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PICKERING COLLEGE AND THE HERMITAGE:
HISTORY THAT WAS EXTINGUISHED

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Pickering Village is located in the Town of Ajax. It was originally located in the County of Ontario, in the Township of Pickering. It was first called Duffin's Creek, which is a creek that runs through the village. The Township of Pickering ^{was first} ~~began~~ ^{settled} settling in the early 1800s when land grants were handed out to service men. It consisted of a number of different villages at various crossroads between the concessions. Duffin's Creek was one of the villages located near Lake Ontario. In the early 1970s, Pickering Village became part of the Town of Ajax. The local citizens continue to fight today to keep the distinct heritage of the Village alive. Development is very important to the Town of Ajax. Historical buildings occasionally get caught in the way. As will be discussed in this paper, money is an important aspect to any town and through the years, on this specific plot of land in Pickering Village, education and historical heritage were destroyed to make way for new residential developments.

Religion was an important aspect in Pickering Village as was the case for most rural towns in the late 1800s. Religion had a large role in ^{the} early settlement of the Village. An early pioneer, Timothy Rogers, was a Quaker and was commissioned by the government to settle families. In 1807 he moved to Pickering Village and brought with him twenty Quaker families. Rogers had hoped that Pickering would become the centre of Quaker meetings in Canada.¹ Little did he know that a much larger Quaker institution would be located in Pickering where future generations would benefit from a

¹The Journal of Timothy Rogers, 1756-1827.

worthwhile education.

One of the most prominent buildings in Pickering Village was located on Conc. 2, Lot 13. Situated on the southwest corner of the lot on a hill overlooking the village, was a four storey building that was called Pickering College. This was a co-education^{al} boarding school that was erected by the Quakers in 1877. Pickering College was a non-denominational school and ~~they~~^{it} received students from all over the continent as well as ~~from~~^{from} Japan, Russia, China, Persia, Armenia, Australia, Central America and the West Indies.² The school had gained a worldwide reputation. The reason that the Quakers built the college was that they believed that an institution was necessary for the education of both sexes.³ ✓ The school was a new development to the Village and it was hoped that it would enhance the area surrounding the building while ~~providing~~^{proving} to be a valuable resource to the local businesses. The contract for building the college was given to an Oshawa contractor for \$24 300.00.⁴ It was built on the top of a hill overlooking the Village and it began to keep a watchful eye over all the houses down below by Duffins Creek.

The building was an architectural delight. It was built with red brick and was four storeys high. It had a bell-tower on the centre section of the slate roof and elegant arched windows, headed

²"Pickering College", Kindred Spirits: Ontario Genealogical Society, Fall 1993, Vol. XII, Issue 4.

³"Pickering College," The Pickering News, July 27 1883, 4.

⁴"Pickering College", The Pickering News, July 27 1883, 4.

with buff brick.⁵ It was located on four acres of Lot 13. It was a large building and housed many students and staff. There were parlours and rooms for the teachers, principal and superintendent. Two wings were built which ran eighty feet back and it was here that the students' dormitory rooms and laboratory were located. The building housed 75 resident pupils.⁶ The school was heated by stove until 1883 when steam-heating became the main source of heat.⁷ Plumbing only arrived at the college around 1905. A former student, Arthur Dorland, recalls:

About the time I arrived at the school, inside plumbing had been installed and toilet accommodation had been modernized and enlarged. An adequate supply of water was also ensured by the erection of a windmill at Duffins Creek...which delivered some eight thousand gallons of water daily. This was in addition to the reserve supply in the main well and cisterns at the school. Nevertheless, we still used pitchers and basins in our rooms for washing and we filled our own jugs at a tap in the bathroom.⁸

Electricity was not yet available at the College. There was still no hydro electric power. "Consequently, coal-oil lamps were used throughout the school for illumination. This presented a serious fire hazard; for oil lamps were used throughout the school for illumination. This presented a serious fire hazard⁹, for oil lamps

⁵Archie Macdonald, ed., A Town Called Ajax, (Ajax: Ajax Historical Board, 1995). 286.

⁶"Pickering College Fire," The Pickering News, January 5 1906, 1.

⁷"Pickering College", The Pickering News, July 27 1883, 4.

⁸Arthur Garratt Dorland, Former Days and Quaker Ways: A Canadian Retrospective, (Picton: The Picton Gazette, 1965), 142.

were always liable to be knocked over, and many a glass chimney was smashed to smithereens in a pillow fight or similar fracas.⁹ Later on, an acetylene gas plant was installed in the school replacing the hazardous coal lamps. Pickering College attempted to provide the best facilities to its students with the least amount of cost. It was an institution that was an example for others across North America.

The Quaker religion believed in providing the best education for their children while placing them in an environment where they could learn to be better persons.

The object of Pickering College [was] to secure to its students as thorough an education as can be obtained outside of a University or of a professional school, and at the same time to surround them with all the moral influences and guarded care of a well-conducted home.¹⁰

It was hoped that the students would be able to interact with both male and females and enable them to become better marriage partners in the future especially for those within the Quaker religion. Pickering College was a preparatory school for students planning to enter University or just looking for an alternative education in business or the fine arts. Tuition for the school per year in 1893 was \$165.00.¹¹ Therefore the type of students attending the college would be from middle-class families. Students from farmers would not likely attend because they did not need the extra education as

⁹ibid.

¹⁰"Pickering College," The Pickering News, July 27 1883, 4.

¹¹"Pickering College", The Pickering News, July 21 1893, 5.

their life was destined to work on their family farm. ✓

The business program was world-class at the College. It was the first school in North America to offer a course in typewriting.¹² The fine arts program flourished as well. Every week during the school year the Pickering College Literary Society met. Their meetings consisted of musical recitals, poetry readings, discussions and debates on current issues. There was a weekly column in the Pickering News discussing the meeting and inviting the public to attend to special meetings when the Society had a speaker. The curriculum at the College was extensive. It gave the students a resourceful education which would prove be valuable in the future.

Pickering College was also a valuable asset to the community. It provided education to many students living in the Village. In 1905, fifteen students from the Village and vicinity attended the College.¹³ It was the only preparatory school within forty miles of the Village. Local businesses also prospered. They provided the supplies and materials for the College. Everyone in the Village felt the effect of the College: ✓ From the various churches which provided Sunday services to the students to William Peak, who ran a "taxi service" from the Grand Trunk Railway station to the College transporting students. The College was located on twelve acres of spacious grounds which offered space for recreational

¹²"Enterprise", The Pickering News, December 8 1882, 8.

¹³"Pickering College Fire", The Pickering News, January 5 1906, 1.

activities for both the students and the inhabitants of the village. Various sports and activities were held on the college lands such as cricket and football.

It [was] the chief aim of...the teachers to encourage in students a love of outside exercise, and no pains [would] be spared by the [Friends] Committee to make this a prominent feature of the institution, so that the health of the students may be secured in the best possible way, viz. by fresh air and outdoor recreation.¹⁴

Various sport clubs were formed at the College and during the sport seasons the College played leagues against other teams from other towns. Recreation was an important part ^{of} the Village because it was a way to get together and meet friends and neighbours.

Pickering Village welcomed the new development into their town as the Quakers paid for the construction of the building. They realized that it would be a valuable asset to their village. Therefore development was used to enhance the educational system in the Village. In this case development gave positive results because the entire village benefited. In a small agricultural town where major events do not have an effect on the town, the College provided a valuable resource which put Pickering Village on the map. ✓

Everything that Pickering College had given to Pickering Village was destroyed in the fire that occurred in December 1905. It was called the most disastrous fire in Pickering. The main

¹⁴"Pickering College," The Pickering News, July 27 1883, 4.

building was completely destroyed. All that was left standing was the gymnasium. The fire occurred over the Christmas holidays so no students were in the building. The fire had started in the principal's apartment and spread to the rest of the building due to strong winds. The actual cause of the fire was not determined. Damages were extensive. The principal, Mr. Firth lost all his possessions and just his library alone was worth \$4000.00. The total loss was estimated at \$50 000.00. To re-build the structure would cost probably \$75 000.00 to \$80 000.00. The building was only ensured for \$12 500.00.¹⁵ Fire fighters from Pickering and Whitby attempted to save the building but it proved to be impossible. It was easy to determine how much the College meant to Pickering Village because a large number of people from the Village came to assist in anyway possible. They realized what a disaster this could mean for the Village. ✓

After the fire the Village attempted to determine its losses. There were no immediate plans from the Quakers to rebuild. The College committee was looking at offers from other towns. The Pickering News reported that the committee was swaying towards Pickering but "that feeling may be overcome by the great inducements offered by other towns and the indifference of the people of Pickering."¹⁶ Apparently not all the people of Pickering realized the impact Pickering College had on their small town. It

¹⁵"Pickering College Fire," The Pickering News, January 5 1906, 1.

¹⁶ibid.

was estimated that the village would lose \$1500.00 per year due to the loss of the college.¹⁷ Everyone in the Village would be affected. Property rates would be depreciated and rents would decrease thereby influencing people to move away and population would decrease. The effects would hurt the Village both economically and socially. The College committee eventually decided not to rebuild in Pickering and instead move to Newmarket. To this day the college remains Pickering College in Newmarket.

