

#4 Sterling Ont. Sept 13/65

Mr. G. Boyce

President Hastings County Historical Society.

Belleville, Ont. (173 Bridge St. East)

Dear Sir-

According to last notice of meetings of Hastings County Historical Society - I notice you expect to hold a meeting at River Valley school house, which I trust will be of much interest locally and to all who may attend - in October /65.

We have some old records of 1877-1887. <sup>later</sup> I went to school here from 1896 to 1900 - many changes since. Been living here again since August 1919 - the last 46 yrs. My uncl late Thos. J. Smith lived on this farm 47 yrs - previously since 1875\* <sup>to 1919</sup> as a sample taxes on this place in 1877 were Four dollars and fifty cents - This <sup>year</sup> 1965 - on same sized farm they are One hundred and fifty dollars and 92 cents. In 1919 the tax was Forty dollars.

As having always been interested in History - often listened to the older settlers tell of Pioneer days in River Valley. A few families have deeds of their farms going back to the Crown & Canada Company.

Enclosed a few items I well remember since 1896 & many others as told then & later.

Many <sup>my</sup> family names on Oak Hills & River Valley communities have disappeared entirely - Twenty Two names at least, I trust the October meeting at River Valley school house may be well attended. If a notice of date in Sterling news Argus - it should bring a full house.

Yours truly

C. S. Chard  
Member Hastings County H.S.  
#4 Sterling, Ont

P.S. A Copy for the Tweedsmuir Book about River Valley & Oak Hills community - has been sent,  
C. S. Chard.

Oct 18/65

Dear Mr. Boyce

Here are a few more notes on  
River Valley & Oak Hills of other  
days.

Good crowd out tonight - hoped to have  
seen you there. Mr. Ranson & Mr.  
Pegg? told me you were over busy  
like my two sons - teaching school.

Best of luck in your work

yours sincerely  
Clarence S. Chard.

#4 Stirling,  
Ont.

#4 Stirling, Ont. Oct 18/65

Mr G. E. Boyce

President Hastings Historical Society,  
Belleville, Ont.

Dear Sir -

Please find enclosed a few more notes  
on River Valley & the Oak Hills.

Thanks for your letter. I am very  
pleased if I can contribute something  
of interest - as I went to school here  
from 1896 - to 1900.

Older people often told of "other days"  
which was interesting to me.

yours sincerely  
C. S. Chard.

from C. S. CHARD.  
#4, Stirling, Ont.,  
SEPT. 13/65.

RIVER VALLEY and THE OAK HILLS COMMUNITY.

For the River Valley TWEEDSMUIR BOOK and THE HASTINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Some of the following is from Family Records and some as told me by ~~the~~ some of the Early settlers of the River Valley and the Oak Hills.--- 1877--- 1965.

The following names have disappeared entirely from the supporters of the RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL SECTION# 19-- SIDNEY Township, Hastings County, Ontario- ( CANADA WEST).

From the HILLS--COSBY? , MARSHALLS, HATFIELDs, ROBINSONS, SMITHS, CHAPMANS, (RICHARD BAMBERS),  
( AIRFIELD  
TAUGHERS, ( ROBT. GREEN FAMILY//-- ~~AIRFIELD~~ 1965)--WAGERS.

FROM "THE VALLEY" -----

HEAGLES-BOULTONS--?MCCANNs, -MC NARYS/--KRATINGS/--SHEAS/--Mr. HOWARD, fisherman at RIVER  
MR CHRISTIE SCOTT (where Ernie Carr 1965)-DINGWALL-FRAPPY-the Jesse Carr family-- Harry  
Vandervoort( where J. KANE 1965)-- James Vandervoort--The Waterloo Mills (just South of  
Jack Sager's house-- in use in 1877 and Earlier)- WILKES--Goldings-( Palmers--family where  
S. Irven 1965)-Hermons- Whitneys --the Wm( Anna family) -where Ken. Morrow 1965.  
Mr. Edwards , where Ed Kent 1965)- Blogg. McKenzie.-  
**-TICE-- Wannanaker.**

A few farms are still in the Family Name as about a Century ago--when they were purchased  
from the Crown.--and some from the Canada Company--. Crown Deeds are still in the names  
of the following--Richardson Family, Sager Family, Irven Family, and Sarles Family at  
Oak Lake.

