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Our Cover: Carrie Holmes MacGillivary (Photo courtesy of Williamstown Public Library)
CARRIE HOLMES MACGILLIVRAY
Sue Harrington

It was a lucky day for Glengarry when the late Evelyn Theakston van Beek and her husband, George, decided to take a Sunday afternoon drive in the country on July 11, 1965. Heading east along the Raisin River toward Williamstown, they made their acquaintance with a large house, well placed on a terrace with lawns and trees to set it off.

"Now there’s MY idea of a house," Evelyn said to George, who knew of her life-long dream to live in a big house. As luck would have it, the house was for sale. This was the beginning of Mrs. van Beek’s love affair with Dalcrombie, home of the historic MacGillivray family. After buying the house, which the van Beeks renamed Avondbloem, Evelyn began the hunt for information that culminated in her writing a book about the MacGillivrays of Dalcrombie.

Carefully sifting through archival materials, writing letters to newspaper editors, contacting friends of friends of friends, Mrs. van Beek discovered missing links, unravelled genealogical mysteries, and brought a colourful and talented family to the attention of history lovers.

A copy of her work was placed in the Williamstown Library’s Local History Collection, and two large scrapbooks containing photos, memorabilia and letters which she had amassed in her studies of the MacGillivrays, are located in the Glengarry Archives in the Sir John Johnson Manor House.

The late Mrs. van Beek left Glengarry more than just the legacy of her work, however. It was announced in the fall of 2003 that she had bequeathed $125,000 to the Glengarry Historical Society. Her interest in Dalcrombie and the resulting information she gathered about the fascinating MacGillivray family had ignited in her a love of Glengarry history.

Of the MacGillivrays of Dalcrombie, this is what she discovered.

The story begins, as with so many other families in Glengarry, in Scotland. Familiar terms — Culloden, British landowners, the New World, the fur trade, adventure —
combined to create in John McGillivray, as in countless other young men of the time, the desire to sail across the Atlantic.

McGillivray came over in the late 1790s, and promptly joined the North West Company. Several of his “distant cousins” were already prominent in the fur trading company, and one of them, the Hon. William MacGillivray, later became its head. John became a wintering partner in 1801, and five years later was in charge of the company in the Athabasca District of northern Saskatchewan.

In 1818, having accumulated some wealth, and having had an unwarranted brush with the law, John decided to retire. And like so many other Nor’Westers, he chose the Williamstown area. He selected a site on the Raisin River mid-way between Williamstown and Martintown — now known in his honour as MacGillivray’s Bridge — and there he built Dalcrombie, named after his ancestral home in Scotland.

The North West Company partners acted similarly by marrying aboriginal women. These women helped the fur-traders to survive in the long winters of the West, caring for, and “comforting,” their husbands.

From this union, McGillivray had four children, although just who they all were is not known. His son, William, followed in his footsteps in the North West Company, but was drowned in Stuart Lake, B.C., in 1832. His daughter, Elizabeth, married Colin Campbell, also an employee of the North West Company. Elizabeth and Colin had five sons and nine daughters, and some of you reading this may be descended from their offspring.

The other two children from John’s marriage to the “perfect” Indian woman (as she was described by Governor Simpson) are not known. Local legend has it that after John settled down at Dalcrombie and was married to Isabella, the daughter of the Hon. Neil McLean, the following event took place.
“One winter in a wild storm, there was a knock at the door. Isabella opened it and there stood an Indian woman with two small boys. She had come from the far Northwest, all the way to Glengarry, to claim their rights for the two boys.” So wrote Rhodes Grant of Martintown, who said he had been told the story by his grandmother, Janet Munro, who was raised on the farm adjacent to the MacGillivrays.
The visitors were taken in, and when spring came, the woman set out again for the West. John and Isabella kept the two boys. One died in childhood, while the other appears to have survived.

According to Mrs. van Beek, "Some people have cast doubt on this story, but when Mr. Ian Henderson of Williamstown was reading it in the trial draft of this history, there immediately flashed into his mind something his aunt had told him when he was a very little boy, namely that she had SEEN the Indian son of John McGillivray as a clerk in Vankleek Hill, Ont."

Certainly there must be some truth to the story of an Indian woman following her husband back to the East. Tales of such happenings have swirled around the countryside for years, and have even been fictionalized in Grace Campbell's novel, The Thorn Apple Tree.

It seems as though John McGillivray produced his children in lots of four. He and Isabella had four daughters in a row between 1819 and 1826, but oddly, they all died. They then had four sons in the next decade, and they all lived.

John McGillivray held many important titles during his time in Williamstown, among them Commissioner of Crown Lands, member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada (giving him the right to use Hon. in front of his name), and Justice of the Peace — but there was one title he had to return to Scotland to try to retrieve.

In 1852, at the age of more than 75 years, he sailed across the sea whence he had come, to claim the title of Chief of the MacGillivary Clan. But legal ramblings took their time, and John, feeling in ill health, returned to Williamstown without settling the matter. He died in 1855.

The eldest of his four sons with Isabella, Neil John, then took up the quest to be leader of the clan. Unfortunately, he encountered some difficulties in proving he was who he said he was. In the records of St. Andrew's United Church in Williamstown, there is mention of the baptism of some of John and Isabella's children, but there is no Neil John.
As Mrs. van Beek wrote, "This seemed puzzling until in an affidavit written by the Rev. Hugh Urquhart of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Cornwall in 1857, the information came to light that Rev. Mr. McKenzie of Williamstown had been somewhat remiss in the keeping of the ministerial registry of baptisms."

Armed with this affidavit and another one from his uncle, Alexander McLean, Neil John became the Chief of the MacGillivray Clan and was able to claim his rights to the Scottish estates.

Despite becoming chief in 1858, Neil John ruled the clan for many years from his home just west of Dalcrombie. He and his wife, the former Catherine Macdonell (a niece of the Bishop Macdonell, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Kingston), had four children, all of whom were baptized in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (now United) in Martintown.

