has scanned the flank of Owl's Head to find topographical indications that reason it is so named may be other than which is commonly accepted. Will he convince you from the photograph he has submitted?

Finally, I extend a very warm welcome to Marie Joli, who has joined our production team in order to assure the revision of our French texts. Marie is replacing Jacqueline Robitaille, who has worked tirelessly for several years to assure the perfection in all the written work emanating from our Association. We sincerely thank Jacqueline for her professionalism and high standards, and we are grateful for her tireless efforts as the faithful Secretary of the Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton. (GBMP).

And with that, I hope you will enjoy reading what our new team has worked hard to produce.

**Sandra Jewett, President  
Potton Heritage Association**

## Le mot de la présidente

Je suis fière de vous présenter le sommaire de ce numéro de Histoire Potton History dans lequel vous noterez la présence de nouveaux collaborateurs à qui je souhaite la bienvenue.

Lorraine Rouillard partage avec nous ses souvenirs d'enfance en signant l'article *Ah! que mon village a changé!* En cette période d'investissements importants dans notre région, je fais mienne sa conclusion en clamant : « J'aime mon village! ».

En nous racontant la petite histoire du bureau de poste de Mansonville, Rachel Bégin met également en relief un point de rencontre incontournable de notre canton. Gérard Leduc souligne, par ailleurs, le centenaire du magasin Giroux et Giroux.

Promoteurs de la sauvegarde de notre patrimoine bâti, nous étions tous ravis de voir, le 23 octobre dernier, s'ouvrir le chantier des travaux de restauration de la grange ronde de Mansonville. D'autres granges rondes ont aussi décoré les paysages du canton, mais elles sont aujourd'hui disparues. Chantal Ethier a rencontré des membres de la famille Messier, qui furent propriétaires d'une grange ronde située près de l'intersection de la route 243 et du chemin Traver. Notre infatigable webmestre, Serge Normand, a parcouru nos archives photographiques pour dénicher des images qui illustrent la malheureuse agonie de cette grange.

Édouard Cloutier observe depuis plusieurs années un versant du mont Owl's Head à la recherche de la figure du hibou. Saura-t-il vous convaincre à partir de la photo soumise ?

Jean-Louis Bertrand signe également dans ce numéro sa dernière chronique portant sur la démocratie à Potton. Dans cet article, qui couvre également la période des troubles de 1837-1838, Jean-Louis souligne l'intérêt de consulter également des auteurs anglophones. Nous reproduisons donc dans ce numéro une série de quatre articles attribués aux auteurs suivants : Audrey Martin McCaw, Matthew F. Farfan, M.G. Peters et Edgar C. Barnett. Nous remercions la Société historique de Brome de nous avoir permis de les publier dans nos pages.

Enfin, j'accueille chaleureusement Marie Joli au sein de l'équipe de production de la revue, qui sera responsable de la révision française des articles. Marie succède à Jacqueline Robitaille, qui a travaillé sans relâche pendant plusieurs années à la révision de l'ensemble des publications de l'Association. Nous la remercions sincèrement pour son professionnalisme et pour les normes strictes qu'elle a imposées en matière de qualité du français. Nous lui sommes également reconnaissants des efforts importants qu'elle déploie à titre de secrétaire du Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton et du Comité de la grange ronde.

**Sandra Jewett, présidente  
Association du patrimoine de Potton**

## Ah! Que mon village a changé! par Lorraine Rouillard

Je parle ici d'un Mansonville des années 50-60. C'est un voyage dans le temps que je vous propose pour vous faire découvrir ce village où j'ai grandi. Il se peut que certains faits relatés manquent d'exactitude. L'important, ce sont les souvenirs précieux qui ont marqué mon enfance.



**La grande côte vue de notre maison**  
Collection L. Rouillard

Je suis née en 1952, sixième d'une famille composée d'un garçon et de six filles. Mon père, Raymond, originaire de Saint-Odilon de Cranborne en Beauce, est arrivé à Mansonville en 1920 à l'âge de 7 ans. Il aura, pendant sa vie, été fermier et camionneur. Il fut camionneur à son compte avant de travailler pour la Baker Talc Inc. et ensuite pour la Coopérative agricole jusqu'à l'âge de 70 ans. Ma mère, Cédonia Bédard, native de Sainte-Rose de Watford en Beauce également, est arrivée à son tour au début de la vingtaine, pour travailler comme « fille engagée » pour la famille Giroux.

Il est intéressant de constater qu'un grand nombre de familles francophones de Mansonville provenaient de Saint-Odilon ou des villages avoisinants. Mentionnons les Lessard, Colgan, Laplume, Maheu, Carrier, Marcoux, Boily,

Dupont, Baillargeon, Caron, Parent, Pouliot, Turcotte, Boucher, Lachance, entre autres. Chacune de ces familles aura contribué à semer nos racines dans notre beau coin de pays. Leurs descendants y vivent toujours.

J'ai passé mon enfance de l'autre côté de la rivière. Nous y habitions la 3<sup>e</sup> maison à droite, en face de la maison Manson. Il n'y avait, en ce temps-là, aucun nom de rue ni de numéro civique. Cette maison fut démolie depuis. Nos voisins de l'époque étaient la famille de Georges Hamelin qui était employé à l'épicerie de Tancrede Drouin et celle de Clément Lessard, livreur de pain pour la boulangerie Racine et dont la maison était située dans le « trou » au bord du pont. Cette maison fut détruite lors de la construction du nouveau pont. En face de notre résidence, la maison Manson appartenait à Gilles Bernier, contremaître au moulin à scie Rémillard, connu sous le nom de Mansonville Lumber. Il avait lui, comme voisins, Arthur Aiken, officier des douanes et Tancrede Drouin, épiciers.



**La maison de mon enfance**  
Collection L. Rouillard

J'ai commencé à fréquenter l'école catholique Notre-Dame-des-Lumières en 1959. Cette nouvelle école a été inaugurée un an ou deux avant mon entrée. Elle était dirigée par les Sœurs de la charité qui en habitaient une partie aux 2<sup>e</sup> et 3<sup>e</sup> étages. Cette étape de ma vie avec les religieuses me rappelle certaines choses

comme les spectacles de fin d'année qu'on préparait longtemps d'avance et qu'on présentait devant tous les villageois au sous-sol de l'église. Une grande scène permettait la présentation d'une variété de spectacles. Nous étions très impressionnés par l'imposant rideau de scène illustrant notre village. Je me souviens aussi de la tire de la Sainte-Catherine faite par les religieuses et que nous étirions à deux pour en faire des bonbons. À quelques reprises pendant l'année, les élèves devaient patiner en bas de laine pour faire briller les planchers qui venaient d'être cirés. Il y a, bien sûr aussi, les souvenirs de punitions ou de coups de règle sur les doigts pour les gauchers dont je faisais partie. De la fenêtre de ma classe, je pouvais apercevoir la maison Adams au toit en bardeaux bruns surmonté d'une petite tour qui me faisait rêver à un château quand je partais dans la lune.



**Spectacle devant le grand rideau à l'église.  
Lorraine, première rangée à gauche  
Collection L. Rouillard**

Mon trajet pour me rendre à l'école consistait à traverser le pont sur le trottoir en bois et à tourner à droite, puis à monter la petite côte du village (rue Mill). Évidemment, avant la côte, nous étions passés devant la Coopérative agricole et avons fait un arrêt chez le cordonnier Omer Privé qui vendait des bonbons à la « cenne ». On se régalaient de cigarettes Popeye, de boules noires, de pipes en réglisse noire, etc. Quand nous nous sentions plus riches, nous achetions des Cracker Jack, du toffee McIntosh en boîte ou un sac de chips à 5 cennes. Au retour de l'école, nous prenions

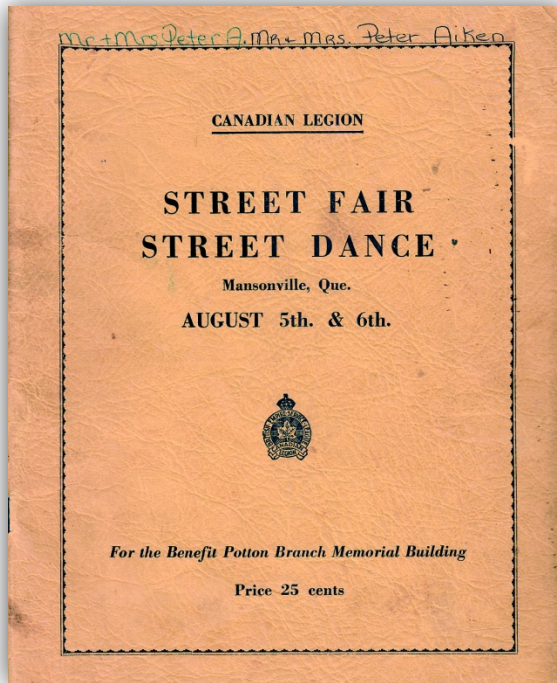
notre temps. L'une de nos activités préférées consistait à marcher sur les petites roches blanches pointues qui longeaient le mur de pierres devant l'église. C'était un défi d'endurer les roches pointues sous nos pieds. Nous nous arrêtons pour sentir les lilas qui bordaient les trottoirs, mais nous marchions vite devant une maison abandonnée voisine de la maison Reilly. Pour nous, il s'agissait sûrement d'une maison hantée. Nous traversions le village pour dévaler la grande côte jusqu'au pont et arriver enfin à la maison.

Le village possédait aussi son parc dans ces années-là : un espace vert, plat et presque dépourvu d'arbres. Il s'appelait la « Common » (parc Manson). C'était le lieu de rassemblement des villageois pour différentes activités. Mes souvenirs les plus lointains me ramènent à la tombola annuelle organisée chaque été, conjointement par la Légion canadienne et les différentes Églises de la paroisse incluant l'Église catholique avec le curé Boisclair. Chaque organisation y tenait son kiosque de jeux allant du bingo aux jeux de poches et aux pommes à attraper avec la bouche dans un seau d'eau. Le tout servait de collecte de fonds.



**Tombola | 1949  
Collection L. Rouillard**

Cette journée se terminait par une « Street Dance » devant l'hôtel de ville. Après avoir répandu de la poudre pour bébés ou celle venant de la Baker Talc sur la chaussée afin qu'elle soit plus glissante, chacun s'en donnait à cœur joie au son d'un groupe de musiciens.



**Programme de la Légion canadienne | 1949**  
Collection L. Rouillard

L'hiver venu, c'est la patinoire qui occupait la Common. Le père Noël de la Légion canadienne s'y installait aussi la veille de Noël pour distribuer des bonbons aux enfants. On passait beaucoup de temps sur la patinoire puisqu'on patinait tous les jours. C'était aussi l'époque des joutes de hockey et de ballon-balai entre villages avoisinants. Ces rencontres attiraient plusieurs spectateurs, car tous étaient férus de ces sports et avaient un esprit très compétitif. La cabane à patins, une sorte de roulotte, était animée soit par les batailles entre joueurs adverses ou par les amourettes en floraison.



**Mon frère Normand Rouillard | Saison 1956-57**  
Collection L. Rouillard

Le secteur économique était bien florissant. En effet, il y avait six épiceries : celle de Léon Lamothe (Dépanneur des 13), de Tancrede Drouin (Hôtel de Ville), de Gabriel McDuff (Euro Deli), de M. Stair (Owl's Bread), le magasin général Giroux (Rona) et le marché Richelieu de Rupert Clark. Les ménagères avaient donc le choix au moment d'aller s'approvisionner. Le magasin général Giroux était comme un coffre aux trésors; on y trouvait de tout autant en épicerie qu'en quincaillerie : jouets, tissus, bijoux, etc. Je me rappelle les beaux comptoirs en bois avec vitrines, les étagères pleines de tissus de toutes les couleurs, de fils, de rubans. L'épicerie Stair devint à un moment un « News Stand » où on pouvait se procurer journaux, magazines, tabac. Elle comportait aussi un comptoir à crème glacée. L'hôtel Mansonville en imposait sur son coin de rue. En plus du bar, on y trouvait une salle à manger, des chambres à louer et un salon de coiffure. Bien des histoires se sont déroulées dans cet hôtel au fil des ans. Son incendie fut une grande perte pour plusieurs villageois.

L'autre monument de la communauté fut le restaurant Couture (Soleil Rouge), propriété d'Yvonne et Gus Couture. C'était le principal lieu de rencontres des voisins et amis. Ce commerce comprenait un restaurant, une boutique de jouets, une boutique de souvenirs et de cadeaux. On y vendait aussi quelques articles



pour dépanner lors des fins de semaine, car les autres magasins étaient fermés. Les dépanneurs n'avaient pas encore fait leur entrée sur la scène québécoise. Après la grand-messe du dimanche, le restaurant se remplissait. On y prenait un café en s'échangeant les nouvelles et les racontars de la semaine. En ce qui me concerne, le restaurant aura marqué mon adolescence. En effet, on partait en patins de la patinoire pour aller s'entasser sur les banquettes en cuir du restaurant. On mettait des pièces de 0,25 \$ dans les petits juke-box placés sur les tables pour écouter nos hits préférés, tout en sirotant un Pepsi ou un milkshake. C'est aussi là que j'ai obtenu mon premier emploi à 14 ans comme serveuse. À l'arrière du restaurant, le barbier tenait son salon. Maman nous y faisait couper les cheveux quand nous étions petites. On était plusieurs à avoir la même coupe carrée. Finalement, un entrepôt était aussi utilisé par la boulangerie Racine de Granby. On y apportait le pain pendant la nuit afin que Clément Lessard puisse faire ses livraisons dès le matin.

À l'emplacement du Centre professionnel actuel, madame Yvonne Robin a tenu un commerce pendant plusieurs années. On l'appellerait maintenant un magasin de variétés. Elle offrait tout ce dont les couturières avaient besoin : de la lingerie, certains vêtements, des jouets, de la papeterie, etc. Le tout servi avec un sourire.

C'était l'époque des vendeurs itinérants pour différentes compagnies telles que Raleigh, Avon, Familex, les chips et boissons gazeuses Fiesta. Vous vous doutez bien que c'était la fête pour nous quand les marchands arrivaient. Ma mère, elle-même, a vendu des produits de beauté Régine de France, des corsets et des soutiens-gorges Spencer.

Des garages meublaient aussi le paysage commercial de Mansonville : le garage Esso Emery Marcoux, maintenant propriété de la famille Jauniaux, le garage Shell Giroux, le garage Edmond Ducharme dans la petite côte.

Les trois garages offraient pompes à essence et ateliers de mécanique.

Deux institutions financières, la Banque Impériale de Commerce (CIBC) et la Caisse populaire Desjardins, localisée dans une maison de la petite rue derrière le parc, avaient aussi pignon sur rue.

Il ne faut pas oublier les autres besoins de la communauté. D'abord, les soins de santé étaient dispensés par un médecin, le docteur Gillanders, qui devint une légende après son décès. Ensuite, plusieurs spécialistes variés se partageaient les tâches dont les agents d'assurances Paul-Émile Gemme, Alain Allard et Frank McKelvey, les électriciens Fred Korman et Royal Lamothe, le plombier George Jewett, le fournisseur de mazout René Robin, le livreur de lait Abel Rodrigue et le barbier Clermont Rodrigue. Enfin, les coiffeuses Flora Drouin et Jacqueline Champoux possédaient un salon dans l'hôtel, alors que Lise Maheux et, plus tard, Jocelyne Bouchard sont venues compléter les services offerts.

Le bureau de poste était situé là où se trouve maintenant le salon funéraire Désourdy. Il était géré par M. Ken Jones qui a assumé la fonction de maître de poste pendant de nombreuses années. Il a marqué la population par sa gentillesse et sa générosité.

Le salon funéraire, pour sa part, était situé dans la maison de M. Thomas Vachon, sur la petite rue derrière le parc (rue des Pins). C'est là que nous avons pleuré la perte de mon unique frère en 1962.

Les francs-maçons occupaient le même local que maintenant, alors que la Légion royale canadienne était installée dans des locaux du vieux couvent.

Il ne manquait pas d'emplois à Mansonville dans les années 60. Quelques industries y pourvoyaient. Je pense, entre autres, à la Baker Talc, au Space Research, à la Mansonville

Lumber, à quelques moulins à bobines, à la Mansonville Plastics, à la ferme de visons d'Emil Korman, à la Montreal Pipeline, à la Coopérative agricole de Waterloo, qui opérait une succursale à Mansonville, et à la station de ski Owl's Head. J'ajouterai, de plus, qu'il y avait des compagnies d'excavation, de construction, de transport, etc.

Les fermes foisonnaient et produisaient bien. Le verger des frères Conrad et Blaise Vachon nous offrait, chaque automne, ses belles pommes (chemin de Province Hill). La grange ronde ne représentait pas l'attrait touristique de maintenant. Cependant, elle assumait bien son rôle initial en abritant les vaches de monsieur Labbé. Elle n'était d'ailleurs pas la seule grange ronde de la paroisse, puisque la ferme Messier en possédait une, qui n'a toutefois pas survécu.