The only structure left standing after the fire was the gymnasium. This was built in 1899 through donated funds from Samuel Rogers, a Quaker descendant of Timothy Rogers. The Pickering College lands were sold after the fire to Ernest L. Ruddy. In the land deed records of Conc. 2, Lot 13 the first time Ruddy is mentioned is on September 23, 1911. There was a consideration of \$4320.00 for thirty-six acres of the south half.¹⁸ The college lands were priced as a derelict property; eleven dollars per acre amounted to \$550.00 for the fifty-acre property.¹⁹ Ruddy, who was from Toronto, bought the gymnasium and converted it into a lavish summer home. Ruddy named the house The Hermitage. The additions that he added were designed in the Greek Revival style. A mezzanine floor was added in the back two-thirds of the room. Here, a central hall contained four bedrooms, a bathroom and

¹⁷ibid.

¹⁸Land records for Township of Pickering South, Lot 13, Conc. 2.

¹⁹Macdonald, 286.

a rear staircase. There was a kitchen to the rear of the house and two large brick fireplaces were added. About ten yards from the house there was a well which was made of fieldstone and had a wooden roof.¹¹ The Hermitage was an example of the many places in Pickering that became summer residences for the upper class from Toronto. This development in Pickering Village did not have as large an effect as Pickering College did, yet it demonstrated that there was still money to be spent by the rich and the economy was doing well.

Ruddy and his wife lived ^{here?} for over forty-five years. He was a fine example of the elite in the Village. On July 15 1922, Ruddy's stables ^{caught} were on fire. It was discovered by his Chinese cook who was about to prepare breakfast for Ruddy and his guests. Ruddy held expensive horses in the stables. He lost a Kentucky saddle mare which was valued at \$1000.00.¹² Other horses in the stable were injured. This was also the third fire that had occurred in the past year. Fortunately Ruddy had sufficient funds to rebuild the stable.

Through the next decades, nothing significant happened to Conc. 2, Lot 13. As was the case for the whole Township of Pickering people were mostly concerned with getting by in the rural agricultural township. The Depression did not affect the Ruddys. They continued to summer at their home while others around the

¹¹Sandra Lucci, "Hermitage last Quaker link", The News Advertiser, May 30 1987, 8.

¹²"Localisms", The Pickering News, July 22 1922, 8.

Village had to deal with the lean times. ✓ Both World Wars had little effect as well on the Ruddys. In the Village, some families had to deal with sons who had gone overseas to war and some who did not come back. The Township of Pickering was dealing with new developments while still attempting to maintain ~~their~~^{its} agricultural base. Things did not change for the Ruddys until the 1960s when they sold the property. In 1964 the executor of the estate of Ernest Ruddy sold the property.¹¹ After that The Hermitage was abandoned. Near the building, there was a farmhouse built where a family lived but no one ever lived in The Hermitage again.

The former lands of the Pickering College became a place to go exploring for the Village children. There was this big old building ~~of~~ which was the setting for many ghost stories. The Hermitage remained untouched and was basically left to rot away. The newly formed Town of Ajax did not have any plans for it and would ideally be looking for developers to make an offer for the land. In 1982, the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee designated the building a heritage property. They reported to council that restoration was feasible, worthwhile and reasonable. Ajax LACAC opted for a temporary investment that would stop further erosion of the structure and protect it for future development.¹² Unfortunately Ajax LACAC was working with a town

¹¹Land records for Township of Pickering south, Lot. 13, Conc. 2.

¹²R.S. Wright, "Loss of Hermitage needn't have happened", The News Advertiser, October 28 1987, 5.

council that was more concerned with new residential developments than restoring the few historical buildings that were still around. The Hermitage fell victim to many vandals. Vandals had recently tore out the oak staircase and ruined the plaster on which stencils had been placed by Ruddy.¹⁴ The Hermitage's days appeared to be numbered.

In 1983 the interior of The Hermitage was discussed in a report by architect Spencer Higgins. He said:

the original gymnasium structure [was] in good condition and 'could be saved at moderate expense'. However, he added there [were] serious problems with foundations and drainage due to the alterations of the building.¹⁵

In 1981 it was estimated that \$400 000.00 was needed to restore the building and because of the high cost it was believed that Ajax council would have it demolished.¹⁶ This was convenient for Town council because as the years went by, Runnymede Development Corporation put in a proposal for a residential community of 1 157 dwellings on a 23 acre site which included the Hermitage.¹⁷ Mainly because of the money, town council felt that they could not save The Hermitage. The town councillor responsible for the area, Rene Soetens said:

It's my feeling that [The Hermitage will] be

¹⁴ibid.

¹⁵Lucci, The News Advertiser, May 30 1987, 8.

¹⁶Lucci, The News Advertiser, May 30 1987, 8.

¹⁷Kevin Hann, "Mammoth subdivision for Village," The News Advertiser, May 30 1987, 8.

demolished...The cost, based on work done two to three years back, seems rather prohibitive...And, it's not useable for the people of the community because there are no services on the site.¹⁸

Ajax town council was not keen on restoring The Hermitage. The new houses that Runnymede were proposing to build were designed as "move-up" housing for people living in the village who were ready for something else.¹⁹ Town council were more likely to accept the Runnymede offer because throughout the 1980s the emphasis was on creating new developments, not restoring old ones. ✓

Discussions continued between town council and Runnymede and public meetings were held. Then, in the fall, the problems of The Hermitage were resolved for Ajax Town Council. On October 4, 1987 The Hermitage succumbed to fire. The building was completely destroyed. Arson was suspected to be the cause of the blaze. And so ended a legacy in Pickering Village. The object of controversy had been extinguished. There was never any suspect arrested for the fire. But there were still feelings of loss throughout the Village. R.S. Wright wrote a letter to the editor in the News Advertiser. He said:

With the help of the fire department who regarded it as 'just another fire', The Hermitage was utterly destroyed. To them, its fate was written in the wind...To our town fathers, its preservation was a matter of dollars and of no real concern-certainly not enough to justify spending a few bucks. To Runnymede...it was a liability, a damned nuisance or, at best, a contractor's bargaining tool.

But to most of us, the silent majority, it was

¹⁸ibid.

¹⁹ibid.

a fragment from another era. Its loss represents a tearing away of a part of our heritage."

Wright spoke for many villagers as he expressed the loss of The Hermitage. It was just another building that eventually would have succumbed to residential development had it not been for the fire.

Runnymede was allowed to go ahead with their development plans after many discussions with town council. Now the Pickering College lands are filled with residential homes, meant for upper middle-class families. There is no longer one significant structure on the hill looking down on the Village. Instead there are hundreds of homes watching over the Village. In 1990, Ajax Council designated part of the lands for recreational use. A park was created and it was called Hermitage Community Park as a reminder of what had previously been there. Town council also erected a replica of the well previously located on the Ruddy's property. Ajax LACAC continues to fight for restoring historical properties against new developments. They have become more successful as town council is realizing that preserving the town of Ajax heritage is just as important as preparing for its future. ✓

"R.S. Wright, "Loss of Hermitage needn't have happened", The News Advertiser, October 28 1987, 5.

There were various primary resources used for this assignment. The Pickering News was a local rural newspaper that catered to the Township of Pickering. The paper contained gossip, news of accidents and fires and advertisements. It proved to be a valuable resource to this assignment because it was the only primary source describing the fire of Pickering College. There was little bias in the articles. The editors did have the opinion that the College was beneficial to the Village. ✓

The picture postcards of Pickering College and The Hermitage are also valuable because they give a visual description of the buildings. They are beneficial when the structure of the buildings ^{is} described because the reader can ^{visualize} what Greek Revival architecture really is. ✓ The postcard of the burnt college demonstrates the devastation and ruins of the co-educational school. Words cannot explain how it looks. Only photos can give the historian a visual depiction of how it actually was. ✓

The land records for Lot 13, Conc. 2 ^{were} ~~was~~ not totally beneficial to ^{me} ~~myself~~ for the assignment. I found it difficult ~~trying~~ to understand what the terms meant and how they related to the plot of land. Because the 100 acres is divided up, there can be a number of owners for the plot of land and I found it to be too much information, ^{al} Though I was able to determine exactly when E.L. Ruddy bought and when his estate sold the land. Generally, in local history research, land records are used as a resource for names of those owners of the plot of land.

The descendant of The Pickering News was the News Advertiser. It also proved to be a valuable resource because it was an actual account of the saga of The Hermitage. There seemed to be little bias in the articles because they gave the opinions of both Ajax Town Council and Ajax LACAC. The News Advertiser also allowed a letter from R.S. Wright who was upset that The Hermitage was gone.

Other primary sources such as the Pickering Tweedsmuir History were not included because they had the same basic information as the newspaper articles. The fire insurance plan from 1891 did not cover the area that Pickering College was located on. The Diary of Timothy Rogers was beneficial because it gave an actual account of the plans for the Quakers in Pickering Village. ✓

The secondary sources were worthwhile to this assignment because they gave a general view of the history of Pickering. The account of Arthur Dorland was equally beneficial because it was a first hand account of life at Pickering College thereby making it a primary source. He had nothing but praise for the College. ✓

The Local History Room at the Pickering Public Library was where I located most of my materials. I worked there for two summers so I was quite familiar with the sources available. I also went to the Land Registry Office in Whitby to obtain the land records. I enjoyed researching this assignment and plan to donate a copy of my report to the History Room because there has not been a thorough examination of this plot of land until I began researching it.

