

MEMOIRS
OF THE
KEEFER FAMILY

BY
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BURLINGTON, ONT.



PREFACE

In the eighties of the past century, when I was still a lad in my early teens, A. Dingwall Fordyce, a Public School Inspector living at Fergus, Ontario, in compiling his "Family History of Dingwall Fordyce" frequently wrote to my father for information regarding the Keefer family, some of whom were connected with the Fordyces. It fell to my lot to answer his correspondence. In so doing I became infected, the contagion spread, for a time the fever raged and with the enthusiasm of youth I began the development of a genealogical tree.

The tree possessed wonderful vitality and in an incredibly short time grew into a forest of unknown dimensions. The magnitude of the task, the difficulty of obtaining reliable detailed information, the pressure of my studies, followed soon after by the multiplicity of ministerial duties resulted in delaying the work for a more convenient season. In the almost fifty years that elapsed, I made a prisoner of any information I obtained.

Retirement from the active work of the ministry afforded an opportunity to resume the work which I have much abridged from the ambitious plan of my youthful days. Writing a family history has always impressed me as being somewhat analogous to growing potatoes—the best part is underground. Yielding, however, to the importunity of my friends who maintain that it is an obligation I owe to my forebears as well as to those who follow, I have decided, with the kind co-operation of my brother, J. George Keefer of Norwood, Ontario, to place in a permanent form some of the facts which I have gathered during these years.

In compiling the data found in the following pages I desire to acknowledge valuable assistance received from Thos. C. Keefer, C. E., of Ottawa, Surgeon Major Keefer of Galt, F. H. Keefer, K. C., of Port Arthur, Miss Janet Carnochan, Historian and Curator of Niagara-on-the-Lake, A. Dingwall Fordyce of Fergus, (all of whom have since deceased), Chadwick's "Ontarian Families," John H. Thompson, publisher of the "Jubilee History of Thorold," the publisher of the "Welland Tribune" and others.

ROBT. KEEFER

"ORIOLE LODGE,"
BURLINGTON, ONT.
1935

ARMS AND CREST



Particular symbols have been assumed by various families of mankind, civilized and uncivilized, in all ages of the world's history. Such were the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Eagle of Imperial Rome, the tattoo marks of the American savages, and the White Horse of Saxony. In the early years, when the armour completely obscured the features of the warrior some distinguishing mark or symbol on the armour became a necessity. This was first used in Germany, and was later adopted and improved by France, Spain and Italy. It was imported into England by the Norman Conquerors in 1066. These symbols were the pre-

cursors of heraldic bearings, which during the crusades developed into an elaborate science. The innumerable signs, symbols and markings by their position, inclination and colourings, had a distinct significance. They were displayed upon the shield or embroidered upon the surcoat or camise worn over the armour, hence the designation, "Coat of Arms."

The Coat of Arms is much older than the family name, and by custom was inherited by the male heirs. We are interested in the Ancestor who first adopted the coat of arms and crest which accompanies this article, as he was the Adam of the Keefer family. Before this, as far as tracing genealogy is concerned, all was oblivion and chaos. The presence of the Cross in the Emblem indicates that the person who first wore it, participated in the Crusades, while the three Martlets imply that it was inherited by the fourth son of the original custodian.

ARMS: Arg., on a bend engrailed gu., between a lion's head erased az. langued gu. in chief, and a cross patonce sa. in base, three martlets of the last winged or.

CREST: Out of a coronet a cubit arm mailed ppr., and hand, also ppr., holding three ostrich feathers, the middle one gu, the others az.

MOTTO: Vincit qui patitur.



GEORGE KEEFER, SR.

Born in Sussex County, Colony of New Jersey, November 8, 1773.

Died at Thorold, Ontario, June 25th, 1858,

aged 84 years, 7 months and 17 days.



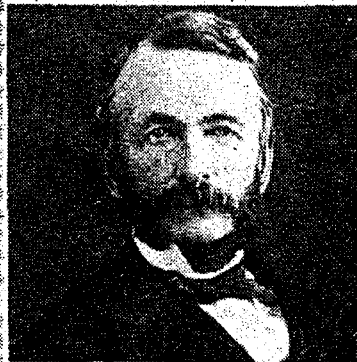
ELIZABETH HAMOT
Born Nov. 17, 1797. Died 1868



GEORGE
Born Feb. 25, 1790. Died Nov. 18, 1885



JACOB
Born Nov. 8, 1800. Died June, 1875



PETER
Born Mar. 20, 1805. Died Jan. 25, 1885

CATHERINE LAMPMAN

Born 1778, Died 1813

MARY
HER DAUGHTER

Born 1808
Died 1804

No Portraits of These
are extant



ANNA KELSO
Born Jan. 1, 1807. Died May 31, 1891



CATHERINE EASTMAN
Born Jan. 23, 1809. Died Dec. 5, 1892



JOHN
Born Jan. 13, 1813. Died Nov. 6, 1892



SAMUEL
Born Jan. 22, 1811. Died Jan. 7, 1890

CHILDREN OF
GEORGE KEEFER AND CATHERINE LAMPMAN
who died in 1813



AUGUSTUS

Born Oct. 21, 1819. Died Oct. 30, 1885



JAMES

Born Mar. 14, 1815. Died June 29, 1874.



AMELIA McFARLAND

Born Jan. 4, 1818



JANE McBRIDE,
Wife of George Keefer



THOMAS C.

Born Nov. 4, 1821



CHARLES H.

Born Nov. 30, 1823. Died Oct. 14, 1847.



ALEXANDER

Born Nov. 20, 1825. Died May 25, 1863.

CHILDREN OF
GEORGE KEEFER AND JANE McBRIDE
who died in 1833



JACOB KEEFER

Born April 5th, 1803.
Died January 19th, 1881



MARY CORBETT

wife of Jacob Keefer
Died August 18th, 1887,
at the age of 84 years.

MEMOIRS OF THE KEEFER FAMILY

France was the ancestral home of the Keefer family. In the eleventh or twelfth century, when Sur names came to be used, many were selected from the occupation or craft followed. The ancestors of the Keefer family having inherited an extensive cooperage, chose as their name "Le Tonnellier" (The cooper).

In religion, they were Protestants, designated "Huguenots" by the French Roman Catholics, a term which was originally applied in derision to the followers of John Calvin in Geneva, but which has long since outgrown whatever odium was associated with it, and is acknowledged to-day with pardonable pride by myriads of their descendants throughout the world.

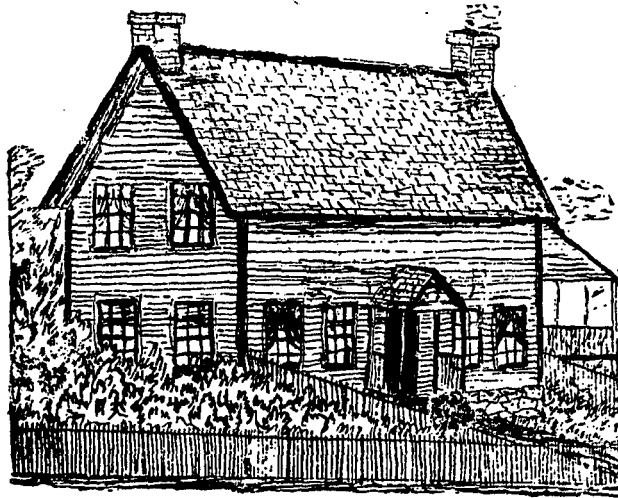
The bitter and bloody struggle between the Huguenots and Roman Catholics continued throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reaching its climax on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24th, 1572, when it is recorded that 70,000 Huguenots were massacred in Paris and other parts of France. In 1598 by the edict of Nantes, the Huguenots were granted civil and religious freedom on an equality with Roman Catholics. Protestantism was to be no longer a bar to offices of public trust. The Century following was, however, one of distrust and suspicion, of encroachment on the one hand, and resistance on the other, culminating in the revoking of the Edict of Nantes on October 22nd, 1685. This resulted in an exodus of the Huguenots from France, chiefly to Germany, Switzerland, Holland and England, while some sought refuge in Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Prussia and America. It is variously estimated that from three to five hundred thousand left their homes in France and all their material possessions (excepting what they could carry with them) to the country in which they sought that freedom which had been denied them in the land of their nativity.