Le portrait ne serait pas complet si je ne mentionnais pas la présence, dans le village, de quatre églises soit les églises catholique, baptiste, unie et anglicane. On peut en ajouter une cinquième représentée par le monastère orthodoxe russe, à l'extérieur du village.

J'ai parlé de l'école catholique francophone, mais il y avait aussi l'école anglophone, Mansonville Elementary School. Elle a aussi marqué mon adolescence puisque c'est là que nous allions danser dans les fameux « Record Hop ». C'était le temps de l'« American Bandstand » et du rock. On s'y amusait beaucoup sans compter les « slows » qu'on dansait collés et les premiers baisers. Quelques années plus tard, une fois les religieuses parties, l'école francophone a autorisé la tenue de danses dans ses locaux.

La religion occupait une place importante, dans nos vies, pendant les années 60. Il me semble que nous étions toujours à l'église. Le dimanche, les paroissiens avaient le choix entre la basse messe et la grand-messe. La participation était élevée dans le temps. Ensuite venaient les occasions spéciales comme Noël, le Carême et ses retraites, Pâques, le mois de

Marie et j'en passe. Bien sûr, on a connu les visites paroissiales du curé Boisclair. Plusieurs dames de la paroisse faisaient partie des Dames de Sainte-Anne. Les différents offices religieux étaient accompagnés par la chorale composée, pendant longtemps, de membres des familles Lessard, Parent, Rodrigue et Caron.

Je me souviens avoir pris part à une procession de la Fête-Dieu. J'étais à l'avant avec d'autres enfants et je lançais des pétales de fleurs sur la chaussée. C'était sûrement la dernière procession puisque cette cérémonie religieuse a pris fin en 59 ou en 60.

Le Cercle des fermières était très actif à cette époque. Les membres, dont ma mère, se réunissaient au sous-sol de l'église pour tisser ou pour « piquer » des courtpointes.

Finalement, cette période de ma vie m'aura permis d'être témoin d'événements malheureux dont le déversement d'un chargement de bétail dans la rivière. Le camion de Fred Turcotte, transporteur de bétail, avait fait défaut dans la grande côte. Il est descendu à reculons jusqu'à ce qu'il frappe le parapet du pont. De notre fenêtre de la cuisine, nous pouvions voir les vaches tomber une à une dans la rivière. Il y a eu aussi l'explosion suivie d'un incendie à la Mansonville Plastics et l'incendie du garage Emery Marcoux.

Voilà, je dois mettre fin à mon récit ici. J'ai sûrement oublié des gens; je vous demande de m'en excuser. Cependant, j'espère avoir réussi à vous faire visualiser le village de mon enfance. J'ai eu la chance de grandir dans un village où le respect des différences et l'entraide étaient de mise. Différentes nationalités s'y sont toujours côtoyées sans problème. Ces valeurs ont été intégrées par ses enfants.

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**J'aime mon village!**

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## L'histoire du bureau de poste par Rachel Bégin

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L'hiver dernier, nous avons posté une enveloppe dans la boîte de courrier communautaire. Le lendemain, notre casier contenait un message : l'affranchissement était insuffisant. Cependant le courrier était parti tout de même car Barbara Taylor, la maîtresse de poste, avait ajouté les quelques sous manquants. Qui dit mieux en termes de services ?

Lorsque j'ai rencontré deux de nos maîtresses de poste, j'ai compris à quel point notre bureau de poste sortait de l'ordinaire. « On se sentait au cœur de la communauté », affirment Barbara Taylor et Diane Rypinski, qui ont recueilli pendant des années les confidences de leurs concitoyens. Barbara Taylor a été maîtresse de poste de 2013 à 2018 et Diane Rypinski occupa cette fonction de 1979 à 2007, après une période de travail à temps partiel.

Les employés des petits bureaux de poste font souvent office d'écrivains publics. Ils prodiguent aide et conseils aux clients embêtés par les formulaires gouvernementaux, les mandats postaux ou les demandes de passeport. Diane, grâce à sa connaissance de quatre langues (anglais, français, polonais et russe), fut d'une grande aide pour les immigrants originaires de l'Europe de l'Est réfugiés ici après la guerre. Elle se rappelle que plusieurs anciens se retrouvaient au bureau de poste, l'un avec son violon, l'autre avec son harmonica, faisant du local un endroit festif.

Chacune de nos maîtresses de poste a livré elle-même, en son temps, des colis de Noël. C'est que, le 24 décembre, le facteur terminait sa tournée à midi, alors que les colis continuaient à arriver. Les jours de neige abondante, Barbara a même livré des médicaments, grâce à son véhicule à quatre roues motrices.

Les surprises faisaient également partie du travail, comme le jour où l'on reçut un sac de courrier rempli de poussière. Il s'agissait des cendres d'une personne destinées à être enterrées ici, mais mal emballées dans une boîte de carton. On devine combien il fut difficile de les ramasser et beaucoup de destinataires, ce jour-là, en reçurent un petit échantillon. Une autre fois, un dentier orphelin arriva, sans adresse de réception. Autres colis spéciaux, des abeilles ou des poussins. Pour ces derniers, l'acheteur ne venait pas toujours immédiatement, laissant aux responsables sur place, en plus de leurs tâches journalières, le plaisir de nourrir les petits pendant quelques heures!

### Plongeon dans l'histoire : l'acheminement du courrier.

De tout temps, l'arrivée du courrier a suscité la curiosité, l'espoir et parfois quelque crainte parmi les destinataires. Même aujourd'hui, nous surveillons le passage du facteur! Jadis une grande part de la vie sociale se jouait sur le perron de l'église, mais aussi au bureau de poste, parfois situé dans le magasin général. Jusqu'en 1908, où fut instituée la livraison à domicile, chacun se rendait au bureau de poste du rang ou du village pour récupérer son courrier. Les uns essayaient de deviner le contenu des lettres ou des colis, les autres commentaient les événements locaux, nationaux ou mondiaux. Cependant tous, y compris les personnes esseulées ou les âmes en peine, trouvaient au bureau de poste une oreille attentive ou un conseil.

Le temps nécessaire au voyage du courrier, au fil de l'histoire, connut maintes variations. Ainsi, au début de la colonie, le temps requis pour le transport du courrier par bateau à voiles sur l'Atlantique pouvait sans doute se décliner en termes de mois ou même d'années. De ce côté-ci de l'océan, on mit tout d'abord à contribution les messagers à cheval ou en traîneau à chiens.

Année Ouverture fermeture	Nom du bureau de poste	Township	Maître de poste	Lieu
1837 /1865	South Potton	Potton	H.R. Woods	Highwater jusqu'en 1845, Mansonville en 1865
1865/1895	West Potton	Potton	Chase Gilman	Devenu Dunkin
1879/1970	Vale Perkins	Potton	Mills Geer	Autrefois Herbert
1893/ 1896	Tuck's Landing	Potton	J.F. Tuck	Autrefois Knowlton Landing, Knowlton Landing en 1896
1899/1913	Province Hill		Simon Sargent	
1908/1934	Potton Springs	Potton	J.A. Wright	Autrefois Bolton Springs

David P. Evens | Brome County Historical Society

Avant 1817, les édits du gouvernement arrivaient par des messagers spéciaux, faute de service postal régulier dans les Cantons-de-l'Est.

Au tout début du XIXe siècle, beaucoup de pionniers, qui arrivaient de Nouvelle-Angleterre, souhaitent recevoir des nouvelles de leurs proches. Des messagers à cheval traversaient le Vermont et le courrier parvenait aux destinataires environ deux fois par mois, selon l'historien des Cantons B. F. Hubbard. Certains recevaient un journal, *The Green Mountain Patriot*, publié à Peacham, Vermont. En 1817, on ouvrit enfin une route postale reliant Stanstead à la ville de Québec, en passant par Melbourne et le chemin Craig; le courrier était distribué chaque semaine.

Avec l'amélioration du réseau routier dans les années 1820 et 1830, le service de diligence connut un développement rapide. Sur les routes des Cantons, elles transportaient le courrier dans une malle, d'où l'expression « aller chercher la malle », employée par plusieurs d'entre nous qui n'en connaissent pas l'origine. On n'imagine plus, aujourd'hui, le temps nécessaire pour aller d'un endroit à l'autre. Ainsi, entre Québec et Boston, le voyage durait quatre jours et de Montréal à Québec, deux jours et demi, avec plusieurs arrêts dans les relais.

Avec le temps, les diligences adoptèrent d'autres fonctions et itinéraires. Pour les longs trajets, elles cédèrent la place au chemin de fer et reprirent du service en transportant les voyageurs et le courrier entre la gare et le village. De plus, elles prirent le relais des bateaux à vapeur sur les quais. Notre région a connu aussi le transport du courrier par bateau sur le lac Memphrémagog. En effet, à partir de 1824 et jusqu'en 1850, le traversier *Copp* effectuait un service hebdomadaire entre les deux rives du lac pendant l'été. En 1854, le ministère aménagea les premiers wagons-postes, dans lesquels le courrier était non seulement transporté, mais également trié pendant le voyage entre les gares. En 1853, le temps pour livrer le courrier entre Québec et Windsor passa de 10 jours et demi à 49 heures.

### Les bureaux de poste dans notre région

À Mansonville, le bureau de poste était d'abord localisé dans l'hôtel de ville, ensuite dans la maison de Frank Cowan, aujourd'hui résidence de Hiro Gagnon, et enfin il déménagea dans l'immeuble des francs-maçons, près de l'hôtel de ville. Au début des années 1960, Postes Canada acquit son propre établissement, là où il se trouve aujourd'hui. Au fil des deux derniers siècles, lorsqu'une localité se développait, elle réclamait un bureau de poste,

par requête ou pétition auprès de Postes Canada. On constate que l'emplacement des services a changé avec l'évolution des voies de communication. Notre région connut de nombreux changements, comme en témoigne le tableau compilé par David P. Ewens, de la BCHS (Brome County Historical Society). En 1830, Potton, Brome et Sutton possédaient un bureau de poste. Aujourd'hui il existe un bureau de poste à Mansonville, à Abercorn et à Bolton-Est.

### L'affranchissement et l'oblitération

Au début, les tarifs variaient selon le nombre de feuilles à expédier. La deuxième feuille doublait le tarif, la troisième le triplait, et ainsi de suite. Avant 1844, on utilisait peu les enveloppes, car elles comptaient comme une feuille supplémentaire. On appliquait plutôt sur le pli de la feuille, un cachet de cire fondue à la flamme d'une bougie. Habituellement rouge, le cachet était noir pour les faire-part de décès. Les tarifs augmentaient aussi en fonction de la distance. En l'occurrence, la *Brome County Historical Society* nous apprend que l'envoi sur un trajet de 0 à 60 milles coûtait 4<sup>1/2</sup> pence; celui de 61 à 100 milles, 7 pence; de 101 à 200 milles, 9 pence; de 201 à 300 milles, 11 pence; enfin, de 300 à 400 milles, 1 shilling et 2 pence. (Le shilling valait 12 pence). Pour les tarifs transatlantiques, toujours selon la même source, l'envoi d'une lettre d'une once à partir de Brome coûtait 13 shillings et 4 pence, équivalant à 2.65\$ de nos jours (1982).

« En ce temps-là », le destinataire refusait parfois de payer les frais d'expédition pour diverses raisons. Par exemple, certains rusés utilisaient un code révélant le contenu du message, sous forme de petits signes sur l'enveloppe : le stratagème permettait au destinataire, d'obtenir des nouvelles sans ouvrir l'enveloppe. Cette façon de faire a été interrompue par la mise en circulation du timbre-poste, une invention de Rowland Hill, le

6 mai 1840, en Angleterre. Le principe du timbre simplifiait les tarifs et permettait de percevoir le paiement, car l'expéditeur payait l'envoi au départ. Au tout début, on devait découper les timbres aux ciseaux mais, bientôt, on émit des timbres perforés, une nette amélioration quant à l'efficacité du service. En 1851, le premier timbre canadien fit son apparition. Oeuvre de Sir *Sandford Fleming*, il reproduisait un castor : « On jugeait que le castor représentait bien le Canadien moyen parce qu'il est travaillant, tenace et très habile en construction. »

Les instruments de travail des postiers ont changé au cours de l'histoire. Il y eut des tampons encreurs, des marteaux à oblitérer et des cachets dateurs en acier, avec sceau de timbrage en caoutchouc. On peut en voir des images sur le site du Musée canadien de la poste. Apparaissaient sur l'envoi la date et le lieu d'expédition. Une machine pour l'oblitération reste encore en fonction à Mansonville. L'entretien de cette machine suppose une régularité dans le nettoyage, pour assurer la lisibilité du cachet. De plus, c'est une machine dont il ne faut surtout pas oublier de changer la date chaque matin !



**Barbara Taylor opérant la machine  
pour oblitérer le courrier**  
S. Normand | 2017

Lorsqu'une occasion se présente d'abuser d'une fonction, certains cèdent à la tentation. Jusqu'à janvier 1844, les maîtres de poste bénéficiaient d'une dispense d'affranchissement pour leur courrier personnel. À cette époque, plusieurs maîtres de poste, également imprimeurs, hommes d'affaires ou éditeurs de journaux, profitaient de cet avantage qui, en raison d'abus fréquents, fut retiré à tous les agents des postes sauf au sous-ministre.

Plus loin dans le passé, en 1827, on retrouve les traces de *Thomas Allen Stayner*, maître général des Postes du Haut et du Bas-Canada sous le contrôle de Londres. À cette époque, Londres se réservait encore le droit de fixer les tarifs et de garder les recettes. Quant à Stayner, il accroissait lui-même ses gains, car il pouvait fixer et conserver les revenus générés par les tarifs imposés aux journaux canadiens, un procédé dénoncé par ces derniers. Finalement, Londres céda le contrôle des postes au Canada, en 1851 et le ministère des Postes vit le jour en 1867, avec le but d'établir un service uniforme à travers le pays.

Parfois, avec l'élection d'un nouveau gouvernement, un nouveau maître de poste était nommé. Dans notre région, la rumeur prétend qu'il y eut, à un certain moment, des nominations partisans, rumeur qui inspira d'ailleurs quelques chansons grivoises, que nous ne reproduirons pas ici.

### Courtoisie et recherche de solution

Finalement, on ne saurait, aujourd'hui, se figurer pleinement l'importance passée de la poste comme principal et parfois unique moyen de communication avec l'extérieur. À Potton, les responsables de notre bureau de poste local conservent leur tradition d'un service empressé, offert avec sourire et amabilité. Diane Rypinski et Barbara Taylor se souviennent de la formation offerte par

l'administration de la poste à ses futurs employés. On apprenait entre autres que, face à un client en colère, « Calmez-vous » est une expression inutile ; « Je vous comprends », donne de bien meilleurs résultats!

Notre désir de conserver un service dispensé si aimablement n'est donc pas étonnant. Ainsi, lorsque Stephen Harper était au pouvoir et que notre bureau de poste était menacé de disparition, plusieurs d'entre nous ont signé une pétition pour le conserver. Barbara Taylor, qui était alors en poste, fit sa part : pour justifier le maintien des services, elle rassembla des documents probants sur le nombre de clients et les revenus. Grâce à sa vigilance et à celle des citoyens, nous pouvons toujours profiter du service exceptionnel de notre bureau de poste.

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### Note de la rédaction

On trouve également des informations complémentaires sous l'entrée *Mansonville, Postes Canada Post* dans le répertoire toponymique de Potton.

La version anglaise de ce texte est reproduite ci-dessous.

### Editor's note

Additional information is also available under the entry *Mansonville, Postes Canada Post* in the Potton Place Names directory.

This text, in English, is reproduced below.

### Place Names of Potton and More Sandra Jewett | 2013

#### Mansonville, Postes Canada Post

*"The first post-office in Potton was established at Knowlton's Landing. Afterward, it was removed to Dr. Gilman's in South Potton, as it was then called. Subsequently, it was removed to Coit's Corners, L.A. Coit being postmaster; and thence, about 1845, to Mansonville, where it still remains."*<sup>[1]</sup>

In the Missiskoui Standard, a newspaper published in Frelighsburg, January 17, 1837 issue, appeared the announcement of new mail routes and appointments of Post Masters for Sutton and Potton. *"A route is also established from Frelighsburg (...) across Sutton Mountain to South Potton, to Mr. Elkins', thence by Mr. Coit's to Mr. Manson's mills."*<sup>[2]</sup> From the Canada Directory of 1857-

58, we learn that "(...) mail (was) tri-weekly"<sup>[3]</sup> for the Sutton area and most probably on a similar schedule for the neighbouring Township of Potton.

