

## The Office Window

Old newspapers are historical records for a community. Week by week this fact may not impress but through the years the story of the community it serves is recorded. . . . Unfortunately, prior to present ownership, files of this newspaper were not cared for or were lost. During your editor's time, which is now in its 24th year, files have been bound in book form and dated at the end of each year and it may be that the time will come when some historian will find use for them. Only odd copies previous to that time are on hand. . . . Apparently in some offices files have been kept over a longer period as the following interesting editorial from the Newmarket Era and Express would indicate: "Last week we said that the old burial ground site on the north side of Eagle St., Newmarket, should be restored or at least the property should be improved. It has an important place in the history of Newmarket. At one time it was the only cemetery in Newmarket. According to The Era files, the late Erastus Jackson, who was editor for 50 years, wrote about the cemetery in the late 1850's. He opposed the purchase of land for a new cemetery at that time, saying that the community already had an adequate cemetery on Eagle St. In strong terms he said in an editorial in 1859, that money would have been better spent on a new fire hall and fire fighting equipment. . . . As late as 1934, the burial ground was called St. Paul's Cemetery. In an article published March 2, 1934, The Era reported about St. Paul's Church centennial jubilee. The following is a portion of the article which referred to the cemetery: 'In St. Paul's Cemetery lie several persons closely associated with the early history of British North America. One tombstone bears the date 1820. The mother of Sir John Beverley Robinson, the first baronet and Chief Justice of Ontario, lies there. Another well known name is that of William Rowe, credited with saving Upper Canada's gold from the United States 'invaders when they sacked York in 1813. The story is that Rowe carried the government supplies from the offices at the foot of present Berkeley St., Toronto, and buried the precious metal near the Don River until York's guests had gone home. One of the most interesting monuments is that of John MacDonald, once the chief factor of the North-

west Fur Trading Co., whose body was brought to Newmarket as his dying wish. Lady Franklin, wife of the Arctic explorer, sent the stone from Scotland and Alexander Muir, writer of 'The Maple Leaf Forever' and one-time Newmarket school teacher, laid it in place. Another grave of more than ordinary interest is that of Christopher Beswick, retired Army surgeon, who is traditionally said to have lived to the age of 118 years. Beswick presented the Eagle St. burying ground, in which he now rests, to St. Paul's. . . . All but two of the gravestones have been removed and we do not know of their whereabouts now. The importance of the burial ground does not seem to have stirred the interest of many community leaders in Newmarket. We are of the opinion that the names of the persons buried in the cemetery should be inscribed on one or more cairns at the site, since the stones have now been removed. After all, they founded our community. An iron fence could be erected around the property. A fitting time for the unveiling of a cairn would be in 1957, the centenary of the incorporation of Newmarket as a village. There is plenty of time between now and that date to plan a centennial celebration and to erect a cairn at the old burial grounds. . . . Read the following editorial the other day: "Nowadays, when we read the newspapers and listen to the radio, it would almost appear as though there is nothing happening in the world except conferences, and machinations, on a universal scale. We have to turn to the local paper to find out what is happening in our own village, or around the country. Or we have

to listen at the counter of the village store, or the small-town post office, while neighbours greet each other and exchange the latest gossip. That is what goes on all over the world, for most people are immediately concerned with the happenings near at hand, the small events which they are likely to share with the person next door, or members of their own family. It is these microscopic and almost private happenings that make the all-pervasive lubrication of human society. They also serve as reminders that human nature will never be wholly subdued to the huge political agglomerations which over-arch the world today. Being an inhabitant of Blank, I turn once a week to our capacious local newspaper, The Blank Messenger, which deals in a cool, detached way with the major happenings that

with the major happenings that shake humanity, and then turns, in detail, to the happenings that have taken place during the past week, village by village. Believe me, they are indeed stranger than fiction. And in the end they always mount up to a testimony for the courage, variety, fundamental compassion of the average human being."

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Pg 1

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