It is recorded that some 80,000 sought refuge in England alone. Among these we find several of the name of LeTonnellier. They became thoroughly Anglicised, excepting in name. During the wars of Napoleon, when French names were no longer regarded with favour in England, they changed the name to the inoffensive Cooper.

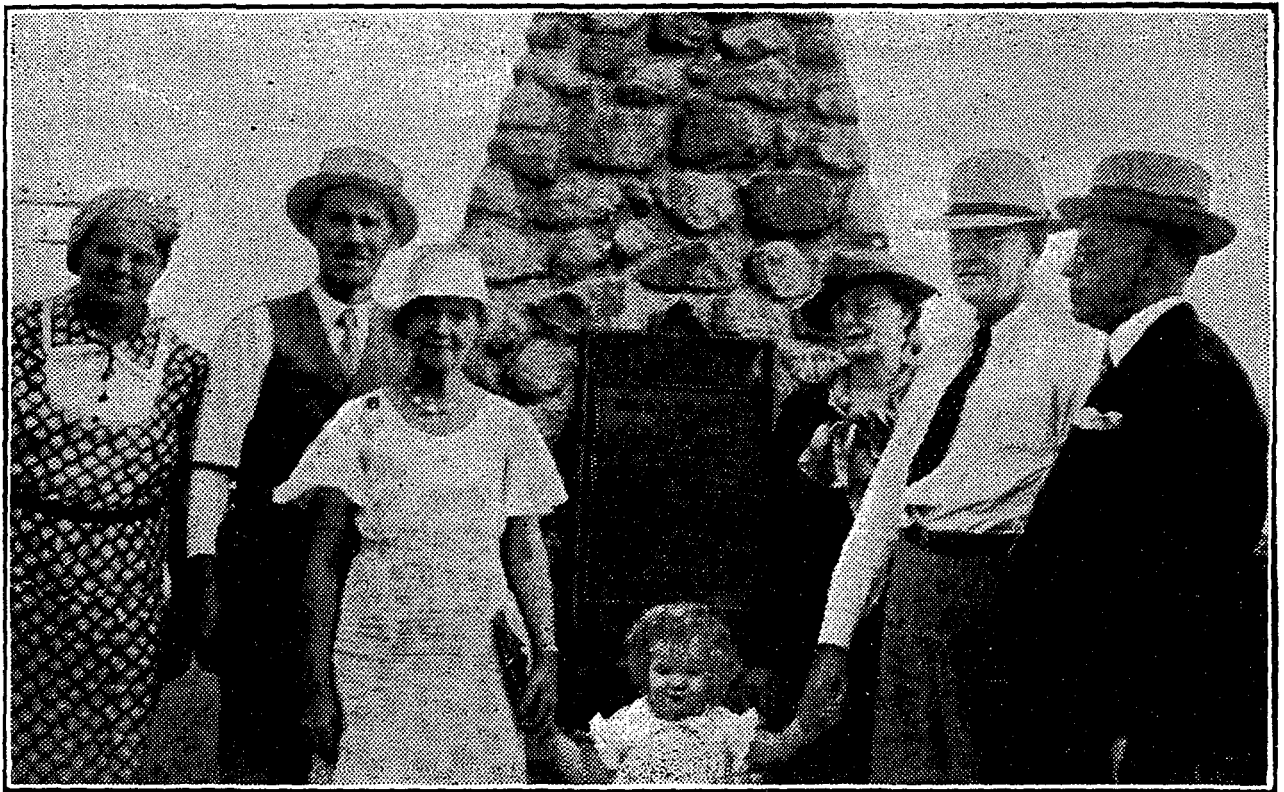
Many of the Huguenots left France in the latter part of the 16th century. About the year 1565, just seven years before the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, when persecution was most rampant, one DeWald dit Tonnellier, who resided in Paris, gave up rank, ease and heritage in France, and went to Alsace, at that time a dukedom of the German Empire, where he followed the occupation of a Blacksmith at Kittenheim. He Germanised the name changing it to KIEFFER, the German for Cooper, thus retaining the original significance of the name. One of his descendants, Samuel Kieffer, a peasant farmer lived on the banks of the Ill river which parallels the Rhine and which gave its name to the country (Illsaas, Elsas, or Alsace, the country of the Ill) within a few miles of the city of Strausburg. Samuel married Ann Waldruff, who was born in Westervallen, Germany, by whom he had two sons, George, born in 1739 and Jacob born in 1741. In 1744, Samuel died of pneumonia and his widow afterwards married Frederick Saverein, a Frenchman. Saverein was of a roving disposition, so Ann sold her property and went with him to the South of France, taking the two boys with them. Their stay in France was short and in 1749 they crossed the Atlantic and settled in Paulinskill, or, Paulin's Hill, Sussex County, New Jersey, on the Pepper Cotton Creek, near Newton, where Saverein took up land which he cleared and cultivated, and later left to his stepson George.

Jacob Keiffer, the youngest of the two sons born in Alsace, settled at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. During the war of Independence he took the side of the revolutionists and became an American citizen. He continued the German spelling of his name, though some of his descendants have changed it to Keefer, to insure its proper pronunciation. We also find the name spelt KEIFFER, KIEFFER, and some who returned to France have changed it to Keveré. The German spelling of the name is perpetuated by the Kieffer pear which was originated and propagated by Peter Kieffer, of Roxbury, Penn. The Keefer family, under different spellings of the name, became quite numerous in the Keystone State from which they have scattered to every part of the Union. They have retained their interest in their common Ancestry by holding frequent reunions.

George Kieffer, referred to above, married Mary Maria Conke or Conck of Philadelphia in 1767, by whom he had two sons and



FIRST KEEFER HOME AT THOROLD
erected in the year 1790



CAIRN AT ALLANBURG
erected in honor of George Keefer who cut the first sod for the
Old Welland Canal on November 30th, 1824

one daughter. George born in 1773, Jacob in 1775, and Mary (see last paragraph of this sketch). He was a quiet plodding man, who cultivated the land and took no part in the political agitation of his time. Being well satisfied with existing conditions, he had little to say. He possessed two farms, a distillery and a female slave, and was looked upon as a prosperous settler. He was a strong conservative, being imbued with Biblical training which had been drilled into him to "Fear the Lord, honour the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change." He had consequently no sympathy with those who revolted and at once declared himself on the side of the King, joined the royal troops and for some months fought under Col. Barton and Sir William Howe. While encamped on Staten Island he contracted typhoid fever from which he died.

At the close of the war his property was confiscated by the State, but his widow was allowed to remain on the farm till the boys had grown to young manhood. It was hoped that by that time they would change their political views and become citizens of the new Republic. This hope, however, was not to be realized.

In 1790 when George was 17 and Jacob 15, the two lads set out on foot for Lake Erie, accompanied by the Lampmans, Bales, Hoovers and others, following an Indian Trail over the mountains and through dense forests, fording treacherous, turbulent streams and encountering all kinds of wild life, till they came upon a few fishermen's huts, where the city of Buffalo is now located. Crossing the Niagara river to Fort Erie, they continued to thread their way inland, till they came to a lone squatter, where the town of Thorold is now situated. The squatter had cut down a few trees and built a hut. He gladly sold out to the two boys, who remained for two years clearing the land and building a commodious log house (see cut following pp. 81 "Jubilee History of Thorold") for their mother and family.

In 1792 the two boys walked back to New Jersey and brought their sister Mary, their mother and family, together with several neighbours, to their new Canadian home. The mother had previously married Michael Teeter, also a loyalist, by whom she had seven sons and one daughter. We cannot ascertain the date of this marriage, but it is recorded that their son, Aaron, aged 23 years, was mortally wounded at the battle of Lundy's Lane on July 24th, 1814. He must therefore have been an infant in 1792 when his

mother came to Canada. It is difficult for us to fully realize the hazards of this journey. They were frequently forced to hide during the day to avoid hostile Indians and soldiers of the Republic, who did all in their power to prevent their migration. The men walked while the women and children rode on the backs of what animals they were able to smuggle out of the country. Babies and small children were balanced on each side of a saddle in improvised panniers. To mislead those who endeavored to intercept them, they resorted to several expedients, such as fastening the heels of their shoes to the toes of their boots.