Early mail service was slow, erratic and expensive. Most mail was carried "by favour" of some traveller going to the destination, either by stage or ferry. When a postal system was organized, payment for the service was made in the British system of pounds, schillings and pence until 1859, when Canada's monetary system converted to decimal.

The advent of rail service in rural areas greatly speeded mail delivery, and resulted in an increased use of the postal system for commerce.

Potton's very own "great mail robbery" occurred in 1867, an event in which *"money letters containing between \$400 and \$500 (were) (...) abstracted from the mail, but whether from the Post Office at Mansonville or after the mail left (...) was not known"*. An investigation *"relieved all the Postmasters at Potton and along the line"<sup>[4]</sup>*, this presumed to mean that Postmasters concerned were placed on leave until investigation resolved the matter. The "matter" remains without answer since no further mention of the incident has been found.

After the move to Mansonville from Coit's Corner in 1845, the post office became known as Mansonville-Potton post office. In 1895, the name changed to Mansonville and so it has remained to this day.

Before free rural mail delivery was instituted across Canada, on October 10, 1908, small post-offices sprung up in virtually every hamlet of Potton, including Province Hill, Leadville, Owl's Head, Potton Springs and McNeil's Crossing, Dunkin, Highwater, Vale Perkins, and Knowlton Landing, also

known as Tuck's Landing, depending upon the political party in power!

At 93 years of age, John F. Tuck was still the faithful postmaster in Knowlton Landing, having devoted some 45 years to the task.



Mail delivery | 1940~1945  
Archives APP

When these small post offices were eventually phased out, rural routes were established and mail delivery was then almost door-to-door. Throughout the 1930's and 40's, and perhaps even earlier, Philius Hamelin faithfully delivered mail by horse and cart on Rural Route 2, Mansonville-Vale-Perkins-Knowlton-Landing and to parts of what is now Cooledge Road, a distance of some 11-12 miles, calculated on today's roads, one way. He alternated horses each day, using a cart in summer, sleigh in winter. *"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat (...) will keep this faithful courier from his appointed rounds!"* Plate # 61 in *Potton d'antan, Yesterdays of Potton* depicts another postman, Aulden Bailey, delivering mail by horse and cart in the 1930's.

Today, Potton's only Post Office is in Mansonville. The building was built in 1963, before which the post office was located on the

first floor of the St. John's Masonic Lodge building, beside the Dépanneur des 13, where the funeral parlour is now located.

Clinton Adams, Kenneth Jones and Danuta Rypinski-Marcoux have been successive postmasters to name only three. Barbara Brouillette, of Mansonville, worked in our local post office for 37 years, beginning in the time of Mr. Adams. She recalls that mail delivery at the time was three times a day, by rail to Highwater, and was brought to the Post Office by Merrill Heath, the owner of Mansonville House and station agent. Barbara recounted that Heath's service *"was called 'The Stage' because anyone needing a ride to or from Highwater Station to town could ride along for a quarter!"* (\$0.25). Mail was subsequently delivered twice daily, by train to the East Ray railway station, near Eastman. It was then retrieved by Walter Durrell, a South Bolton resident, and delivered to offices in Bolton Centre, South Bolton and Mansonville.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Sources

- [1] *Contributions to the History of the Eastern Townships*, Thomas, Cyrus, 1866, page 311
- [2] *Along the Old Roads, Lore and Legend of Brome County*, "Glimpses of Sutton Flats", 1965, page 63
- [3] Same article, page 62
- [4] From the *Waterloo Advertiser* of December 19, 1867, quoted in *Yesterdays of Brome County*, Volume I, page 27
- [5] Conversation with Barbara Brouillette, October 16, 2012



Giroux et Giroux, 100 ans à Mansonville  
par Gérard Leduc

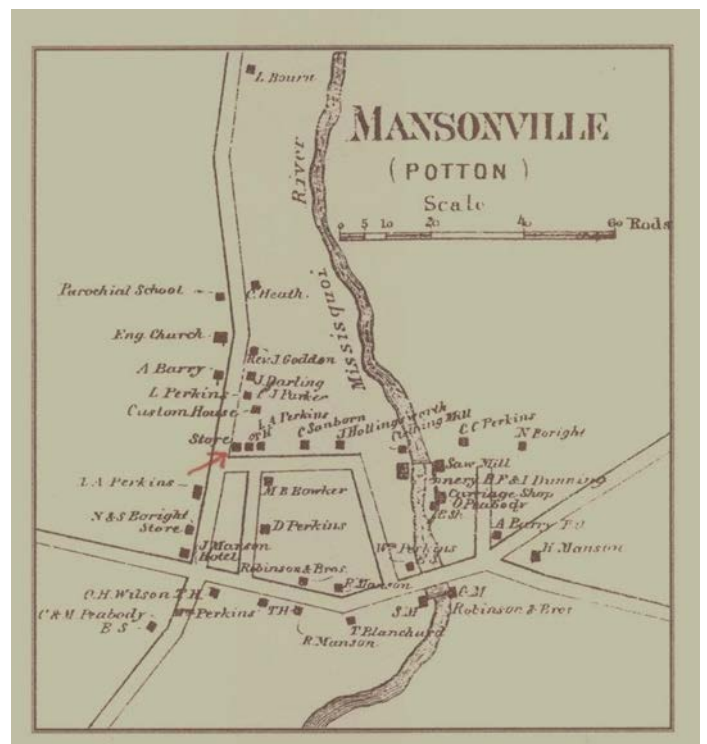


Les cinq propriétaires de la famille Giroux et photo du magasin vers 1950.

La famille Giroux exploite un commerce sur la rue Principale de Mansonville depuis cent ans déjà! L'article qui suit examine le chemin parcouru par les nombreux propriétaires qui ont occupé le site de ce magasin.

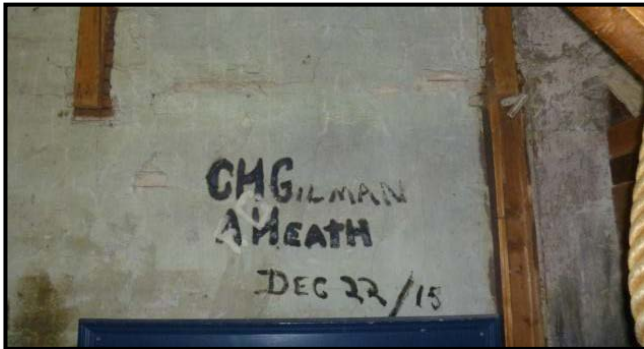
Un plan du village de Mansonville, qui provient de la carte Walling de 1864, nous indique la présence d'un commerce sur le coin des rues Principale et Mill (marqueur fléché rouge sur le plan ci-contre); le nom du propriétaire m'est inconnu. Les fondations de pierre de ce bâtiment sont toujours présentes sous le commerce actuel.

C'est dans cette bâtisse que s'installe, avant 1915, la quincaillerie F. N. Corriveau qui y remplace un grand hôtel, le Windsor.



Tiré de la carte Walling, 1864

MM. C. M. G. Gillman et A. Heath, qui ont peint leurs noms sur un mur du bâtiment le 22 décembre 1915, l'occupent alors.



**Graffitis sur un mur du magasin**  
Collection G. Leduc

En 1918, Joseph-Alfred Giroux arrive de la Beauce. Il est le premier des cinq générations de la famille à exploiter cette quincaillerie. En 1925, Gédéon Giroux, neveu de Joseph-Alfred, se joint à son oncle qui avait pris la relève en 1920. Il est suivi en 1949 et jusqu'en 1984, par son fils Gilles. Enfin, Pierre, le fils de ce dernier, devient propriétaire en 1970. Son fils Daniel lui succède à partir de 2003.

Au cours des années, le commerce a servi une clientèle assez variée composée des villageois de Mansonville et des cultivateurs du canton de Potton. Il est le « magasin général » de l'endroit. On y vend non seulement des clous et de la peinture, mais également des aliments et, étonnamment, un onguent « pour toutes sortes de bobos » et un sirop enrichi de menthol et d'alcool. Joseph-Alfred, surnommé le « Druide » fabriquait ces produits miracles de marque « Eskimo », distribués partout au Québec. Enfin, comme on peut le voir sur la photo du bâtiment, le magasin Giroux et Giroux devient dépositaire de machinerie agricole pour la compagnie International Harvester dont on aperçoit l'affiche au-dessus de l'entrée.

Le magasin Giroux et Giroux inc. occupe donc un site commercial qui a connu divers propriétaires depuis plus de 150 ans et qui affiche aujourd'hui la bannière Rona. Volet intéressant de notre patrimoine commercial : il a servi d'abord une population rurale, puis il a évolué pour contribuer au développement des secteurs villégiature et tourisme local.

Souhaitons longue vie à cette famille de commerçants ! Daniel a trois enfants, deux filles et un garçon. Verra-t-on un ou une d'entre eux assurer la pérennité de cette lignée de commerçants ?

#### Note de la rédaction

On trouve également des informations complémentaires sous l'entrée *Giroux & Giroux, Magasin* dans le répertoire toponymique de Potton.

La version anglaise de ce texte est reproduite ci-dessous.

#### Editor's note

Additional information is also available under the entry *Giroux & Giroux, Magasin* in the Potton Place Name directory.

This text, in English, is reproduced below.

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## Place Names of Potton and More

Sandra Jewett | 2013

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### Giroux & Giroux, Magasin

This building was built in 1824 by James Manson. Around 1900, it was known as "The Windsor Hotel". Around 1910, F.N. Corriveau purchased the building and made it into a general store.

From 1915 to 1918 the general store was owned and operated by C. H. Gilman and A. Heath, who then sold to Joseph-Alfred Giroux in 1918. J.-A. Giroux continued to operate a general store with his nephew Gédéon Giroux. Succeeding generations of the Gédéon Giroux family have operated it since: Gilles and his wife, Suzelle Bernier-Giroux, ran it with sons Pierre, the late Paul, and daughter, Marie. Their oldest daughter Lyn made her life as a nurse elsewhere. Pierre married Suzette St-Onge, a local girl, and they had two sons: Daniel, who now owns the retail business operating under the Rona banner, and Jean-François, who owns and operates the Shell gas station in Mansonville.

Giroux's Store is the oldest continuously family-run business in Potton, serving generation after generation of farmer and cottager alike with efficient friendliness. In 2012, Giroux's Store, as it is still called, operates exclusively as a hardware and building supply store under the Rona banner, but in years past, it was a true general store selling everything from foodstuffs to coal oil by the gallon, rubber boots and overalls, blankets, nylon stockings to yard goods,

pharmaceuticals for animal husbandry and sewing notions, appliances to farm tools. Rare was the item they did not stock.

In a short conversation with Pierre recently, it was learned that it was his maternal grandfather, Omer Bernier, a contractor specialized in heating and plumbing from Saint-Hyacinthe, who installed these essential



*Potton d'antan | Yesterdays of Potton*  
**Note the hitching post for horses in the front!**

requirements in Saint-Cajetan Church, when it was constructed in 1950.

This building has strong heritage value, according to its classification by Claude Bergeron, who was commissioned by the Municipal Council to evaluate the buildings within the urban perimeter of Mansonville. The classification considers only the heritage value with no particular weighting as to its authenticity.

Please have a look at the interpretative panel affixed to the store's front. It was placed there by Potton Heritage Association to identify buildings of note featured in *Une promenade au village de Mansonville*, the brochure accompanying a walking tour of Mansonville.

**La grange Messier**  
**Souvenirs d'une grange ronde**  
**aujourd'hui disparue**  
 par Chantal Ethier



**Vue aérienne de la ferme Messier | 1965**  
 Archives APP

La grange ronde Messier aurait été bâtie par un certain John Sanders au début du XXe siècle. L'année exacte de sa construction demeure inconnue. On sait toutefois qu'elle fut érigée avant celle de Mansonville, qui date de 1912. Lorsque Joseph Messier fit l'acquisition de la grange qui allait porter son nom, en 1921, elle appartenait à la famille d'Irving Davis.

En 1940, quelques années avant sa mort, Joseph revendit la ferme à son fils Elphège. La terre familiale s'étendait alors sur 275 acres, de part et d'autre de la route 243 et du chemin Traver. « On a peu de détails sur ces années-là, raconte Suzanne, une des trois filles d'Elphège. Notre grand-père est décédé avant notre naissance et notre père ne parlait pas beaucoup ».

Mais son frère aîné Jules, le seul garçon de la famille, se souvient très bien de la grange ronde. « On y grimpait en tracteur jusqu'à l'étage, qui formait une sorte de mezzanine ouverte au centre. Sans faire trop d'effort, nous pouvions jeter le foin au rez-de-chaussée, pour nourrir les vaches. »

Suzanne conserve aussi de beaux souvenirs de cette époque. Petite fille, elle accompagnait son père aux champs et aidait au ramassage du foin. « Je préférais traire les vaches plutôt que faire la vaisselle », dit-elle en riant.

Pourtant, aucun des quatre enfants d'Elphège n'a voulu reprendre la ferme. À la fin des années 60, ils avaient presque tous quitté le canton pour aller vivre à Valcourt ou à Granby. En 1973, alors que l'industrie laitière connaissait des transformations technologiques, Elphège décida de vendre. « Il avait 67 ans et se sentait dépassé par tous ces changements », raconte son fils Jules. Et puis, la grange tombait en ruine. La remettre sur pied aurait coûté trop cher.

C'est une résidente de Montréal, Margaret Kemps Morris, qui acquit la terre dans le but de la revendre en lots. Un professeur de l'université McGill, monsieur McMahon, racheta la parcelle de terrain où se trouvait la grange et tenta, tant bien que mal, de la préserver.

Malheureusement, en 1974, une violente tempête endommagea les câbles qu'il avait installés pour la soutenir. La grange se mit à pencher. Abandonnée à son sort, elle finira par s'effondrer.



**Jules Messier | 1963**  
 Collection Messier

Aujourd'hui, il ne reste aucune trace de la grange Messier. « Je ne suis même plus certaine de l'endroit exact où elle se trouvait », relate Suzanne. Les champs cultivés par son père, recouverts maintenant par les arbres, ont également disparu. Mais la maison familiale est toujours là. Elle a été rénoverée et déplacée de quelques centaines de mètres pour l'éloigner de la route 243. Suzanne est heureuse qu'on ait baptisé la route qui traverse l'ancien domaine familial du nom de chemin Messier. « En 2005, avec l'aide de mon beau-frère Clément, j'ai effectué une recherche sur l'histoire de la ferme pour la présentation du dossier à la Commission de toponymie », dit-elle. « Le peu que nous savons est noté là. Heureusement, car avec le temps, nous pourrions tout oublier... »



**Clément Marois, Pauline Messier, Suzanne Messier, Denis Lafaille, Monique Messier, Gilles Champigny  
Devant la grange ronde | ~ 1960**



**Grange Messier | 1931~1942  
Collection Talbot**



**Grange Messier | 1931~1942  
Collection Talbot**



**Grange Messier | 1974  
Archives APP**



**Grange Messier | 1977  
Archives APP**

### Pourquoi étaient-elles rondes?

Entre 1885 et 1920, on trouvait une trentaine de granges circulaires en Estrie, éparpillées le long la frontière américaine. Elles étaient construites en bois, mesuraient entre 18m et 27m de diamètre et comportaient, la plupart du temps, deux étages.

Les *Shakers*, un groupe religieux américain, auraient érigé la première grange ronde en 1826, au Massachussets. Elles sont ensuite apparues au Vermont à la fin des années 1890, au moment où l'industrie laitière était en pleine expansion. Certains agriculteurs d'ici ont été séduits par cette mode, dont ils entendaient parler dans les journaux et les foires agricoles.

La légende veut que les *Skakers* aient préféré les bâtiments circulaires pour empêcher le diable de se cacher dans les coins. Mais en réalité, les agriculteurs les choisissaient pour des raisons d'ordre pratique. D'une part, la grange ronde pouvait abriter davantage de bêtes que le modèle rectangulaire. Placés en cercle au rez-de-chaussée, les animaux avaient la tête orientée vers le centre, ce qui facilitait le nourrissage, alors que l'étage supérieur servait à entreposer le fourrage. D'autre part, les fenêtres tout autour du bâtiment assuraient un apport constant de lumière et procurait une meilleure ventilation. Une forme arrondie offrait également une meilleure résistance au vent.

Toutefois, bâtir ce type de construction coûtait cher: la perte de bois, en raison des nombreux découpages nécessaires pour concevoir une architecture circulaire, était importante. De plus, la forme du bâtiment rendait plus difficile son agrandissement, ce qui explique l'abandon progressif de ce type de bâtiment vers 1915. Aujourd'hui, il ne reste plus que six granges rondes dans les Cantons-de-l'Est, dont certaines sont en mauvais état.

### Une grange au coeur du village.

Au début du siècle dernier, Potton comptait quatre granges circulaires: la grange Messier et celle de Léon Eldridge, situées près de la route 243, celle de Bill Gendron, à Highwater, et celle de Robert J. Jersey, au centre de Mansonville.

