

# We're Wrong, He's Right Thinks Highways Engineer

Just when we thought that offending sign at the bridge on Highway 11, naming the river (known to everyone here throughout the years as the Holland River) by another name, was about to be corrected, or at least, removed, The Witness received a letter from the "Chief Engineer of Maintenance, Department of Highways," C. A. Robbins, which reads as follows:

Re: Sign on Highway No. 11 south of Bradford. "This is to advise that we have consulted various plans, including one prepared by the Department of National Defence, regarding the correct name of the river which crosses the highway south of Bradford. All the plans that are at our disposal show this river to be the Schomberg River and that it joins the Holland River at a point two miles northeast of Bradford. The Holland River runs southerly through Newmarket, not crossing Highway No. 11.

"Hoping this will clear up the misunderstanding.

Yours very truly,  
C. A. Robbins,

Chief Engineer of Maintenance."

Enclosed with this letter was a map—Department of National Defence—second edition printed in 1949, naming our river the Schomberg River.

It seems strange that our representative in the Ontario Legislature, Mr. G. G. Johnston, a Simcoe County native who is familiar with Simcoe County geography, moved to have the offending sign removed; that Ontario Minister of Highways, Mr. G. Doucett, when Mr. Johnston drew his attention to the matter, notified an engineer of the Department to rectify the error; and that it remained with said engineer to give us an argument.

Referring to that letter: To begin with, he heads it "re sign on Highway 11 south of Bradford. The southern limits of Bradford would be more correct since the river is our boundary. He states that "all plans at our disposal show this river to be the Schomberg River." "Well, this office has a map of Simcoe County (1913), and we are sure many another map is available, showing it as the Holland River. Also, since Mr. Robbins is such a stickler for accuracy, we would draw his attention to his statement, "the Schomberg River — joins the Holland River at a point about two miles northeast of Bradford. The Holland River runs southerly through Newmarket, not crossing Highway 11." We ask Mr. Robbins how the river he calls the Holland River could ever join the so-called Schomberg River if it "runs southerly" through Newmarket?" The entire river in question flows in a northerly direction into Lake Simcoe.

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WE'RE WRONG, HE'S RIGHT,  
—THINKS HIGHWAYS ENGINEER—

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What a mess! Down to the last little shipping tag the marsh gardens are advertised as the Holland Marsh gardens. Our big, modern vegetable packing plant is named and registered "The Holland River Gardens Co. Limited" — named after the gardens along the river which Mr. Robbins, Chief Engineer, now names the Schomberg. Our local theatre is the "Holland" for the same reason.

The map Mr. Robbins sent us is the first on which we ever saw any name but "Holland River". It has always been called the Holland by residents here. Why should we now have another name thrust upon us because it so appears on a small Department of National Defence map? It does matter and matter a lot to the many who have built up industry about the name "Holland." In so far as the "Chief Engineer" is concerned (we don't know the gentleman and maybe if we did we'd have a different opinion) our impression is that he is making an issue, of what to him should be a matter of

small moment, rather than acknowledge an error.

No sign at all would be much better than that one.

Now, for Mr. Robbins' information we will recall a little Holland River history taken from an article in our own files as published a few years ago:

"Beginning about Schomberg and flowing, or moving in a very sluggish manner, in a northeasterly direction toward Lake Simcoe is the stream known as the Holland River, so named after a Major S. Holland, Surveyor-General of Canada, who in 1791 visited the river in making a general survey of the Lake Simcoe region. This is the main river and it is joined by an eastern or Holland Landing tributary at a place called Soldier's Bay, about seven miles from the mouth."

No, Mr. Robbins, because your present map, showing a very small area of South Simcoe, printed in 1949 and calling our river by another name, you are not changing geographical records in this district. We still ask that that sign be either corrected or removed — and promptly.