The difficulties, privations and hardships of the loyalist settlers in the primitive Canadian forests were very great and called forth wonderful resourcefulness, courage and ingenuity on the part of the settlers. Their homes were rude but comfortable. They were built of logs, with great fire-places in which they could burn a stump or log which often served the dual purpose of heat and light. Oiled paper was their substitute for glass windows, and wooden pegs served the purpose of nails. Their food consisted of wild fruits, nuts, honey, maple sugar, fish and game. Every house was a small factory in which the garments worn by the household were manufactured by the women from flax or wool. For years they lived in constant dread of having their children or cattle attacked by wolves, bears, panthers or eagles. The zeal and energy with which they applied themselves to their task soon resulted in converting primeval forests into comfortable, productive and happy homesteads.

What little currency the new-comers had was chiefly American and Mexican silver dollars. These they cut in two or four pieces for smaller coins, hence the expression "half dollar" and "quarter dollar."

The United Empire Loyalists believed in being fully prepared for any eventuality that might arise. T. C. Keefer tells us that on one occasion when visiting the home of his grandmother, Mrs. Michael Teeter, at the Twenty Mile Creek, he was amazed to notice that when preparing the dinner she went to her bedroom and lifting the valance from the bed took from a coffin underneath a supply of onions. It was quite customary in those days to have both coffin and shroud in readiness years before they were required. The writer knew of one case in which not only the coffin and shroud



FIRST WELAND CANAL—LOCK AT ST. CATHARINES

were in readiness, but the grave had been dug, the rough box placed, a light covering of earth covered by sod supported by planks at the top of the grave and the monument erected and engraved excepting the date of death.

George Keefer (1773-1858) who came to Canada in 1790 was a cabinet maker by trade. He took up 600 acres of land at and adjacent to where the town of Thorold is located. He did the work of a surveyor, conducted a general store, built two saw mills, built and operated a flour mill, shipping his product to Montreal and England, was magistrate, was appointed Ensign in the Militia in 1799, Lieutenant in 1806, Captain in 1815. Served in the war of 1812, being present at the battles of Chippawa and Lundy's Lane. He was one of the original promoters of the Welland Canal, and was president of the company formed for its construction. He turned the first sod on November 30th, 1824. One hundred years after—November 30th, 1924—the Government of Canada erected a Cairn to his memory on the banks of the Canal at Allanburg.

The inscription on the tablet reads as follows:—

“THE OLD WELLAND CANAL

“Near this spot on the 30th of November, 1824, the first sod of the old Welland Canal was cut by

GEORGE KEEFER

President of the Welland Canal Company, in the presence of William Hamilton Merritt, chief promotor of the enterprise and about 200 other persons.

“The great work, connecting Lakes Erie and Ontario for ship navigation was planned and carried out by a private company.”

THE CEREMONY

The following account of the proceedings at the ceremony in connection with the turning of the first sod in 1824 is given by Mr. J. P. Merritt in his “Biography of Hon. W. H. Merritt, M. P.”

“Mr. Hall, the engineer, delivered into the hands of George Keefer, Esq., President of the Board of Directors, a spade, addressing him as follows:

“Mr. President, I beg leave to present you with this spade, for the purpose of removing the first earth from the Welland Canal.”

Mr. Keefer, on taking the spade, said: "Gentlemen, it is with pleasure that I remove the first earth from the Welland Canal, and ardently hope the work may continue uninterrupted until the whole is completed."

The ceremony was followed by a dinner at the Inn at which thirty-four gentlemen were present."

When the Loyalists first settled on the Niagara Peninsula, newspapers were unknown, and for some time were a rare luxury. George Keefer and Thomas Merritt, who lived at the Twelve Mile Creek, subscribed for a New York paper between them. In the paper Mr. Keefer saw an advertisement for a missing heiress. He recognized it as one of his neighbours at Beaverdams. The family paid Mr. Keefer's expenses to New York and he came back with the legacy which had been bequeathed by a sister in that city.

In 1896 the writer and his wife were spending their vacation with the latter's aunt, Miss Janet Carnochan, the Historian and Curator, at her home at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Miss Carnochan in her recent researches had discovered an old brown leather covered minute book, which in some mysterious way had escaped the flames on that dreadful night in December 1813, when the entire town was burned, on one hour's notice by the American Soldiers under the command of officer McClure. The book contained a "Record of the library of Niagara" from 1800, when it was organized, till 1820, excepting during the period of the war. In all probability this was the first Public Library in Canada. The record contains a list of the "Proprietors" together with their annual payments, a catalogue of the books, the cost of each, the expenditure, rules and regulations, an account of the Annual meetings, contingent meetings, also a list showing when and by whom each book was taken out and returned. The Library at its organization contained eighty volumes. The first entry in the book reads as follows:—"Niagara Library, 8th June 1800: Sensible how much we are at a loss in this new and remote country for every kind of useful knowledge, and convinced that nothing would be of more use to diffuse knowledge among us and our offspring than a Library, supported by subscriptions in this town, we, whose names are hereto subscribed, hereby associate ourselves together for that purpose, and promise to pay annually a sum not exceeding four dollars, to be laid out on books as agreed upon by a majority of the votes at a

yearly meeting to be held by us at this town on the 15th of August Annually, when everything respecting the library will be regulated by a majority vote." Following this we have the signatures of forty-two "Proprietors," among which we noticed that of George Keefer, of Thorold, a village fourteen miles distant from Niagara. The books that Mr. Keefer took out of the Library reveal the character of the man and his home life in a way that we could not have obtained from any other source. The following are the books which the "Record" shows he took from the library from time to time. "Watt, on the Son of God;" "Smith's Prophecy;" "Snodgrass' Revelation;" "Moral Repository;" "Holy War;" "Emperor Charles V.;" "Wells' Geography;" "Watson's Apology for the Bible;" "New York Missionaries;" "Josephus Works" (six vols.); "Beauties of the Bible;" "Gillies Greece" (three vols.); "Goldsmith's Rome;" "Life of George III, by Adolphus" (three vols.); "Pinkerton's Geography;" "History of France, by Adolphus;" "Egypt by Wilson;" "Nesbitt's Church History;" "History of France" (three vols.); "Morse's Gazeteer" (two vols.); "Rollins History" (twelve vols.); "The Spectator" (eight vols.); "Bruce's Travels;" "Goldsmith's Animated Nature;" "Blackstone's Commentaries On Law" (four vols.) These four volumes were taken out on August 24th, 1812, soon after the American Congress declared war against Great Britain and is the last time the name of George Keefer appears in the "Record."

George Keefer first married Catharine Lampman on February 6th, 1797, daughter of Peter Lampman, also a U. E. L. who came from Long Island, New York, and settled in Grantham township, Lincoln County. By this marriage he had five sons and four daughters. His youngest son, John, was born on January 13th, 1813, when his father, then Lieutenant, was at the front with his company, which was made up of young men from Thorold and the surrounding country. His house was seized and converted into a hospital by the American Soldiers. His wife, who had a baby only three months old at the time, was in poor health. Anxiety about her husband, the care of her family of eight small children—Mary her second daughter having died in infancy—together with the nursing of sick and wounded American Soldiers, proved to be too much for her weakened constitution and she fell a prey to Army fever, from which so many in the improvised hospital to whom she

was ministering were suffering, and she died on July 14th, 1813, at the early age of thirty-five years. Her eldest child, Elizabeth, who was only fifteen years and eight months old at her mother's death, was obliged to take full charge of the home, the hospital, her five small brothers, one of whom was only six months old, and two sisters. The manner in which she discharged her many and onerous duties, won for her the respect, admiration and love of a young American Army Surgeon, named Coltrin, who returned after the war and married her under a flag of truce at Queenston, in 1815. The young couple went to Erie, Pennsylvania, where he practised medicine. In 1825 he died leaving his young widow childless. She later married a French banker, named Hamet, who settled in Erie, and by whom she had five children. Her second husband also predeceased her, and she continued to reside in Erie surrounded by her children and grandchildren. At her death, the homestead, a large commodious residence with extensive grounds fronting on Lake Erie and overlooking the Harbor, was presented by her children to the city of Erie for a hospital.

