



Historic Gloucester

Newsletter of the

**GLOUCESTER
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

www.gloucesterhistory.com

Vol.16, No. 3

Fall 2015

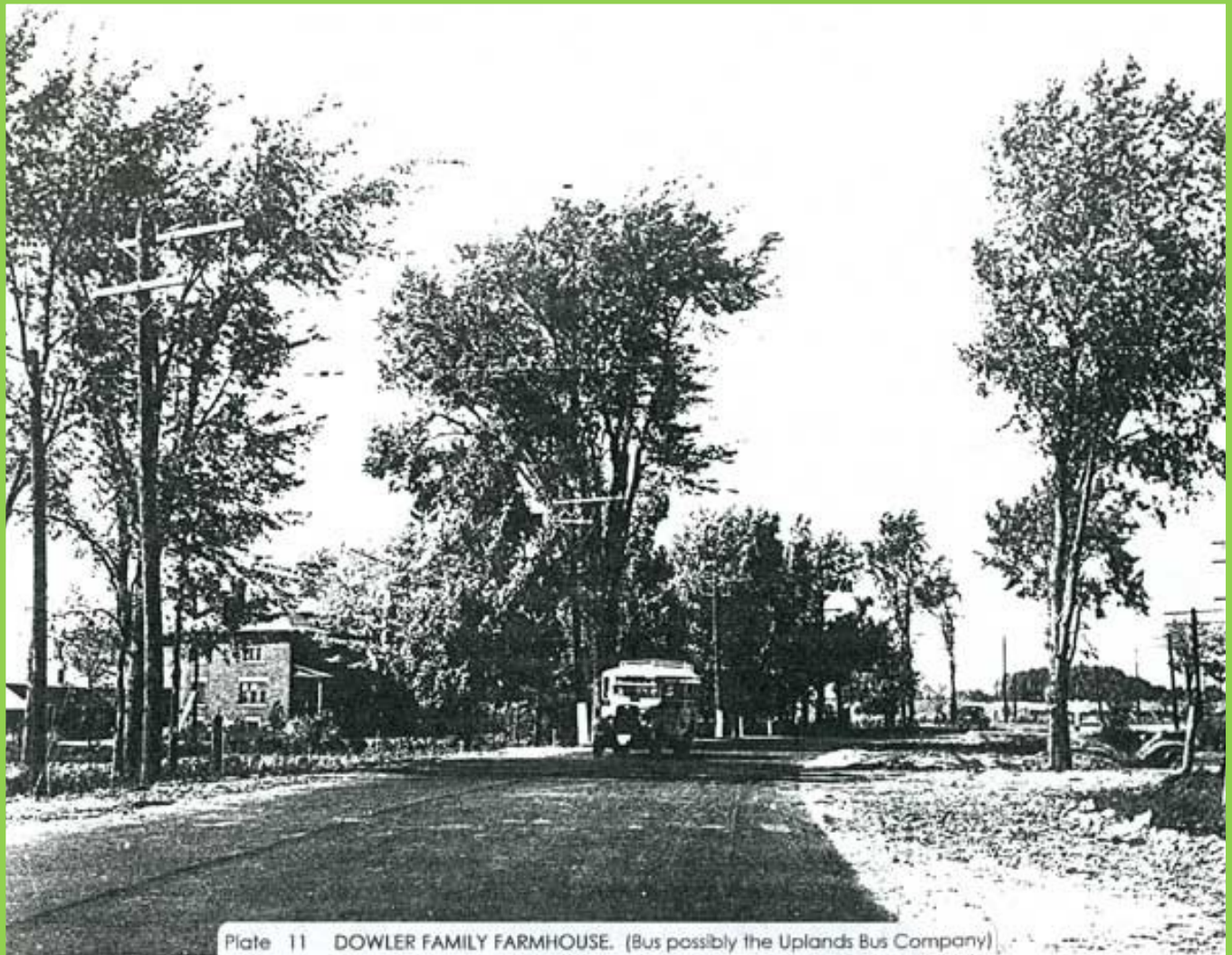


Plate 11 DOWLER FAMILY FARMHOUSE. (Bus possibly the Uplands Bus Company)
Bowesville Road before widening in 1940 (level RR crossing also visible)
City of Ottawa Archives CA-2703

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THE GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE
THAT ITS HISTORY ROOM WILL NOT BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
DURING THE WINTER MONTHS, BUT
IS STILL OPEN BY APPOINTMENT

LOCATION: 4550B BANK STREET (AT LEITRIM ROAD)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact

Mary Boyd at 613-521-2082 or boydmary172@gmail.com

Cover Photo:

The cover photo shows an Uplands Bus Company bus travelling along Bowesville Road just before the widening in 1940. The bus is about to go over the railway crossing.