Aujourd'hui, seule la grange de Mansonville est encore debout. Non seulement ce bâtiment circulaire présente un réel intérêt historique, mais il s'agit également d'une des rares constructions du genre à être située au beau milieu d'un village. Maintenant âgée de 106 ans, notre grange a souffert des assauts du temps. L'an dernier, par mesure de sécurité, on a dû la fermer au public.

Pour éviter qu'elle ne connaisse le même sort que les autres granges rondes du canton, le Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton (GBMP) et le Comité de la grange ronde ont travaillé d'arrache-pied pour trouver les ressources financières nécessaires à sa restauration. Après plus de huit ans de démarches, leurs efforts ont enfin porté fruit: la majeure partie du financement a été obtenue, mais il manque encore quelques dizaines de milliers de dollars pour réaliser la totalité du projet.

Les travaux ont donc débuté cet automne et devraient se terminer le 31 octobre 2019. On procèdera à la réfection des fondations, au renforcement des planchers, à la réparation ou au remplacement des portes et des fenêtres et au remplacement du toit. Une fois la restauration terminée, la grange abritera le Centre d'interprétation du patrimoine de Potton. Non seulement on aura sauvé un rare bâtiment patrimonial, mais on lui aura donné une vocation de conservation et de mise en valeur de notre histoire. Un atout, à la fois pour notre communauté et pour le développement de notre industrie touristique...

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### Sauvons la grange ronde de Mansonville! Ouverture du chantier | Octobre 2018



Photos | S. Normand

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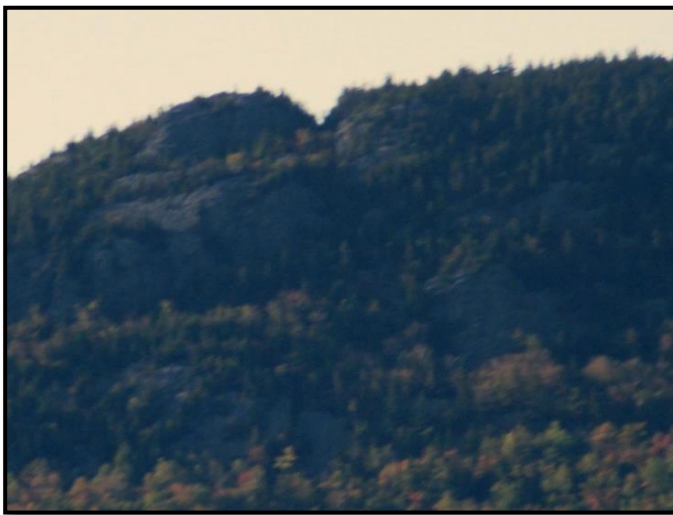
**Le mont Owl's Head  
tire-t-il son nom d'une formation  
rocheuse à son sommet ?  
par Édouard Cloutier**

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La photo ci-dessous de la face sud-ouest du mont Owl's Head a été prise sur le lac Memphrémagog à environ 72 degrés 15' de latitude et 45 degrés 02' de longitude, le 19 septembre 2017 à 15h52.

On y discerne, sans trop forcer l'imagination, une tête de hibou dont l'œil droit est nettement visible et l'œil gauche est esquissé en partie et en partie recouvert de végétation.

J'ai constaté à plusieurs reprises que cette possible tête de hibou est visible dans un



Face sud-ouest du mont Owl's Head  
Édouard Cloutier

périmètre d'environ 400-500 mètres autour des coordonnées géographiques indiquées ci-haut, en fin d'après-midi quand le soleil jette un éclairage de biais sur cette face de la montagne, mettant en relief ce dessin rocheux qui évoque une tête de hibou.

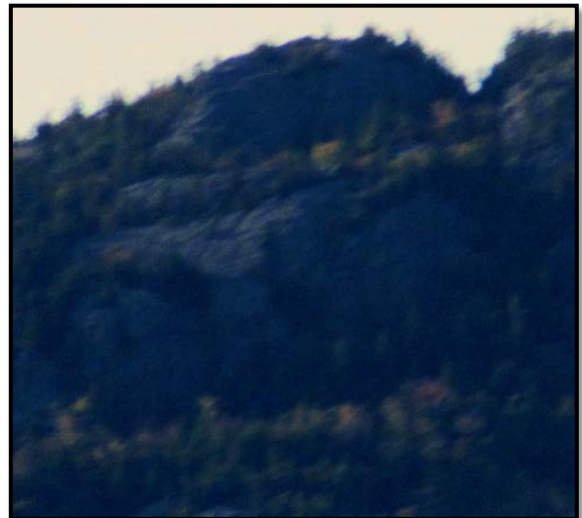
Si d'autres yeux que les miens percevaient le même dessin rocheux vers le même endroit et vers la même période du jour (dont le moment varie bien sûr selon les saisons), on pourrait alors envisager sérieusement que la montagne ait été nommée en fonction de cette évocation rocheuse d'une tête de hibou.

On pourrait aussi supposer que ce dessin rocheux, mis en contraste par le soleil angulaire de fin d'après-midi, aurait été repéré par les Amérindiens qui vivaient en ces lieux, il y a un ou deux siècles.

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N.B. Ces photos nous ont été transmises  
à basse résolution.

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## Chroniques

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### La démocratie à Potton

**1834-1838 :**

**l'élection de 1834,  
l'insurrection de 1837,  
la défaite des patriotes en 1838,  
la répression et la fin du Bas-Canada.**

#### Recherche de Jean-Louis Bertrand

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Cette huitième chronique sur la démocratie à Potton évoque l'élection de 1834 et la rébellion des patriotes en 1837 et en 1838. Les élections ont lieu du 11 octobre au 22 novembre 1834<sup>1</sup>. Le Parti patriote remporte 68 sièges et le Parti britannique, 16. Dans le comté de Stanstead, qui englobe le canton de Potton, le premier siège est remporté par John Grannis, remplacé en 1837 par Moses French Colby. Marcus Child est élu au second siège.

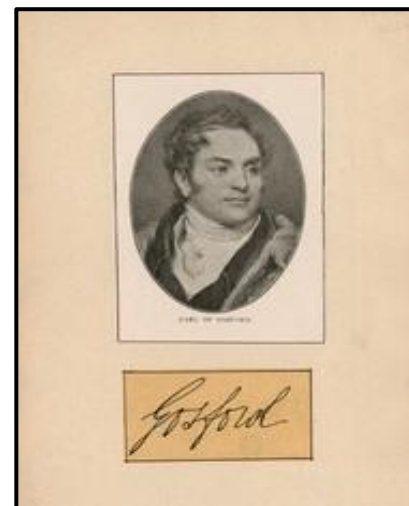
John Grannis<sup>2</sup> est le fils d'Américains de Claremont au New Hampshire. Pionnier du village de Charleston (East Hatley) fondé officiellement en 1818, Grannis est agriculteur et l'un des administrateurs de la Charleston Academy. Il appuie le Parti patriote jusqu'à sa démission en octobre 1836, en raison de sa volonté de quitter le Bas-Canada.

À l'occasion d'une élection partielle tenue le 13 janvier 1837, il est remplacé par Moses French Colby<sup>3</sup>. Né à Thornton au New Hampshire le 2 juillet 1795, il est le fils de Samuel Colby et de Ruth French. Il étudie la médecine à Derby au Vermont en 1814, puis au Yale College de New Haven au Connecticut. Il termine ses études au Darmouth College de Hanover au New Hampshire, en 1821. Il pratique son art à Derby puis, en 1828, il se rend à la School of Practical Anatomy du Harvard College, Cambridge Massachusetts, où il obtient une maîtrise ès arts. En 1832, il passe avec succès l'examen du Bureau d'examineurs en

médecine du district de Québec et s'établit à Stanstead. Élu député de Stanstead, il appuie le Parti des bureaucrates. Son mandat prend fin avec la suspension de la Constitution du Bas-Canada le 27 mars 1838. Notons qu'il fut l'un des administrateurs de la Masonic Golden Rule Lodge et médecin du régiment de milice de Stanstead. Il décède à Stanstead Plain, le 4 mai 1863, à l'âge de 67 ans.

Marcus Child est réélu en 1834; il appuie le Parti patriote. Il sera emporté dans la tourmente de l'insurrection patriote, mais reviendra comme député en 1841, sous l'Acte d'union du Haut et du Bas-Canada.

La période 1834-1837 en est une d'instabilité. La grande question débattue au cours de la campagne électorale de 1834 porte sur les 92 résolutions<sup>4</sup> votées par la dernière Assemblée législative. Le climat est très tendu. Les Anglais se préparent à la lutte armée. Les patriotes, de moins en moins enclins à adoucir leurs revendications, se préparent aussi. D'un côté le Doric Club, de l'autre, les Fils de la Liberté<sup>5</sup>. C'est dans ce climat tendu que le nouveau gouverneur général, lord Gosford, remplace lord Aylmer, le 24 août 1835.



**Archibald Acheson,  
2<sup>e</sup> comte de Gosford**

Le gouverneur général Archibald Acheson<sup>6</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> comte de Gosford, est né en Irlande le 1<sup>er</sup> août 1776; fils d'Arthur Acheson, 1<sup>er</sup> comte de Gosford, il est descendant d'une famille protestante d'origine écossaise. Maître ès arts d'Oxford University en 1797, il sert comme officier dans la milice au cours de la répression de la rébellion irlandaise de 1798. Député d'Armagh à la Chambre des communes d'Irlande en 1798, il s'oppose en 1800 à l'union de l'Irlande et de la Grande-Bretagne. Il succède en 1807 à son père et devient le second comte de Gosford. Il est élu à la Chambre des lords britannique en 1811, à titre de représentant des pairs d'Irlande. En 1835, il est nommé pair du Royaume-Uni sous le titre de baron Worlingham.

Sous sa gouverne, les patriotes se rebellent. Il quitte son poste le 27 février 1838. John Colborne, chargé de la répression militaire de l'insurrection, le remplace.

Premier non-militaire nommé gouverneur général du Bas-Canada, Archibald Acheson s'efforce de concilier l'impossible comme il avait réussi à le faire en Irlande de 1825 à 1834. De plus, le gouvernement britannique le nomme, en 1835, à la tête d'une commission d'enquête sur les problèmes politiques du Bas-Canada : la Commission Gosford.

Le rapport de cette commission est présenté en janvier 1836. Ses principales conclusions sont ébruitées au Bas-Canada : les commissaires ne peuvent pas accepter un Conseil législatif électif, ni abandonner inconditionnellement les revenus de la Couronne. Les patriotes modérés, qui étaient prêts à soutenir les actions de Gosford, retournent dans le giron de Papineau.

L'Assemblée refuse de voter l'arréage des salaires des fonctionnaires et réitère son appui aux 92 résolutions. En mars, Papineau et ses partisans quittent la Chambre, de sorte que le quorum n'est plus atteint. Gosford proroge le

Parlement le 21 mars et puise dans les revenus imprévus et fonciers pour payer les dépenses les plus pressantes. Un règlement satisfaisant de la crise financière est, admet-il, « aussi lointain et plus improbable que jamais ».

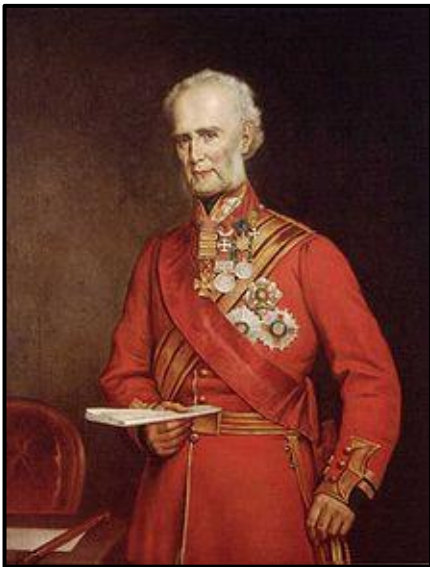
Le gouverneur général tente de résoudre l'impasse en désignant des élus du Parti patriote à des postes importants de l'administration coloniale et en s'alliant la hiérarchie de l'Église catholique dont Mgr Lartigue, premier évêque de Montréal. Mais l'impasse politique perdure. Dès l'été de 1837, le gouvernement ne peut plus maintenir l'ordre dans les campagnes. En septembre, Gosford destitue 18 magistrats et 35 officiers de milice coupables d'avoir assisté à des réunions où la désobéissance civile est prônée. En octobre, il constate que la constitution doit être suspendue. En novembre, il présente sa démission et recommande la nomination d'un nouveau gouverneur général.

Le 16 novembre 1837, convaincu que les griefs des patriotes sont « de simples prétextes pour masquer des desseins plus profonds et plus noirs », Gosford lance 26 mandats d'arrestation, dont un contre Papineau. Cette décision met le feu à la poudrière sociale : une semaine plus tard, la rébellion éclate à Saint-Denis, sur le Richelieu, sous la gouverne du patriote Wolfred Nelson. En décembre, Gosford soumet le district de Montréal à la loi martiale. À la fin de décembre, quand la rébellion semble écrasée, il relâche 112 habitants pour montrer sa clémence. Il accepte que les leaders rebelles soient traduits en cour martiale, mais insiste pour que Colborne procède « avec la plus grande prudence ». Il ne tolérera ni représailles de la part du Parti des bureaucrates, ni persécutions contre ceux qui n'ont pas participé au soulèvement.

En janvier 1838, Gosford apprend que sa démission est acceptée et il retourne en

Angleterre le 27 février 1838. Il est remplacé de façon intérimaire par John Colborne<sup>6</sup> chargé de mater la rébellion au Bas-Canada

John Colborne<sup>7</sup>, 1<sup>er</sup> baron Seaton (16 février 1778 - 17 avril 1863) est un militaire et un administrateur colonial britannique. Outre sa brillante carrière militaire, il fut gouverneur de Guernesey, lieutenant-gouverneur du Haut-Canada et administrateur du Bas-Canada en 1837-38 et, de nouveau, en 1838-39, période durant laquelle il est chargé de réprimer la rébellion des patriotes. Au Bas-Canada, on le surnomme le « Vieux Brûlot » à cause de ses pratiques guerrières sans merci, dont l'incendie de plusieurs villages.



**Baron John Colborne**  
1778 – 1863

John Colborne est né à Lyndhurst, dans le Hampshire. Attiré par la vie militaire, il s'engage dans l'armée en 1794, débutant comme enseigne au 20<sup>e</sup> Régiment. Il monte lentement et régulièrement en grades, s'élevant jusqu'à celui de feld-maréchal à la fin de sa vie.

Il participe activement aux campagnes britanniques contre la France napoléonienne,

servant comme capitaine en Égypte, à Malte et en Sicile. Durant la guerre d'Espagne, il est sous les ordres du général Wellington qui deviendra son protecteur dans les années suivantes. Blessé gravement en 1812, il perd l'usage de l'un de ses bras, mais retourne dans l'armée active en 1813. En janvier 1815, il reçoit la Médaille de chevalier commandeur de l'Ordre du bain.

Le 18 juin 1815, il connaît son heure de gloire à la bataille de Waterloo lorsqu'il commande les troupes qu'il lance contre la Garde impériale en déroute. Certains de ses admirateurs prétendent qu'il est l'artisan de la défaite de Napoléon ce jour-là.

Sitôt la paix installée en Europe, le gouvernement britannique commence à lui confier la responsabilité de l'administration de certaines de ses colonies. De 1821 à 1828, il est lieutenant-gouverneur de l'île de Guernesey, tâche qu'il remplit de façon efficace. Il fait prolonger le réseau routier de l'île et y fait construire la première fonderie. Il crée des quais et des marchés publics. Lorsqu'il quitte ses fonctions, les habitants du territoire ne peuvent que se féliciter de son administration.

Le 14 août 1828, Londres le nomme au poste de lieutenant-gouverneur du Haut-Canada (l'Ontario actuel). Sa tâche est ici plus difficile, car les politiciens réformistes de l'endroit (William Lyon Mackenzie, Francis Collins), sont en constante opposition avec le Family Compact, le groupe de politiciens conservateurs qui s'oppose à un accroissement des pouvoirs de la Chambre législative de l'endroit.

L'esprit conservateur de Colborne l'inciterait à sympathiser avec le Family Compact, mais il se méfie de ce regroupement et la prudence le fait louvoyer entre les deux partis.

## L'insurrection de 1837

En 1836, Londres nomme Colborne commandant en chef des armées britanniques des deux Canadas, sous les ordres du gouverneur général, lord Gosford. Il entre dans la période la plus controversée de sa carrière, jusqu'alors sans tache. Il arrive à Québec en juin 1837, peu après le vote, à Londres, des résolutions Russell, limitant fortement les pouvoirs de la Chambre d'assemblée du Bas-Canada dominée par le Parti patriote de Louis-Joseph Papineau.