On June 8th, 1815, George Keefer, now holding the rank of Captain of the Militia, married the widow of John Emory—nee Jane McBride, a sister of Edward McBride, member of the Provincial Legislature for Niagara. John Emory was also a U. E. L. and served in the war of 1812 dying of Army fever in 1813, leaving his young widow with five small children. By this second marriage George Keefer had five sons and one daughter.

His second wife having died on January 6th, 1833, he married the third time on June 2nd, 1836, Mary Wilson, or, Swaize, a widow, who died on June 25th, 1838. He married again on November 14th, 1839, to Esther Magdalen, daughter of Stephen Secord, also a U. E. L. of St. David's and niece of Captain James Secord whose wife by a daring act of heroism distinguished herself in the war of 1812-15 and immortalized the name Secord in Canadian history. She survived him by thirteen years, dying in September 1871. He had no children by his third and fourth marriages, but by the first and second marriages, he had ten sons and five daughters, also five step-children by the second marriage, making twenty children in all.

Of the fifteen children of George Keefer, those by his first wife, Catharine Lampman, were:

1st George, February 1799—November 1885, Civil Engineer, Miller, Magistrate and Clerk of Division Court at Thorold. He married Margaret, nee Scott, widow of McGregor of Amherstburg, by whom he had three children—William, George and Julia. George became a Civil Engineer and located at Victoria, B.C. He was employed on the construction of the C. P. Ry. through the Mountains. A station is named Keefer in honor of him. He died at Victoria May 10th, 1912.

2nd Jacob, November 8th, 1800—November 1875, conducted a general store and was Postmaster at Thorold for fifty years. He was also Magistrate and School Superintendent. He married Christina, only child of Captain Robert Grant of Inverness, Scotland, by whom he had fifteen children, only seven of whom attained to manhood and womanhood.

a Robert, located in California.

b Henry, graduated in medicine and located in Honesdale, Penn. He was Surgeon-Major in the American Civil War, 1861-5. He married Mary Jane McFarland, (see par. 15) and had six children—Jessie, Margaret, John, Louisa, Edwin and George Henry.

c Francis, located at Bridgeport, Conn.

d Benjamin Berry, entered the Methodist Ministry, in 1868 and was stationed at Thorold, Grimsby, Brantford, London, Guelph, Hamilton and Wingham. In 1882, owing to ill health, he withdrew from the pastorate and devoted his attention to journalism, conducting a temperance publication in Hamilton for some years, after which he went to Ottawa, where he occupied an editorial chair on "The Citizen." He died in June 1911.

e Edwin, an honour graduate of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons, Toronto, where he practiced until his death in April 1917. In 1883 he married Clara Church of Allamburg, Ont. They had two children, Zada and Norman.

f Louisa, married Jacob De Witt Brewster of Montreal.

g Catharine, married Jacob De Witt of Salina, Kansas.

3rd Peter, March 20th, 1805—January 21st, 1886. Located in Galt, married Jane Angela, daughter of James Christie, by whom he had three sons and two daughters.

- a Robert and Peter died in young manhood.
- b William Napier, was Surgeon-Major in the Army, and served in several campaigns in India and Africa, in which he won a number of recognitions for distinguished service. He married Eugenia Wilkes of Galt, Ontario, a granddaughter of John Jacob Astor of New York.
- c Angela, married David Spiers of Galt.
- d Julia - Boswell, married John Fisk Barnard of Cincinnati.

4th Samuel, January 22nd, 1811 — January 7th, 1890 — Civil Engineer; Chief Engineer and Commissioner of Public Works; Inspector of Railways; was engaged in many public works, including the Victoria Bridge over the St. Lawrence at Montreal, and the Suspension Bridge at Niagara Falls; Fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, London. Married firstly Ann, daughter of Senator George Crawford, and secondly, Rosaline, daughter of Charles Ashwel Boteler Pocock. Resided at Brockville, Ontario.

5th John, January 13th, 1813, married Sarah McMicking, by whom he had four sons and two daughters. George and Charles died unmarried. John and Hugh went to Vancouver, B. C. Mary married Arthur Lindsay of the Civil Service at Ottawa; Anne married, firstly Barney French, a Civil Engineer of Ottawa, and secondly William Blackstock, M. D., of Barrie, Ontario. His father gave him the old homestead on the hill fronting on St. David's Street where he erected the handsome residence known as "Maplehurst." He died at Maplehurst, November 6th, 1892.

6th Elizabeth, March 13th, 1797—1866. An account has already been given. (See page 16.)

7th May, died in infancy Februry 23rd, 1803—October 26th, 1804.

8th Ann, January 1st, 1807—1891, married firstly Frederick Louis Converse, M. D., and secondly Judge Kelso of Erie, Penn., a member of the United States Congress.

9th Catharine, January 23rd, 1809—December 5th, 1892, married William Eastman, son of the Rev. Daniel Eastman. They had six children; Ward, a merchant at Smithville; Bessie unmarried; Catharine married Sheriff Middleton of Hamilton; William, a

Commercial traveller; Frederick, a medical doctor in Missouri; Samuel a Presbyterian Minister in London, Ontario.

10th James, March 23rd, 1816—1874, clerk of the Division Court at Strathroy, Ontario. He married Maria Cook, by whom he had thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters, three of the sons died in early life. The other three were lawyers. George Albert, practiced law in New York; Thomas Alexander and Francis Henry practiced law at Port Arthur, Ontario. The latter represented Port Arthur and Kenora in the Provincial Legislature 1923- -1926, and Port Arthur in the House of Commons from 1917—1923. During the Great War he acted as adviser to the Canada Food Control Board, was parliamentary Secretary of External Affairs 1918—21. At the time of his death, December 4th, 1928, he was Public Trustee for the Province of Ontario. He was twice married and had three children by his first wife, Mrs. (Dr.) Wodehouse of Ottawa; Hugh, of Port Arthur, and Harold of Thorold. His second wife was Margaret W. Keefer, daughter of William Keefer (see paragraph 4a.)

Three of the seven daughters died in early life; Martha, married Richard Dumbrill, Merchant of Thorold; Susan Frances, married Alfred Hamilton Kittridge, son of Judge Kittridge of Concord, New Hampshire; Annie Bradshaw, married John Lenfesty, of Quebec; Amelia of Toronto, graduated in medicine in 1892, being the first woman registered as a physician in Canadian Institute of Homeopathy. Married Alexander Johnston a banker in Strathroy.

11th Augustus, October 21st, 1819—October 30th, 1885, Barrister-at-law in Ottawa. Married Grace Ann, daughter of Col. Richard Duncan Fraser of Brockville.