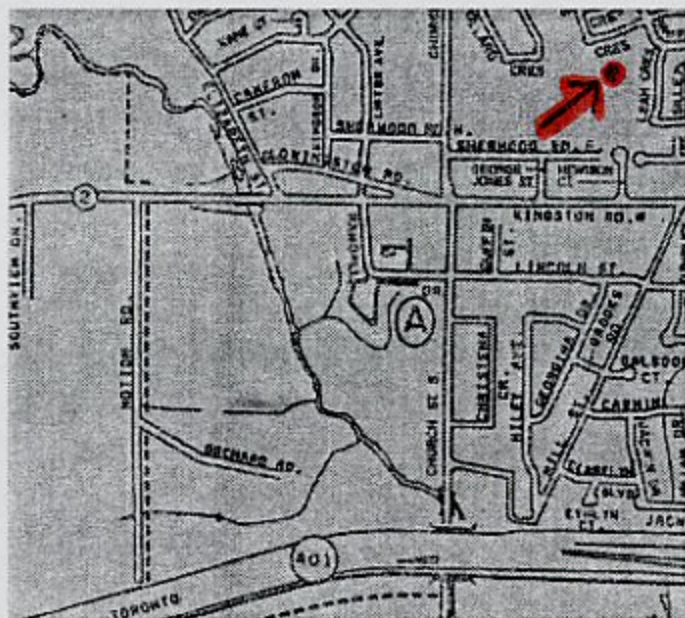
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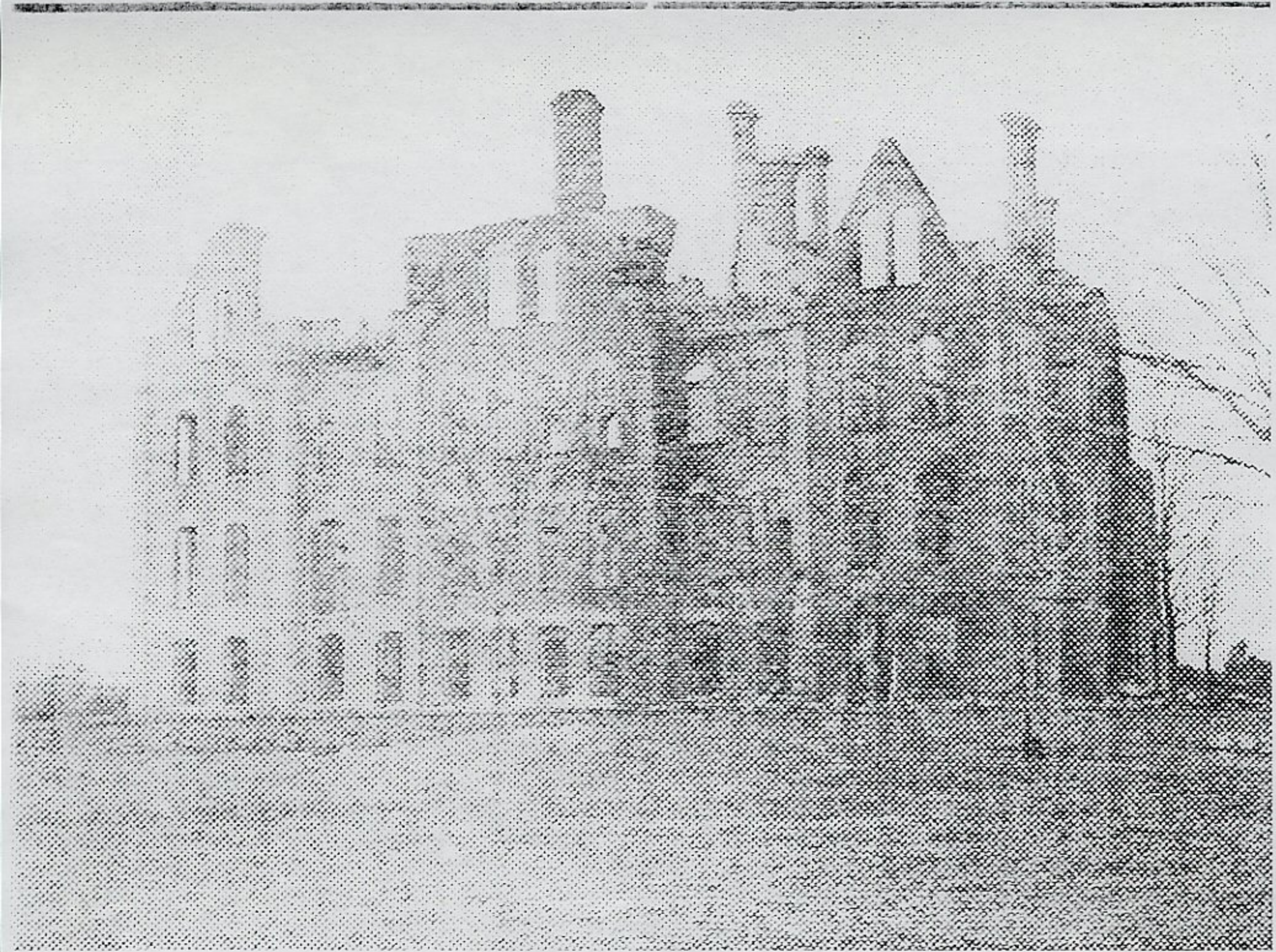
RES OF EL RUDY
Pickering, Ont

PICKERING COLLEGE



THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED IN 1877 AND WAS THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKER) COLLEGE. IT WAS CO-ED AND STUDENTS CAME FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. IT WAS NOT A REQUIREMENT TO BE A QUAKER AS THE TEACHING WAS NON-SECTERIAN. FROM 1885-1892 THE COLLEGE WAS CLOSED.

PICKERING COLLEGE AFTER THE FIRE





Pickering
College



Pickering College and Campus.

Strict Independence.
A First-class Local Paper.
Expectations - The hearty
people of Pickering and vicinity.

JULY 27th, 1883.
PICKERING NO. 38

NEWS

INT ANNOUNCEMENT.
verging on the last quarter
we beg to remind those of our
whose subscriptions expire in
his year, and who have not
t we shall be compelled to
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during this and next month.
desire to press subscribers,
we make the following
-If such subscriptions are
the last day of August only
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be required to pay \$1.25.
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intend to make other im-
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hope those of our subscribers
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before the last of August and
be forwarded at once. We
pelled to take this step owing
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hope those in arrears will
on the time specified, and
25 cents.

LEAN NEWSPAPER.

a growing feeling in healthy
s against journals which make
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by seeking out and serving
luctive form, disgusting and
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e field to worthier claimants.
of the decent newspaper, it may
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well as old, it has developed a
ne and a discriminating taste.

e to thank Mr. R. W. Phipps,
for a copy of a "Report on the
of Preserving and Replanting
compiled at the instance of the
government. The book contains
pages, and we must say Mr.

PICKERING COLLEGE.

Through the courtesy of the College authorities we are this week enabled to give an illustration of this seat of learning, and at the same time a short sketch of its inception, completion and the progress made during the time it has been open for the reception of pupils.

For a number of years the question of building a College in Pickering was discussed by the Society of Friends, and finally in 1877 they came to the conclusion to go on with it. All were convinced that such an institution was necessary for the education of young people of both sexes, so that rapid progress was made in maturing the scheme. The present beautiful site, upon the summit of a gently-rising slope, which commands a charming view of Lake Ontario and the surrounding country, was secured. The site is quite convenient to the business portion of the village and is one of the healthiest spots that could have been selected. Here ground was broken, contracts given out, and all the details arranged for the putting up of a structure that would not be only an ornament to the village but would be convenient and suitable for the purpose for which it was intended.

The contract for its erection was let to Messrs. Cameron & Dingle, of Oshawa, for \$24,300. The work was rapidly pushed forward, and on the 3rd of September, 1879, it was first opened for the reception of students, under the Principalship of Mr. Thos. H. Burgess.

The building is of red brick with cut stone facings, and is four stories in height. The main building has a frontage of 106 feet, and in it are the dining-room (in the basement), school, class and lecture rooms, Principal's room, Superintendent's and Matron's room, and Teachers' parlors. Two wings were erected, running 80 feet back, and contain the laboratory and students' parlors and sleeping apartments. All the rooms are lofty and spacious. Since its completion the entire building has been heated by stoves, but this year the Society concluded to adopt steam-heating, and arrangements are now being made to that end, which will be completed by the winter term. This will add very much to the comfort and health of those in attendance.

The object of Pickering College is to secure to its students as thorough an education as can be obtained outside of a University or of a professional school, and at the same time to surround them with all the moral influences and guarded care of a well-conducted home.

The qualification for entrance into the College is the same as that required for High Schools and Collegiate Institutes, but there are two preparatory classes for those not having passed the Entrance Examination.

The programme of studies for entered students is arranged with four main objects in view: First, to prepare students for passing the examinations annually held by the Department of Education, called the Intermediate Examination, or Examination for Third and Second Class Certificates; secondly, to prepare students for passing the Examination for First Class Certificates, and also University Examinations of Junior Matriculation, Senior Matriculation, and the Examination of the First Year; thirdly, to give a sound business education; and lastly, to afford thorough instruction in the fine arts—Music, Drawing and Painting.

The grounds about the College afford sufficient means of recreation. The main

play-ground having become too confined for the increasing numbers who use it for the different games, a second play-ground has been secured from the field adjoining the first, and ample space is thus afforded for double sets of players at any game or games; close to the College are the croquet and archery grounds. The adjacent river gives the boys excellent opportunities for bathing and swimming in the summer, and for skating in the winter. Students who wish may have flower-plots assigned to them for their own cultivation. The Committee are laying out the grounds (12 acres) in such a way as to make the naturally fine site of the College still more attractive, and give the students attending all the benefits of free out-door life. It is the chief aim of the officers and teachers to encourage in students a love of outside exercise, and no pains will be spared by the Committee to make this a prominent feature of the institution, so that the health of students may be secured in the best possible way, viz., by fresh air and out-door recreation.