The EXACT date of the building of THE WATERLOO MILLS( FLOUR MILLS) is not definitely  
known-- it was a Three or Four Story Frame Mill built by the late Mr. Crask-- later owned  
by Mr. Hart-- the Miller was Mr. EDMUND ROWBOTTOM---later years was used as a " GRIST"  
mill and as a Cider Mill in the basement. In 1896 and for many years the Miller was late  
Mr. Louis Descant of Stirling.

C. S. CHARD, #4, Stirling, Ont.

RIVER VALLEY and THE OAK HILLS COMMUNITY. /// --1877--1965. SEPT. 13/65.

For the RIVER VALLEY TREEDSMUIR BOOK and // THE HASTINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

( Page 1 Cont'd)

We have a receipt for wheat to the late Thos. J. Smith dated October 12th 1877 and signed CRASK AND HART/-- per Edmund ROWBOTTOM-- ( MILLER)  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

This mill was torn down previous to 1919-- when we came here after War I. --- part of it was purchased by late Arthur Hamblin for a new barn-- later the Fred Heasman farm.

The MILLPOND FOR THE WATERLOO MILLS WAS (just South of Ed. Kent's house , 1965) and extended South to the Bridge by PHIL. CONLEY'S HOUSE, -- formerly the late Jesse Carr house. The water came out to the OLD MILL ROAD, and a " PUNT" -- a flat bottomed boat was tied up to the old wooden Bridge. --and Peter Dingwall, Bert Hanna, and others used to go " sailing on the former Mill POND. --- now all filled in , except where TROUT CREEK runs. The old Mill Dam was about where Ed. Kent's is now (1965).

My people came here in 1875 ( Ninety Years ago) and I have often heard them say that others told them " HOW foolish Mr. Crask was to build a Flour Mill on a stream a person could jump across. " -- so it looks as if the WATERLOO MILLS were built before 1875.

The Central Ontario Railway was built in the late 1870's from Trenton to Coe Hill to bring out Minerals. At one time it was expected to cross the TRENT RIVER at Frankford come up through RIVER VALLEY to Stirling and then on to Coe Hill. A late survey took it WEST of the TRENT River ( about Two miles West of River Valley -- fortunately- it saved running through many good level farms -- and according to what I have heard told many years ago it would have had to nearly parallel the present # 33 Highway- formerly called the Frankford Road. My late father worked on the building of this Railway for the Pay of TWO DOLLARS a day for himself and a team of horses. He had to board himself and the horses. Also he used to tell of Working on the GRAND JUNCTION RAILWAY -- Belleville to Peterboro at One Dollar and fifty cents a day for himself and team of horses

C. S. Chard-#4 Stirling, ONT.

River Valley and OAK HILLS COMMUNITY.

Sept. 13/65.

For the River VALLEY TWEEDSMUIR BOOK AND THE HASTINGS COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

( cont'd) ~~XXXX~~ and had to " board " himself and team.

Once I was told by an older man he worked on the building of the Grand Jct. Ry. through Stirling at Fifty cents a day at laboring work with a " PICK and Shovel". This Ry. came through Stirling in 1876. ~~XXXXXXXX~~ the cost of building from Belleville to Peterboro // -- according to one account. was THREE MILLION DOLLARS.