12th Thomas Coltrin, November 4th, 1821—January 7th, 1914, of Ottawa, a Civil Engineer, C.M.G., an officer of the Legion of Honor (France.) Attained a high standing in his profession; was Canadian Commissioner at the International Exhibition in London, 1851, and chief Commissioner at the Paris Exposition 1878. Published important works on the Canals and Railways of Canada. He was married firstly to Elizabeth, and secondly, to Ann, daughters of Hon. Thomas Mackay of Ottawa. He had eight children all of whom predeceased the father excepting

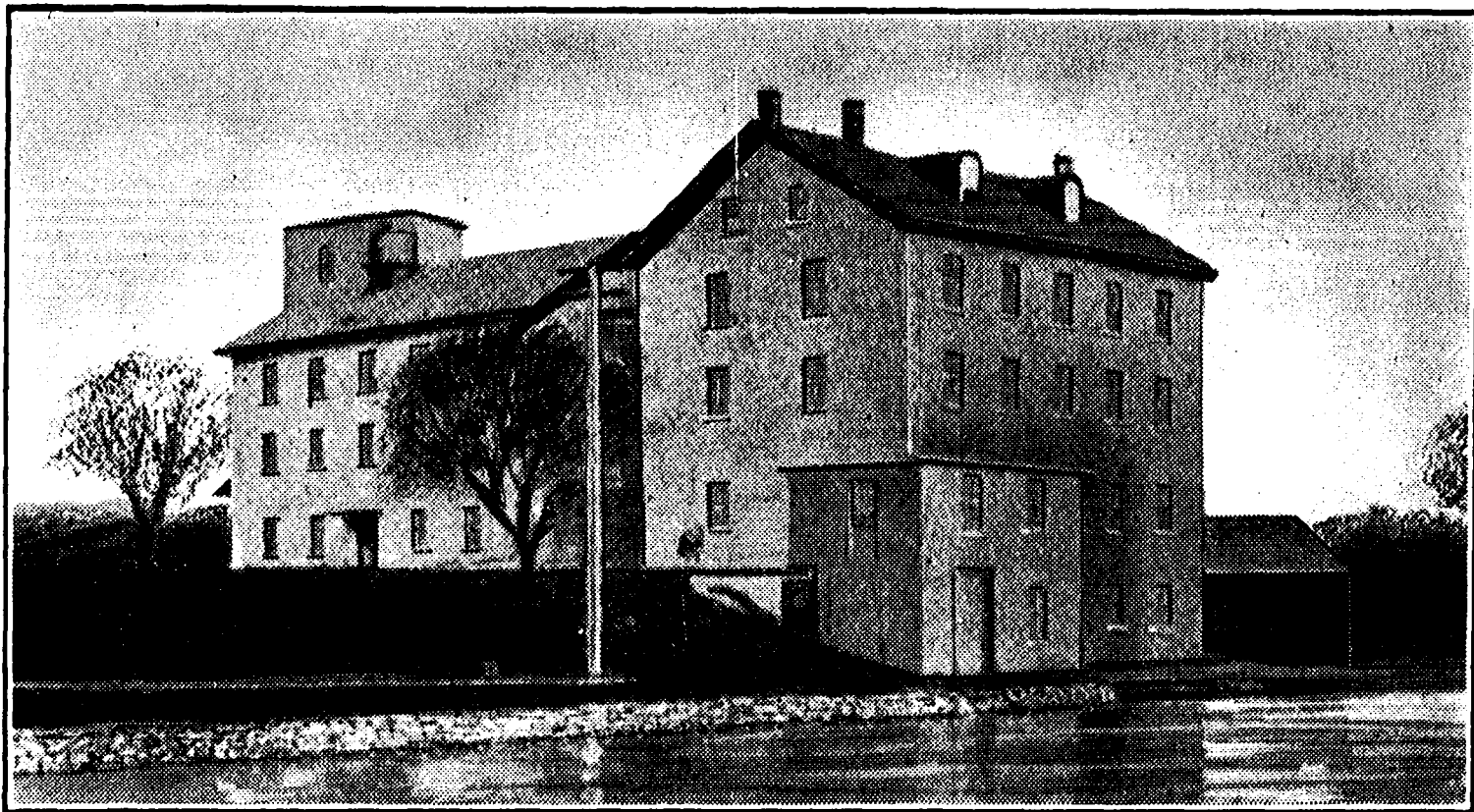
Charles Henry, Civil Engineer of Ottawa, who married Lucy Mabel Jones.

13th Charles Henry, November 30th, 1823—October 14th, 1847, graduated in Medicine from McGill University, Montreal, in spring of 1847. He was appointed on the staff of the General Hospital, Montreal. That summer a large number of emigrants arrived from Ireland. Typhus fever broke out on shipboard, and when they landed in Montreal Dr. Keefer and several other physicians were placed in charge. A number of the emigrants died and were buried at Point St. Charles, near the Victoria Bridge, where a large boulder, suitably inscribed, has been placed to mark the spot. Dr. Keefer contracted the disease and returned to Thorold where he died October 14th, 1847.

14th Alexander, November 20th, 1825—May 25th, 1863. Barrister-at-law. Settled in Australia where he became a member of the Colonial Legislature, was married and had one son, a merchant in Gisborne, New Zealand.

15th Amelia, January 4th, 1818—March, 1899. Became an accomplished painter in water colors and oils. Married John McFarland, of Niagara, by whom she had eight children, two of whom died in childhood; George, Joseph and Duncan located in British Columbia; John Augustus died unmarried; Mary Jane, married her cousin, Henry Grant Keefer, son of Jacob Keefer, (see No. 2.) Marjorie, married George Richard Nash of Kingston, son of Col. Geo. Nash of Ottawa.

After the war George Keefer gave his attention to the work of restoration and the development of the many enterprises in which he was interested. William Hamilton Merritt, George Keefer and John De Cew all owned mills on the Twelve Mile Creek. The water supply was very uncertain in dry weather, and the mills were frequently idle in consequence. Mr. Merritt conceived the idea of connecting with the Chippawa Creek to insure an ample supply of water. The three mill owners undertook a survey with this end in view. On returning from their preliminary survey, Mr. Merritt is reported to have had a sudden inspiration and to have said "Keefer, would it not be a good thing to have a canal from lake to lake? Then every one could have an ample supply of water." Mr. Keefer assented. The Government was approached on the



FIRST FLOUR MILL AT THOROLD
erected by George Keefer about the year 1827.
This mill is still serving the public.

CORRECTION

It has been found that the picture of the mill following page 20 of the Keefer Memoirs (a copy of which was sent you) is not that of the first flour mill erected by George Keefer in 1827, but is that of another mill erected later by Jacob Keefer, son of George Keefer.

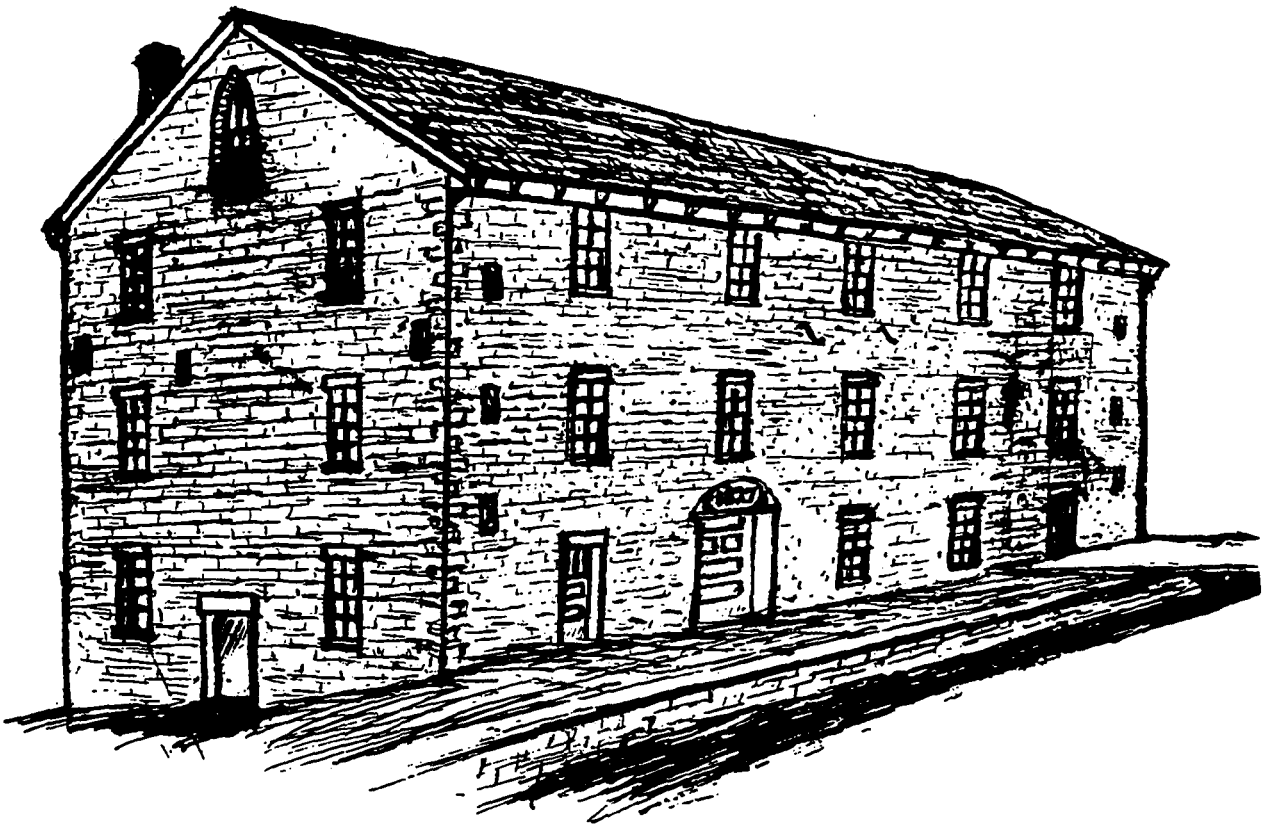
The cut shown on the leaflet herewith was made from a drawing and is a splendid reproduction of the old mill in its original form.