In 1870, the family left Glengarry and relocated to Montreal. After "commuting" many times to Scotland to look after his clan duties, Neil John and Catherine and family finally made the move back to Scotland in 1880.

Just six years later, Neil John died suddenly, but his character legacy was a good one. He was regarded as a "kind and benevolent chief" by his clansmen, who filled the church to overflowing at his funeral.

He was succeeded as chief by his son, John William MacGillivray, but by then the family's finances were in decline. In 1890, all the Scottish estates were sold off, ending a four-century MacGillivray connection. The new chief, having a title but no lands, set off roaming about the world, living for periods in British North Borneo, Hong Kong and India. He died, without issue, in a London workhouse in 1914. His brother, Angus, who had predeceased him, also is said to have died in indigent circumstances.

The chief's title then passed to John Farquhar MacGillivray, a cousin of John William. John Farquhar was the son of Neil John's brother, Farquhar, who became a barrister and later worked as Clerk of Routine and Records in the Canadian House of Commons.
The younger Farquhar was born in Ottawa but lived in Kenora and later Toronto. He was also a lawyer, a K.C., in fact, and became Taxation Master at Osgoode Hall.

Although married, Farquhar, the 14th Chief of the MacGillivray Clan, had no family. His three brothers had died before him and with his death in 1942, the long line of MacGillivray chiefs ended.

Isabella and John McGillivray's third son, William, had gone to the United States as a young man. Not much was known about his family until Mrs. van Beek, through her diligence, managed to track it down in California. The last of William's family had also died out.

So who was left at Dalcrombie near Williamstown? The fourth and youngest son of John McGillivray and Isabella McLean was George Hopper MacGillivray. Except for a brief period, George Hopper stayed home on the farm. He married Caroline Metcalf Holmes of Montreal in 1870, but the union was short lived. Mrs. MacGillivray died the following year in childbirth.

The baby survived, however, and was named Carrie Holmes MacGillivray. And although she was the last MacGillivray resident of Dalcrombie, she was a memorable one.

Carrie, who was nicknamed "Birdie" by her father, lived with him at Dalcrombie until his death in 1912. George Hopper MacGillivray was a big man in the Williamstown-Martintown area, big in physical stature as well as in the esteem of his friends and neighbours. He served as the Reeve of Charlottenburgh Township in 1879, and was also its clerk for many years. George provided a universal ear for the problems of the residents, shelling out advice when asked.

"George was regarded as one of the most knowledgeable men of the area on its history," said Mrs. van Beek, who, when writing her history of the MacGillivray family in the 1970s, spoke to many locals who remembered him.

Carrie Holmes attended the MacGillivray's Bridge School as a young girl, but also spent time at a boarding school in Ottawa.
She returned to Dalcrombie and graduated from Williamstown High School in 1890, winning the gold medal. She was an artistic lady, painting in water colours, and also received some musical training. She attended a finishing school upon graduation and travelled abroad with her father, taking in Scotland, where the MacGillivray estates had just been surrendered. In fact, she was, by all accounts, an accomplished, attractive young lady.

But things were not easy for Carrie. Sometime during the 1890s, she fell in love with the principal of Williamstown High School, Wynn Williams. Wynn was an Englishman and a graduate of Cambridge University. The two were well suited; they courted and became engaged. Unfortunately, before they had the opportunity to be married, Mr. Williams died suddenly of apoplexy while on a hunting trip, according to an obituary found in the scrapbooks at the Manor House.

Carrie Holmes MacGillivray never married. Following the death of her father, she sold Dalcrombie and its contents, and moved to Toronto, where she worked in the Ontario Archives.

"This employment gave her an excellent opportunity to study historical records of the West, which she later used in the writing of a novel," observed Mrs. van Beek.

Carrie wrote two books. One is the well-known local novel, The Shadow of Tradition; the other is The Prairie Star: a Saga of the Western Plains. The latter book was never published, but two editions of The Shadow of Tradition have found their way to the library shelves of countless Glengarrians. A new edition of this book was recently published by Optimum Publishing of Maxville.

When Carrie Holmes MacGillivray died in 1949, she requested that no stone be erected on her grave. She believed that the brass plaque she had placed in St. Andrew’s Church in memory of her late father some years before was sufficient recognition of the family. Instead she left money to Queen’s University to provide the George Hopper MacGillivray Scholarship, open to high school graduates in SD&G.
So ended the line of the MacGillivrays of Dalcrombie. And their names might have been forgotten if not for the efforts of Evelyn van Beek. Visiting the St. Andrew’s Church cemetery one day to find the MacGillivray plot, she was astounded to discover that there were no markers of any description on their graves. John the fur-trader, George the civic leader, and Carrie the writer, all were likely to fade into oblivion.

In 1972, a recognition ceremony was held, and a granite marker showing the burial place of the MacGillivrays lain. Evelyn Theakston van Beek was the party responsible.

This article first appeared in the Glengarry News, the weekly newspaper serving Alexandria and surrounding area. Sue Harrington is a popular columnist for the News and a very active member of her community of Williamstown.
To our pioneers the trade in wood ashes was one of the most important industries in Canada. Cash was a scarce commodity, but there was a market for wood ashes. The ashes formed the basis for the manufacture of potash. In Europe, there was a market for potash, which they needed to make soap.

Part of the deal in obtaining land grants, along with building a cabin, was to clear the land, so that crops could be planted. This meant that each tree was an enemy which had to be attacked and got rid of. Acres of large pine, maple, oak, ash and elm trees were cut. Only a few of the best were sold for lumber for ship building, the rest were piled in large piles, and then burned. Having a market for the large piles of remaining ash was a real benefit for the settlers, who could receive 4d a bushel for it. This provided them with necessary cash to purchase other provisions they badly needed. Ashes were sometimes stored in barrels or a small log house to keep them dry, until they could be sold.