The late Mr. Thomas Richardson of River Valley used to tell of seeing the Indians going up the Trent River in their Canoes-- must be nearly a Century ago, as he lived well along in the Ninety Year age and been dead many years.

have it told often that " Never a Log DRIVE went down the Trent River , but a man was drowned. Often caused by a "JAM" when a log got caught on a rock and those following piled up. A river driver told me once ~~that~~ the " Boss on the " DRIVE " called for a Volunteer to cut the " KEY LOG-- the one that caused the " pile up. He volunteered for this dangerous job . cut the log and dived in the River.-- thought he must have swam under water for a short distance and the current carried him some distance-- as he was told about a week later in the Hospital of how they found him some distance down river from the " jam" washed up to the shore where they had ~~piled~~ pulled him out. Said he had no memory of any thing after he dived in the River until a week later in Hospital. In some cases DYNAMITE was used to " BLOW the JAM"-- also a very dangerous job-- as in a wide river like the "TRENT" it could be a QUARTER mile out from shore as likely as near the shore -- the return " Passage" was Not guaranteed by the " BOSS. Sometimes the first" charge" of Explosive did not start the logs and a second trip out was even more dangerous than the first one.

At one time much " SQUARED TIMBER" & hewed by hand-- was floated down a the rivers. My late Grandfather went on one of thes " Cribs " about 1845 to "QUEBEC CITY,

RIVER VALLEY and OAK HILLS COMMUNITY.

For the River VALLEY TWEEDSMUIR BOOK and the HASTINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.  
PAGE -- one/- cont'd. ).

These "CRIBS" or ~~RAFTS~~ were squared timber Chained together at TRENTON or BELLEVILLE with a shanty built on top for the men to sleep ( if any chance) in and to eat in. At that time it is quite likely this Raft was " towed down the Bay of Quinte with a Sail boat and also a ~~S~~ Sail erected on the "TIMBER CRIB or RAFT"-- as not likely much if any steam used in 1845. The men were paid at the rate of Ten to Twelve dollars a month -- same as in the " Shanti - es where the Timber was cut. in the forest. There was an agreement that the Lumber Company was to bring the men back to where they started from. Instead of doing this, the men were " DUMPED " of at Kingston , Ontario , on the return journey-- and had to " Hoof" it home. As it is Sixty five miles from here to KINGSTON by no 2 Highway-- and a wide stretch of Swamp this side of Ca Catarauai--- quite likely those men had a very long walk to get home. One thing these men were used to plenty of hard work, and stood it better than we would at this time.

Two former residents of the Oak Hills -- who ~~grew~~ grew up here, late Mr. Ben Hatfield and the late Mr. Alex Park, used to work in the " Shanties" in the winters. and both could tell how men had to work in those days of long ago-- so the Logging industry( or the Lumber Industry) affected the Oak Hills Community.

*connection with this*  
Another thing in ~~connection with this~~ community was the pulling of very large stone in the fields near the ~~near the~~ " Hills". The late Mr. James Stapley had a " STONE MACHINE" - it was a vehicle on wheels with a Timber" TRIPOD on top. The front wheels may have been Three feet high and the Rear wheels were at Least Five to Six feet high, with very wide tires at least six to eight inches wide. Under the high frame there was a a solid WOODEN DRUM( or log about four feet long. Around this "log was a large thick rope attached to a place on the top of the " Tripod.

Sept. 13/65.

## RIVER VALLEY and OAK HILLS COMMUNITY.

For the River Valley TWEEDSMUIR BOOK--and the Hastings County Historical Society.

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When the " Brakes" were set on the wheels. (blocked ) so the Stone Machine was stationary  
 the Iron Hooks about one foot long were unwound and lowered down over the stone to be pulled up out of the good Earth and when it got to the top it was locked the horses

at the end of (possibly a fifty foot rope) were brought back to the Stone Machine. hitched to it and away to the fence.

It took some skill to get the stone machine over the rock to be pulled o plenty "know how" to get the stone in line at the fence.

