

## SETTLEMENT OF THE VILLAGE OF COLD SPRINGS

Catharine Parr Traill emigrated to Canada with her husband, Thomas, in 1832. She travelled up to Peterborough on the Cobourg to Rice Lake road and wrote letters home describing the trip. The following is an excerpt from the first edition of her book, *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836):

"The outline of the country [Hamilton Township] reminded me of the hilly part of Gloucestershire.... Here the bold forests of oak, beech, maple, and bass-wood, with now and then a grove of dark pines, cover the hills, only enlivened by an occasional settlement with its log-house and zig-zag fences of split timber....

About halfway between Cobourg and the Rice Lake, there is a pretty valley between two steep hills. Here there is a good deal of cleared land and a tavern; the place is called the 'Cold Springs'. Who knows but some century or two hence this spot may become a fashionable place of resort to drink the waters. A Canadian Bath or Cheltenham may spring up where now Nature revels in her wilderness of forest trees."

Cold Springs is located about eight miles from the town of Cobourg and five from Rice Lake. There are numerous fresh water springs in the valley and in places the icy water gushes out of the ground, hence its name. The village is divided between Upper and Lower Cold Springs and was laid out in village lots in 1845. Upper Cold Springs, with an elevation of 1000 feet above sea level, often experiences fog or snow when there is clear visibility or rain elsewhere in the township. This section is located in lot 15, concessions 5 and 6, and was settled mainly by Irish families from Ulster and once known as "Derry". The Congregational Church and cemetery were established there in 1849.

Lower Cold Springs, in the valley, is in lot 16, concession 5, and had a predominance of Scottish settlers. In 1850 they established the Presbyterian Church and cemetery in that section. There was great rivalry between the two churches and both congregations built new edifices of brick in 1875. The Congregational Church closed in 1930, however, and amalgamated with St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, now part of The Cold Springs United Church Charge. The Congregational Church building was torn down in 1958 and replaced with a cairn. The cemetery on the site is still in use.

DAVID SIDEY, Founder of Cold Springs

The first land owner in the area was David Sidey. He purchased lot

16, concession 5, from Edward Ellice, a wealthy fur merchant who owned much of the land in the northern part of Hamilton Township.

The following report was given in 1827 by John Smith, Deputy Provincial Surveyor: "The following sale has come to my knowledge, viz: Edward Ellice and Co. of London, England, by their agents Forsythe and Richardson of Montreal, to David Sidey, No 16 in the 5th Concession of Hamilton, 200 acres at 15s per acre: 25 pounds down and the rest in 5 annual installments with interest. The sale was made in the course of the summer; the lot is good and on the Cobourg road."

David Sidey (1784-1871) was a Scotsman from Blairgowrie, Perthshire.

He came to Canada around 1823 and two years later was operating a tavern at Rice Lake on the site of the present Harris Boatworks, lot 16, concession 9. When Sidey left Rice Lake c.1830 he built a log house on the west side of Pine Hill, on the highest elevation in Upper Cold Springs. The house can still be seen although the logs are now covered with clapboard. It is thought that Catharine Parr Traill used Sidey as a prototype for her character, Duncan Maxwell, in *Canadian Crusoes, A Tale of The Rice Lake Plains* (1852).

David Sidey was one of the founders of the Congregational Church and is buried in the cemetery there with his wife and nephew, William Souter of Edinburgh, who joined him in Cold Springs in 1842.

Sidey and his wife, Ann Souter (also spelled Soutar), had three daughters who married Cold Springs men: Isabella to George Campbell, Jane to John Steele and Mary to Peter Sidey Jr., who was probably a relative. Peter Sidey Jr. was reeve of Hamilton Township in 1878 and precentor at the Presbyterian Church. Descendants of their family were noted singers. His father, Peter Sr., and his mother, Mary Jane (Janet) Ford, had nine children. They came to Cold Springs from Dundee, Scotland, around 1839.

David Sidey got title to his 200 acres in 1832 and immediately began selling off parcels. He sold 78 acres of the northern section to Israel Ellsworth, who had a tavern on the property and whose father, Aaron, had the tavern at Sully from 1827-32. In 1832 Sidey sold the south 71 acres to Hiram Ash.