Photo: City of Ottawa Archives CA-2703

Historic Gloucester is published by The Gloucester Historical Society. It is intended as a Newsletter to members of the Society to provide interesting articles on Gloucester's past and to keep them informed of new acquisitions by the Museum, publications available, upcoming events and other items of general interest. Comments and suggestions regarding the Newsletter are always welcome.



Gloucester Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa.

President's Report

By Glenn Clark

I am writing my report a little later than I had hoped.

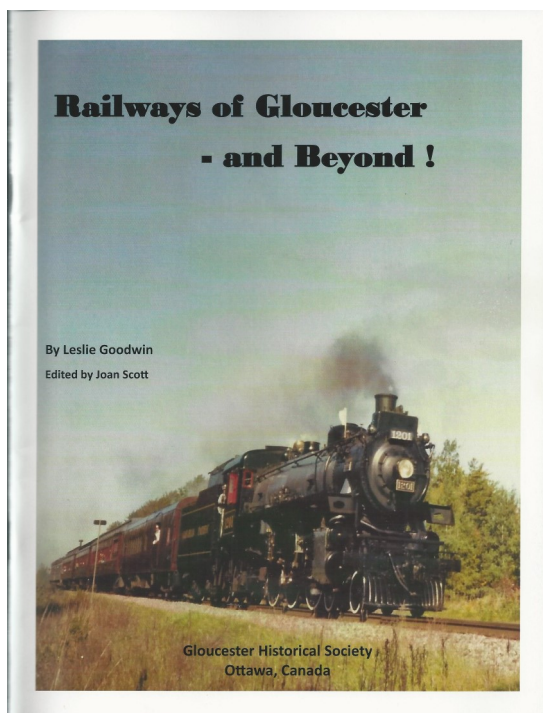
We had planned for a fall speaker but scheduling everybody involved had become impossible with the holiday season quickly approaching. Perhaps in the New Year.

I do have some good news as a new publication titled "The Railways of Gloucester – And Beyond" has been completed and is now available in time for Christmas for just \$20.00 plus \$9.00 shipping. This 72 page book includes the history of all the railway lines that ran through Gloucester and features 116 photographs, many in colour. We are expecting to have an official book launch in the New Year, however our members get an advance opportunity to purchase a copy. The perfect gift for a railway or history buff in your family.

This edition of Historic Gloucester includes another installment on the history of public transit in Gloucester. This time, we talk about Uplands Bus Lines which began its history in order to serve our airmen during World War II. Also, read about earlier failed attempts to provide public transit to the south half of the township.

This issue also contains a story of a young man from Gloucester who died in the First World War, Private Walter Gervin.

Our next newsletter to release before Christmas will feature a story on the early history of Alta Vista Drive. Do you know what it was originally named? Stay tuned.



*For more information about books for sale
by Gloucester Historical Society,
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Uplands Bus Lines – Gloucester South's Transit System from 1940 to 1950

By Glenn Clark

Public Transport was inaugurated in Ottawa on July 21, 1870 by the Ottawa City Passenger Railway Company, which operated a horse tramway. From the early days, service reached Rockcliffe Park, then part of Gloucester Township. As suburbs developed in New Edinburgh, Janeville and Clarks-town (the latter two to become Eastview and now Vanier) in the 19th century and early 20th century, transit service became viable in the north part of Gloucester Township quite early. On the other hand, transit service in Gloucester South was a more difficult proposition because of its more rural character.

A number of trial services were attempted beginning with a stagecoach service that operated between Billings Bridge and downtown in the late 19th century.

With the introduction of motor vehicles in the early 20th century, motorized transit vehicles quickly replaced the stagecoach. The first attempt to introduce bus transit service in Gloucester South began with the land boom that preceded World War I. At that time when few people had automobiles, land developers offered buses as a way to transport potential customers out to newly subdivided land. This was most important when the subdivision was not within reasonable walking distance of Ottawa street-cars. The developers of the Ridgemont subdivisions south of Heron Road and south of Walkley Road realized that their lots were too far from the Bank Street car line, with its closest stop at Lansdowne Park. The bus service was offered from at least 1910 until 1913 [Ottawa Citizen, October 8, 1910 page 14, and May 10, 1913].