Some settlers made what was known as “Black Salts” themselves. Most sold their ashes to a store keeper who often ran a Potash Factory as a second business or traded them for supplies.

The Potash Factory was usually built on a piece of waste land near a creek. A good supply of water was a necessity, as a quantity had to be poured in each tub every day. The leach tubs, made of basswood or cedar slabs were held together at the top by firm, heavy timbers, framed together and met in a log trough at the bottom, where the lye drained off. These sat along one side of the building. The filling of these tubs was of great importance. Straw or brush was placed on the bottom, then a layer of quicklime with the ashes on top. When the lye began to run, it was collected in buckets and poured in large iron pots.

Many farmers made their own soap. Soap making was a long, hot process. The pioneers had to make their own lye and render down their own fat from pork or beef fat. Pork
fat made a soft soap, while beef fat made a hard soap.

The soap making process took two days. A large pot was hung in an arch over an outside fire. Lye, fat, salt and water (soft water made a nicer soap) were mixed in the pot and the fire was kept going day and night. When the lye mixture was sufficiently boiled down, which took about two days, the mixture was tested by placing a small amount on a saucer. If it hardened, it was poured in moulds, where it cooled and hardened overnight. The next morning it was cut in blocks with a sharp knife. In later years the lye was purchased at the store, thus making the process a bit easier. I can remember my mother making soap.

In 1862, Canada exported 32,945 barrels of potash. Much of it went to Montreal and was shipped overseas by boat. In 1885, Mr. Cass, from Maxville, bought three carloads of ash to be shipped to Oswego, New York. Later years, chemists discovered a means of obtaining a purer and cheaper form of potash, thus ending the market for ashes. Consequently, the Asheries gradually disappeared from our landscape.

In the early days, many trips were made to Montreal with produce to sell, to be shipped by boat overseas, or to purchase supplies. In the wintertime, they traveled mostly with teams of horses or on horseback, on the St. Lawrence River. This proved quite dangerous by times with the horses breaking through the ice. A distant relative of mine, William Murray, who lived south-east of here in Glen Fallach, died this way in 1815. He was only 40 years old and left a pregnant wife with a young family of four.

Judge Pringle wrote in his book, "Lunenburgh or the Old Eastern District": "In the back concessions one may occasionally meet a one horse wagon with a high box of rough boards in the colour of ashes. The horse is old and lazy, though not uncommonly fat. The driver, an old ash colored man, sits on the side of the box smoking a short clay pipe. This is the gatherer of the ashes. He does all his bargaining with the womenfolks, for the heap of ashes is the woman's pre-requisite."
I remember my father telling me that the field south of Campbell and Alison Murray's house had lovely big, tall pine trees and they were cut, piled in large piles and burnt, branches and all for the ash in them. It seems like such a shame today, all that beautiful lumber.

Another business closely related to the ash industry was lime burning. Lime was necessary to mix with mortar for the filling of cracks in houses and building chimneys and fireplaces. Processed lime could be purchased for 6d or 1s a barrel.

To make lime they needed timber from at least one-half an acre. This was piled into a huge pile. A frame was constructed on top of the pile of wood to hold the limestone. Twenty ox carts of limestone were drawn and placed on the frame. The wood was set on fire and left to burn all night, with the hot coals continuing to burn for days. It was this prolonged heat that powdered the limestone. When the heating process was over the lime was collected and covered.

One hundred bushels of lime were required to plaster a house 36 ft. by 24 ft. The lime used for building our house was produced in the field just north of the house. You can still see the lime showing on the knoll. Many farms had lime kilns on them. These were large stone structures which served as an oven for heating the limestone.

Cedar oil was another product gleaned from the forest. Cedar branches were cut and boiled to extract the oil for furniture polish. I remember from time to time the manufacturing of cedar oil at Sandfield Mills, at the bend in the river, again where there is lots of water. Even in the summer of 1994 there was a crew set up there making oil.

Home building created the need for several industries. Sawmills were needed to convert logs into boards and planks. Shingle mills made shingles for roofs of homes and barns, usually from cedar logs. A stone mason would build the fireplaces and chimneys and a brickyard supplied the brick although some brick was made on the farms from their own clay. The brick used for our house was made on the farm, and at least six other homes in the area. Carpenters would finish the woodwork.
Grist mills were needed to grind wheat into flour and grind grains into feed for the livestock.

The local cooper made buckets, hogs heads, barrels, kegs and chests from wooden staves. A wheelwright's job was very important to his community. The wheels of buggies, wagons and carriages were difficult to make. Runners for sleighs, cutters, etc. were equally important. A farrier made shoes and shoed horses and oxen.

Other industries arose around the clothing industry. Some women had their own looms and made their own cloth, but others didn't as it was time consuming. Professional weavers were needed to produce enough clothes to meet the demand. A hatchel was an instrument with sharp steel teeth that was used in dressing the flax so it could be woven into fine linen for clothing, tablecloths, etc. Woolen and carding mills prepared the wool for weaving and knitting. Tailors and dressmakers made use of all of these fabrics. Milliners supplied the ladies of the community with fancy hats. In those days the lady's hats certainly made a fashion statement. A tannery was needed to convert hides into leather for shoes, purses and saddlebags. Both shoemakers and dressmakers would travel from home to home to make the clothing and footwear for the family. Infantile paralysis was a dreaded disease that struck many homes, leaving members in the family paralyzed, thus needing specially fitted shoes and clothing.

Marland Murray is an area farmer and author of "The History of Stormont Agriculture." This article first appeared in the Cornwall Township Historical Society newsletter of March, 2001. It is reprinted here with permission.
ALEXANDRIA, THE SLEIGH AND CARRIAGE CAPITAL
Dane Lanken

Alexandria has a remarkable history as a sleigh and carriage manufacturing centre, not just in the glory days of Munro and McIntosh a century ago, but in the 1940s, when the Séguin family operated what may have been the only carriage factory in Ontario, and then again in the late 1960s when François Séguin and associates recalled ancient skills and made a dozen old-style sleighs for the Chicago-based Sears-Roebuck and Co.