#### THE TAVERN KEEPERS OF COLD SPRINGS

One of the most lucrative businesses for early settlers appears to have been tavern keeping. Owners were required to secure a tavern licence and bed and board were often provided. According to Inn Petitions preserved at the Public Archives of Ontario, the first person to be recommended for a tavern at lot 16, concession 5, was one Benjamin Green in 1827. Samuel Ash followed in 1832 and their petitions were approved by Judge William Falkner, who was the first

settler on the Rice Lake Plains in 1828. His farm was called "Oaklands". On May 7, 1833, in the Cobourg Star, Israel Ellsworth, "lately of the tavern at Cold Springs" advertised a tavern for sale or let. His property was purchased a year later by Allen McIntosh.

#### Hiram Ash

Hiram Ash (1790-1881) was a son of George Ash Jr. Four Ash brothers, George Jr., Samuel, James and Joseph were United Empire Loyalists who received grants near Cobourg in 1798. Hiram Ash was on lot 16, concession 5, by 1830 and first rented 150 acres. He had a tavern in Cold Springs until 1836 when it burned down. It was either Ash or Ellsworth who was operating a tavern when Mrs. Traill passed through in 1832. After the fire Ash gave up tavern keeping and moved east to lot 13, concession 5, which he shared with his sons, George, Adam Henry, Samuel and William. So many members of the Ash family lived in that area it was known as Ashville.

#### Allen McIntosh

In 1834 Allen McIntosh (1800-1869), a Scotsman from Edinburgh, bought the north section, 78 acres, of lot 16, concession 5, and applied for a tavern licence the same year. His wife was Jane Suter, and although the name is spelled a little differently, it is probable that McIntosh's wife and David Sidey's were related.

Allen McIntosh kept a frame two-story tavern in Lower Cold Springs which he operated himself until 1857. It was located close to the main road above the second township hall and is shown on the 1861 map of Hamilton Township. Allen McIntosh became successful and eventually bought up much of the land in and around the village of Cold Springs, also renting several houses. According to 1857 records McIntosh served on the township council and as a Justice of the Peace but his will states he became blind in his later years. He gave the land for the school and the Presbyterian Church. The first township hall was built on land purchased from McIntosh.

In 1857 two men, John Hutchison and Alex Lockie, took over the management of the McIntosh inn and also operated a still but McIntosh retained the ownership. Lockie left a few years later but Hutchison remained. He was joined by his wife, Alexandrina, from Scotland and they had several children.

When Allen McIntosh died in 1869 the inn was closed and John Hutchison then rented a small house and operated a bakery business. As the assessed value of the inn and 1 acre remained at 100 pounds (\$400) during Hutchison's occupancy from 1857-68 it appears that the inn was not a large building. The 1854 assessments show that the Harris and Gabetis inns in Gore's Landing, which were also of frame

construction, were valued at 300 pounds and Jaynes's brick tavern (later the Pickering Hotel) in Baltimore at 345 pounds. Each also had approximately 1 acre of property attached. It is not known what happened to McIntosh's former inn. It was either torn down or clad in brick by Allen's son, David. David McIntosh had kept a store in a one-storey stone and frame building on the east side of the road and in 1845 was the first postmaster in Cold Springs. That house burned down sometime after 1861.

The McIntosh family operated a store and post office and later the telephone exchange from the two-storey brick house. It also was located close to the main road and may have been used as a hotel at some period, as family tradition says. When the route of the main road was changed in 1968 the brick house was demolished and it is said that the boards underneath were cut by a very early sawmill.

#### John Gabetis

In 1837 a second tavern was established in Lower Cold Springs by John Gabetis, an innkeeper from Otonabee township. He bought land on both sides of the road: 26 acres of the property formerly owned by Hiram Ash. Gabetis sold out to Allen McIntosh and in 1849 built an inn, The Rice Lake House, in Gore's Landing (now property of William Babb). The building of the Plank Road, resulting in faster traffic, was probably a factor in his move.

The taverns in Cold Springs differed from those at Rice Lake, in that the latter were able to take advantage of providing overnight accomodation for travellers waiting to cross the lake; although the accomodation was of very poor quality according to early writers.