During inclement weather, and in the winter season, the Gymnasiums may be advantageously used.

Two Athletic Clubs have been established by the students—Football and Cricket—and these, during the past year, have been very popular. The Cricket Club is capitally equipped. Archery is a favourite pastime with the young ladies, and their Club is well sustained. The Annual Athletic Games are held in September, when, through the kindness of friends of the College, many useful and valuable prizes are offered for competition.

A Literary Society is conducted by the students, and meets every Friday evening during College Terms. This Society has proved to be one of the most useful features of the College.

Steps are being taken to fit up a room suitable for a Museum. Through the kindness of Alfred R. C. Selwyn, L. L. D., F. R. S., Director of the Geological Survey of Canada, a collection of Canadian Economic Minerals have been presented to the College. To increase the collection in the Museum, the Principal will gladly receive prepared birds and insects, fossils, antiquities, and rare or curious objects of any kind. The donor's name will be mentioned on the slips describing the specimens.

We published the staff some weeks ago, therefore it is not necessary to repeat. We may say, however, that it embraces gentlemen and ladies of well known and acknowledged ability. Parents sending their sons and daughters to the College may rest assured that every care and attention will be bestowed upon them by those in authority.

People who understand the temptations which surround students in city institutions can readily perceive the advantages which Pickering College possesses over them. Here the temptations are reduced to a minimum; the teachers exercise more personal supervision over their pupils, and consequently the latter are enabled to make more progress than would be the case were they attending some school in a larger place. Mr. Huston, the Principal, is a man highly esteemed by both pupils and public, and in Mr. Barker, the Superintendent, the College has a man whose equal for the position it would be hard to find.

We are pleased to be able to say that the attendance at the College is increasing every term, and success is crowning the efforts of all who are connected with it.

GREENWOOD.

Mrs. Edward Bowes, one of the oldest residents of this part of the country, is prostrated by a paralytic stroke, and as she is very advanced in years, small hopes are entertained of her recovery.

Mrs. James Doyle, who was removed from here to the Toronto Hospital a few weeks ago, passed away at that institution on Saturday last. Her remains were interred in the city on Sunday.

Those Weeds Again

To the Editor of the Pickering News:
Sir,—Having travelled a good deal through-out this Township during the past few weeks, I have noticed that more weeds and thistles are allowed to grow on the roadside in the village district than in any other part. Evidently all of the other path-masters have set men to work and cut down

and every buyer of dry goods should grasp this grand opportunity,

Call Early a

HUGH M. ROSS

WH

Goldsmiths' Hall

New English Jewelry

JUST RECEIVED.

- Colored Gold Sets,
- Colored Gold Earrings,
- Colored Gold Brooches,
- Colored Gold Chains, Necklets and Locketts,
- Colored Gold Keepers and Gem Rings
- Colored Gold Neaf Pins.
- Silver Jewellery, new styles.
- Waltham, Elgin and Swiss Watches.
- Walnut, Nickel and Gift Clocks.

A full assortment of Silver-plated Crosets, Butter Coolers, Knives, Forks, Spoons, etc. Prices as low as any stores. Repairing carefully attended to.

JAS. JOHNSTON

Practical Watchmaker, Brock-st., Whitby. Jan. 10, 83

DOMINION WOOD WORKS
WHITBY.

GEO. CORMACK

Lumber Merchant. A large supply of Builders' Furnishings of all kinds of Twisted Mouldings, Doors, Sashes and Blinds.

LUMBER!

Wholesale and Retail, or by the Car Load
Planing, Mouldings of every description, Flooring, Shooting, Re-sawing, Shaping, Scroll, &c.
Dec. 12th, 1882.

TICKETS! TICKETS!

Railway and Ocean Steamship Ticket Agency.

HO! FOR THE

Great North-West

the Old Country, and Uncle Sam's Domains.

But don't forget to ask for RATES, ROUTES, and every required information. Also save time and money by buying through tickets from E. STEPHENSON, who is prepared to sell through railway tickets reading from Whitley to all points North-west, West, South-West, South or East, guaranteed at as low as the lowest rates; also single and return railway tickets to or from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Dover, Delaware, Jacksonville, Florida, etc.

If any friends in England, Ireland, and Scotland to send for, he can sell you prepaid storage tickets, through to Whitley for \$47, via any of the following very popular Ocean Steamship lines:

White Star, Cunard, American and Red Star.

First Cabin Tickets to or from European towns—\$60, \$80 and \$100.

Return Tickets, good for one year, \$110, \$120, \$144 and \$180; Intermediate, \$40, return \$75.

Storage Tickets and First-class Railway Tickets, reading from Whitley via New York or Philadelphia, to Liverpool, Londonderry, Queenston, Glasgow, Belfast, London, Bristol, Cardiff, Galway and Antwerp, only \$35; round trip (to and from Whitley) \$60. Buy from

E. STEPHENSON

General Railway, Boat and Ocean Steamship Ticket Agent. Also Life and Accident Insurance; Montreal and Dominion Telegraph Agency, Brock-street.

16-y WHITBY, ONT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

That Egypt was an area in Pickering?
April 1, 1887

EGYPT.

This charming little spot is situated one mile west of the Brock road, in the 4th con. of Pickering.....The farmers around here are preparing for spring work.....Mr. John Mitchell is around again after a severe illness.....Mr. Walter Mills and Mr. Henry Rowe and wife, of Hagerman, were visiting at Hildred farm on Sunday.....Mr. Wm. Albright has sold his stock of implements and intends moving to Toronto soon..... We have lost one of our fair belles, in the person of Miss Louisa Wright, who has left this vicinity for the summer..... Miss Martha Dickson is home from Markham, where she has been visiting for a few weeks.....Wonder how the "boys" got home.

That Pickering College had the first course on the typewriter in North America?

December 8, 1882

PICKERING NEWS

ENTREPRISE.—The efficiency of the Shorthand and Commercial Departments of the College has been greatly increased by the introduction of a Typewriter.—Pickering College Students now enjoy advantages to be found in no other College in Canada or the States.

Red Wheat 80 box. 44.75
 White Wheat 70 box. 44.00
 Spring Wheat 74 box. 44.25
 Globe Wheat 74 box. 44.25

Best-Ton Manitoba Flour 44.75
 Cream Buns, Best Family 44.00
 Tea Buns, Best Family 44.00
 Major, Family Flour 44.25
 Cotton, Sewer or Paper Bags included.

Best \$12.00 Ton
 Shorts, \$20.00 Ton
 Jumbo, \$22.00 Ton

Cracked Corn \$1.15 per 100 lbs
 Whole Corn, \$1.10 per 100 lbs.
 Green Chop \$2.25 per ton.
 Wholesale prices apply.

Graham, Wholewheat Flour.
 Chop of all kinds
 Chopping and Grating.

PICKERING COAL CO. Y.

Yards at Spink Mills.

Best Coal \$6.25 ton.
 Chestnut Coal \$6.25 ton.
 Pea Coal \$7.25 ton.
 Select Lump Coal, \$5.25 ton.
 Blacksmith Coal, \$5.25 ton.

50c per ton discount for cash.
 Full weight guaranteed.
 Orders for coal left with W. Peak will be delivered promptly.
 Above prices subject to change without notice.

J. L. SPINK LIMITED
 J. L. Spink, President D. M. Spink, Manager

Cutters - Cutters

A large supply of Canada Carriage Co's best cutters on hand. Prices right. Quality the best.

Secure One in Time.

First-class rigs to hire by day and night. Bus meets all trains.

W. H. Peak, Pickering.

Furniture

A full line of first-class furniture now on exhibition in our ware rooms. Prices right.

R. S. Dillingham, Pickering, Ont.

Wagner & Co.

Have a full line of fresh and cured meats constantly on hand. Spice Roll, Breakfast Bacon, Ham, Bologna, Weiners, etc.

Highest prices paid for Butcher's cattle.

FARMERS!

If you want a good robe or a good fur coat or anything in the fur line leave your order at the Farmer's Supply store. Prices right.

No. 1 Groceries always on hand.

Highest price paid for all kinds of produce.

FARMERS SUPPLY STORE, E. Bryan, Manager.

DOMINION BANK

Capital Paid up, \$3,000,000
 Reserve Fund and Undivided Profits, \$3,722,350

WHITBY BRANCH. General Banking

Fire Started in west Wing of Building—High west wind made it impossible to Save Structure.

The most disastrous fire in the history of Pickering occurred on Saturday forenoon when the Pickering College main building was completely destroyed. About 8 o'clock the fire alarm sounded. In a few minutes the Pickering Fire Company were upon the scene and at work and a determined effort was made to subdue



THE COLLEGE.

the flames. The Whitley Fire Brigade was also summoned to the rescue, and they lost no time in their efforts to reach the scene of the fire to render assistance. But all efforts to save the building proved unavailing. The fire had started in Mr. Firth's apartments on the North-west corner of the building and the wind was blowing from the north-west a perfect gale. A large number from the village and vicinity had assembled upon the scene and these did all in their power to save the movable property. Much was saved but in a damaged condition, but the greater part became the prey of the flames. Mr. Firth's loss will be great. His library, valued at over \$4,000, his private laboratory, which was one of the finest in the country, and all his furniture and other personal property of every description that was in the building at the time was completely destroyed. Fortunately, the fire occurred during the vacation, and the pupils had taken much of their property with them. However, their loss also will be great. What the total loss will be it is difficult to estimate, but it has been placed at \$50,000. To re-build a modern structure would cost probably \$75,000 or \$80,000. The insurance on the building was only \$12,500. How the fire originated is not known. Mr. and Mrs. Firth had left the college at 8 o'clock at which time everything was all right, and after they had been at the station a short time they received a 'phone message stating that the college was on fire. The Pickering firemen succeeded in keeping the flames in check for an hour and a half, but owing to the exceedingly high wind blowing the flames directly into the building, it was impossible to save the beautiful structure.