We will thank you if you will have the enclosed explanatory leaf inserted in your copy of the Memoirs following page 20.

Yours very truly,

J. G. KEEFER,

Norwood, Ont.



THE FIRST FLOUR MILL ON THE WELLAND CANAL

The above mill was built by George Keefer in 1827. It was the first mill to grind flour with water from the Welland canal, and was given a free franchise in perpetuity of water for two run of stones, wheat in those days being ground between two great flat iron-bound stones, instead of, as now, by the roller process, to which it was changed in 1887. It remained a flouring mill until 1889, when it became a casket factory, then a woodworking factory, then a pulp-mill, which it still is. Originally a warehouse capable of holding 3,000 barrels of flour was situated at the rear, but gave way long ago to the changes to which the mill has been put.

In 1924 the north end of the building fell into the raceway below, the end being closed up as it was left, and grinding of pulp-wood was not interrupted.

The building was never pictured as a flouring mill, this being a reproduction by Fannie (Thompson) Hicks from photographs taken after it was devoted to other purposes, with all modern externals removed.

It measures 100 x 50 feet in size, and is three full storeys in height, besides a full basement underneath.

The statements made in regard to the mill which appears on the opposite page, are in error. That, long known as the Welland mill, was built in 1846 by Jacob Keefer, son of George, and ground flour for export until 1925, since which time it has been closed. In 1889 it was changed from the stone process of grinding to the roller process.

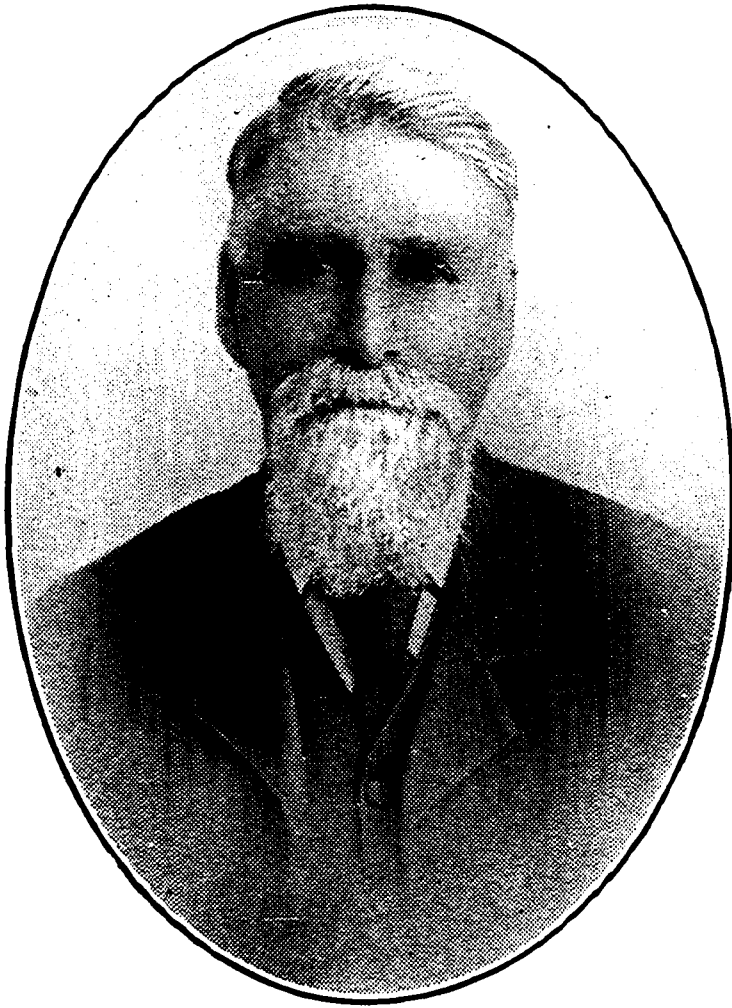
matter but objected to Merritt's plan as it was, in their estimation, too near the frontier. They voted £2,000. to have a survey made from the Grand River to Burlington Bay, a distance of fifty miles, whereas Merritt's survey was only twenty-eight miles. In 1823, a number of private citizens subscribed money to have a competent engineer survey the route suggested by Mr. Merritt. Hiram Tibbets was engaged for this purpose. Following his report, the necessary legislation was passed on January 19th, 1824, incorporating George Keefer, George Adams, Thomas Merritt, Wm. Chisholm, W.H. Merritt and others as the Welland Canal Company, with a capital of £40,000. divided into shares of £12-10s. each, with George Keefer as President. On November 24th, of the same year (1824) the first sod was turned near the present village of Allanburg, by the president in the presence of about 200 people, Hon. W. H. Merritt being the chief speaker.

During the construction of the Canal, the company advertised throughout Canada and the United States, that they would give a free grant of water power forever for two flour mills to any person, or, persons who would build them, with four run of stones ready to begin grinding when the Canal was opened, and water let in. The offer was accepted by George Keefer and General Beach of Rochester, New York. General Beach, however, later withdrew for want of confidence in the company to complete the undertaking. Those who dissuaded General Beach, also told Mr. Keefer that the Canal would never be completed, and the mill would be a dry one, a dead loss, and a by-word among the people. George Keefer had faith in the enterprise and he built the mill in the woods at a spot where the Canal was surveyed to pass. He said, he felt like Noah, when his neighbours derided him for building the Ark. Noah was confident the waters of the flood would come and he purposed being ready with the Ark, so George Keefer, feeling certain the waters of the Canal would come, intended to have the mill in readiness. The mill was finished before the Canal and so George Keefer and his heirs received free water power for all time.

Jacob Keefer, who was born at Paulin's Hill, or, Paulinskill, Sussex County, New Jersey, in 1775, came to Canada with his brother George in 1790. Such was the indomitable courage of the two lads, that in two years they had hewn out, and erected for themselves, a comfortable and commodious home in the wilderness

where the town of Thorold is located. Jacob took up land adjoining his brother George, on what now is the South West side of St. David's Street in Thorold. In 1801 he married Jerusha, daughter of Joseph Vannater and Hannah his wife, who came to Canada in 1798. Jacob Keefer continued to live in Thorold where his five children were born—Jacob, John, Robert, Joseph Nelson and Hannah—until the war of 1812. He was mortally wounded in the battle of Lundy's Lane on July 24th, 1814, and died in a few days. After his death the widow and family, assisted financially by George Keefer, moved onto "Wild Lands" near Scotland, in the County of Brant. His widow later married James Bennett, a U. E. L. of Dereham, in Oxford County.