Sometimes other school boys and I would go back to the fields to watch stone being pulled. To pull 25 stone in ten hours was a good days work. In 1949 a "Bulldozer took off three hundred large rocks in nine hours - at a cost of ninety dollars.

This work usually done when grain cut + ground dry. up to a few inches ~~is~~ of frost in the ground. The stone "pecks" - like a sharp pointed hammer had to be tempered right to make holes in the "hard head" rocks. to fit the Iron hooks in to raise the stone out of the ground. one time Mr. Stapley drove with horses nearly ten miles to a blacksmith who could temper these pecks to a "Pigeon Blue" - instead of a blacksmith in Stirling who insisted to make them a "Cherry Red" when tempering them.

The Old Ingonous Trail came up about where #33 Highway is now - to Sagers Corners (River Valley) then turn west to the Trent River - nearly a mile - and follows the River to Campbellford.

Sterling R.R. 4 Ont.

Feb. 16/66

Dear Mr. Boyce:

Since Feb. is the last month you gave me I thought I had better draft this out & not wait any longer for more material from Toronto. (Kerks). I believe this to be quite authentic. This is a general outline & maybe someday we can get some more details such as mill - (outlet by stone & screen but) I do not think you want that here & maybe we can get a pamphlet like I can have.

I tried in this to tell its importance by ~~the~~ early dates. Its ~~primary~~ importance & brought up to day for importance as they want these places now for tourist attraction. & this is a good area from Glen Ross & Frankford & Oak Hills. widely combed each season with Americans. I just gave a brief sketch in most places & added most names now living so you could understand it better. & if book for tourist attraction that might be of use also. I never got it typed - could yet if time. Thought I could bring it & explain but time flies.



It is 12.30. Am hoping to go tonight for  
a few holidays to Lundy & have a meeting (Bible  
Study) this afternoon.

How is the book coming? Best  
regards to all. Sorry for the rush which  
seems to always be.

Have you Over the Hills to Hastings?

Thank you

Sincerely

Bessie Bush.

## River Valley

The Trent River has always been noted for its importance of connecting the inland of East York County with the important chain of inland Waterways of Ontario. This was most important to the <sup>first</sup> Pioneer before other means of trade & travelling.

One portion of that river which seldom has been given written prominence equal with its boundaries, namely Glen Ross, Frankford, Oak Lake, & Sterling, (among which the Valley is snuggled -) and which not only played an outstanding part in early days but is still on the map to day with up-to-date (modern) farming & industries & living. This (new) is the River Valley Community. This (new) name chosen by Mrs. Chas. Morrow in 1881 for the then new school.

Early explorers & trappers (e.g. Champlain - the Sixteen Hundredths) made note of the wealth of the land drained by this river & the also famous Raouin Creek territory. The virgin timber was ideal for spars which were used for the masts of ships. These were cut & hauled to the banks & piled for a long distance along the river - this community where they were made ready to be shipped over seas for ship building. The centre of this bee hive of activity among the pioneer forests was here an up to date hotel built by Lewis Rosebush (after referred to as Wabing Lewis Bush) & his father Joseph Rosebush shortly after the 1800s. These people settled here in the late 1700s. This hotel was their second home. This house after being lived continuously had been modernized from time to time but always using the same doors, windows, & <sup>the</sup> frame of the building until it was a modern tourist centre called Raouin

Lodge. The Lodge was surrounded by cottages when it burned in 1960. There was a huge fire place in this pioneer building at one time capable of burning the pioneer logs 6' 8" wide. It had a very large ball room on 2nd floor (up stairs). There was no plastic & the boards of which it was erected were 24" to 30" inches wide in a solid piece. This was said to be the first house painted in this district. Blacksmith nails (drum pins) were used to build it. Only a small dirt cellar was under the centre (no wall) which was approached by a trap door in the centre of the floor put together with wooden pegs (pins) called dowels. These boards were considered half worn out in the early 1900s. because these wooden ~~pegs~~<sup>pins</sup> which should be in the centre were showing at the surface. A grocery store, sheds, shoe shop (home made) blacksmith, shop, potato leech, charcoal industry to make fuel for the blacksmith, roat cellar & bake oven etc all helped to complete the little village.