NOTES OF THE FIRE.

In the proposed new buildings there will be accommodation for 125 resident pupils instead of 75 as in the past, and school accommodation for 150. There will be separate buildings for school and residences, and modern in every respect.

Elwood S. Moore, formerly of the teaching staff has been appointed science master in the College Institute of Collingwood, and A. E. Way has been appointed principal of the Business Col-

lege and School of Telegraphy of Ottawa. The work of the Pickering fire engine was most satisfactory in every respect. Its work on that day was never surpassed at any previous time. While fighting the fire, Walter Logan received several very serious lacerations on one of his hands by

broken glass. Several others also received slight injuries. There were some present at the fire who seemed unable to distinguish between "mine and thine." There is nothing more contemptible than for persons at a fire appropriating to themselves the property of others. Can Pickering afford to lose the College? "We never miss the water until the well runs dry." We have never been able to appreciate the worth of the College until it was destroyed by fire, but now we are beginning to calculate its value. At the present time there were fifteen pupils attending from the village and vicinity. These will now be compelled to go to other towns, where the expense to each pupil will be, taking everything into consideration, about \$100 greater, making a total of \$1500 loss to the village each year. Not only this, but property here will depreciate in value by loss of the College. One of the largest land-owners near the village says his loss will be at least a dollar an acre. Again, as the College was a strong drawing card to the village, its loss will mean a lowering of rents, as certain families now residing in the village will move elsewhere. The loss of business, and the social advantages that the College affords will be hard to estimate. The college committee have been meeting during the week in Toronto to settle up affairs and to consider the steps to be taken in the future. Temporary quarters will not be secured but steps will be taken to re-build at once. Great inducements have been offered by other towns. The feeling of the committee is decidedly in favor of Pickering, but this feeling may be overcome by the great inducements offered by other towns and the indifference of the people of Pickering. It now remains for Pickering to bestir itself.

What's in a name? One of the most valuable assets in the hands of the committee is the name of the College has won for itself throughout the world. This is one of the greatest inducements to retain the College in Pickering. —Antonio Pyuan, a young Spaniard from Cuba, arrived in the village on Wednesday for the purpose of attending college. In the meantime, the college authorities will place him in some other suitable institution.

home for the holidays. Mr. Richardson, of Charnont, visited at Henry Fuller's on Christmas. Miss Thompson and Albert Middleton visited the city during the holidays. Harry Elliott and wife entertained a number of friends on Christmas night. There was a gathering of young people at Mr. Ashford's last Monday evening. There was an annual Christmas gathering of the Bold family held at Gos. Kays on Christmas Day.

Miss Lena Elliott, John Knox, Chas. Fuller and Frank Humphrey, of the city, spent the holiday with their parents here. At the annual school meeting held on Wednesday Frank Humphrey was appointed trustee. George Rowson was the retiring member of the board.

Whitevale.

A happy new year! The wedding bells are ringing. The amateur photographers are busy at present.

Miss N. Turner has returned to the city after the holiday. Miss Alice Liddell spent the holidays under the parental roof.

A. J. Madill B. A., of Orillia, spent the holidays with his grandparents, J. and Mrs. J. White.

Ernest and Mrs. Thornton and the Misses Ida and Lila Thornton are visiting friends in the vale. There were no services in the Baptist church last Sunday owing to the Green River anniversary.

The Misses T. and B. Turner and Miss Chandler, all of Toronto, are the guests of Mrs. D. S. Turner.

J. Godard, who has been in the Old Country for the past seven years, is now the guest of A. E. White.

The Rev. G. C. and Mrs. Lamont were in the city for the New Year and attended the meetings of Alexander and Torrey.

Quite a number from the vale attended the New Year's concert at Beogram and returned reporting an enjoyable time.

Mrs. D. S. Turner invited her unmarried friends to a sumptuous repast on New Year's Day, after which the company were entertained with games and amusements of various kinds.

The Rev. Mr. Reynolds rendered a very able address on temperance last Sunday evening and judging from the majority of the votes polled in the village for the Local Option By-Law we are sure his address had the desired effect.

GREEN RIVER.

P. R. Hoover & Sons' chopper will be running very soon.

Mrs. C. Calender, of Toronto, spent New Year's day with Mrs. W. Hoover. Murry Fuller left Tuesday morning to attend the business college in the city.

Mrs. Herst is spending a week with her sister, Mrs. H. Hopkins, at "Silver Maple."

Most all the Christmas visitors returned to their homes again on Tuesday morning.

Miss A. Barnes, of Toronto was the guest of her brother, W. G. Barnes over the holidays. Many congratulations are extended to John A. White on his having been elected councillor for 1905.

Miss Nelly Wilson left Wednesday morning for Mongolia to assume charge of the public school there.

Mr. and Mrs. Lehman has returned home from Newmarket, where they have been spending the holidays. Mr. Lehman opened school on Wednesday.

Alf Hoover is leaving this week for Buffalo having accepted a position in connection with the telephone company. We wish Alph every success. Sorry to lose him from our village. Hope it will be for long.

Our union Sunday school anniversary came off as announced Sunday last and was a grand success. The address by the Rev. Mrs. Aldenhead, of Stratford, to the children was something that it is seldom our privilege to hear, and in the evening a most excellent discourse was delivered to Sunday school workers and parents the like of it has never been heard within the walls of the little church at Green River. We congratulate Mrs. Aldenhead on the many kind words we hear since her visit with us. The Rev. C. Sharp, of Markham, preached a powerful sermon and was well received by all. The singing by the children was all that could be expected. The united choir of Whitevale

Building likely to be demolished

Hermitage last Quaker link

By SANDRA LUCCI

PICKERING VILLAGE - The town of Ajax will soon make a decision that could terminate one of its surviving links to history.

What is now called the Hermitage is all that remains of the 18th-century Quaker settlement and the Quakers' gift to future generations -- an education facility once known as Pickering College.

Pickering College, built in 1878, was internationally renowned as a co-educational Quaker school which attracted students from as far away as Australia, Japan, China and Russia. The Quakers originally planned to develop the Village of Pickering as the centre for Quaker life in Upper Canada.

Still in its infancy, the college was destroyed by fire in 1905. All that was left was the grand gymnasium, a structure built in 1899 by a staunch Quaker named Samuel Rogers, who donated the building to the college.

Today, it sits in complete obscurity at the end of a 400-yard winding driveway off Highway 2 in the heart of Pickering Village.

The imposing structure peaks out from weeds and unruly trees. Although it has managed to stand the test of time, it has suffered the costly damages of vandalism.

After the fire, the property was secured by R.L. Ruddy and modified to serve as his summer home. The Toronto resident renamed it the Hermitage and abandoned the project around 1960. It has remained empty since.

The two-storey structure is con-

structed of red brick and four two-storey pillars support the roof of the front verandah and frame what is left of the wooden floor.

Ruddy's additions to the original building were designed in the Greek Revival style and are not of historical significance. The interior, according to a 1983 report by architect Spencer Higgins, was originally a single double-height room.

When the building was converted to a summer home, a mezzanine floor was added in the back two-thirds of the room. This floor contains a central hall with four bedrooms, a bathroom, toilet and a rear staircase. There is also a double height room at the entrance of the building with a grand staircase leading up to the additional second floor.

There are several small rooms at the back of the ground floor, including a kitchen on the north side. Two large brick fireplaces were also added.

About 10 yards from the building is a beautiful well, which is made of fieldstone and has a wooden roof. There are remains of a sunken garden with steps on both the north and south ends.

In the 1983 report, Higgins said the original gymnasium structure is in good condition and "could be saved at moderate expense." However, he added there are serious problems with foundations and drainage due to the alterations of the building.