Plusieurs partisans de Papineau prônent l'insurrection armée pour faire valoir leurs droits. Au début, Colborne estime peu probable la possibilité d'une rébellion. Mais en novembre, la création de comités de résistance par les patriotes et l'assemblée générale de Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, appelant à l'insurrection générale, l'obligent à mobiliser : il met la milice sur pied de guerre et enrôle de nouvelles troupes.

Il laisse ses subordonnés mener les opérations dans la Vallée-du-Richelieu, mais prend lui-même le commandement des troupes devant mater les insurgés du comté des Deux-Montagnes. Le 14 décembre, il encercle le village de Saint-Eustache, puis il fait bombarder l'église et les maisons environnantes avant de donner l'assaut. Cent vingt patriotes sont faits prisonniers et quarante sont tués dont l'un de ses chefs, Jean-Olivier Chénier.

Deux jours plus tard, il est à Saint-Benoît et met le feu au village malgré l'absence de résistance. Sainte-Scholastique et Saint-Hermas sont également incendiés et pillés. Pour les Québécois francophones, Colborne devient vite le Vieux Brûlot. Plus tard, l'ancien gouverneur se défendra en déclarant que ce sont des francophones opposés aux insurgés qui ont mis le feu au village de Saint-Benoît.

## L'insurrection de 1838

En février 1838, Gosford donne sa démission et Colborne le remplace à titre intérimaire. Le 27 février, il annonce que la loi martiale sera maintenue. Un mois plus tard, il suspend la Constitution de 1791 et crée un Conseil spécial composé de onze anglophones et de onze francophones, dont le but est, d'abord, d'adopter des ordonnances qui auront force de loi et, ensuite, de remplacer l'Assemblée législative dissoute.

En mai, lord Durham le remplace comme gouverneur en titre, mais ne reste que quelques mois, le temps de rédiger son rapport préconisant l'union des deux Canadas. Colborne s'oppose à ce projet qui, selon lui, encouragerait de graves troubles dans les deux Canadas.

À l'automne, il redevient donc gouverneur, toujours à titre intérimaire. Il instaure alors un gouvernement semi-militaire et s'occupe d'écraser la seconde insurrection. Il fait brûler plusieurs fermes susceptibles d'abriter des rebelles, notamment à La Prairie et à Napierville. Il fait arrêter 1 000 personnes et en fait exiler 58. Douze patriotes sont exécutés, dont le plus connu est Marie-Thomas Chevalier de Lorimier. Par la force et la terreur, il réussit à mater la seconde insurrection.

## Fin de carrière

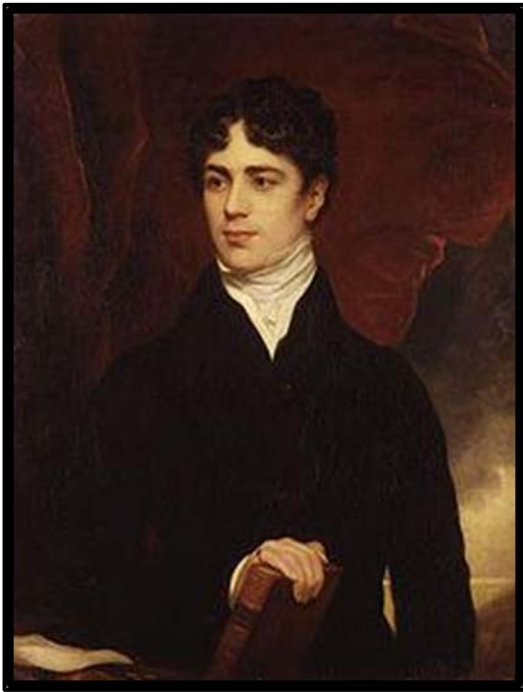
En octobre 1839, Colborne, toujours opposé au projet d'union, quitte Québec. Il est remplacé par Charles Edward Poulett Thomson, futur baron Sydenham, qui, lui, conformément à la recommandation du Rapport Durham, préconise l'union des deux Canadas.

Colborne est récompensé pour ses services. Il reçoit une pension annuelle de 2 000 livres sterling et est élevé à la pairie avec le titre de baron Seaton. De 1843 à 1849, il est haut-commissaire des îles Ioniennes.

De 1855 à 1860, il est commandant des troupes britanniques en Irlande. Il devient général en 1854 et maréchal en 1860. Il meurt à Torquay en 1863.

### Lord Durham<sup>8</sup>

Lord Durham est un homme politique britannique envoyé en Amérique du Nord en 1838, pour enquêter sur les causes des rébellions simultanées de l'année précédente dans les colonies du Haut-Canada et du Bas-Canada. Le célèbre Rapport Durham mène à une série de réformes et de changements, y compris à l'union des deux Canadas. Il ouvre ainsi la voie au gouvernement responsable, une étape essentielle dans l'évolution de la démocratie canadienne.



**John Lambton, 1st Earl of Durham**

John George Lambton, comte de Durham, est un réformateur politique de Grande-Bretagne. Il est nommé gouverneur général de l'Amérique du Nord britannique par le premier ministre du gouvernement anglais, lord Melbourne, pour examiner les doléances des habitants des colonies britanniques du Haut-

Canada et du Bas-Canada. Durham arrive au Canada en mai 1838, mais il abandonne ses fonctions quatre mois plus tard. De retour en Grande-Bretagne, il dépose en 1839 son rapport sur la situation en Amérique du Nord britannique.

Bien que controversé, le rapport offre des recommandations progressistes pour l'époque. Durham propose de créer des gouvernements municipaux et une Cour suprême dans les colonies d'Amérique du Nord britannique. Son plan à long terme d'unir toutes les colonies d'Amérique du Nord britannique est abandonné, la Nouvelle-Écosse et le Nouveau-Brunswick ne s'y intéressant pas. (Il faudra une trentaine d'années pour que la Confédération réalise l'union des colonies).

La principale recommandation du rapport concernant l'union du Haut-Canada et du Bas-Canada est acceptée. Cette recommandation et l'appel de Durham pour que la Grande-Bretagne accorde le gouvernement responsable aux colonies d'Amérique du Nord britannique découlent de son analyse des causes des deux rébellions.

Au Bas-Canada, dont la majorité de la population est francophone, Durham constate des problèmes plutôt raciaux que politiques. Il y trouve « deux nations en guerre au sein d'un même État ». Durham fait preuve d'un certain chauvinisme quand il recommande d'assimiler la population canadienne-française, qui, pour lui, est « un peuple sans histoire ni littérature ». Pour ce faire, il préconise l'union législative des deux Canadas qui seront dominés par la majorité anglophone. Ainsi, les francophones ne pourront plus tendre vers un but ethnique et les marchands, pour la plupart anglophones, maintiendront une économie forte dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent, garantissant par-là, à la colonie, un avenir prospère.

Durham croit que le triomphe du capitalisme se traduira par l'harmonie et la paix si on met également en œuvre des réformes politiques. Dans le Haut-Canada, il constate les défauts du système constitutionnel, dans lequel le pouvoir est monopolisé par ce que son proche conseiller Charles Buller qualifiait d'« une clique de Tories, mesquine, corrompue et insolente ». Ce Pacte de famille (le Family Compact) fait obstacle au développement économique et social d'une colonie potentiellement riche, causant ainsi le mécontentement ayant mené à la rébellion. La solution proposée par Durham : un système dans lequel les gouvernements coloniaux seraient responsables envers l'électorat plutôt que devant le gouverneur ou la Couronne, à tout le moins, sur le plan intérieur. Pour ce faire, il faudrait que l'Exécutif (ou Cabinet, en termes modernes) ait le soutien de la majorité des membres de l'assemblée élue.

Une telle réforme réduirait le pouvoir du Pacte de famille, stimulerait le développement des colonies, renforcerait leurs liens avec la Grande-Bretagne et diminuerait l'influence américaine.

Bien que le Rapport Durham ait été rejeté par l'élite conservatrice du Haut-Canada, les réformateurs locaux et ceux de la Nouvelle-Écosse saluent l'idée du gouvernement responsable. Au Bas-Canada, les conservateurs anglophones de Montréal soutiennent l'union, car ils y voient un moyen de surmonter l'opposition de la population canadienne-française à leurs projets de développement économique. Les Canadiens français, quant à eux, résistent à l'idée d'une union et réaffirment leur détermination à défendre leur nationalité. Le gouvernement britannique finit par accepter la recommandation de Durham d'unifier les deux Canadas. En 1841, la Province unie du Canada voit le jour.

Cependant, le gouvernement responsable ne passe pas, car les leaders du gouvernement impérial croient que le contrôle administratif des colonies est essentiel au maintien de leur allégeance envers la Grande-Bretagne. Ce n'est qu'en 1847 que la Grande-Bretagne accorde l'autonomie aux colonies, après les élections d'un nouveau gouvernement à Londres qui cherche à réduire les dépenses coloniales. En 1848, les réformateurs de la Nouvelle-Écosse, dont Joseph Howe, forment le premier gouvernement responsable de l'Empire britannique. Cette année-là, les réformateurs avec, à leur tête, Robert Baldwin et Louis H. La Fontaine, créent un ministère responsable dans la Province unie du Canada. Plus tard, le Nouveau-Brunswick, l'Île du Prince-Édouard et Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador adoptent le même système.

Le Rapport Durham est controversé, car il recommande d'assimiler la population canadienne-française par l'union du Haut-Canada et du Bas-Canada. Durham devient ainsi un personnage détesté des Canadiens français. On considère toutefois son rapport comme déterminant dans le développement de la démocratie canadienne et dans l'obtention de son autonomie politique, surtout grâce à son appui au gouvernement responsable.

### La fin du Bas-Canada

Les rébellions des patriotes en 1837 et en 1838 et le Rapport Durham persuadent le gouvernement de Londres de créer un nouveau cadre institutionnel : l'union du Haut et du Bas-Canada. C'est la fin d'une ère et la fin du rêve des patriotes de créer une république.

Ce projet renaît sans cesse, mais s'estompe de plus en plus.

Le Canton de Potton a participé à cette quête de liberté en élisant des députés favorables aux idées du Parti patriote. Plus de 180 ans plus tard, que reste-t-il de cette époque? Une

avancée démocratique essentielle : la mise en place de gouvernements responsables devant les citoyens.

Bien que Potton ait été peu touché par cette rébellion, plusieurs citoyens, dont des députés, soutenaient les idées des patriotes comme la reconnaissance d'un gouvernement responsable.

J'ai retracé trois articles qui soulignent ces événements et qui sont reproduits dans le présent numéro :

- *The troubles in Potton* de Audrey Martin McCaw<sup>9</sup>.
- *The Capture of Wolfred Nelson in the Rebellion of 1837* by M.G. Peters<sup>10</sup>.
- *"Hunters' Lodges " in Potton and Bolton, and the Rebellion of 1837-1838*, by Matthew F. Farfan<sup>11</sup>.

Pour ceux qui voudraient revivre en détail cette période, je recommande la lecture des volumes 11 et 12 de *Nos racines - l'histoire vivante de Québécois*<sup>12</sup>.

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## Remarque

Cette chronique est ma dernière. Je laisse à d'autres le soin de poursuivre l'histoire de notre démocratie, toujours vivante, tant au niveau municipal que provincial et fédéral.

Merci.

## Prix du patrimoine 2017



**À Jean-Louis Bertrand,  
pour sa contribution  
exceptionnelle à la  
gestion de l'Association  
du patrimoine de  
Potton et à la  
promotion du  
patrimoine de Potton,  
particulièrement de son  
histoire**

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## The Trouble in Potton

By Audrey Martin McCaw

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Yesterdays of Brome County – Volume Four, The Brome County Historical Society, Knowlton, Quebec 1980, pages 28-36

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It is 150 years since sparks from the Papineau Rebellion flared into scattered eruptions and short-lived battles in south-western Quebec. When students of Canadian history think of “the troubles of 1837-38”, they are apt to recall the confrontations between the rebels, or “patriotes” and government forces at St. Charles and St. Denis on the Richelieu River east of Montreal, the rout at St. Eustache and the Battle of Moore's Corners in Missisquoi County. However, here in Brome County feelings reached a fever pitch too and there was the odd skirmish that might very well have resulted in a full-fledged battle.

E. C. Barnett of Highwater, a descendant of pioneer Colonel Henry Ruiter, wrote in an article in 1926: *“The Troubles of 1837 and 1838 found an echo in Potton and possibly there was as much excitement in this vicinity as at any point along the border.”*

Life along the border has always had its unique concerns, particularly during the days of early settlement when newcomers had to be sized up as post-revolutionary loyalists from the U.S., immigrants from French Canada or the British Isles, Yankee land speculators with doubtful loyalties or just plain squatters. The general malaise in Lower Canada that led to the Papineau Rebellion had numerous causes, but in southern Quebec some of those causes were unique to our pioneer forefathers who lived close to the frontier that divided Brome County from the State of Vermont.

The troubles stirred up by Papineau and his Patriots against the British Government in

Canada found eager sympathizers among the “Sons of Liberty” on both sides of the border, and Potton Township was dismayed to find itself uncomfortably close to the centre of the storm. Daily alarms kept the populace in a state of panic: dispatch riders were shot at, worshippers gathering at the Potton school house for their Sunday service were shocked to find a cache of gunpowder hidden in the ashes of the stove. Challenges for the hastily formed Potton Guard came to a head on the evening of February 27th, 1838, a date which E. C. Barnett said: *“must go down in history in red letter.”*

But first, some background. In 1837, many of the inhabitants of Potton were sons and daughters of original settlers from the U.S. who had been loyal to the Crown during the American Revolution, and they inherited the political sympathies of their parents. They were weary of revolution, had been loyal to Canada in the War of 1812, and wanted only to be left alone to pursue a peaceful and productive life. Thomas H. Raddall in *The Path of Destiny* describes a typical Loyalist as “a born American of strong opinions, little wealth, a suspicion of local demagogues, a conservative instinct for law and order and a hatred of being (in the modern phrase) *“pushed around”.*”

However, there were others whose parents had gladly acquired land in Canada but who still nourished the hope, fifty years after the Revolution, that this politically unsettled country would yet become part of the United States. This sentiment had been bolstered by the curious position of Vermont in the late 18th century. The American rebels Ethan and Ira Allen, resentful of New York's claims on Vermont territory during the Revolution, had made overtures to Canada's Governor Haldimand, offering to join the British with 4,000 armed men in return for recognition of Vermont as a Canadian province. Attractive as



this might sound, Haldimand rightly distrusted these "sour Mountain Boys" who, in fact, had no intention of turning British, but were trying to play Canada and the U.S. Congress off against each other. Vermont became a state in 1791. Governor Haldimand's policy of forbidding Loyalist settlement close to the border immediately following the Revolution had left a vacuum in our area, and we can hardly blame the Vermonters, encouraged by greedy land speculators in Quebec and Montreal, for moving in and availing themselves of this promising wilderness. Rev. Ernest M. Taylor points out that "during the War of 1812-14 some of these settlers returned to the United States, but later many of them came back again to Canada. Some even came to Canada at that time to escape being drafted into the American Army. But many of the residents of Potton Township entered the British Service and fought nobly in defence of their new homes."

The main cause of the Rebellion was, of course, the grievances of the British Canadians against repressive British rule and a widespread desire for responsible government. Papineau and his followers had, as George H. Montgomery put it in his *"History of Missisquoi Bay,"* "been stumping the environs of Montreal and the Valley of the Richelieu with fiery and somewhat seditious speeches culminating in an advocacy of annexation to the U.S." Consequently Papineau, who was both intelligent and passionate, attracted - in addition to his vast crowd of French -Canadian Patriotes - a number of English-speaking sympathizers. His senior lieutenants included men such as Thomas Storrow Brown, a leading English politician, Wolfred Nelson, a medical doctor from England who practised in the Richelieu area and was a member of the Reform Party in Lower Canada, and Wolfred's hot-headed brother Robert who proved later to have a good deal to do with the troubles in Potton.

Papineau made the mistake of protesting too hard. When civil war seemed imminent in Montreal in late 1837 and Papineau began to lose the support of many French Canadians, including the clergy, he and some of his side fled across the border to the U.S. More followed after the defeats at St. Denis and St. Charles. Not all made it. Wolfred Nelson was captured near Waterloo after swimming across the Yamaska River and wandering in the woods for a week. Several were captured near West Farnham. Brown, with a price of \$10,000.00 on his head and with impaired eyesight and a bad leg as a result of the recent battles, struggled from one hiding place to another in the Cowansville-Dunham area and finally managed to cross the border to Berkshire, Vermont. Others fled successfully by way of Stanstead.