- 1 Jacob, born April 5th, 1803, died January 19th, 1881, married Mary Corbett, daughter of James Corbett of Kelso, Scotland, Agent of the Canada Company for the county of Wellington, and sister of Robert Corbett, postmaster of Guelph. Jacob settled near Annan in Grey County, in 1844, where he resided till his death. He had three sons and seven daughters. His wife died August 18th, 1887, at the age of 84.
 - 1a George, born July 15th, 1824, died February 17th, 1899, married Mary Jane Trimble born January 18th, 1833, died June 17th, 1917, by whom he had four sons and three daughters, all of whom were born in Grey County, Ontario. For thirty years, prior to his death, he resided in Flesherton.
 - 1b Mary, born December 23rd, 1855, married E. O. Gjerdrum, a civil engineer. Later she married Captain Gilchrist of Ottawa, who also predeceased her. By her first husband she had five children; Helene, who died in early life; Christina, a graduate nurse, who died in New York of angina pectoris; Isabelle, who married Frederick Ashfield of Ottawa; George Inor, who died in infancy; Ida, a graduate nurse, who married Dr. Fred Buck, of Norwood, Ontario, and removed to Shakopee, Minnesota, U. S. A. They have one daughter, Betty.
 - 2b Isabelle, born November 24th, 1860, married David E. Wright, a merchant, of Flesherton, Ontario. They resided for several years at Bloomfield, New Jersey. They had two daughters, Ina and Emeline. Ina, married firstly, Kingsley M. Price of New York, by whom she had



GEORGE KEEFER

Born July 15th, 1824.
Died February 17th, 1899.



MARY JANE TRIMBLE

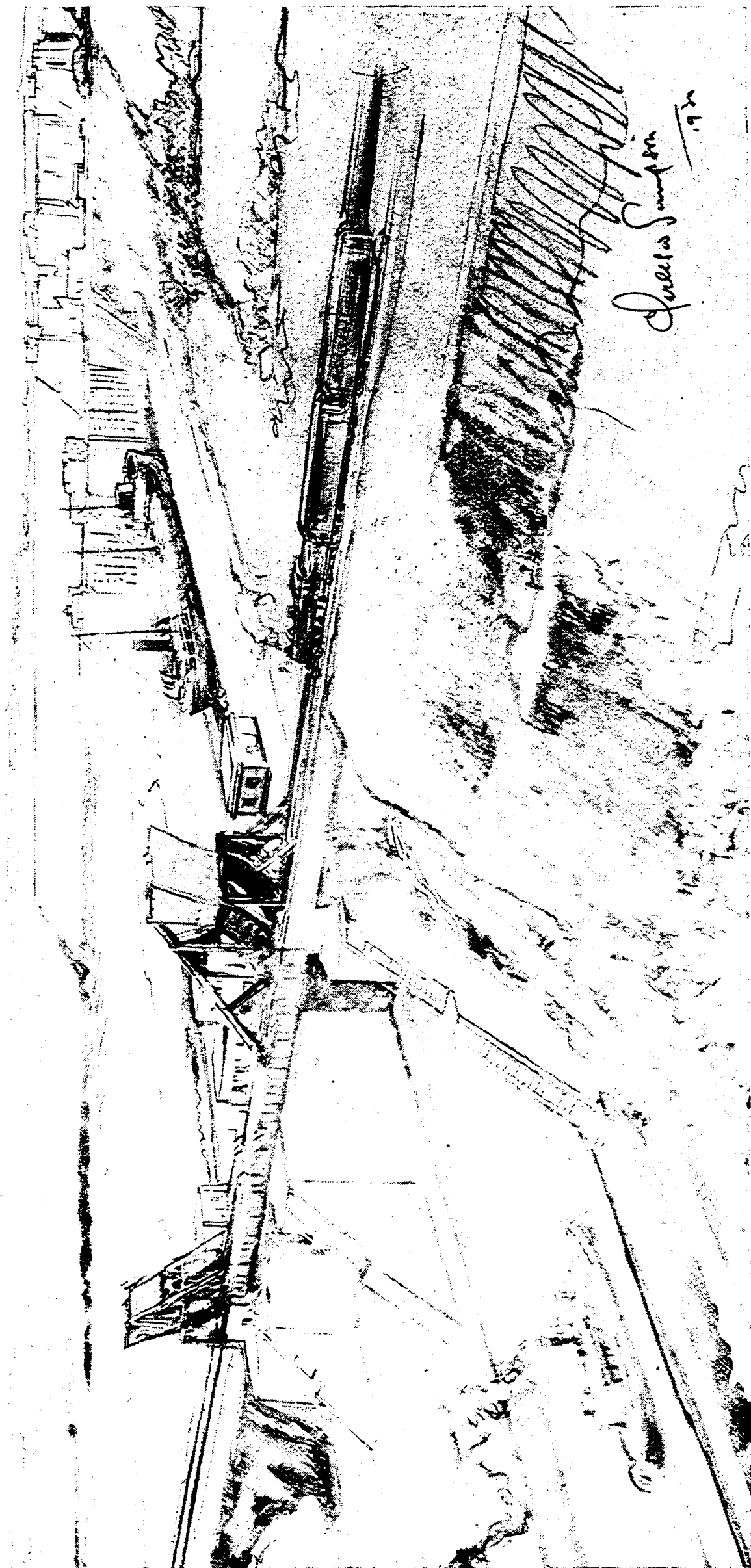
wife of George Keefer
Born January 18th, 1833.
Died June 17th, 1917

one daughter, Mildred, born February 22nd, 1913. Later she married Francis A. Loveland of Hartford, Connecticut, by whom she had one son, John Wright, born September 29th, 1925. Emeline, born June 23rd, 1893, married Frederick B. Edwards, also of Hartford, Connecticut, by whom she had one son, Frederick B. III, born October 1928.

- 3b William Corbett, born September 22nd, 1863, died at Riverside, Illinois, U. S. A., July 26th, 1933. Graduated in Pharmacy. For years was employed by the McCormick family of Chicago, in the management of their private financial affairs. He married Bessie, niece of Hon. David Mills, by whom he had two daughters, Muriel and Jean, both of whom graduated from Alma College, St. Thomas, Ontario. Muriel was born March 6th, 1890, and married William Woodford of St. Thomas, who died at Maywood, Illinois, in 1920. Jean was born March 27th, 1891. She married Herman Slocum of Chicago, by whom she had two children, Ellen and Donald.
- 4b Jacob George, born January 25th, 1866, Editor and Publisher of The Register, Norwood, Ontario, from 1893 to 1932, also twice chairman of Board of Education, chairman of the Public Library Board for several years, and a director of the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association 1920—1. Married September 9th, 1891, to Margaret Pickering, daughter of Isaac Pickering, mayor of Forest, Ontario, and a grand niece of Robert Walker, one of Toronto's pioneer merchants, who kept the store of "The Golden Lion," and was a prominent figure in the Primitive Methodist Church, being the only layman to be honored with the presidency of the Toronto Conference (1875.) They have one son, Isaac Harland, born August 7th, 1892, graduated from High School and entered his father's publishing business in 1910 and later became a partner. At the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Convention at Ottawa in 1923 The Norwood Register was awarded first prize for the best Canadian country weekly. In 1926, Isaac Harland, now residing in Peterborough, Ontario, was married to Mildred Gray, daughter of Mr. and Mrs.

R. H. Gray, of Sharbot Lake, Frontenac County, Ontario, and granddaughter of Archibald Gray of Paisley, Scotland.

- 5b James R. T. was born at Flesherton, Ontario, June 13th, 1868. In 1894 he married Gertrude Hackett of Victoria, Norfolk County, Ontario. In 1893 he entered the employ of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company which was later absorbed in the International Harvester Company of Chicago. He served these companies in different capacities as travelling salesman, cashier and branch manager at New Orleans, Louisiana and Mason City, Iowa. From here he retired in 1920 to Kansas City, Missouri, where he has since resided,
- 6b Rev. Robert, born May 30th, 1871, educated at McGill University and Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal, entered the Ministry of the Methodist Church in the Hamilton Conference, Ontario. Married Caroline Slack, daughter of Benjamin Slack and Margaret Carnochan of Williamstown, Ontario, in 1896. Retired from active ministry, owing to ill health, in June 1927. Resides at Oriole Lodge, 139 Guelph Road, Burlington, Ontario. Only child, Cora Orene (adopted,) married Stanley Green July 4th, 1931, have issue, Mary Carolyn Keefer, born May 18th, 1932. Reside at Oriole Lodge.
- 7b Gertrude, born October 22nd, 1874. Married Howard Milspaugh VanTassel of Bloomfield, New Jersey, by whom she had two children. Howard Milspaugh, Jr., graduated from Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, is a member of the Staff of Instructors in Modern History in New York City High Schools. Gladys, graduated from College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1931, married Bogue Hunt II, son of Bogue Hunt, the famous artist-naturalist, of Williston Park, Long Island, by whom she had one son, Bogue III.
- 2a Janet married William Osborne of Desboro in Grey County.
- 3a Mary Ann, born May 30th, 1828, married Daniel Hazen Bennett.
- 4a William, born at Annan, Grey County, Ontario, on December 2nd, 1830, farmed on the homestead the major part of his