When the land boom abruptly ended in 1913, the developer abandoned the Ridgemont project and the bus service ended. Very few people had purchased lots and even fewer had built houses making it impossible to sustain transit service. Much of the property in Ridgemont eventually reverted to Carleton County for tax arrears and was acquired by Gloucester Township with the idea that the sale of lots would eventually recover the lost property tax revenue. For the most part, this did not begin until following World War II when lot sales were noted in Gloucester Township Council minutes regularly. The Ridgemont subdivisions were amongst the first

to be built up in the post-war era as veterans returned from Europe ready to have families and settle down in suburbia.

The scattered populations of Gloucester South attracted further attempts to establish public transit in the 1920s. Yellow Bus Lines started a new bus service on August 11, 1923 between the Downtown Post Office and Hog's Back and the Hunt Club to serve the members of the Club and the cottages and recreation at Hog's Back. Camping and cycling was popular at Hog's Back in the first half of the twentieth century and many cottages had been built around the falls and locks [Ottawa Journal, August 13, 1923, Page 10]. This is the only mention of this service and it is unlikely that it lasted beyond that summer.

The residents of Ridgemont eventually attracted the attention of the Ottawa Electric Railway and a one month trial bus service began on May 18, 1927. This was the first real attempt to establish an 'all-day' service south of Billings Bridge. Buses ran from 6 a.m. to midnight with one bus assigned all day and a second bus during rush hour. The route ran from Bank and Grove to provide connections with the Bank Street car line and as far south as Walkley Road. Fares were 2 ½ cents if your trip was no further than the CPR crossing (Randall Avenue intersection), and a 5 cents beyond that point [Ottawa Citizen, May 18, 1927 page 19, Ottawa Journal, April 11, 1927 page 3]. Again, there is no indication that service survived beyond the trial period.

Realistic needs for transit began to increase with the development of Uplands Airport, which opened as a government operated commercial airport on August 20, 1938 but it was the advent of war that greatly increased activity there. Uplands Airport was chosen as one of the host locations for the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, which promoted a fast expansion of the airport starting on May 14, 1940 followed by the opening of the air school on August 5th.

William Gorman, a well-known Ottawa sportsman and director of the Ottawa Senators Hockey Club, Ottawa Nationals Baseball Club, the Ottawa Auditorium and Honorary Vice-President of the Ottawa Rough Riders, saw the development of the airport as a business opportunity. Airmen and support workers all needed transportation. As a result, he founded Uplands Bus Lines.

On July 2, 1940, Gloucester Council inaugurated Mr. Gorman's new bus service that would operate from Bank and Grove to Uplands Airport via Bowesville Road (now Riverside Drive). Regular hourly service commenced on July 5th [Ottawa Journal, July 3, 1940 Page 20 and Ottawa Journal, July 6, 1940 page 9].

The service was expanded with new routes to Rideau Park and on Metcalfe Road (now Bank Street) on July 7, 1941 [Ottawa Citizen, July 5, 1941 page 1]. The Rideau Park route was later extended to the Rideau Health and Occupational Centre (later known as the Rideau Veteran's Home) on Smyth Road (often called Smith Road before 1950), which was opened in phases starting in January 1944 [Ottawa Citizen, December 28, 1943 page 2]. As the bus company continued to grow, there was a need for a proper garage and bus terminal. Initially, they looked at 2 lots on the east side of Bank Street, however, they ultimately chose 1270 Bank Street just south of Chesley Avenue [Ottawa Journal September 5, 1941 page 4].

Despite the restrictions imposed on bus service hours by the Transit Controller, a new bus was dedicated on July 8, 1942 in order to improve service to the airport and to introduce a new service as far south as Manotick. Wing Commander William MacBrien drove the inaugural run with Gloucester Township Clerk Carmen Guest on board [Ottawa Citizen, July 9, 1942 page 10 and the Ottawa Journal, same date]. The service hour restrictions ended with the conclusion of the war on May 14, 1945 [Ottawa Citizen, May 15, 1945 page 7].

Uplands Bus Lines provided a vital transportation service to the young airmen who were training at Uplands and they supported the community through a softball team sponsorship [Ottawa Citizen, May 16, 1943 page 19], however, fares were a source of complaints. In comparison with transit service offered to Rockcliffe airport by the Eastview Bus Company at 10 cents, Uplands charged a 25 cent fare and another fare had to be paid to the Ottawa Electric Railway to reach downtown Ottawa. It was argued that higher fares were necessary because of the lack of population along the Bowesville Road route in comparison to the Rockcliffe route that crossed through Eastview along Montreal Road [Ottawa Citizen, November 2, 1943 page 12].