In the 19th century, all towns had carriage and sleigh makers. But Alexandria’s Munro and McIntosh grew to become one of the largest such manufacturers in Canada, exporting its buggies and cutters across the country and indeed around the world. (The company story is told by Ewan Ross and Royce MacGillivray in A History of Glengarry (Mika Publishing, 1979), and by Oakley Bush in the Glengarry News and the Carriage Journal in 1984.)

The company principals were cousins from the Apple Hill-Glen Roy area, Hugh Munro (1854-1939), a blacksmith turned super-salesman, and John D. McIntosh (1858-1914), a wheelwright who became plant manager. They were partners from 1880. In 1885, they opened a new premises on the east side of Main Street at St. George — the M&M corner for the next fifty years. Woodworking, painting and shipping were done in a big grey tin-covered wood building (with red window frames) north of St. George, with the blacksmithing done in another building south of St. George. An overpass over St. George connected the two buildings.

Alas, with the automobile coming on, sleighs and carriages was a dead-end business. Munro and McIntosh were getting on in years, and neither had sons to move the business into new directions. In 1909, the company was amalgamated with other firms into Carriage Factories Ltd., and while there were a few good years, by 1920, demand had dropped off and the workforce was way down.
It made its last carriage in 1930. By the late 1930s, the once-vibrant factory was closed and vandalized — though, oddly, still full of equipment. The streets, meanwhile, were full of out-of-work carriage builders.

"My father, Hormisdas, had a blacksmith shop in town" — François Séguin takes up the story here; now 80, he lives in a house just east of Alexandria. "He came from Sainte-Marthe, just over the Québec border. He came to Alexandria because he had heard of Munro and McIntosh and he hoped to work there. He never did, but he was a blacksmith here for many years.

"In the 1930s, after the factory had closed, he thought, well, there's no call for lots of carriages, but maybe there is for a few carriages. So he got Elzéar Pigeon to go with him, he'd been a boss at Munro and McIntosh, and his son Réne, and another fellow, Adélard Bédard, they were three woodworkers, plus an upholsterer and a painter, seven or eight men in all, and me, too, I was in my teens."
They bought some equipment out of Munro and McIntosh — the buildings were being torn down — band saw, rip saw, jointer, planer, carving machine, they knew what they needed, and they started making a few carriages at a shop at Main Street and Lochiel, just north of the Bank of Nova Scotia and in the back (the building is gone now). One year they made 165 buggies and cutters.”

At the time, the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Séguin shop was very likely the only operating carriage factory in Ontario.

“We made buggies in winter and sleighs in summer,” says François Séguin, “always to be ready for the season.”

Sleigh runners, and the frames of sleighs and carriages, were made of ash or oak, sometimes hickory. Sleigh bodies were of basswood. Upholstery was stuffed with sea grass or sometimes flax. Shafts were hickory, bent with steam. Dashboards were shaped by packing wood sheets in sawdust and applying hot water. The wood was all local. In former times, supplying wood to Munro and McIntosh (and the other wood-based industries in Alexandria, like Schell’s, turned wood products, cheese boxes, and a wooden pipe factory) made woodcutting a major local industry.

Hormisdas Séguin died in 1944, and first Elzéar Pigeon and then François Séguin took over the operation.

“Elzéar Pigeon had a wooden leg,” François Séguin recalls. “When he was working at Munro and McIntosh, he heard a noise coming out of one of the machines and he went to look. There was a long cast iron shaft, ten or twelve feet long, that broke. The engine kept going, the arm was flying all over the place, and it hit him on the leg and cut it off. He might have made the wooden leg himself. I remember sometimes he took it off and carved it with a pen knife to make it fit better.”

Despite their modest ambitions of supplying just a few carriages, M.François Séguin’s little factory faced hard times; the orders just weren’t there. “We looked for something else to do,” he says. “We made truck bodies for a while, bought axles ready-made and built bodies on them.
Then I started a little hardware store in front and we made windows and doors in the back, and kitchen cupboards and school furniture, made a lot of school desks. The sleighs and carriages was all over.

1930s advertising brochure for sleighs and carriages
And then one day in 1968, F. Séguin got a letter from Sears-Roebuck in Chicago. They were asking if he could make them twelve old-fashioned one-horse open sleighs.

“They were putting out a big catalogue,” says Monsieur Séguin, “seven hundred pages, sort of an anniversary edition. Every hundred pages they wanted an old item for sale, a wood stove or a sleigh. They sent a picture of a sleigh. They called it a city-style. We called it a speeder. It was high in front so the horse’s legs could stretch out and not hit anything. They said, can you do it? I talked to René Pigeon. He said, well, if we can get the steel — you need a special kind of steel for the runners, like spring steel, very smooth, the snow won’t stick to it. We quoted a price, $1400 each, with upholstery, and they said go ahead.”

Thus in that shop in the back just north of the Bank of Nova Scotia, the little team went to work. François Séguin did the forging. René Pigeon was chief woodworker, with Bernard Jeaurond and Mérile Desjardins. They made twelve sets of runners, twelve frames, twelve bodies, and a few extras of some things. Then they assembled them. “And then an old guy from Munro and McIntosh,” as M. Séguin says, Arthur Cuerrier, did the upholstery. “—this team of Alexandria men,” Ross and MacGillivray observed in A History of Glengarry, “who as young men learned to build cutters at Munro and McIntosh and as old men showed they still knew how.”

It took six months in all, “not steady steady,” M. Séguin says, “but pretty steady.” They sent three sleighs off for Christmas 1968, and the rest in the new year. They were advertised in the catalogue at $3500 a piece, and they all sold.