Even though the Rebellion appeared to be a failure, many Americans mistakenly believed that Canada was in the mood to be liberated. Throughout 1838 there were acts of lawlessness, rumours of invasion and a number of alarming incidents along the frontier. Robert Nelson, now on the American side of the border, became the leader of the radical "*Sons of Liberty*" who took their name from a band of French rebels in Lower Canada who were known as "*Les fils de la Liberté.*" Robert, drunk with power, set up his "Republic", with himself as President, and formed a provisional government at Franklin, Vermont, with armed forces at Highgate, Swanton and St. Albans.

In the words of Taylor: "*All this while Potton, (now Mansonville) lying just across an imaginary line from this storm centre and refuge of voluntary exiles and sympathizers to the number of some two thousand, was spending sleepless nights, terrorized not so much at what appeared by day as to what the cover of darkness might carry.*"

Throughout the Townships, efforts were being made to enlarge the existing militia and to administer the Oath of Allegiance to individuals considered "to be disaffected". Potton and Bolton formed part of Stanstead County at that time. A Stanstead newspaper called *The Canadian Patriot* ran a controversial article, signed merely 'Patriot,' which aroused and encouraged many readers to refuse to take the Oath. In January of 1838, a letter from an official in Stanstead to the Governor's secretary, urging the sending of more commissioners for the purpose of administering Oaths to the troops, said in part : *"I meet with a good deal of opposition and many refusals ... there never was a time when it was more desirable to have measures decided than at present, in relation to Stanstead County, I do consider it to be the most disaffected and restless in the province ..."*

For protection, the loyal citizens of Potton relied on the Potton Guard. This consisted of the Second Townships Battalion, originally mustered under Col. Henry Ruiter of West Potton (now the village of Dunkin). In 1837 the troop was commanded by Thomas Gilman, with Stephen C. Boswell as lieutenant, Ensign David Heath and non-commissioned officers Francis Peabody, Levi A. Perkins, Henry Woods, David Barnett and "some twenty odd of the best riders in the Valley" who served as scouts and despatch riders. Around this group gathered every loyal able-bodied male citizen of Potton Township.

The headquarters of the Potton Guard, serving as a supply depot and sort of barracks, was a part of the old homestead of the late Dr. Gilman near Dunkin. It was that time occupied by his sons Leander and John T. Gilman, and his widow Susannah. She was now married to Capt. Moses Elkins who had been Captain of Militia during the War of 1812. The Elkins

family were early settlers in Potton Township, although branches of the family had remained on the Vermont side. Interesting histories of this and other families connected with this story are recounted by Rev. E.M.Taylor in his *HISTORY OF BROME COUNTY*, Volumes 1 and II.

The facts of what actually happened the night of February 27th, 1838 are gleaned from several sources, so we have to piece together the scenario of events. And they began a short time previous to this with a dramatic false alarm.

Ralph Elkins brought in word that troops of Robert Nelson were heading for Potton from the direction of Coventry, Vermont. Despatch riders alerted the community and members of the Potton Guard hastily gathered on foot and on horse-back at Coit's Corners. This small community, later known as Meig's Corners, was situated between Mansonville and Highwater and consisted of Levi Coit's store (the first store in Potton Township), a schoolhouse and a distillery operated by the Heath brothers, which contained a still made with coils of lead or 'britannia.' In the report of E. C. Barnett we read: *"Madly the gathering Guard tore down the rail fences in the vicinity, bringing them in to bar the road where the bridge crosses the river, then called the 'Branch'. They had powder for their muskets but they were short of bullets. Few of them but who revered the still, but potato whisky must wait in times of stress, and out came the still be to cast into bullets ..."*

After all this frenzied effort, the warning of approaching troops from Vermont proved to be nothing more than a false alarm. However, frequent rumours such as this were putting the Sons of Liberty in a bad light, and the continual 'no show' on the part of Robert Nelson was beginning to make him and his troops a sort of laughing stock in the area.

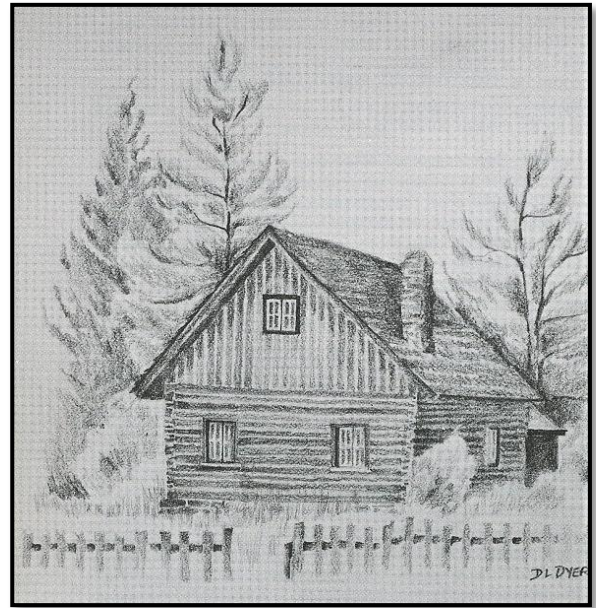
Records indicate that they were definitely short of arms. The exiles from Pottton among his forces were itching for action and finally, on February 27th, they decided to make a move and disarm the Pottton Guard.

A party of about fourteen men gathered at North Troy, just across the border from Highwater. They were mainly American citizens but several were Canadians, closely related to their 'enemies' north of the border. The rebel party consisted of Captain Ira A. Bailey, Jonathan Bailey, James Manson, Hazen Hadlock, Ithamar Hadlock, Jonathan Elkins, John Miltimore, Daniel Miltimore Junior, Dr. L. C. Moore, William Perkins, Ashley Walker and a few others. We do not know whether they intended merely to raid the barracks for arms, or if they had knowledge that the Guard had hidden their equipment and ammunition in various places. In any case, they left North Troy in a sleigh, called a 'double pung,' crossed the border and halted at the home of Farrand Livingstone who lived about a quarter mile from the boundary. He did not belong to the Guard and certainly did not have any arms but his own.

Peter Gardine, who lived at Livingstone's, slipped out and ran ahead to warn the Elkins family in the next house on the hill. These families were related for Mrs. Livingstone was a niece of Salmon Elkins (also a cousin of Jonathan in the rebel party). Salmon Elkins lived with his sons Ralph and Harvey and the latter's son Hector. The raiders followed fairly closely behind Gardine, but their delay at Livingstone's seems to indicate a certain disorganization or indecision in their strategy. Possibly they had expected to find a cache of arms at this point.

Salmon Elkins was old and infirm at this time, but luckily his two sons and grandson were at home. They had only three guns among them. The Elkins lived in a small two-storey house,

and as you entered the door, a narrow stairway ascended to the upper floor ending in a landing with a turn at the top, so it was impossible to see beyond the landing from the foot of the staircase. Barnett explains: *"This description is given to disprove the contention of some that the attackers pointed guns at the inmates to make them give up their arms ... for they saw no one that night."*



**Diana Dyer | Artist's Concept  
of the Log House owned by Mr. Elkins  
at time of the raid by the "Sons of Liberty"**

The Elkins family took cover upstairs as quickly as possible, Ralph, Harvey and Hector arming themselves with their old regulation flintlock muskets. These *"carried an ounce ball and discharged from a spark from the flint dropped in a little protected pan filled with powder and connected by a minute hole in the breech to the charge inside the barrel."*

Barnett relates what happened: *"Two of the men took their stand on the landing at the head of the stairs ... and the lights were extinguished. In came the raiders. Finding the lower rooms empty and in darkness, they did*

*not quite like to bolt that narrow stairway without knowing what they were up against. So calling up the stairs the order to produce their guns, they were shocked to receive the reply: "Come and get them!". James Manson, one of the exiles, also one of their leaders, to prove his right to be considered as such or in a spirit of bravado, said: "Come on!" and stepped up the stairs. There was a click and a momentary light pierced the darkness. James Manson stepped back, for he had seen death face to face and been spared. The flash in the pan had failed ... right well he knew what he had seen and it had been enough for him. His remark: "They have blown out the light" was his resignation as leader."*

*"Among the party were two, at least, of the Hadlocks from Jay, Vermont, Hazen and Ithamore, dare-devils and tough. Hazen saw Manson ... funk, and with a curse, cried: "Come on, I'm not afraid!" and sprung for that narrow landing, ending in a volume of flame and smoke that shook the building, and Hadlock reeled back in the arms of his companions with a muttered "They've killed me!" That ounce of lead had passed ... through his body and buried itself deeply in the adjoining wall. That flash had not failed. The temper of the defendants had been proved."*

The results of this one shot quickly sobered the raiders. How could they avenge the death of their companion? Foiled in their plan, they now proposed to burn down the house, but fortunately for the Elkins family and *"thanks to family connections, where civilization had slipped its bounds, and to Dr. Levi Moore whose wife was a niece and cousin of the family, the fiendish project was given up."*

Taylor says: *"After Harvey had shot Hadlock it is thought that they gave up their guns to the rebels provided they would go away peaceably and not burn the house. The rebels took the*

*body and went to a hotel in Troy, Vermont and caroused."*

At the hotel, according to Barnett, the landlord noticed that Hadlock was not among the raiders and inquired about him. The men told him that he had remained outside to hold the horses, so the landlord proposed taking him some refreshment. Against the protestations of the men, he poured a stiff drink and carried it outside to Hadlock. He was "horrified at finding him propped in the sleigh, frozen stiff, the lines about his neck ..."

It would be a simplification to say that one bullet on that night of February 28th, 1838, put an end to the troubles in Potton completely, for resentment continued for a number of years and there were many "heart burnings between these exiles, who were exiles still, and their neighbours who had been loyal." Harvey Elkins, who fired the fatal shot, was "so persecuted that he left Potton". Barnett says that *"their proximity to the border made the position of this Elkins family untenable and they soon removed to the County of Shefford, where their descendants have ever been loyal and worthy citizens."*

In the Archives in Ottawa is a letter from Harvey Elkins addressed to Col. Rowan, Secretary to His Excellency, Sir John Colborne, written in South Potton, Aug. 9, 1838,

"Dear Sir,

On or about the 20th March last, I had the honour of addressing you and stating my case in reference to the losses sustained by me and my being obliged to leave Potton in consequence of an attack made on my father's house by rebels on the night of 26th (sic) February on which occasion in self-defence and my nephew were obliged to fire on the parties attacking us, and one of the rebels from across the line was killed. I have been obliged to part

with my property at a great loss and am now without a residence, having altogether sustained a loss I cannot repair, without some assistance from the Government. You was kind enough to say I should receive an answer to my letter of March. I will be much obliged, by being informed if anything is determined on and what further steps I am to take. I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

Harvey F. Elkins."

The rebels finally got their revenge two years later on the night of June 3, 1840, when a group of bitter exiles, still determined to 'get the Potton barracks,' succeeded in burning the Gilman house and out-buildings to the ground, the family barely escaping with their lives, In Quebec as a whole, Papineau's Rebellion had not been a complete failure, for it did finally lead to responsible government. The eruptions in Upper and Lower Canada, occurring just as the Young Queen Victoria was ascending the throne, were a great shock to England and in order to find out just what was going on in these troublesome Colonies, they sent out Lord Durham as the new Governor General. He got rid of Sir John Colborne's ultra-Tory Council and made a good start by consulting with Canadian leaders, both French and English. However, his next act was both dramatic and illegal, and while it finished his career in Canada, it did put an end to the ambitions of Robert Nelson. According to Thomas H. Randall, Lord Durham: "... *obtained a confession of guilt from Wolfred Nelson and several other notable rebels and with their own consent exiled them to Bermuda out of harm's way. They were forbidden to return to Canada without proper authority, under pain of death, The same decree of banishment under these terms applied to Papineau, .. Robert Nelson and thirteen other leaders who were already safe in the United States.*"

Full amnesty was granted to most other prisoners and refugees and the majority of the Potton exiles returned and "were pampered at the expense of those who had been loyal." In the files of the Brome County Historical Society are petitions for annexation to the U .S. which indicate a good deal of resentment among those "who had been the salvation of the county in its hour of peril."

One of the rebel raiders who did not return to Canada was Daniel Miltimore Junior. He settled in Plainfield, Wisconsin, where he made a life for himself and his family as a farmer. It is clear from a letter to his brother in 1856 that his heart was often heavy with thoughts of home and the knowledge that he would never return.

He says, in part:

"Respected Brother,

Yours of the 3rd of May was duly received and was much gratified in perusing the same - containing news of yours and family's health and prosperity and the assurance of your thoughtfulness toward us, though you might have on occasion sometimes thought we had wholly forgotten you, since we have neglected writing you so long. But I assure you I have not forgotten you and your family. Yes, there is not probably a day and I might say an hour, that my mind does to wander back to Canada and to various scenes, both of pleasure and pain, of those I shall probably visit no more ...

You intimated the possibility of visiting the West. I wish you could come at this season of the year when nature is in all its glory ... I had wished to have made ample improvement for the entertainment of friends but I hope you will not wait for that but come as soon as convenient, Dear Brother. You have a privilege which I have denied myself, that of visiting all your friends but one in a day, and that as

often as you wish, but this I never expect to enjoy. Catherine and Family send their respects. You all now be sure and write as soon as you get this and tell us all the news in your vicinity and likewise that of our old home. So adieu for the moment.

Dan'l Miltimore."

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### **"Hunters' Lodges" in Potton and Bolton, and the Rebellion of 1837-1838 By Matthew F. Farfan <sup>1</sup>**

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Yesterdays of Brome County, Volume VIII, Brome County Historical Society, Knowlton, 1991, pages 40 to 43

During the Lower Canada rebellions of 1837 and 1838, sympathy for the "rebels" or "Patriotes" (however one wishes to call them) was quite strong in the border areas of the

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Farfan is currently the Executive Director of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN - October 2018)

Eastern Townships. This was particularly true of the townships around Lake Memphremagog, where "seditious" activities were widespread. These included the publication of a radical newspaper, *The Canadian Patriot*, which was dedicated, according to Benjamin Hubbard, "to stirring up the people to revolt."<sup>1</sup> Other activities included local assistance to French Canadian and other Patriotes crossing the border into the United States<sup>2</sup> and of course, the abortive "uprising" in Stanstead and the raid on Potton in February, 1838, both infamous in local lore.<sup>3</sup> There is, however, one aspect of the local rebellions which is not so well known, and that is, that in the summer of 1838 the movement in some townships went quietly underground. In Potton and Bolton (as well as Sutton and Shefford), this took the form of mysterious secret societies known as "Hunters' Lodges".

Following the suppression of the first round of rebellions in early 1838, and the general amnesty extended to rebels by Lord Durham, Hunters' Lodges or "Frères Chasseurs", as they were more commonly called in Lower Canada, were established in many parts of the province - the Townships included. According to S.D. Clark, the ones in the Townships were the direct result of visits by Lodge organizers from across the border.<sup>4</sup> In fact, exiled Patriote leader Robert Nelson was involved in the establishment of at least one - the one in Shefford.<sup>5</sup> According to Elinor Senior, the goal of these organizers was to create "a system of secret lodges along military lines that could supply shock troops within the province in combination with an invading force from the United States to overthrow British power" in Lower Canada.<sup>8</sup>

It was in the three months leading up to the second round of rebellions of November, 1838 that Hunters' Lodges were active in Potton and Bolton. Back in February, local militia lieutenant Henry R. Woods had noted that Potton - possibly the most agitated township in

the region - was "pretty equally divided," though the "rebels are unarmed."<sup>7</sup> The creation of Lodges in Pot-ton and Bolton was a sign that Patriotes in the area were still committed. Over forty people - mostly from Potton but a few from Bolton and North Troy, Vermont - would later be named as participants in the clandestine Lodge activities, and at least two would be formally charged with sedition.

Lodge members communicated by secret signs and passwords. Initiation ceremonies were solemn affairs. According to Senior, *"Each candidate had to kneel, blindfolded, before at least three other members and solemnly swear in the presence of Almighty God to observe the secret signs and mysteries of the society of Chasseurs; never to write, describe, or make known in any way, the things which shall be revealed to me by the society, or lodge of Chasseurs, - to aid with my advice, care and property every brother Chasseur in need, and to notify him in time of any misfortune that may befall him. All this I promise without reservation, and consenting to see my property destroyed and to have my throat cut to the bone."*<sup>9</sup>

Secret oaths were being administered in Potton as early as August, 1838. The Potton Lodge was formalized in October at the mills of James Manson, with farmer Charles Woods (Henry R. Woods' brother) elected Master, in charge of administering oaths. Dr. Amos Lay was in charge in Bolton.<sup>10</sup>

Like Lodges elsewhere in the province, those in the Townships began preparing for a "general uprising" and invasion that was planned for early November. On the fourth of that month, Robert Nelson entered the province and proclaimed himself "President" (for the second time). However, as they had in the earlier uprisings, the Patriotes lacked guns. After only a week, and a few minor incidents in the Richelieu valley, and a failed attempt by

Patriote leaders to obtain weapons in the United States, the uprisings were once again quelled. As for the Townships, various people later testified that secret military preparations had been under way in Potton and Bolton at the same time as events on the Richelieu. Local Hunters' Lodge members had apparently tried to procure some \$600 worth of guns. A nocturnal gathering of about twenty-five men took place at the home of Potton tavern-keeper Buswell Gilman. It seems that the plan had been to "take the dragoons at Bolton and the Guns at Brome." One resident claimed that he had been asked to participate by Robert Manson, who said that seventy-five to eighty men were needed for the job, and who offered "as an inducement" that "the Horses and Guns" would be taken across the Line and sold and the money divided Equally.<sup>11</sup> The raid, however, failed to materialize. This, according to one witness, Daniel Miltimore jr., was because he and another man, William Perkins (both Lodge members), had considered it "imprudent in consequence of the ill success of the Rebels along the Frontier."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, it does seem likely that Patriotes in this rather isolated area would realize the futility of acting on their own, without encouraging news from their compatriots in other locales.