Society began to change following the war with an increased emphasis on leisure. Uplands Bus Lines regularly advertised summer excursions and a popular dance hall named Pineland referenced the bus service for all its events. Pineland was located immediately adjacent to the Hunt Club and Golf Course and Tudor Hall is now on that location. The neighbouring IBM buildings were previously the Pineland Go Cart course, which had been popular with young people for many years.

As Ridgemont began to grow quickly after the war, the community began to demand more bus service. The Ridgemont-Ellwood Municipal Association sent a delegation to the Gloucester Township Council meeting on February 16, 1948 and this was repeated the following year [Ottawa Citizen, February 8, 1949, Page 3]. Gloucester Council approved bus service on Highway 31 as far south as Albion Road at their January 27, 1949 meeting. They further approved extension of service from Bowesville to Manotick Station and to Johnston's Corners and from Rideau Park to the Metcalfe Highway (Bank Street) via Churchill Drive (now Alta Vista Drive) at the March 21, 1949 council meeting [Ottawa Journal March 22, 1949 page 15]. Service to Johnston's Corners was subject to repair or replacement of the humpback bridge over the CPR. In the end, the Churchill Drive route was not implemented until November 30, 1953 and by then was operated by the Ottawa Transportation Commission.

The winds of annexation began to blow in 1949 with concerns expressed about the future of Uplands Bus Lines and other suburban transit services. An Ottawa Journal article published on October 1, 1949 (page 18) listed the details of the various suburban bus services that existed at that time. On that date, Uplands Bus Lines operated to Rideau Park, Bowesville and to the Research Station off the Morrisburg Highway (the old Radar Station located at Albion Road and Queensdale Avenue). This is reflected on the 1948 transit map that accompanies this article.

In preparation for the January 1, 1950 annexation, a plan was established for an orderly transition to city transit service in Nepean Township. Annexation in Gloucester Township was less certain and no comparable plan was put in place. As a result, when annexation did take place on January 1st, The suburban transit system providers did not know what to

do. Operating charters had forbidden them from picking up passengers within the Ottawa city limits. The Eastview Bus Company, Capital Coach Lines and Uplands Bus Lines all suspended service leaving passengers stranded. With no plan in place in advance, the Ottawa Transportation Commission was not in a position to pick up the abandoned routes. The matter was resolved with the assistance of the newly elected Gloucester Ward Alderman Archibald Newman. The suspended routes were reinstated by the various suburban transit services, at least temporarily. There was a further complication in that former Gloucester high school students no longer had their fares covered by the Gloucester High School Board [Ottawa Citizen, January 4, 1950 page 1].

On June 22, 1950, the Ottawa Transportation Commission announced that they would take over Uplands Bus Line routes on July 1st but not the Uplands buses or their facilities [Ottawa Citizen, June 23, 1950 page 34]. The new routes and schedules were published on June 30th [Ottawa Journal, June 30, 1950 page 7].

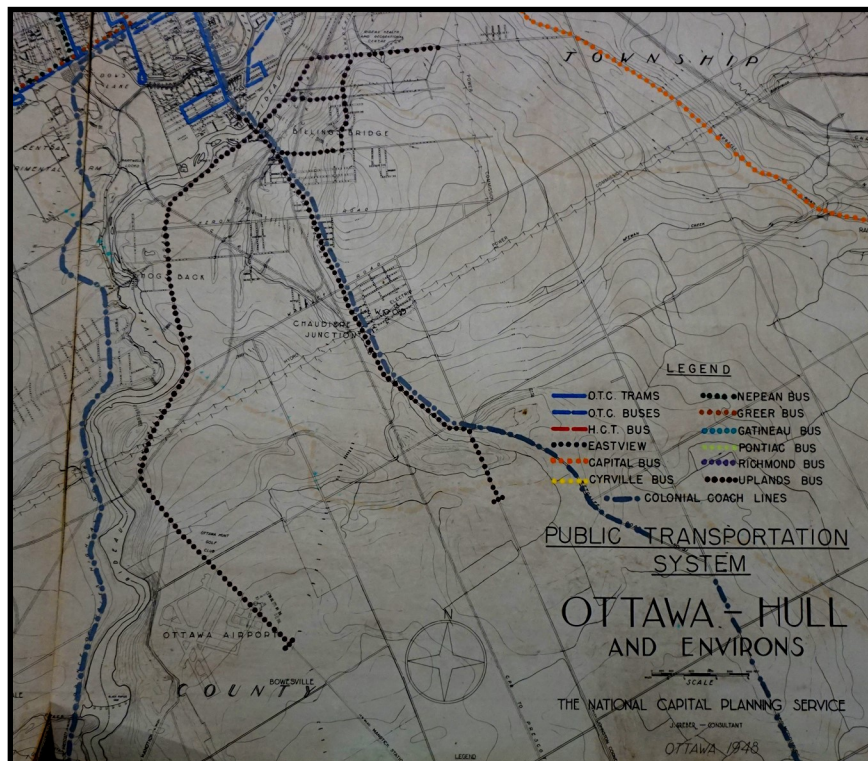
Although Uplands routes were picked up on July 1st, the new routes did not cover 100% of the former routes. Some of the routes had extended beyond the new Ottawa city limits. With the Ottawa Transportation Commission funded only by Ottawa ratepayers, there was no interest in maintaining routes beyond the city limits. The Bowesville Road