“But not one sold to someone with horses,” says M. Séguin, who himself kept horses and drove carriages for most of his life. “They all went to millionaires who wanted to put it on a verandah and put flowers in it.”
At around the same time as the dozen sleighs, François Séguin and René Pigeon also built a replica of an 1867-era Montreal-Toronto stagecoach for Upper Canada Village. It's still there today, still driven every day (pulled by four black Canadian horses), and still in good order.

In the 1970s, with his hardware business growing, M. Séguin gave up the woodworking shop and moved his store to larger premises kitty-corner across Main Street, to the southeast corner of Main and Lochiel. He operated Quincaillerie Séguin Hardware there until finally selling the business in 1984. The next year he built a new house east of Alexandria, and he lives there still. In back of the house is a shed with (surprise!) plenty of old sleigh and carriage parts to keep him busy.

Dane Lanken is proud to say that René Pigeon made new windows for him when he bought an old house in Glengarry in the 1960s, and that he was a frequent and always satisfied customer at François Séguin’s hardware store in the 1970s and 1980s.
Whenever you want to delve into the past of any place you turn to a volume of local history. For most of us these books are the starting place for research in local studies. The professional historian may refer to them as secondary sources because their authors have built upon the primary material of the earlier written records. But to the average reader, local histories are the books to which we turn for a knowledge of a region’s past.

Glengarry and the surrounding area have been fortunate in both the quality and quantity of local histories. And most remarkable was the part played by a small publishing firm that operated from Belleville, Ontario. Over a time period of less than two decades it made a most valuable contribution to the published history of our area.

This firm, the Mika Publishing Company, operated from 1960 until 1992 and it was an enterprise of Nick Mika and his wife Helma, immigrants from Europe during the early 1950s. The business grew from a small silk screen printing business in their basement. Several of the couple’s earliest titles had silk screen illustrations. When they decided to publish books Nick Mika provided his artistic and sales ability to the enterprise and his wife had the office and business management skills that would insure the success of their business.

The year 1967 provides a suitable dividing line between publications of earlier local histories and more recent titles. For that year, the centennial of Confederation, saw a renewed interest in all aspects of Canadian history together with substantial funding for the publication of local histories.

Now let us consider the canon of our local history books. It begins with James Croil’s Dundas; or, A Sketch of Canadian History, and More Particularly of the County of Dundas, One of the Earliest Settled Counties in Upper Canada, published in 1861.
This is the first county history published in Canada and could be considered the first history of Canada. This was followed in 1879 by the *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry* by H. Belden and Company.

In 1890, the Standard Printing House in Cornwall published *Lunenburgh or the Old Eastern District* by Judge J. F. Pringle. This book has a rather long sub-title informing the reader that it covers the author’s recollections of the Town of Cornwall from 1824. It remains one of our most useful local histories.

Three years later the Montreal firm of William Foster, Brown and Company printed *Sketches Illustrating the Early Settlement and History of Glengarry in Canada* by J.A. MacDonell. Glengarry originally ran from the St. Lawrence to the Ottawa River.

In 1800, the County of Prescott was severed from the northern part. A history of Prescott was written by Cyrus Thomas and published by John Lovell and Son of Montreal in 1896, titled *History of the Counties of Argenteuil, Quebec and Prescott, Ontario from the Earliest Settlement to the Present*. This is likely the only example of a local history covering territory in both provinces.


This volume became a standard reference for our part of Ontario. With the exception of the Harkness book, which was reprinted by the United Counties in 1972, all of these local histories were reprinted by the Mika Publishing Company during the 1970s and 1980s. These well produced facsimile reprints, some of the earlier publications of the firm, set the high standard for later books.

The reprinting of these important earlier local histories meant that scarce and expensive titles were now readily available to readers and students.
It also meant that the wear and tear on the more fragile originals could be avoided. It might seem that the reprinting of earlier books is a fairly straight-forward process but a closer examination will show it’s a task fraught with major pitfalls. Consider the recent reprint (2004) of that “classic” Glengarry novel The Shadow of Tradition by Carrie Holmes MacGillivray by Optimum Publishing International Inc. of Maxville, Ontario.

This book had appeared in two quite distinct editions. One by the Graphic Publishers of Ottawa in 1927 and the other by McClelland and Stewart of Toronto in 1945. Now the text of the latter edition is reprinted and the reader is informed that it is the reprint of the Graphic edition. Then they place an illustration on the cover that has nothing to do with the contents of the book. The name of a well known Glengarry artist is incorrectly spelled as well as the name of the Scottish clan from which the name of the county originates.

The reader is informed that this reprint is a “200th anniversary limited edition,” a statement that is at the same time inaccurate and meaningless. It has not been two hundred years since the first publication in 1927, and the limitation is to the unknown quantity of this current book that has been printed.

The title, The Shadow of Tradition refers to a curse. Perhaps that had an influence upon the quality of the novel’s reappearance. Certainly, Mika Publishing avoided some of these problems by making a facsimile reprint of the original and by obtaining a scholarly introduction to their reprints.

When we turn to the original publications that relate to the area we are considering, we find the sequel to the Harkness history of the Three United Counties by Clive and Frances Marin titled Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry 1945 - 1978 (published in 1982).

Moving through our area as the planet moves from west to east we have the Williamsburg Tweedsmuir Village History (1984). Then there is Upper Canada Village on the St. Lawrence River (1990) by Christine Daumont together with Nick and Helma Mika. The Mikas wrote and published many titles of their own.
This is their only effort in our area. This title was published in a French edition titled *Le Village du Haut-Canada sur le fleuve Saint-Laurent*. This is the only book published by the Mikas in French.

Elizabeth L. Hoople’s *Medicine Maid: the Life Story of a Canadian Pioneer* (1977) relates to a family connection along the St. Lawrence River. It was published in both hard cover and paperback.

The only substantial history of Cornwall published to date is *From Royal Township to Industrial City: Cornwall 1784 -1984* (1983). There was a second printing of this book with minor changes in 1984.