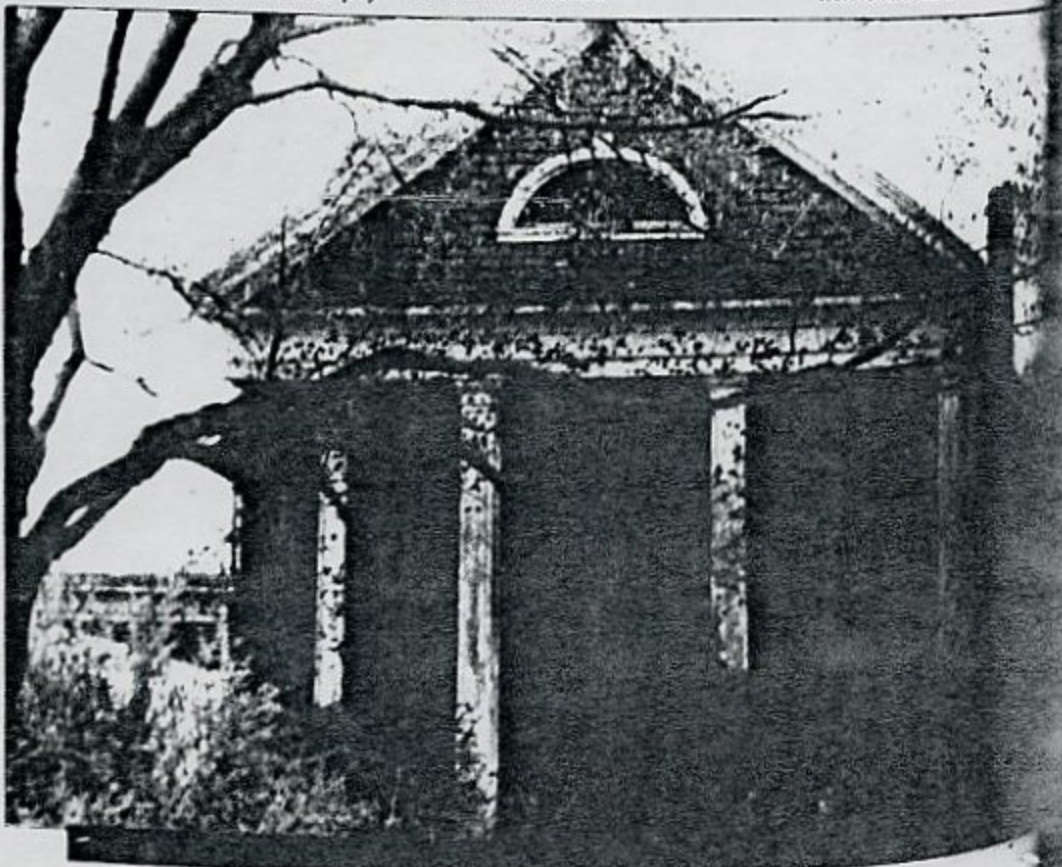
The entire site, of about 130 hectares is now owned by Runnymede Development Corporation and is scheduled for major redevelopment.

However, because the 11-hectare Hermitage property was designated as a heritage property by the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, it cannot be included in Runnymede's plans for a massive subdivision.

According to Claudia Fieder of Runnymede, the company is dedicating the gymnasium to the town of Ajax, which will have to pay

a disclosed sum of money because it is above the five-per cent park dedication. She says that, once Runnymede has its draft plan of subdivision registered, it will relinquish the Hermitage.

Because of the high cost to restore the building, estimated at \$400,000 in 1981, it is believed Ajax council will have it demolished.



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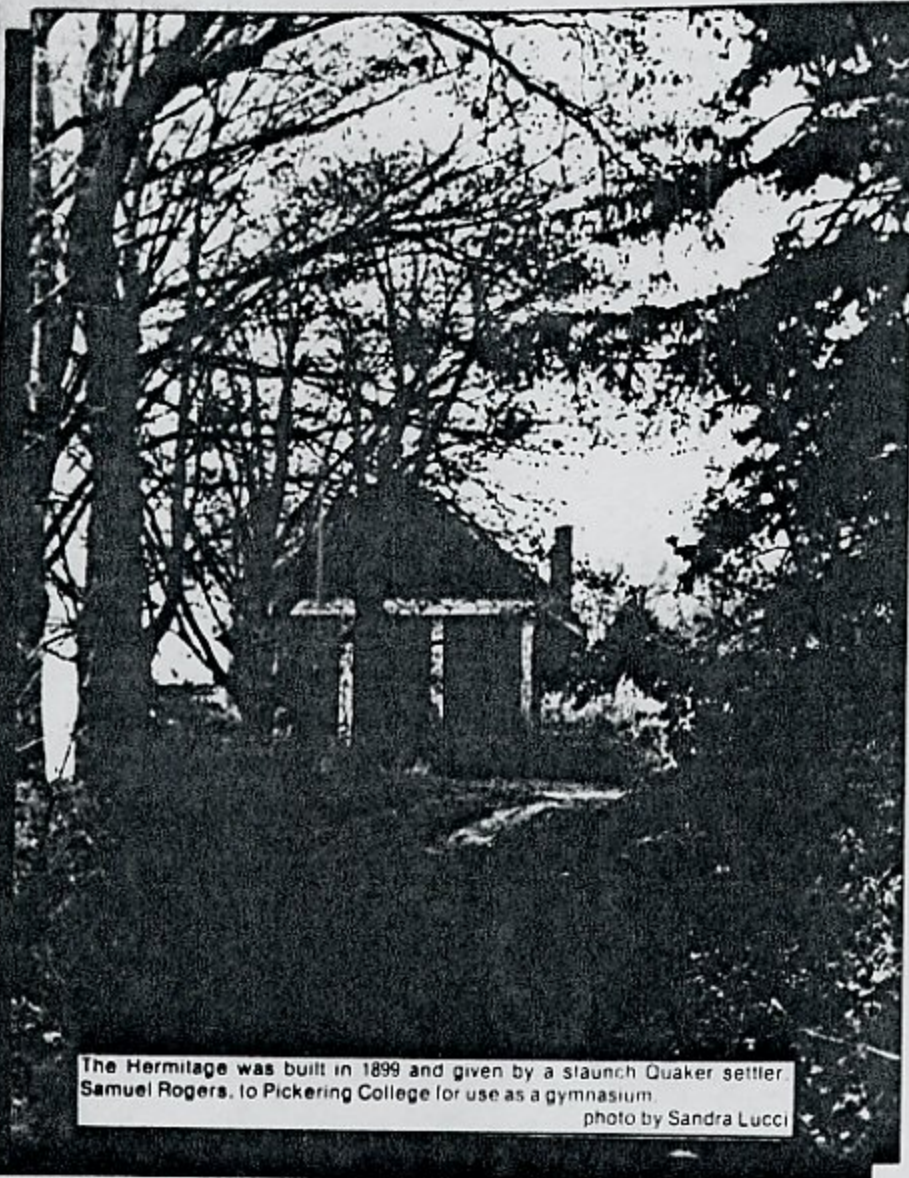
MTC) making it a priority. It not into subsidizing the MTC."

Another concern is the impact construction close to the Village. "People here have been in the lings of development for a long time now," says Soeters. "Now, it's to be right next door."

"It's the first development (Ajax) which, in its entirety, is ing forward lots of executive move-up housing," he adds. "The up housing is geared to those who've lived in the area for 20 years, who'd like something new."

The report has been deferred to a council meeting on Monday, June 14, to allow Runnymede time to address criticisms and concerns of officials and residents.

Mammoth subdivision for Village



The Hermitage was built in 1899 and given by a staunch Quaker settler, Samuel Rogers, to Pickering College for use as a gymnasium.
photo by Sandra Lucci

Building likely to be demolished

Hermitage last Quaker link

By SANDRA LUCCI

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Because of the high cost to restore the building, estimated at \$400,000 in 1981, it is believed Ajax council will have it demolished.

By KEVIN HANN

PICKERING VILLAGE - As the death bell tolls for a piece of Village heritage, plans for a mammoth housing development in the north end of town near completion.

Last Monday, Runnymede Development Corporation unveiled its proposed concept for Hermitage Phase II, a residential community of 1,157 dwellings on a 23-acre site, north of Sherwood Road between Rotherglen and Ravencroft Roads and Church Street.

The development, which could take three years to complete if work begins next spring, could result in the demolition of Hermitage, a designated heritage property which once served as the Pickering College gymnasium.

"It's my feeling that it's going to be demolished," says Ward 1 councillor Rene Soetens, who's worked with Runnymede on this project for almost six years. "The most significant problem, in terms of preserving the site, is the cost."

"The cost, based on work done two to three years back, seems rather prohibitive," he adds. "And, it's not usable for the people of the community because there are no services on the site."

Soetens reports extensive vandalism has also played a role in determining the fate of the boarded-up building.

Runnymede's housing project involves construction of 311 single detached homes on lots with minimum frontages of 40 feet, 385 single detached units on minimum 50-foot lots, 146 single detached dwellings on minimum 60-foot lots, and 315 high-density units.

"Most likely, the high-density units will be in an apartment building configuration," explains town planning director Bob Martindale. Blueprints indicate the apartment complex will be situated at the corner of Church Street and the proposed Delaney Drive extension.

When planning between the town and Runnymede got underway several years ago, there was no of-

ficial development plan for the lands north of Sherwood Road, east of Church Street.

"In fact, (the Ajax area) was an area in town without a plan," Soetens says. "We had five meetings with residents to discuss locations for schools, parks and facilities. After that, we did a lot of the Hermitage gymnasium and woodlot, and that was about it."

"(Planning) wasn't studied to stretch," he stresses. "I don't look all of our points of consideration as they come along."

While proposed street names met with unofficial approval of council at its Monday meeting, other criticisms and concerns of town officials and residents were addressed and corrected before council approves the project.

The major concern is traffic on Rotherglen and Ravencroft Roads, which, councillors and residents say, is already congested and dangerous during rush-hour periods. Suggestions include installation of traffic lights at Rotherglen Road and Highway 2, where motorists counter extraordinary delays attempting left-hand turns on Highway 2. The cost would be met by Runnymede and the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MTC).

"Runnymede's portion of the funding is in place," says company president Lou Greenbaum. "It's a matter of the powers that be (MTC) making it a priority. We're not into subsidizing the MTC."

Another concern is the impact construction close to the Village. "People here have been so used to living in development for a long time now," says Soetens. "Now, they're to be right next door."

"It's the first development in Ajax which, in its entirety, is going forward lots of construction move-up housing," he adds. "The housing is geared to people who've lived in the area for 15 years, who'd like something new."

