

The Old Miller's Homestead

The old house was built about 1830 by Alfred McCarty and his wife Anna Miller McCarty. About 1870 my great grandfather William Miller, bought the farm from Mrs. Anna Miller McCarty, and her son, whom by this time was living at Kendall Creek (Bradford) Pennsylvania. He had graduated from University Of Buffalo Medical School in 1865 and was practising doctor at Kendall Creek. This area was known as Miller's Bay and is shown as such on early marine maps showing the west branch of the Niagara River as the Chippawa Channel. The small point of land (curve of the present Niagara Blvd.,) was called Pleasant Point. This was at the location of the Old Homestead. The name Miller's Creek was well chosen as 2 Miller families took up the original land grants on each side of the creek.

The Old Homestead has seen much of history along the Niagara Frontier. From teams of oxen, later horses, pulling log rafts of oak logs from the mouth of Black Creek, to the mills at Black Rock (Buffalo), New York. At the time of the Fenian Raid of 1866, these insurgents raided the garden for new potatoes and searched the cupboards in the homestead as they advanced down along the river and back the Old Townline Road to their engagement with the Queens Own Rifles at the Battle of Ridgeway. Upon their retreat, which followed in reverse the same route, they brought their dead and wounded. One young man who had his throat partially shot away was given water from the old cistern at the house, as he screamed for help and water. Water and blood then flowed out of his neck. It was never known if he survived to

con't from page one...

...return to Buffalo. This scene was witnessed by the McCarty Family.

When the Niagara Parks Commission (Queen Victoria Parks) acquired the riverfront in 1909 the house and barn were "Moved Back." The barn was torn down in 1958. The house still stands and was recently purchased from my father and mother by Mr. and Mrs. John Christopher of Hamilton, Ontario. The property, until 1980 had been in the Miller family since the 1800's, a period of a 180 years. When the Niagara Parks Commission purchased the riverfront my great grandmother, Edla Riselay Miller, who by this time was a widow, put up a real foght to retain the water front and numerous court actions took place. In partial payment the Parks Commission put in a new basement under the present rear part of the house (which was built in 1910) they also moved the front part of the old house back to it's present site, they moved back the rear part of the barn, and put in a new water line and basement drain from the new basement to the river. The middle (or drive shed) part and the front part near the river bank (wear a big black walnut tree still stands) was the cabinet and furniture shop of my great grandfather, William Miller. Many peices of furniture in our home were built by him.

The front part of the old home was orginally "split lath", with horse hair plaster on the walls. Walls are beam construction like a barn with wood pins, square blacksmith made nails. were used.

con't from page two....

...The rafters are wood poles with bark still on the, My grandfather and his brothers and sisters were all born in the homestead. A hard maple tree still stands in the lawn, this was planted the day (July 4, 1875) that William Miller's first child was born, Blanche Riselay Miller.