*Gravestones of Ontario: Volume 1* (1976) and *Volume 2* (1978) by Alexander W. Fraser are most useful genealogical research books and along with these may be included a volume by Robert B. Campbell and Douglas McDermid titled *The Kennedys-MacDiarmids McDermids-Munros and Other Glengarry - Stormont Pioneers* (1986).

To extend your historical studies beyond the northern border of Glengarry, you might consult *The Story of Vankleek Hill and its Environ*: Volume 1 (1979) by Alan Douglas MacKinnon.

The publishing activities of the Mikas ceased with the death of Helma Mika in October, 1995. With the death of Nick Mika in January, 1999, all trace of a valiant publishing venture has been slowly fading into history. Most people remember the name of an author or the title of a book. Few recall the name of the publisher whose faith in the book or the author made possible the transfer of a manuscript to a handsome bound book that sits on the shelf.
Our six reprints and thirteen original publications represent but a small fraction of the estimated 250 titles that appeared under the Mika imprint. Mika Publishing made a remarkable contribution to the publishing of our local history. It seems very unlikely that we will ever again witness such an extraordinary achievement.

Edward St. John is a resident of Cornwall with a keen interest in area history as well as an extensive background in the publishing field.
Northwest Company – Canoe Brigade
The Journal Entries
August 17th – September 2nd, 1967
Hugh MacMillan

Editor’s Note: For anyone who is a newcomer to this area, the tale of this canoe trip should have special significance. Not only was it accomplished nearly forty years ago, it was a celebration of our heritage during Canada’s Centennial Year. The difficulties of such a trip, with the participants making an effort to replicate an earlier voyage, were all overcome with enthusiasm. The trip was organized to publicize the official opening of the Nor’Westers and Loyalist Museum in Williamstown, and one of the canoes is now on permanent display in this museum.

Thursday, August 17th
Andre LaMothe and Dr. Leo Roy arrived at breakfast. Allan Bell phoned. Loaded gear and dashed to Toronto City Hall by 11:30 a.m. Garth MacDonald phoned to say he is donating cost of gas for vehicles. The group: myself, John Gadsby, Skip Spencer, Richard Hubert, Andre LaMothe and Leo Roy met Mayor William Dennison at City Hall. MacKenzie Explorer group who came from Pouce-Coupe, B.C. were there. They are retracing Sir Alex.MacKenzie’s route to Pacific. We will meet them at Expo and paddle together to Williamstown. Went from Toronto to Windsor where we met Allan Bell and Bill Noir. Met the press. Andre, as a descendant of Cadillac, founder of Detroit, was the star.

Friday, August 18th
Drove to Mackinac bridge by 4:00 a.m. Light rain and cool. Took turns sleeping, got to Wawa at 9:00 a.m. and ran out of gas. Phoned Xavier Michon in Port Arthur and asked for 3 Indian chaps to help paddle to the Lakehead.
Made good time, traveled 1100 miles in 26 hours. Michon’s secretary is Dorothy George, daughter of the late Angus McCormick from Eigg Road, Glengarry. Charlie McDonell will drive 3 Indian boys – Malcolm MacLaurin, Ron
Singleton and Roger Soloman. Dorothy will go to Grand Portage where canoe trip starts, and will paddle with us to Fort William. She is a former forest ranger, told lots of stories. We patched bark canoe and put both canoes in water. Sitting in moonlight, talked to Dorothy about Glengarry and imagined scene from 1776-1803.

**Saturday, August 19th**

Breakfast of nuts, figs and coffee at 5:30 a.m. Dorothy dressed in buckskins. Left at 7:00 a.m. Allan Bell, as Captain, has John Gadsby in bow of bark canoe, and Bill Noir, Captain of our canoe has Leo Roy as his bowman. I am a middleman. Bark canoe is taking water, but bailing is helping. We made up to 7 knots with sails up. Landed with some difficulty and had lunch of figs, almonds, rye krisp and high wines. Got mail to be delivered. Passed bark canoe then stopped paddling for one and a half hours while they caught up. Quartered into the waves which was rough. Made excellent time for our first day on water. Met Thunder Bay Historical Society, Keith Denis, Geo. MacGillivray and his wife, Charles MacDonell and others. Press on hand. Dorothy George only woman voyageur to make trip. Historic occasion first time a NWCo canoe has come to Fort William since 1821. Visited H.M.C.S. Kootenay destroyer for dinner. Visited with Max, Dorothy’s husband, then camped east of Port Arthur. First day canoed 45 miles. Good start!

**Sunday, August 20th**

On the road at 8:30 for Michipicotin. Picked up hitchhiker, John Carling on his way from Vancouver to St. John, N.B. He is game to try paddling. Met Donald McDonell, great-great grandson of Spanish John McDonnell, near Jackfish Bay. Arrived Michipicotin by 7:00 p.m. Called Mrs. Turcotte who restored Fort Michipicotin with her husband. No answer, so went to see restored fort. Drove on east, across river and visited place where fur trade center is, took photo of Louisa MacKenzie’s grave, wife of Angus Bethune, daughter of Roderick MacKenzie.
Met Ralph Frese of Chicago and his group at St. Ignace. They have 36 ft. canoe. Dick Hubert's group not behind us.

**Monday, August 21st**

I slept in car as did John Carling. Andre and Leo slept under bark canoe, Allan stayed with friends. Phoned O.P.P. looking for our crew. They turned up. Received a six gun salute as we paddled across five miles to Fort Michilimackinac. Bark canoe leaking. Met Dr. Steve Armour. Received two clay pipes and set of books regarding the fort. Paddled 8 miles south to Mackinac Island. Had escort of British redcoats up hill to old British fort. Many of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company buildings are still standing. Magnificent view overlooking straits of Mackinac. North West Company flag hoisted beside stars and stripes. After dinner at fort, launched canoes and paddled back to St. Ignace. Heavy swell so could not use sails. Round trip of 18-20 miles took 5 hours. Went by road for the Soo, and Fort Waushgohegan. Centennial commission and Dr. Jim McIntosh had party for our 24 men. Met press and also Dr. Pat Fyfe. Presented them with Nor'Wester flag for the Fort. Drove all night in convoy taking turns sleeping. John Carling has worked out well and will stay with group.