Not surprisingly, following the failure of the second round of rebellions, secret oaths and membership in the Hunters' Lodges were declared unlawful and treasonous. The rebellions of November, 1838, in fact, were more brutally crushed than the earlier uprisings. Hundreds of Patriotes were arrested in different parts of the province, and hundreds more went into exile. Some of those tried were executed. Habeas Corpus was suspended, martial law was in effect, and the province was under the rule not of an elected legislature but of an appointed Special Council.

In the Townships, the conservative or loyal reaction was equally severe. Whereas during the uprisings of November, 1837 to February,

1838, local militia units had been mobilized, office-holders of questionable loyalty deprived of their posts, and people asked to swear the oath of allegiance, following the November, 1838 uprisings suspected Patriotes were actually arrested and jailed without trial. Among the unlucky ones was Hatley militia captain Taylor Wadleigh, who pleaded (successfully) to authorities that despite his radical politics he was “a friend to the British Government under which he lives from choice and nothing would give him greater satisfaction than the total failure of the Rebels in this province.”<sup>13</sup> Wadleigh was released after a couple of weeks, but some prisoners from the area were in jail for as long as five months. Some people avoided arrest by taking up residence across the border in Vermont. Marcus Child, the local Member of the (abolished) Legislative Assembly, was one of them, and no doubt there were people in Potton and Bolton who did the same.

It was thus a concerted and intense period of repression that ended the rebellions and the influence of the Hunters' Lodges in Lower Canada and in the Townships. However, though there were no more “general uprisings” tension and resentment lingered for several years. Indeed, sporadic acts of violence continued to occur. The arsoning of the home of the Gilmans, a Potton family that sided with the government during the rebellions.<sup>14</sup> was evidence of the deep divisions within that local community.

Note: The writer, Matthew Farfan, is a student at McGill University studying for his Master of Arts in History. A member of the Stanstead Historical Society, his home is in Beebe, Que., where the family have resided since 1959. He has a special interest in local history.

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8. ANQ, Documents relatifs ... Doc. No. 1176.
9. Senior, 155.
10. ANQ. Documents relatifs ... Doc. Nos. 1173, 1174, and 1180.
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14. See Barnett, 84.



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## The Capture of Wolfred Nelson In the Rebellion of 1837

By M.G. Peters

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Yesterdays of Brome County, Volume VIII, Brome County Historical Society, Knowlton, 1991, pages 34 - 39.

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Dr. Wolfred Nelson was born July 10, 1792 in Montreal. His ancestors had come from England and settled early in Sorel with the Loyalists. His father was the son of an officer of the Royal Navy and a warden of the Anglican Church in Sorel. His mother was the daughter of Mr. G. Dies, a Loyalist family from New York State who lost all their property in the American Revolution.

At an early age, Wolfred Nelson was apprenticed to Dr. Carter of the Army medical staff. There were very few medical men in Canada at that time and he was soon practising medicine at the military hospital in Sorel. He was licensed as a physician in January 1811, and established a flourishing practice at St. Denis, on the Richelieu River between Sorel and Chambly. As a family doctor he must have been well acquainted with the people of that district and their problems. In the War of 1812 he served as a surgeon in a militia battalion of his district.

He had experience with politics and politicians when he was elected in 1827 to represent the district of Sorel (then called the Borough of William Henry) in the House of Assembly at Quebec. He was also a justice of the peace and commissioner of the court for small cases.

The Constitutional Act of 1791 created the two provinces of Upper Canada and Lower Canada (now Ontario and Quebec). This Act established in each province a Legislative Assembly where the elected representatives were able to discuss the concerns of the people in a democratic manner. This was the

first experience of French Canadians with the idea of representative institutions and many were suspicious of the British principle of self-government. However, the full advantage was delayed because the Act also provided an appointed Legislative Council which could work with the governor, or influence him, to obstruct many important reforms. The members of the Executive Council, who advised the governor, were appointed from the senior officials. This made it possible for those in power to have undue control in government policy, in many cases for the benefit of the elite.

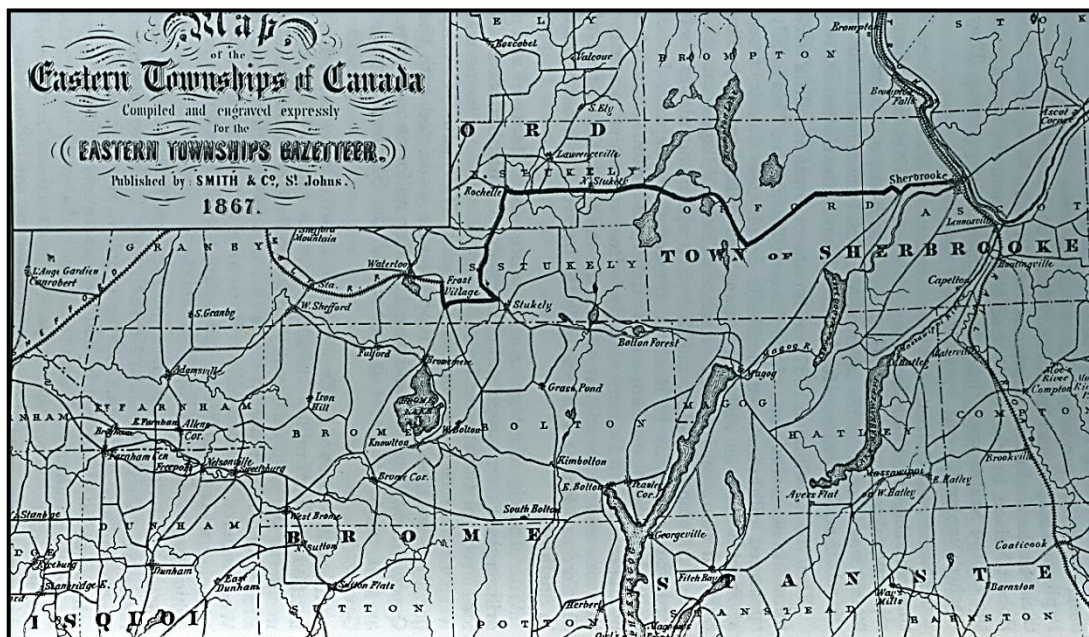
It was inevitable that the discontent and justifiable desire for change would result in a struggle outside of the Assembly when the process of reform in the Assembly was blocked. In Upper Canada the best known of the reformers was William Lyon Mackenzie who led an armed rebellion in December 1837 against the Governor and the ruling officials. The majority of the population did not support the use of force to right their grievances and the rebellion was put down very quickly.

In Lower Canada the struggle for democratic Responsible Government by political reform was supported by people in both the French-speaking community and the English-speaking community. In the Eastern Townships the American pioneer settlers were especially sensitive to their lack of any local municipal institutions.

Louis-Joseph Papineau became the most prominent of those who publicized the justifiable grievances of the French inhabitants of Lower Canada. During the War of 1812 he fought for Canada as a captain in the militia. Famous as an orator, he was chosen Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in 1815. He made a public speech in 1820 in which he praised the situation of the French in Canada under British rule compared with the misery of their condition during the French regime. He

emphasized the advantages of much better legal security such as trial by jury, of personal freedom and equality, of religious toleration and the right to express public opinion through their representatives in the Assembly.

The Quebec Act of 1774 had guaranteed that French Canadians would keep their religion, their language and culture and the old French civil law, with the addition of English criminal law. From the beginning, the French inhabitants had a strong majority in the Assembly at Quebec and both English and French were official languages in the Assembly. Most districts of the Eastern Townships did not have adequate representation in the Assembly before the 1830's.



**MAP Eastern Townships of Canada  
(Eastern Townships C=Gazetteer) | 1867**

The French inhabitants became more sensitive to the slowness of reform than the other settlers and over a period of time they came to regard the situation as a struggle between the French and the English. The French leaders described the English population as “strangers

and intruders upon the French descendants who claim exclusive right to this country”. Some French speakers talked of becoming independent from the British and of replacing the government by people of the “French-Canadian nation”. The fight became so bitter that moderate reformers such as Mr. John Neilson, editor of the Quebec Gazette, would no longer support the cause of the French.

Mr. Papineau became more and more extreme in his opposition. The Rebellion of 1837 in Lower Canada began when small groups of residents organized and marched in the streets in Montreal and several towns in the surrounding region.

In November 1837, groups of insurgents, “the patriotes”, gathered in St. Denis and St.

Charles on the Richelieu River. By this time Dr. Wolfred Nelson, because of his professional and political connections, possessed great influence and authority in the territory bordering the Richelieu River. The local people appealed to him on important political questions. At a local meeting of the rebels he was

chosen as chairman. He supported the cause of the rebels and blamed the government officials for “actions which drive people to desperation”.

Dr. Nelson went even further, he incited the people to open rebellion. Apparently it was his advice which finally persuaded Papineau that

the time had come “to melt our spoons into bullets”. As a result, army troops and volunteer militia were sent to arrest Dr. Nelson, Mr. Thomas S. Brown, Dr. O’Callaghan of the newspaper “the Vindicator”, Mr. Papineau and other leaders for treason. The rebels defended their leaders, trying to prevent their arrest. The armed battles at St. Denis, St. Charles and two weeks later St. Eustache and St. Benoit, north of Montreal, did not last very long but there was considerable loss of life and destruction of property. The rebellion was not successful. Papineau escaped and fled to the United States. Later Papineau declared that he had never intended rebellion. In November, 1838 Robert Nelson, brother of Wolfred Nelson, invaded Canada from the United States with the help of American supporters. They reached Napierville but were defeated near Lacolle.

Dr. Nelson was the leader of the rebel forces at St. Denis, where they won the first battle but then left the town. Nelson fled and tried to make his way to the United States frontier. A reward of \$2,000 was offered for his capture. Mr. T.S. Brown was leader of the rebels at St. Charles. He also fled towards the United States.

When the Rebellion of 1837 was imminent, units of militia were formed in several regions of the Eastern Townships. This locally sponsored militia included the Shefford Volunteer Cavalry troop at Frost Village as well as companies of militia infantry: The Shefford Volunteer Infantry battalion at Frost Village commanded by Lt. Colonel Paul Holland Knowlton with companies in Shefford and a company in Brome commanded by Captain James Ball. There was also a company of infantry in Pottton commanded by Captain David Perkins. Col. Knowlton was senior officer for this area and the headquarters for the militia in the district of Shefford and Brome was located in the barracks at Frost Village in Shefford.

With the help of a regular army officer from Montreal and a drill sergeant from a regiment of Dragoons at Chambly, the Shefford Troop of Cavalry at Frost Village obtained uniforms and weapons and received appropriate training. The Shefford Cavalry (locally called the Shefford Troopers) was associated with the Queen's Light Dragoons and wore the same uniforms and badges as that regiment. Later it was called the Shefford Frontier Cavalry.

After the battles of St. Denis and St. Charles, army authorities notified the local militia including Captain Alonzo Wood, commander of the Shefford Cavalry, to watch for Dr. Nelson and Mr. Brown who were reported as headed in this direction. Captain Wood ordered Sergeant Milton R. Bowker to take two men, Otis Lincoln and Lorenzo Wells, and patrol the old Sherbrooke road (which passed through North Stukely).

Early the following day, December 12, 1837, they came to the house of Stephen Berry, near North Stukely. On being questioned concerning any suspicious looking people in the area, Mr. Berry reluctantly admitted that he had seen a stranger with a younger man and an Indian guide and that they had slept in his barn the previous night. When the troopers approached the barn a small dog ran out and was followed immediately by the Indian. Bowker and Wells entered the barn while Lincoln looked after the horses. From the description which had been given to them, they recognized the man in the barn as Dr. Nelson. When the troopers rushed in, he was holding a small bottle which they immediately took away from him. Later it was determined that the bottle contained poison but he did not have time to drink it.

Dr. Nelson surrendered without resistance. Apparently he did not have any weapons. With the help of Sergeant Mark Whitcomb and his detachment who were also searching, the prisoners were taken to Osgood's Hotel at Frost Village in Shefford and detained there

awaiting further orders. His captors said that he acted like a gentleman and gave the troopers no trouble whatever. Dr. Nelson later acknowledged publicly that he was treated with respect and kindness. This is not surprising considering that many people in the Eastern Townships were sympathetic to the aims of the rebellion. Dr. Nelson had passed through Farnham and the Granby area with the help of the native guide. They had been in the woods for nine days. After being detained for three days, he was escorted by the Shefford Volunteer Infantry to Frelighsburg. A detachment of the Missisquoi Volunteer Infantry took him to Montreal where he was placed in prison.

A special committee of the Executive Council at Quebec examined the various applications claiming the reward for the apprehension of Wolfred Nelson. The committee recommended that the amount of the reward be divided equally among eighteen people, each of whom had some part in the capture and custody of Dr. Nelson in the Eastern Townships.

After the Rebellion, Dr. Nelson was kept in prison for seven months and then exiled to Bermuda. He left there in November, 1838 for the United States where he practised as a physician until August, 1842, when he returned to Montreal. In 1844 he was elected to Parliament for Richelieu County. He became inspector of prisons in 1851 and chairman of the Board of Prison Inspectors in 1859. He served as president of the medical board and college of surgeons. He was also chairman of the board of health during the cholera epidemic of that period. He was twice elected mayor of Montreal. He died in 1863.

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### **The Troubles of 1837 and 1838** **By Edgar C. Barnett (b.1865 – d.1942)**

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Extracted from Volume 3 Transactions of the  
Brome County Historical Society.

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The troubles of 1837 and 1838 found an echo in Potton, and possibly there was as much excitement in this vicinity as at any point along the border.

It must be remembered that Potton, while having been chartered and granted to Loyalists, was to a large extent settled by American subjects, who for various reasons, many of which were best buried in oblivion, had, at the close of the Revolutionary War flocked into the "Townships," as they were then called; and who were known to the government and to the grantees as "squatters."

The pioneer generation, at this time, now fast thinning out, were being replaced by their sons and daughters who had mostly been born in the land they had left and therefore partook largely of the sympathies and learnings of their parents, descendants of schemers who at the close of the Revolution had played Vermont against both Canada and the American Congress, eventually dropping on the side of the fence that fate had ordained. What wonder then that many on both sides of the line should jump at the chance to make Canada what Franklin, Allen and others had

failed to do – American territory. But the aims of fate are not to be thwarted.

As Hopkins in his "Story of the Dominion" has aptly termed them, "leaders of brilliant irresponsibility," – MacKenzie in Upper Canada and Papineau in Quebec; as dissimilar in character as in type and in aims, to one thing alone they had jointly pinned their faith, the obsession that fate had ordained them to be knights errant, and the ruling force was the castle to be demolished. Up and down the provinces, each in his own sphere, rushed these champions of the oppressed, the habitant in his innocence, the ne'er-do-well in his glory; the venerated American in ecstasy in anticipation of the consummation of the hopes of his fathers; one and all became "Sons of Liberty." What wonder then that kindred spirits to the South waxed enthusiastic over the "just" cause of the "Patriots." What wonder that a provisional government was formed at Franklin, Vermont, with Wolfred Nelson as President – though the delineation of his "Republic" is somewhat vague.

And all this while Potton, lying just across an imaginary line from this sore centre and refuge of voluntary exiles and sympathizers to the number of some two thousand, was spending sleepless nights, terrorized not so much at what appeared by day as to what the cover of darkness might carry. Her citizens in the big majority were loyal. Long before procrastinating authority had turned to them, either to assist or for assistance, around the township troop of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Townships – whose rallying point since its organization in the early days of the town's history by Col. Henry Ruiter, had been at West Potton and where still resides the Battalion's Ensign David Heath, with the troop under the command of Thomas Gilman with Stephen C. Boswell as lieutenant and non commissioned officers Francis Peabody, Levi A. Perkins, Henry Woods, David Barnett and some twenty

odd of the best riders in the valley – gathered every able bodied male citizen forming what was known as the "Potton Guard." The barracks, as the storage place for the arms and supplies was termed, was simply a part of the old homestead of the late Dr. Gilman, then occupied by his sons and widow, who had recently married Capt. Moses Elkins.