By the 1890s the villages at Rice Lake had become popular summer vacation spots and the primitive taverns were replaced by comfortable hotels.

Cold Springs was too close to Cobourg to attract overnight guests, especially when the thirteen miles between Cobourg and Rice Lake could be travelled in an hour on the Plank Road built c. 1848. But it was a favourite resting place for early travellers who were making the rough and exhausting day's journey to Peterborough via Rice Lake, and was no doubt often used by stage drivers to rest, water and change their horses.

### HISTORIC BUILDINGS, PAST AND PRESENT

#### The Doctors' House

In 1863 Allen McIntosh purchased a half acre and a frame house for \$2300 from Horsburg and Ainslie, executors of Alexander Ross, a

stonecutter. McIntosh owned the land on three sides of this half acre which had 162 feet of frontage on the main road. Ross built the frame house (value 150 pounds) in 1857 on the main road above McIntosh's inn. He appears to have rented his house and lived on a farm with his sons in Plainville, lot 14, concession 7. Alexander Ross (1795-1863) was a native of Elgin, Murrayshire, Scotland, and was buried at Cold Springs Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

In his will of 1869 McIntosh left the half acre and house to his widow for her lifetime, when their daughter, Jane Richard, who was also a widow and residing in the house, would become the owner. In 1887 Mrs. Richard sold the property for \$900 to Thomas Greer, a doctor, and moved to Oaklands, which had formerly been first the Falkners' and later the Traills' farm on the Rice Lake Plains. Dr. John Pratt, a bachelor, owned the Cold Springs house for a brief period at the turn of the century and it was later occupied by other doctors and known as "The Doctors' House". Unfortunately it, too, was torn down when the route of the road was changed.

#### The Loyal Orange Lodge

Because the Cold Springs settlers were mainly Protestant, an Orange Lodge #514 was warranted in 1856 on land donated by Alexander Hardy.

The lodge built a brick hall c. 1875 and the organization was active until after World War 11, being attended by members from all over the township. The building no longer exists.

#### Township Halls

The first Hamilton Township Hall, where all the township business was conducted, was located in Lower Cold Springs near the school and Orange Lodge. It was a two-storey brick building with round-headed windows and a verandah on three sides. It was constructed in 1854 from plans drawn by Thomas S. Gore, founder of Gore's Landing and friend of the incumbent reeve, James B. Fortune, a mill owner in the same village. The verandah was eventually removed and did not exist within living memory.

The old hall was demolished and a second township hall built across the road in 1950 using some of the old brick from the original building. In 1989 a third municipal building was erected near Camborne and the former township hall is presently being used for community purposes.

#### The Gabetis/Frost House

According to the late Miss Edith Hoskin, Cold Springs historian, the house now belonging to Gerald and Sheila Frost was once one of the early taverns; its elegant classical style suggests it was constructed in the early 1840s or 50s. It is thought it was probably

the inn owned by John Gabetis although it has been a private home for over 130 years. The house was designated an historic building in 1988 by Hamilton Township L.A.C.A.C.

#### The McCune/Beedham House

This property once belonged to the McIntosh family and was rented for some years. The house was built by James McCune, a carpenter, c. 1860. McCune rented the property until he was able to purchase it from the McIntosh family in 1870. The beautiful grey frame house was designated an historic building in 1989 by Hamilton Township L.A.C.A.C.

#### COLD SPRINGS IN 1990

The main industry in the Cold Springs area has always been farming and at one time there was a blacksmith shop and a store in each section of the village. For a short time in the 1890s a cheese factory was in operation and was located west of the second township hall near a creek. The brick school, S.S.#12, was closed in 1962 and the children bused to the new, large school at Camborne. The old school survives as a private home. In 1970 the federal government closed the post office, which was at that period located in Graydon McIntosh's store in Upper Cold Springs. It was replaced with green boxes.

Today the only historic business establishment left in the village is that of McIntosh's Store owned by Graydon McIntosh, a great-great grandson of Allen McIntosh from Edinburg. It is one of the few in the township retaining the ambience of an old-time grocery and hardware emporium.

#### References for the Settlement of Cold Springs

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Catherine Milne, 1990