WELLAND SHIP CANAL--TWIN FLIGHT LOCKS AT THOROLD

life. Married Margaret Atken, also of Annan, on March 17th, 1885, by whom he had one daughter, Margaret Wilhelmina, born January 29th, 1886. She graduated from Alma College, St. Thomas, Ontario, and married F. H. Keefer, K. C., (see page 19, paragraph 10) August 15th, 1917. After the death of her first husband she married George Breckon Nicholson, M. P., on December 7th, 1929. Mr. Nicholson was a native of Prince Edward Island but spent the most of his life in Northern Ontario where he was engaged in the lumber business. At the time of his death, January 1st, 1935, he represented Algoma East in the House of Commons. He was a prominent churchman and leading prohibitionist. A hospital at Chapleau, where he resided, is an appropriate monument to his memory.

- 5a Elizabeth, born February 18th, 1833. Married John Harkness of Leith, Grey County.
- 6a Sarah, born April 25th, 1835. Married Lawrence of Lapier, Michigan.
- 7a Hannah; born April 19th, 1837. Married Adam Waddell of Leith, Grey County, Ontario.
- 8a Robert, died in early life.
- 9a Frances, born September 12th, 1845. Married Dr. Graham of Desboro, Grey County, Ontario.
- 2 John, son of Jacob Keefer and Jerusha Vannater, born at Thorold, died at Oakland 1873. Married Elizabeth Darling, widow of Captain Robson. They had no children.
- 3 George, son of Jacob Keefer and Jerusha Vannater, born at Thorold, died in infancy.
- 4 Robert, son of Jacob Keefer and Jerusha Vannater, born at Thorold, December 12th, 1808. Died July 31st, 1834, in South Dumfries in Waterloo County. Married Lavina Lawrason, daughter of Miller Lawrason of South Dumfries on December 26th, 1826. Farmer and saw mill owner. Was a class-leader in the Wesleyan Methodist Church and was one of the original subscribers to Victoria University, Cobourg. He had two sons, Jacob Lawrason of Chesley, Bruce County, Ontario, and Nelson, a merchant at St. George, Brant County,

and later at Burlington, then known as Wellington Square. Married in 1854, Mary Hodge Ballentine, by whom he had two sons and two daughters.

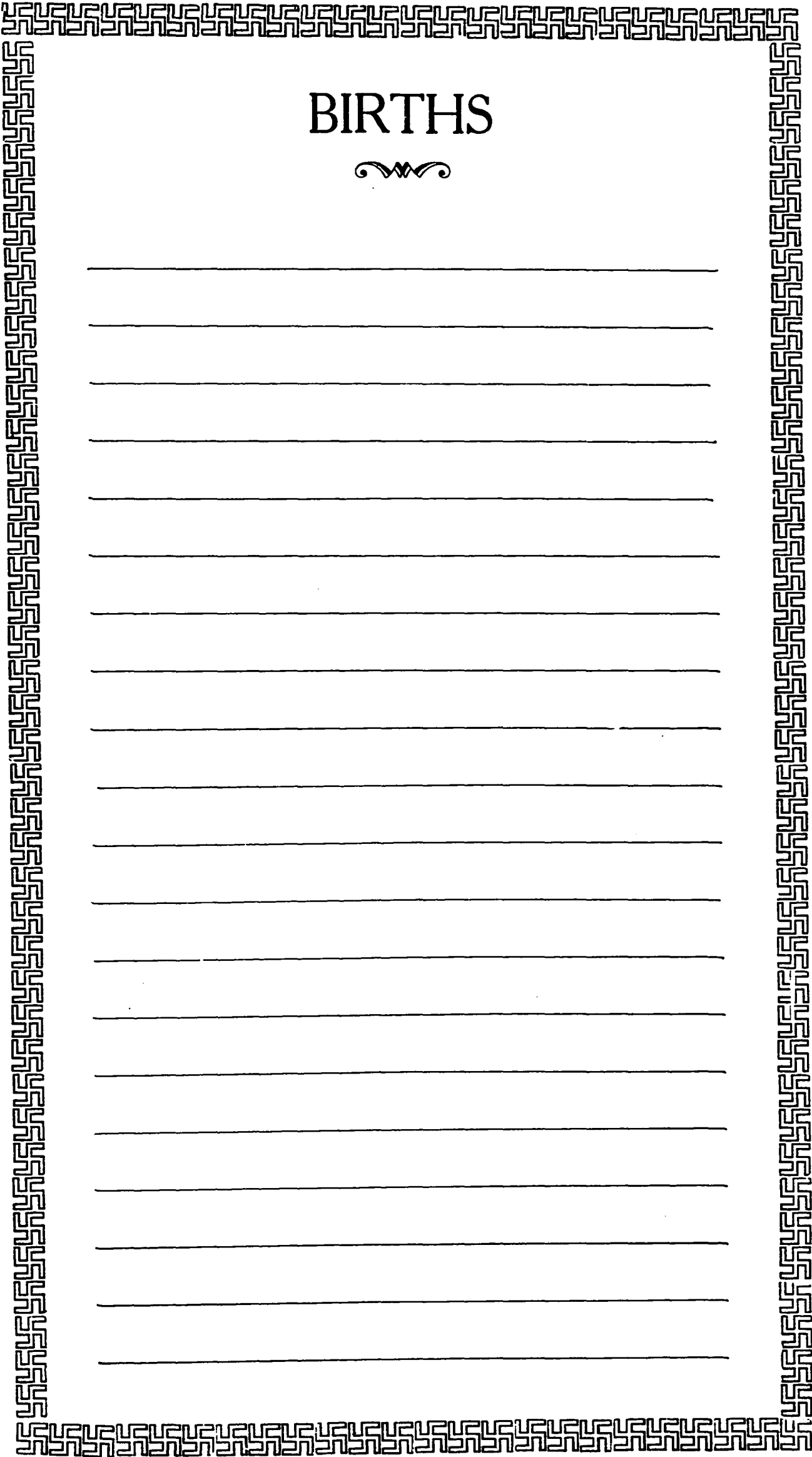
Robert of Chicago; Alexander Thomas; Mary Murray, married James Cadenhead of Midland; Margaret Jane, married James Cadenhead of Rat Portage, Algoma.

- 5 Joseph Nelson, son of Jacob Keefer and Jerusha Vannater, born at Thorold on September 8th, 1809, died March 22nd, 1878, a merchant and farmer at St. George, Brant County. Married Elizabeth Parsons. Had one son, Charles Purves, postmaster and merchant at St. George, and seven daughters.

Mary, daughter of George Keefer and Mary Maria Conke, born at Paulin's Hill, New Jersey, and came to Canada with her mother and two brothers, George and Jacob, in 1792. Married Eli Lundy, son of William Lundy of Lundy's Lane (the battle field,) residing at Newmarket, York County, and had issue, three sons and five daughters.

THANK YOU

We are indebted to Mr. John H. Thompson, author of the "Jubilee History of the Town and Township of Thorold;" also to the Department of Railways and Canals, Ottawa, for illustrations used in this history.

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This image shows a full-page decorative template for a notebook or ledger. The page is framed by a complex, repeating geometric pattern in black ink, which forms a border around the central area. At the top center, the word "MARRIAGES" is printed in a large, bold, serif font. Directly beneath the title is a small, symmetrical decorative flourish. Below this, the majority of the page is filled with horizontal ruling lines, providing space for handwritten entries. The overall design is clean and structured, typical of vintage stationery.



MARRIAGES



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 18 horizontal lines.