Alarms had been of daily occurrence. Despatch bearers had been shot at. Courier David Barnett, while carrying despatches near the home of Bradbury Green, had had his hat perforated. The nerves of the most level headed had become ragged. "Crazy" Ralph Elkins brings in word that Nelson's troops are coming in by the way of Coventry, Vt. Riders madly cover the by-paths of the town warning the "Guard", who gather on foot and horseback at Coit's Corners to barricade the made road leading into town from the South. Here, at the time, was located the store of Levi Coit. Here also the second schoolhouse built in town, and from its size and central location, used for a place of worship. Not far from the Corner also stood the building used as a distillery by the Heath boys, sons of Jonathan Heath, Jun., and in which was the still with its coils of lead, or Britannia. Madly the gathering "Guard" tear down the rail fences in the vicinity bringing them in to bar the road where the bridge crosses the river, then called the "Branch". They have powder for their muskets, but they are short of bullets. And it turns out only a rumour, a flash in the pan. A few days later, as some of the people gather at the schoolhouse to worship, they find a small cask of powder buried in the ashes of the stove. Such were the methods of the "Patriots."

But rumours are getting them nowhere, and threats are causing the "Sons of Liberty" to be a laughing stock. Something must be done to rouse the waning courage of the exiles whose home in Potton has become too warm for

them. The evening of February 27, 1838, must go down in history in red letters.

A party of, some say fourteen, others thirteen, (anyhow it was the fatal number who returned to their base that night), mostly American citizens, but five, as far as can be learned, of Canadian birth, though such men as Dr. Levi Moore had long been residents of Potton, gathered at North Troy, Vt. and decided to assume the delicate duty of disarming the "Potton Guard." Now there has been much assumed and written about the object and outcome of this raid that were well for once and all to set at rest. It has been stated that the party set out to raid the "barracks" and capture the arms. If so they did not know that there were no arms there to capture, as they had all been distributed or hidden, and disarming could be carried out only individually. Their actions that night seem to indicate that they were aware of this fact and that it was the larger undertaking they had assumed. None but muddled brains or descendants of those who had made of "The New Hampshire Grants" a state, would for one moment have considered such a project, and it was a combination of the two.

The party left North Troy in a double pung, or sleigh, heading northeast along the main highway into Potton. Ferrand Livingstone, known as Deacon Livingstone, lived less than a fourth of a mile from the international boundary. He did not belong to the guard. If he had arms, they were his own. His wife was a daughter of Moses Elkins and her uncle Salmon Elkins lived next place to the west on the plain. With Elkins lived his sons Ralph and Harvey and Harvey's son Hector, nearing manhood. The party halted at Livingstone's. If they got any arms that night, they would have got them there, but they would have been his own. Their delay at this place shows their fuddled conditions, for it gave Livingstone time to send one of the boys ahead to warn the

house on the hill. But close in his wake came the raiders.

Salmon Elkins lived in a house of rather small dimension, but two storeys in height. A doorway entered the building, in the southwest corner and, as you entered the door, a stairway ascended to the upper floor at the left hand and flush against the west wall, ending in a landing in the corner of the upper floor. This stairway was very narrow, not more than two and one-half feet, the landing at its head being of the same width and not much more in depth, and at most unable to hold more than two persons. From the foot of the stairs it was an absolute impossibility to see further than the landing as you were facing the north wall. This description to disprove the contention of some that they pointed guns at the inmates to make them give up their arms. Stories of bullies and bluffs, for they saw no one that night. The Elkins had short time for preparation. Salmon was an invalid, as to some extent was his wife, but all as quickly and quietly as possible retired to the upper rooms. The three able men were each armed. Their guns were the old regulation flintlock musket, carrying an ounce ball and discharged from a spark from the flint dropped in a little protected pan filled with powder and connected by a minute hole in the breach to the charge inside the barrel.

Two of the men took their stand on the landing at the head of the stairs; which two they never saw fit to disclose, and the lights were extinguished. In came the raiders. Finding the lower rooms empty and in darkness they did not quite like to bolt that narrow stairway without knowing what they were up against. So calling up the stairs the order to produce their guns, they were shocked to receive the reply, "Come and get them."

James Manson, one of the exiles, also one of their leaders, to prove his right to be

considered as such, or in a spirit of bravado, says "Come on," and stepped upon the stairs. There was a click and a momentary light pierced the darkness. James Manson stepped back for he had seen death face to face and been spared. The flash in the pan had failed to connect. Right well he what he had seen and it had been enough for him. His remark, "They have blown out the light," was his resignation as leader.

Among the party were at least two of the Hadlocks from Jay, Vt., Hazen and Ithamore, dare-devils and tough. Hazen saw Manson, as he thought, funk and with a curse cries, "Come on, I'm not afraid," and sprang for that narrow landing. Again an instantaneous flash hit the landing, ending in a volume of flame and smoke that shook the building and Hadlock reeled back in the arms of his companions with a muttered "They've killed me." That ounce of lead had passed clean through his body and buried itself deeply in the adjoining wall. That flash had not failed. The temper of the defendants had been proved.

The crowd was sobered. A cry went up for revenge. A council was held. That dark stain still remained where none now cared to lead. A proposal was made to burn the building. But thanks to family connections, where civilization had slipped its bounds, and to Dr. Levi Moore whose wife was a niece and cousin of the family, the fiendish project was given up. Inclement weather and coming day precluding a siege, they decided to retire and returned to their base at North Troy.

As an illustration of the character of these men – their scant respect for the dead. For their companion even. On their return to the saloon from whence they had started, they entered in a body and began to refresh themselves. The proprietor noticing that Hadlock was not among them inquired where he was. "Oh, he's holding the horses," they replied. He proposed

that they take him out something but they said, "Oh, he don't want anything." With a curse he replied, "Well I guess he will have something," and pouring a stiff drink carried it to him to be horrified at finding him propped upright in the sleigh the lines about his neck and frozen stiff.

So much for that February night, the "Sons of Liberty," the "Patriots" and their sympathizers across the border. But their proximity to the border made the position of this Elkins family untenable and they soon removed to the County of Shefford, where their descendants have ever been loyal and worthy citizens.

For a number of years after the failure of these irresponsible agitators there were heart burnings between these exiles, who were exiles still, and their neighbours who had been loyal, but so far as Potton was concerned the last depredation took place on the night of June 3, 1840, when some of these misguided men succeeded in burning the whole establishment at the old Gilman place, eventually getting the "barracks" though there was nothing to get, but at the same time nearly succeeding in burning the whole family.

At the importunities of a more than generous government the exiles mostly returned and were pampered at the expense of those who had been loyal. And the perusal of the petitions for annexation to the United States in circulation at about this time will disclose the resentment that existed among those who had been the salvation of the country in its hour of peril.

My authorities were Mrs. Heath, wife of Ensign Heath; *Mrs. Dr. Moore*; my grandfather, David Barnett; Chase Gilman; Annexation Petitions in the museum at Knowlton and the old Elkins house which burned in 1884, and which I have seen many times, also the hole where the ball that pierced Hadlock had been dug out with a

knife. I was also there when it burned and it was occupied by one Jim Beach, a lumberman and contractor, at the time.

(Signed)  
Edgar C. Barnett.

Highwater, P.Q., 1926

**Editor’s note:**

When researching the Edgar Barnett papers at the Brome County Historical Society in Knowlton, I came across his handwritten notes on Potton, Books I and II, which intrigued me. I thought these might be of interest in the present context.

In Book II, Barnett had recorded the names of the Rebel party who attacked Salmon Elkins home in February 1838 as follows:

Capt. Ira A Bailey	Troy
Hayden Hadlock	Jay
Ithamor Hadlock	Jay
James Manson	Potton
Jonathan Elkins	Troy
Daniel Miltimore	Jay
Wm. Perkins	Potton
Jonathan Bailey	
Dr. Levi C. Moore	Potton

Peter Gardyne, scout, brought Elkins the news of approach from Dea. Livingstone’s whose premises were first searched.

*(The list totals 9 – raiding party was supposed to have included 13 – 14)*

Mr. Barnett quotes one of his sources as being “Mrs. Dr. Moore” (opposite)

His notebook contains interesting, although somewhat historically inconsequential reminiscences of this lady, Louisa Elkins, born in

1817, daughter of M.L. Elkins, one of Potton’s first settlers.

Of particular interest, given the present context, are notes of his interview of Mrs. Dr. Moore pertaining to her recollection of the “Troubles of 1838-1839” which Mr. Barnett recorded.

His interview seemed wide-ranging for it included biographical notes of Louisa Elkins Moore as well as childhood memories of being lost and spending the night in the woods (1825), and an adventure in 1826, with a horse-drawn carriage. His notes end with the incidental information after the fateful event on February 27, 1838 in which her husband, Dr. Levi Moore, was involved.

*“Louisa Elkins daughter of M.L. Elkins was born in 1817. Her father lived on what is called “Elkins Hill”, the farm now owned by A. A. Jenkins.*

*As a tot of six years, she attended school at the Branch, later Coit’s Corners and still later Meigs’ Corners. The old schoolhouse stood near S.L. Elkins’ barn, the one nearest to the bridge and on the same side of the road which led from Col. Ruiter’s at West Potton over Elkins’ Hill down past the Branch thence through to North Troy.*

*One night the summer she was eight years old, while she was searching for the cows which had strayed from the pasture which was merely a tract of woodland enclosed by trees which had been fallen to form a sort of break or “slash” fence, as it was called, she became bewildered as night came on and losing her bearings, wandered ‘til exhausted and lying down beside her dog, went to sleep.*

*Before going to sleep she notices three lights winking in the valley to the west. In the morning as soon as it was light enough to see*



she set out to try and reach the point where she had seen the nearest and to her surprise found she had gone to sleep on the very brink of a ledge which has an almost perpendicular drop of upwards of thirty feet. After making a detour to get round the precipice, she finally made her way down into the valley and came to the home of Gardner Gordon, near where Mr. A.E. Aiken lives.

The old man gazed at her for a moment and then, in his Scotch drawl says "Why, "Louisa" child, where did ye come from?" "The whole neighbourhood are all out looking for ye!"

Only once during her wandering did she feel frightened and that was when she thought she thought she saw a bear and cub which her inquisitive spirit soon proved to be nothing but the roots of an upturned tree.

Another of her experiences took place, the next summer 1826 as she was returning on horseback from the mill at North Troy about a mile east of the village. A horse hitched to something having wheels and in which rode a man came up behind her – all more than equine nature could understand! Away went her steed leaving her grist and herself by the wayside. The man in the wonderful conveyance soon came up and it proved to be Elder Ide, an errant Baptist preacher, who gathered up herself and the grist, not much worse for their first experience with a buggy.

When she was 17, (1835) she was married by Jas. Reid of Frelighsburg, then Slab City, to Levi Moore of Parsons ville, Me., thirty miles from Saco, a young physician who had come to Pottton about a year and a half previous, from Georgeville where he had practised a couple of years, and who had taken up his abode at Manson's Mills. Soon after their marriage Moore purchased the farm now owned by B.A. Young where they lived for two or three years, when he sold out to David

Perkins and moved down to the property now owned by Chase Gilman and which then belonged to his grandmother, widow of Dr. Wm C. Gilman (1777-1832) and also the widow of Moses Elkins, grandmother to Mrs. Moore. (Susan Heath (1738-1863).

Political feeling was running rife about the time (1837-38), and Dr. Moore, who had probably not lived in Canada long enough to become a very loyal subject, took a prominent part in the Rebel cause.

On the evening of February 27, 1838 he left home quietly, leaving his wife and infant son and it was near noon the next day e'er he returned. His wife could see something had happened out of common though the Doctor offered no explanation, but in passing his wife, she noted the fingers of his buckskin gloves which protruded from his jacket was covered with blood, and says to him "Why Levi, where have you been and what have you been doing?" and drew his attention to the glove. He then told her of the affair at the house of Harvey Elkins the night before when about a dozen reckless spirits with himself (some of them rebels and the rest sympathizers from Troy and Jay) had undertaken to capture the guns and ammunition left at different fronts along each road leading across the line. In a double sled the party left Troy and at once proceeded to the home of Harvey Elkins situated on the plain midway between Troy and Mansonville and attempted to capture the arms and ammunition and left here for the use of the local militia; and had one of their number, Hazen Hadlock, shot dead on the spot.

(After his return home) The Doctor remained in hiding all evening as he suspected he was being watched and then made his way to the line to Troy where his wife and child later joined him, and where he remained for the rest of his life, though after quiet was restored

*and bitter feelings had subsided, much of his practice was again on the Canadian side of the line."*

#### Note:

This article refers place names no longer used however we do know that Moore lived: in the house once occupied by Dr. William C. Gilman, which was located in the vicinity of 2733 route de la Vallée Missisquoi, not far from Highwater.

(Dr. William Coffin Gilman, b. 1777 – d. 1832, was a doctor in Potton from 1802; his wife, Susan Heath, b. 1783 - d. 1863. Descendants of this family live in Potton).

It is believed that the Gardyne and Livingstone families lived in the area of the Pont de la Frontiere covered bridge, then called Province Hill. Barnett mentions "the Branch" river – now called the Missisquoi, (Highwater); and Coit's Corner – near the intersection of Rte 243 south and Montée René-Rémillard.

He refers to "*the road which led from Col. Ruiter's at West Potton over Elkins' Hill down past the Branch thence through to North Troy*", now but a track leading over private property to Miltimore Road and the Chapel cemetery.

We thank the Brome Historical Society for granting us permission to reproduce these articles.

Nous remercions la Société Historique de Brome de nous avoir accordé la permission de reproduire ces articles.

If you would like to read more about the time period between 1812 and 1840, "Loyalites in Conflict"<sup>2</sup> gives interesting perspective. At the time of writing his book, J.I. Little was a Professor in the Department of History at Simon Fraser University. "Loyalites in Conflict is a rigorous study of the conflicting forces that shaped a Canadian region in a pivotal period in North American history"

The following is quoted from Afterword, (page 107), of this book.

"On 27 June 1797, Moses Elkins of Peachum in central Vermont set out for the Missisquoi Valley with his family, two hired men, and a cart drawn by two oxen. He had heard favourable accounts of this northern frontier from his brother Josiah, who had been trading with those Abenakis who were still living at Lake Memphremagog. Ten days later, having been joined by two other prospective settlers, who helped cut the way through dense woods from the last Vermont settlements, Elkins became a squatter in what would become known the following October as Potton Township. Elkin's name does not appear among the seventy-seven associates granted patents in 1803 but he was a militia captain during the War of 1812, when, as we have seen, he was accused of harbouring deserters. Isolated by some of the highest mountains in the Eastern Townships, Potton continued to have closer links with Troy, Vermont, than with the rest of Lower Canada. In contrast to the region as a whole, most settlers in this thinly settled area were either Baptists or members of the radical Protestant Methodist sect. Yet, during the Rebellion of 1838, as we have seen again, a member of the raiding party from Troy was shot and killed in the house of Elkins neighbouring brother, Salmon. Moses would pay the price in 1840, two months after the British military commander had been removed from the border. Unseen arsonists burned his house, four barns, and two sheds, as well as livestock and other contents to a reported value of £765. As of 1846, the government had still not given Elkins's widow any compensation, based on the argument that the attack had taken place too long after the Rebellion had ended."

<sup>2</sup> Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840 Author: J.I.Little Published by Little University of Toronto Press Inc 2008.

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### VALE PERKINS, QUAÏ MUNICIPAL

This is the municipal wharf at Perkins Landing on Lake Memphremagog, where there is a ramp for launching boats. Potton's municipal beach is located to the north of the wharf. Municipal wharf attendants supervise parking and ensure that boats are washed to prevent the entry of the zebra mussel into the Lake. Municipal residents using the boat launch pay no fees; however, non-residents are charged a launch and parking fee.

See entry for Plage municipale.

Il s'agit du quai principal de la municipalité du Canton de Potton donnant accès au lac Memphrémagog. La rampe d'accès permet la mise à l'eau des embarcations. La plage de la municipalité est située près du quai.

#### Géolocalisation



#### Mots-clés

Quai, Vale Perkins

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## Association du patrimoine de Potton

[www.patrimoinepotton.org](http://www.patrimoinepotton.org)  
[info@patrimoinepotton.org](mailto:info@patrimoinepotton.org)



## Potton Heritage Association

[www.pottonheritage.org](http://www.pottonheritage.org)  
[info@pottonheritage.org](mailto:info@pottonheritage.org)

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**La revue accepte de recevoir pour publication des articles qui concernent l'histoire et le patrimoine de Potton.**

*Reader contributions about the history and heritage of Potton and its families are welcomed.*

**C.P. 262, Mansonville (Québec) JOE 1X8**

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