**Tuesday, August 22nd**

Arrived at French River by 7:00 a.m. and met my brother Roy who had come by bus. Bob Hollywood of Sudbury Chamber of Commerce presented scrolls to each of the voyageurs. Packed canoes. Very steep rocky bank to get canoes to water. Andre and Richard stayed to move vehicles to North Bay. Beautiful canoe trip up French River. Lined and portaged six rapids. Dr. Leo Roy and Roy MacMillan fell in. Our route was: Crooked Rapids, Little Pine Rapids, Blue Chutes, Big Pine Rapids. Sometimes touch and go with much difficulty paddling. Arrived at last portage by 9:00 p.m. Made 27 miles today. Good camping spot. For some of the men, it's a hard grind.
**Wednesday, August 23rd**

Up at 6:00 a.m. to heavy fog. Allan Bell and Bill Moir made fire and breakfast. Loaded gear, stopped at Lochbur Lodge to phone Ron Shackleton in Ottawa to meet us at Champlain Park earlier than expected. Up to Chaudiere Rapids by noon, shot rapids and into Long Bay. Long, hard portage one mile up a 40 degree grade on two century old trail. Left note on bridge for Andre and Richard. Dr. J.L. Norris from Pittsburgh hailed us to his cottage. Andre phoned, wanting to know where we were. After drinks with Dr. Norris, paddled 7 miles more to mouth of South Bay and made camp. Pace is beginning to tell on some of crew. Plan to make Champlain Park by early afternoon tomorrow. Chatted with Luke Fontana, official writer for Illinois Brigade. Bed at midnight in tent on high ground above lake after a total of 20 miles today.

**Thursday, August 24th**

Illinois Brigade enjoyed our porridge breakfast. Allan Bell and crew left first as their bark canoe cannot make as good time. We left an hour later, traveling east on Lake Nipissing. Lost sight of bark canoe. Illinois Brigade out of sight. Stopped at noon. Speed boat towed Andre and Lennie behind us in the 14 ft. canoe. They left word at Woolsley Bay for Ron Shackleton to ferry back to North Bay. We were first canoe to arrive at Champlain Park at 2:00 p.m. Bark canoe cut across South Bay, and the 36 footer arrived one hour later. North Bay Nugget sent people for interview. Shopped in North Bay then moved out to Trout Lake by road. Missed Ron who did not get off the ferry. Allan Bell and I drove to Mattawa to meet Mrs. Hartmann who has arranged for mayor to welcome us on Sunday morning. Illinois Brigade's raccoon mascot "Petit Charles" got loose, and took two hours to recover him.

**Friday, August 25th**

Richard and I will move cars and camp to Champlain Park.
Camp ranger, Charles Laberge has several leads regarding Hudson Bay papers, and a tape of a Mr. Miller of Hudson’s Bay Company. Three of Ralph’s crew were persuaded not to go home. Untried volunteers think they can’t stand the pace, and with this many men together, bound to be problems. Laberge, the deputy ranger helped make camp. Our volunteer hitchhiker, John Carling, keeps going even when it gets tough. After dinner Charlie moved all the men to the park. Brigade covered 18 miles, and did 12 portages. Boys seem to be adapting. Experienced men are setting the pace for less experienced crew. Leo Krusak, Sr. 64, and Tibensky, who has a game leg, are good examples. Richard Hubert, 60, paddled well.

**Saturday, August 26th**

We covered Talon Chute, toughest portage on route, which is 600 paces through sheer rock cuts and in between trees. Robert Lightfoot, American photographer is covering the trip and getting excellent shots. Alex Lyssenko of Chicago and I spent day in the big Montreal canoe. Alex wears a huge felt hat patterned after one worn by French fur traders in the Illinois Company. Montreal canoe is much faster than other canoes. Charlie Laberge is in bark canoe with Allan and Roy. With 65 foot drop of Talon Chutes, one gets real feel of what the voyageurs faced. Back at camp for feed of bass and pea soup.

**Sunday, August 27th**

Travelled to Mattawa. Attractive part of the river, including the cave which voyageurs visited. All portages in park are well marked. If only governments would do the same for the whole voyageur highway. Medium sized crowd met us in Mattawa. Got supplies and headed for Petawawa to re-group. No time to visit Fort William, Quebec, site of old Hudson Bay Co post. Allan and Charlie and I went to meet some Jesuits, for mass at Campbells Bay.
Met Col. Matthews, who is with Centennial canoe pageant, and from Gabriola Island, B.C. We shared notes on voyageur canoeing.

Monday, August 28th

Raining. I went as bowman in the chestnut canoe with Leo Roy. Bill Noir took the birch bark canoe. We passed Chenaux Rapids, full of log booms. We are 22 miles from Arnprior, and ahead of schedule. Centennial canoe pageant group paddling hard and passed us. Sailed on Lac de Chats into Arnprior. Our Illinois and Nor'Wester flags caused interest. Mayor and committee met us and we shared supper in church hall, as it poured rain for hours. Met Rev. Leo Hughes, our former minister at St. Columba. Visited with Centennial canoe voyageurs who have been paddling since early May. Arnprior committee arranged for most of the men to stay in local motels. Grant Campbell joined brigade at Almonte.

Tuesday, August 29th

Drove to Ottawa for 11:00 a.m. meeting at Parliament, with Viateur Ethier the Glengarry-Prescott M.P. and Hon. Arthur Laing, Minister of Northern Affairs, and Geo McIlraith, Minister of Public Works. Americans toured Parliament. After this great reception went to L'Original to camp. Saw “Duldraggan,” home built in 1805 by Alexander Grant, fur trader. Shared home-made wine with Sylvio Myre.