Travellers & lumbermen & traders were coming & going. After the spars were cut lumbering & timbering were carried on. As the forests were cleared, the land proved good for farming. White fish & salmon were so thick that they could be dipped out. The story was handed down that a woman used a plank with spikes to haul the fish out of the Lawdon Creek. Over 100 years ago a small lake was situated on the north side of this territory (now Reeft (Utman) called "Heer Lick". The water being somewhat salty it attracted animals for a drinking place. It is of interest that this spot is still wet & swampy in the spring of year. Recent cottage builders hunting for a water supply found it was high in mineral content. This portion of the community was called

Rosebush Landing

About a mile down the river, nearer Frankford, was another point named Richardson Point. New logs were also hauled & loaded. This was settled about 1820 to 1830. by Joshua Richardson<sup>sr</sup> & family. These settlers were at first attracted by the fine timber & a "spring" a source of drinking water. This spring still furnishes water for several families to-day having its source in the wonderful Oak Hill forest above.

West of the first hotel location another very attractive stone building (also a pioneer hotel) still in continuous use & no doubt built after the pioneer Scottish style which holds its own in Ontario. still stands. Its thick stone walls & architecture is admired by many tourists & campers in its picturesque setting snuggled against a mountainous range of hills. (to day - Ft. Lt. J. P. Morrison)

Still another very old house built after the pattern of the old hotel & by other members of the Rosebush family has been used continuously. This is also in good shape & has been well kept up. A descendant, Mrs. Ed. Palmer, lives there now. It is located about a mile from the river near Shilby.

The little red brick school (one time an average of 75 attended), built in 1881 is still in use & standing beside the Sayer Cemetery (Burying Ground) is the third school to be used. The Sayer School was on the same school grounds. In 1865 there were 65 listed on the register in the common school. These <sup>perhaps</sup> unique schools were dedicated not only for a school but ~~for~~ church. was held here for years & funerals, and it has always been the community centre for various activities. This part of the community was

called Sager's Corners, <sup>Sager's descendant of Michael Sager</sup> because four main roads meet. There is a four story grist mill (used for miles around) with mill pond, a hundred years of cheese making - (Shanrock Cheese Factory has just been modernized) - saw mill, carding mill & another grist mill. <sup>by name</sup> Oak Hills are found for this section of community.

Close to Oak Hills & situated on the Big Street Road recently named Raven Valley Road, was a pump factory where wooden pumps were made (Stanley Owen to day) <sup>near</sup> this road is noted for springs & boiling springs still in use.

These Pioneer names such as Rosebud, Richardson, Smith, Hanna Sager Owen Parks, & Donohoe are still in the valley. <sup>the same</sup> & on land, descendants from the first Pioneers. (6-17 generations)

Many interesting stories have been told from the days of the Indian & the first covered road to the modern community to-day.

The school in the last 2 years is under Sidney School Area with 2 rooms & bus transportation. Rainbow Lodge has been re built & is a thriving all year tourists centre. <sup>Headquarters</sup> <sup>office</sup> of Riverside Construction (Jack Bush) near by is Bona Vista Tourists Camp which accommodates summer visitors from near & far. The land around Richardson Point is a <sup>busy</sup> <sup>beehive</sup> of activity & summer dwellers in cottages & many <sup>unlabeled</sup> ones for those who have <sup>"come home"</sup> returned. Here pleasure of fishing, hunting & boating are well known. Also established is "Comely motor". <sup>near</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Oak</sup> <sup>Hills</sup> is the New Oak Hill Flying club which is drawing much attraction - as also is located one, Belleville's new Skiing Centre. Off the 33 Highway a new Golf Course is being

being completed. Cruising by boat through  
The Trent Canal system is very popular  
holiday to day, & the near by lock are  
of interest.