The report has been discussed at council meeting on Monday. Soetens says he will continue to allow Runnymede to address criticisms and concerns of officials and residents.



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The Hermitage, a Pickering Village landmark for 88 years, succumbs to flames Sunday night as firefighters move in to prevent the raging blaze from spreading. The building was completely destroyed by fire. Aaron is suspected. photo by Kevin Hann

ive ed

NDRA LUCCI
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Landmark succumbs to fiery death Sunday

By KEVIN HANN
PICKERING VILLAGE - The inevitable happened Sunday night. The Hermitage, a prized heritage building constructed in 1899, succumbed to the powerful destructiveness of fire.

Under a full moon, firefighters were unable to mount any attack on the inferno which engulfed the red bricked facility built by Quaker Samuel Rogers. When telephone calls began lighting up the switchboard in the Ajax Fire Department alarm room, the battle was already lost. The Hermitage was gone.

By the time the first pumper truck arrived at the scene, the building's roof had disintegrated and flames were rocketing almost 100 feet into the sky. Firefighters, realizing the blaze was unbeatable, sprayed flying cinders and trained hoses on trees surrounding the two-storey structure to prevent the fire from spreading.

Fire chief Taff Evans says the evening's calm and mild temperature worked to the advantage of firefighters.

The visibility of flames from Whitby and Pickering drew hundreds of curious onlookers and motorists to the area.

Tammy McLean, 19, was in the living room of her parents' Sherwood Road East home when she heard "all kinds" of sirens. "I ran to the front door, ripped it open and said, 'Mom, the bushes (north of the street) are

on fire." I went out into the street and watched all the cars stopping. There were hundreds of people who thought they could get up to (The Hermitage) from our street."

Retreating into the house, Tammy telephoned her father, Ajax mayor Bill McLean, who could see the flames from his town hall office on Harwood Avenue.

Three firefighting units and a dozen men tackled the blaze, which finally subsided around 4 a.m. Monday.

Ten-year part-time firefighting veteran Bert Brande, 41, was injured when a section of the building's east wall collapsed on him around

1:45 a.m. He was transported by ambulance to Ajax and Pickering General Hospital with a suspected compressed fracture of the lower spine. Deputy fire chief Mel Wadsworth says a chimney on the west wall tumbled onto the east wall, causing it to shower bricks down upon Brande.

There were no other injuries. Quakers settling in the area donated the building to Pickering College, which opened here in 1878. Used primarily as a gymnasium, the facility remained the only building intact after fire destroyed the college in 1905.

E.L. Ruddy, renowned for his

advertising billboards, later bought the home and re-named it Hermitage. The building has been abandoned since 1960.

Situated on land owned by Runnymede Development Corporation, The Hermitage has been the centre of mild controversy in the past year, as proposals have materialized for a planned residential community surrounding it. While several interested residents were calling for preservation of the building, studios, and town officials, determined it too costly.

The Hermitage was designated a heritage property by the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee.

Sunday night's fire was the third on The Hermitage site in the past year and a half. In April of 1986, a grass fire swept by high winds engulfed a barn and, early this September, an arsonist torched a large shed.

Investigators from the Ontario Fire Marshal's office, Durham Regional Police and Ajax Fire Department were still examining the scene Monday afternoon to determine the cause of the blaze.

Wadsworth says arson is suspected. "You've got a building sitting in the middle of nowhere, with no electricity or services running through it, and no electrical storms in the area, so some kind of incendiary device could have been used."

A damage total has not yet been set.

Wife's fears come true

Firefighter injured battling blaze

By KEVIN HANN
PICKERING VILLAGE - A few years ago, Sharon Brande would worry when the Milton paging device summoned husband Bert to a fire emergency. Until this past Sunday night, the red bling had somewhat diminished.

The role of a firefighter has changed dramatically in the past decade. At one time, his function was strictly fire suppression and prevention. But today, he's required to administer emergency medical aid and fulfill the role of handyman.

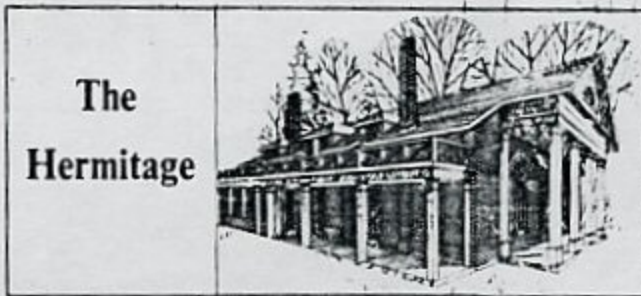
Around 10:30 p.m. Sunday, Bert

See FIREWITERS, Page A6

Loss of Hermitage needn't have happened

To the editor:
The Hermitage is gone. It burned down because of some cretin pyromaniac who had no motive whatsoever or a paid arsonist who had. Will we ever know? Does it really matter?
With the help of the fire department who regarded it as "just another fire", The Hermitage was utterly destroyed. To them, its fate was written in the wind - a matter of time - "Good Riddance!" To our town fathers, its preservation was a matter of dollars and of no real concern - certainly not important enough to justify spending a few bucks. To Runnymede, the owners, it was a liability, a damned nuisance or, at best, a contractor's bargaining tool.
But to most of us, the silent majority, it was a fragment from another era. Its loss represents a tearing

away of a part of our heritage. Through lack of vision and indifference on the part of myopic leaders plus one small match, this irreplaceable treasure has slipped on into obscurity.
Upon examining the site 24 hours later, I was joined by a small group of interested boys ranging from nine to 19 years of age. Every one of them was cognizant of a loss greater than an old neglected building. They perceived it to be an irreplaceable part of history that many of their parents failed to visualize. Each seemed painfully aware of the non-permanency of their current environment with its cold, plastic-lined structures - tacky, economy-controlled, reptitious boxes crammed into areas we euphemistically call "communities".
When I first discovered the Her-



The Hermitage

mitage in 1979, a week or so after I moved in as a neighbor, it revealed itself to me as 'Tara' after the revolution. I had gone for a leisurely walk in 'Sherwood Forest' and discovered this treasure emerging from a jungle of weeds and vines that all but hid this remnant of a finer age. I could visualize its manicured landscape

with a sunken garden, its tidy setting, its stately Greek revival ambience. It was only after I was appointed to LACAC a year or two later that I learned something of its history.
The Hermitage was the only surviving structure from a fire that destroyed the bulk of Pickering College in 1905. Pickering College was a

magnificent four-storey brick building that was built in 1878 by the Quakers who were numbered among the first to settle in the village - earlier known as Duffin's Creek. The college was reputed to be one of the major places of learning in the country - attracting students world-wide from as far away as Japan, Europe and Australia.
It was the first co-ed school in Canada with accommodation for about 100 students.
Across the road at Mill Street, the Pickering Yearly Meeting House (circa 1856) held Canada's first yearly Quaker meeting in 1867. This building is also doomed as a Heritage site but for a different reason. The current owners (Masonic Lodge) will neither allow the building to be designated nor will they entertain our overtures for its restoration. This fact, along with the senseless destruction of the "Little Red Schoolhouse" last year earns Ajax the dubious distinction as one of the few communities in Upper Canada that is unsympathetic to the historical importance of Quaker life in settling the area and to the preservation of heritage in general. All this, in a year when the federal government is seriously examining the concept of declaring a holiday in February specifically for heritage awareness.
The Hermitage which wasn't built until 1899 was the gymnasium. It did not mirror our current perception of what a gymnasium is supposed to be. Rather, it had the appearance more of a ballet school or fitness area. The west side had a magnificent two-storey fireplace with an ornate but boldly hewn pine mantel. Vandals yanked the mantel off the structure and recently burned it in its own

fireplace.
E.L. Ruddy, the billboard manufacturer, purchased the building for a summer home early in this century. He added a partial second floor framed by a balcony and a graceful oak staircase. Many of the rooms upstairs had stencilled walls. Vandals recently tore out the staircase and pummeled the plaster into oblivion so that even the stencils were beyond preservation.
In 1982, we of the LACAC advised council to designate the structure as a heritage site and had professional heritage architects and contractors examine the site to determine restoration costs. Their report proved that restoration was feasible, worthwhile and reasonable. The only drawback was the lack of public utilities which rendered restoration premature. We opted then for a temporary investment that would arrest further eroding of the structure and protect it for future development. Council agreed to designate the property but made no attempt to negotiate with Runnymede (the owners) to launch a serious preservation project.
Ajax is reputed to be the second youngest city in Canada (next to Elliot Lake). The chances of retaining the few architectural gems that exist in the area is getting slimmer and slimmer as bulldozers continue to advance on our once tranquil countryside. We applaud the town council who appointed members to form a LACAC but we are completely frustrated by these same councillors who want to be motivated by public pressure instead of offering the leadership in these matters for which they were elected in the first place.
R.S. Wright
Ajax

Opinion

What happened to Good Samaritans?