Wednesday, August 30th

Took photos on way to Hawkesbury of post and sill log buildings at Duldraggan. Took ferry across river and drove to Lachute to get licenses for 3 canoes. Named the 36 footer the “Illinois Brigade,” the birch canoe the “James McMillan” and the chestnut canoe “Simon McTavish”. Met canoes at lock, and set up camp in “Scotus House,” old home of John “Le Prete” McDonell, great-grandfather of one of our paddlers, Donald McDonell.
**Thursday, August 31st**

After breakfast, canoe brigades were off, while we closed up house. After Senneville, stopped in Rigaud, and watched for canoes from Senneville Yacht Club. Col. Hugh Wallis phoned Yacht Club Commodore who will permit us to camp on their grounds. I went out by speed boat and met canoes, who were sailing at about 10 knots with a 15mph breeze. Took them 5 hours to cover 30 miles from Point Fortune. Set up camp. I saw Simon Fraser house at St. Annes. Not Simon Fraser the explorer, but one of the other Simon Frasers who were Nor’Westers. Visited Fitzpatricks at Lancaster, picked up David McKillican, our piper. Back to Col. Wallis’s for party. Roy, Grant Campbell, Leo Roy, Charlie Laberge, Andre LaMothe were all there. Shared ideas re. a foundation that would restore many of old Williamstown buildings.

**Friday, September 1st**

Five vehicles left by road for Expo. Put canoes in fast water, then paddled 2 miles downriver to landing dock. Tricky landing, because missing it would have made us late for our arrival time at Ontario pavilion. We got all the canoes up the bank in 10 minutes, portaged 150 feet and put in on the lagoon near Ontario Pavilion. Met by John Gossip, secretary of Beaver Club, dressed in beaver hat and red frock coat. He put on a show, accused our Nor’Westers of bringing no furs, with no profit for North West Company. Soon attracted a crowd who did not know that the performance was staged. Ian Ramsay gave us lunch at Pavilion on behalf of Ontario government. Commodore Robertson greeted us from Expo. Our piper led us through several exhibits. John Gossip presented scroll, and photos taken. Arrived in Lancaster by 9:00 p.m. to set up camp at Fitzpatrick’s.

**Saturday, September 2nd**

John Gadsby, Bill Moir, Allan Bell and Alex Lyssenko got breakfast, our last campfire meal of trip.
Sorted gear. Made fast trip to Wiliamstown to check things out. We put our canoes in water at 12:30 p.m. to cover last leg of trip up the Raisin River. Hundreds of spectators along the bank taking pictures. I went in the bark canoe wearing my beaver hat for authenticity in role of bourgeois. About 500 people on hand to greet the Brigade, as we landed at David Thompson's former house with church bells ringing, and cannon firing. Met by Harriet MacKinnon, president of Glengarry Historical Society, Hon. Keiller Mackay, and Col. Donald MacRae, his aide de camp. A 2 hour program of speeches, music, etc. followed. Allan Bell raised N.W.Co flag and plaque was unveiled by Keith Landell, great-great grandson of David Thompson. Buffalo barbeque followed. Many out of town guests.

The NorWesters and Illinois Canoe Brigades, outside Museum in Williamstown (Photo:H.MacMillan)

Great museum display, considering they only had five days to set it up.
Met with Marjorie Wilkins Campbell who gave museum her book “The North West Company”. All members of the canoe brigade autographed it. Party followed at Hugh Fitzpatrick’s house. Planning for next time: 1970 trip to Winnipeg. Recreating the past through voyageur highway is interesting and exciting, especially shooting rapids, but fair amount of work involved. Future crews must be prepared for the hard work as well as the festivities.

And so ended the first re-creation of a Nor’Wester canoe brigade trip. Plan is to go to Winnipeg by canoe to attend the 300th anniversary of the Hudson’s Bay Company. The Nor’Wester spirit is still alive.

Hugh MacMillan is a historian, author and one of the founding members of the Glengarry Historical Society. His most recent publication is “Adventures of a Paper Sleuth” published by Penumbra Press.
GLEN GARRY PIONEER AWARDS
Susan Joiner

For the past three years the Glengarry Pioneer Museum in Dunvegan has honoured members of the community who have made a major contribution to the preservation of Glengarry’s heritage and history with Pioneer Awards.

At its annual general meeting in April this year, the Museum presented Pioneer Awards to Donald Fraser of Dalkeith and Leslie Clark of Dunvegan. In 2004 the honourees were Flora Chisholm of Dunvegan and Ruth MacIntosh of Maxville (now deceased, and in 2003 Velma Franklin of Maxville and Hugh P. MacMillan of Ottawa.

This summer the Museum will be dedicating trees on the Museum site to each of these people who have contributed so much to Glengarry.
This year the Glengarry Pioneer Awards will be presented to members of the community who have made a major contribution to the heritage and history of Glengarry.

Meeting in April this year, the committee will present the Pioneer Awards to Donald Fraser of Dunvegan. In 2004 the husband of Dunvegan and Ruth H. MacMillan of Ottawa.

Donald Fraser will be dedicating trees on behalf of these people who have served the community.
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MEMBERSHIP in the Society is available through the Corresponding Secretary, Box 416, Alexandria, Ontario KOC 1AO. Membership includes a subscription to the Society Newsletter, which is issued seven times per year, as well as a copy of the annual volume, Glengarry Life, and free entry to the two museums operated by the Society. Cheques should be made payable to the Glengarry Historical Society: $15 (individual), $20 (family), $150 (life).

INQUIRIES for submissions to Glengarry Life, on any subject relating to Glengarry County and its history (in the broadest sense of the word), are welcome and should be addressed to the Editor.

OPINIONS are those of the writers and the Society assumes no responsibility for statements or opinions expressed in the articles herein.

THE GLENGARRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY is incorporated as an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society and is recognized as a charitable organization for income tax purposes. It operates the Glengarry Pioneer Museum, Dunvegan, and the Nor'Westers and Loyalist Museum, Williamstown.