As long as the Trent River flows & its  
mountainous scenery which has recently  
been described by Mr. Pierre Berton &  
by Kenneth McNeill in "Cruising the Trent  
& Severn Water Ways" 1959 - River Valley  
will be known far & wide as it still  
is the beginning of many a family tree  
in many parts of Canada & the U.S.A.

This is a general sketch of a good  
example of a rural community being ~~alms~~  
amalgamated by surrounding towns & then  
being revived by those towns for sport  
industry etc.

Often used in brackets the pioneer  
name. e.g. "upstairs" instead of 2nd floor  
cellar - basement

If you need help further on this  
write Mrs. Roy Bush Shelby R.R. 4  
The Writer.

Stirling R.R. 4 Ont  
Jan. 10. 1967.

Dear Mrs. Boyce.

Congratulation on your interesting & well planned chapter! I do not know how you ever condensed so much so well. I am anxious to see <sup>much</sup> the rest & you can put me on the list for an early buyer.

I hesitated to interfere with your well written document but put in pencil a suggestion, if you have reason to not use it you can easily sub it out.

Perhaps I have wrong ideas, the word settlement & Community. There were several early settlements The Roebuck <sup>at the River</sup> Point - the hotel. The first so far as I can find out. Then ~~around~~ a mile & a half east Sagers corner. where the 4 schools were built & the <sup>large</sup> grist mill. Then Richardsons Point further down the river. To me these were settlements later to become the River Valley Community.

why I added the woolen mill ~~added later~~ "to the Community" - it was nearer the Sager Settlement rather than at the River. However these are minor & only a few residents <sup>would</sup> know the difference I am so glad at last some one has

mentioned the Northern Part of the Township  
as all previous printed books <sup>seemingly</sup> ~~seemingly~~  
& stressed Bellesville & the first concessions. Even  
the northern U. E. L. never got listed. This  
addition will help to sell it. I would think.

I am so glad "Lagers" got in. Because  
who ever put the finishing touches on the State  
Centennial left them out & they never have  
really forgiven me - but I had them in my copy.

I had a notion to have nerve enough  
to suggest at the end since you have  
so many places brought it up to date a sentence  
something like this -

"Many sport areas are being introduced  
such as ~~a~~ skiing centres, golf courses  
and the new Oak Hill Flying Club which  
was started on the pioneer Richardson land  
of the Trent River"

I thought this might add to the sale as  
include the younger class & also put  
Richardson name - of which they are proud &  
a large no. of descendants are living - that  
summer resort to day.

n.B. Last Sun. or holiday. The cars are continually  
striving by <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ people, Bellesville must use these a  
lot. I thought if at the end it would include  
over



other centres, spent. — as well as ours. — This is only a suggestion.

Wishing you every success & I know how happy you will be when you get it all in the puss.

Sincerely Bessie Bush.

n.B. We had 2 interesting speakers Mon. night but a very small crowd. It never seems right if the Boyce's not there.  
p.B.

n.B. I just remembered a <sup>small</sup> book printed by Inlet in 1844 — minutes of the municipal Council of the District County Chamber. Aug 12 1840. Asst. of Victoria. Wm. Hutton, Esq. Warden. Names present. Hutton, Yaffe, McTaggart, Sydney Huffman, Cummy, J. Canniff, John Kelchion — Asst. Councillors. (headed — at Tweedmouth Sea. & I never got it to you — but do late now.) It is like a County Bk. Meritons. Sydney. Lawdon School grants. Grammar schools. etc.

one item of Int —

— That time for completing the macadamized road from Bellville to Canniff Mills was extended until Sept. 1846. — That Philo White was paid for surveying for Jas. Gay & Joseph Reebank — wonder if that should be Reebank. I asked Tom Ransom if ever read of Philo White the surveyor for the north?