There are some cruel people living in this area.
They're the ones who left Mary Tomassini, the victim of a hit-and-run accident, stranded on the road last Wednesday night while they drove by. Actually, Tomassini says because her damaged car was still on the road, the drivers had to slow down, even stop, before they drove around her.
Tomassini wonders whatever happened to good Samaritans. I'm now asking the same question.
Trying to rationalize these people's actions, I've come to the conclusion they've never been in a moment of crisis or need and therefore don't comprehend how much help would be appreciated. But, even that's a weak excuse. You don't have to touch a hot plate to know it burns, it's only common sense.
However, these non-helpful people just kept driving, probably more concerned with getting home to watch the ball game or

some other selfish reason. It's most likely everyone thought the same thing - someone else will stop and help her - too bad every single driver thought that.
Tomassini had to flag down a motorist to stop and help her and a kind woman who lived close by gave Tomassini coffee and a ride to the hospital.
To those who passed Tomassini - and to the idiot who hit her and kept driving - may your consciences always bother you about your disgraceful act to a womp in need.
...
A woman school bus driver recently phoned me and asked me to write a column about the hardships she encounters in her job. "I'm fed up with the way people pick on school bus drivers," she said. "People just don't want to cooperate with us."
The woman used Brock Road as an example of how ignorant people are towards the big yellow



Wendy Gallagher
Reporter

vehicle. She said trucks are constantly pulling up close behind the buses in an attempt to make the bus driver speed up. The woman said bus drivers obey the speed limit, won't go any faster and it's annoying, not to mention frightening, when big trucks want the drivers to speed up.
Just remember that there are at least 30 little ones on that bus and the last thing the driver needs is another distraction such as an ignorant truck driver making the road unsafe.
Another irritant, said the woman, are parents who pick up their children at school and

become annoyed at the bus sitting in the parking lot.
"That's the last straw," said the woman. "They're yelling at me when they can park anywhere and I'm parked in the right spot."
Remember, folks, that front driveway is reserved for buses for children who aren't lucky enough to have their parents pick them up.
The woman also complained that people are cutting one another off on the road so they can get by the school bus before the flashing red lights go on. Nobody should ever be in that big a hurry that they have to risk the lives of children and others so they may get by a school bus.
Well, Mrs. School Bus Driver, I hope people will be a little more considerate towards you and your fellow workers. You do a good job and anybody who can transport a whole bus load of screaming and laughing children deserves all the respect on the road they can get.

Letters to the editor

The News Advertiser welcomes letters to the editor on controversial matters, topical issues and anything else of interest to our readers. We reserve the right to edit letters for style, length and legal reasons and to withhold letters deemed not fit for publication. Letters to the editor can be mailed to or dropped off at the News Advertiser, 130 Commercial Ave., Ajax, Ontario, L1S 2H5.

(Continued from page 49)

6574	July 17 1888	July 19 1888	Leavens Daniel	Leavens Jane	19 ac.	\$7000	Dist. by # 1162
6679	Nov 24 1886	Dec 13	"	"	"	"	"
6900	March 2 1889	March 4 1889	Leavens Jane	Robert Scott	11 ac.	\$1200	Dist. by # 1165
6901	April 4	May 5	Milton J	Leavens Jane	"	"	Dist. by # 5323
7049	Oct 24	Oct 24	Becker & Co	H.G. & Co	36 ac.	"	" # 6170
7050	Nov 10	Nov 25	Leavens H. & Co	Annan Robert	"	"	"
7054	Nov 22	Nov 30	Willas Dr & Co	Leavens Harriet	50 ac.	"	Dist. by # 4710
7055	Nov 30	"	Peart Harriet & Thos	Long Leonard	"	"	"
9068	Aug 6 1888	July 9 1897	Long Jeremiah	Leavens Louisa	part	"	Dist. by # 5323
9162	Dec 2 1897	Feb 12 1898	Trustees of the University	Chas. Wm. Lewis	10 acres	\$4000	Dist. by # 1165
9165	Sept 1884	18	Robert & Co	Bright John & Co	"	"	Dist. by # 1165
9166	Dec 31 1897	"	The Union Co. & Co	Trustees of the University	"	"	"
9286	Nov 13 1898	Sept 27	Trustees of the University	"	"	"	"
9569	Oct 20 1897	Feb 22 1899	Wright Sarah	Richardson Lewis	24 ac. 16 ft	\$710	NOT RECORDED
9570	Nov 1900	1900	Richardson Lewis	Richardson Lewis	19 acres	\$1800	Dist. by # 1165
9571	Nov 21	Nov 21	Leavens Jane	Richardson Lewis	"	"	Dist. by # 1165
9572	Nov 21	Nov 21	Leavens Jane	Richardson Lewis	"	"	Dist. by # 1165
9571	Nov 30	Apr 2	Valentine Louis	Annis Selah	24 ac. 16 ft	\$1200	"
9610	Feb 21	Feb 21	Leavens Jane	Richardson Lewis	19 acres	"	Dist. by # 1165
10173	Oct 18 1902	Oct 21 1902	Sprague Co.	Richardson Lewis	"	"	"
10488	Dec 31 1903	Jan 7 1904	Richardson Lewis	Richardson Lewis	"	"	"
10511	Feb 7 1904	Feb 7	Annis Selah wife	Wood Edward	24 ac. 16 ft	\$1300	E. 3.75 & 5.6.00
10932	Jan 1 1906	Jan 24 1906	Long James	Quinlan John	50 acres	\$1874	"
10983	Jan 1 1906	Jan 24 1906	Leavens Louisa	Quinlan John	48.85 acres	\$3106	"
10988	Jan 23 1906	Jan 24 1906	Quinlan John wife	Leavens Louisa	4.150 acres	\$1800	NOT RECORDED
10988	Jan 26 1906	Jan 26 1906	Richardson Lewis	Leavens Jane	19 acres	"	Dist. by # 1165
10996	Oct 22 1905	Feb 13 1906	Annan Robert	Annan John	26 ac. of 1/2	"	"
11058	Apr 20 1906	Apr 23 1906	Quinlan John	Quinlan Mary Ann	part	promissory	subject to mortgage
11483	Jan 28 1908	Feb 26 1908	Leavens William	Richardson Lewis	19 acres	\$100	"
11484	Feb 19 1908	Feb 26 1908	Richardson Lewis	Dickie John	17 acres	\$2100	as in 772 11483
11605	Feb 19 1908	Aug 7 1908	Richardson Lewis	Richardson Lewis	part	"	Dist. by # 1165
11606	Feb 19 1908	Aug 7 1908	Richardson Lewis	Richardson Lewis	part	"	Dist. by # 1165
12471	Sept 9 1911	Sept 23 1911	Annan John wife	Ruddy Ernest L.	36 ac. of 1/2	\$4020	"
12472	Sept 9 1911	Sept 23 1911	Dickie John wife	Ruddy Ernest L.	part 1/2	\$480	"
12493	Sept 19 1911	Sept 23 1911	Ruddy Ernest L. wife	Annan John	part 1/2	\$330	NOT RECORDED
12509	Nov 7 1911	Nov 13 1911	Wood Edward wife	Annan John	24 acres	\$1600	as in 772 10811
12555	July 1 1911	Dec 16 1911	The Trustees of the University	Ruddy Ernest L.	10 acres	\$5000	"
12556	July 1 1911	Dec 16 1911	The Trustees of the University	Ruddy Ernest L.	10 acres	\$4000	"
12557	Nov 14 1911	Nov 23 1911	Leavens Louisa	Quinlan John	4.150 acres	"	Dist. by # 1165
12577	Oct 18 1911	Oct 21 1911	Dickie John wife	Richardson Lewis	17 acres	\$2200	NOT RECORDED

ABSTRACT INDEX

PAGE NO. 53

Township of Pickering LOT 13 CONCESSION 2

continued from Page 52

REGISTRATION NUMBER	INSTRUMENT	REGISTRATION DATE DAY MONTH YEAR	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	CONSIDERATION ETC.	LAND AND REMARKS
37319	Grant	10 05 54	Smith, Wilmot La Verne Smith, Beulah Ruth	Bryant, Meryl Frances	\$2.00 & c	Part-75'± on S. lim. of lot X 200' Com. 240'6" W. from S.E. angle of Lot & running W.
1	Order	24 02 55	Defining Boundaries of Incorporated Village of Pickering			Part and Part Rd. All'ce S'ly 1155' & Part of Rd. All'ce between Cons. 1 & 2
5	By-Law	23 05 55	By-law No. 71 for the Village of Pickering Amending By-Law No. 27 and designating areas of subdivision Control			Part and Part Rd. All'ce S'ly 1155' & Part of Rd. All'ce between Cons. 1 & 2
GR. 14701	Certificate	26 03 56	Re: Payment of duty in Est. of	Ernest Lawrence Ruddy, dec'd		Part ex. Parts
GR. 14723	Certificate	10 04 56	Re: Payment of duty in Est. of	Pearl Annie Blanche Balsdon		Part-"des'd in Inst. 37316"
157	Grant	01 05 56	Smith, Wilmot La Verne Smith, Beulah Ruth	Davidson, Celia Harriet	\$2.00 & c	Part-subj. to restrictions des'd by metes & bounds Planning Board Consents
Twp. 43140	Certificate of Judgement for Foreclosure	03 08 56	S.C.O. in re: Roche vs Gibson			Part-as des'd in No. 33938 Foreclosing def'tnts Thomas Ayton Gibson & Dorothy Gibson.
275	Grant	13 09 56	Roche, David J. Roche, Mary Claire	Gibson, Thomas Ayton Gibson, Dorothy	\$2.00 & c	Part-as des'd in No. 3140 as joint tenants
56610	Grant	16 09 57	Davidson, Celia Harriet	Davidson, Celia Harriet Cooper, Kenneth J.	\$2.00 & c	Part-as des'd in No. 157 with 1 measurement different
60588	Grant	05 02 58	Davidson, Celia Harriet (undivided 1/2 interest)	Cooper, Kenneth J.	\$9,400.00	Part-as des'd in No. 56610 one meas'nt. different