route formerly ran to the end of the pavement 5 or 6 times a day and was shortened to Summerside Road (the main crossroad in Bowesville) and the Metcalfe Road route was truncated at Hunt Club Road. Service on Albion Road was cancelled. The resulting complaints fell on deaf ears [Ottawa Journal, July 12, 1950 page 3].

A period of not always friendly negotiation followed on the disposal of Uplands Bus Lines assets. Finally, it was announced in the February 8, 1951 edition of the Ottawa Citizen (Page 1) that the Ontario Municipal Board had awarded \$75,000 to the Uplands Bus Company for the buses, land and building. This included \$42,000 for 6 Reo buses, and an old Cadillac and \$33,000 for the land and former terminal at 1270 Bank Street. An additional \$6,000 to \$10,000 was to be paid for parts and equipment after an inventory was taken.

With that, the Uplands Bus Company faded out of existence.

William (Bill) Joseph Gorman, founder of the company, died on April 6, 1953 while visiting his daughter in Alexandria, Virginia. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Gorman and husband of Cora Mildred Buckley, he was buried in Notre Dame Cemetery. Although he was a friend of fellow Ottawa sports icon, Tommy Gorman, they were not related.



Pte. Walter Gervin 1896-1916

By Joan Scott (Montreal)

Walter was born on February 14, 1896, one of ten children of Joseph Gervin and Elizabeth Smith. They grew up in what is now Pleasant Park Road in Billings Bridge, Ottawa.

Joseph supported his large family working for the E.B. Eddy Company, a pulp and paper company. He operated a small boat called an "alligator" that towed massive log booms down the Ottawa River.

Walter's sister remembered him as a very good looking young man, with a very good temperament. As Walter grew older, he took up the art of carpentry. In August 1914, he and his older brother Douglas, who was a plumber, were about to go into business together when war broke out in Europe. Within a few months, both brothers answered the call to duty – "For King and Country."

Strict medical exams at the time required a soldier to be at least 5'3", aged 18 to 45, with good eyesight, healthy teeth, and arched feet. To Douglas' disappointment, he was rejected because he was flat-footed. This left Walter to brave the Great War alone.

His medical record shows that Walter was considered fit and in good physical development. He was 6' ½" with a 38" chest. His eyes were brown, his hair black, and he had only a vaccination scar on his left arm.

Walter agreed to be part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force when he signed his attestation papers in Ottawa on January 16, 1915, a month short of his 19th birthday. He was undoubtedly sent to a newly created training base in Valcartier, Quebec, where all Canadian recruits were "prepared" for war.

Private Walter Gervin (Regimental #113017) was assigned to the newly created 8th Brigade, part of the 3rd Canadian Division. The 8th



Alligator tug boat, circa 1907

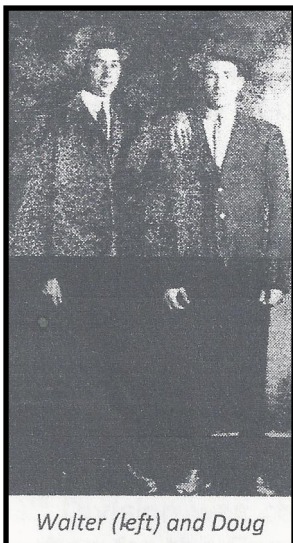
Brigade consisted of the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Battalions of the Canadian Mounted Rifles (CMR). Walter was in the 2nd CMR. Despite the name, the units were soon "dismounted" and used as regular infantry battalions.

From Valcartier, Walter would have traveled by transport ship to the Canadian Training Camp in Shorncliffe (Kent, England). It was here, on September 21, 1915, that he handwrote his Will on the back of a Rate of Regimental Pay sheet, leaving all to his mother. The next day, Walter left for Boulogne, France, to join his regiment.

Once in France, Walter did much traveling with the 8th Brigade while in training and reserve. During this time, he recorded extensive notes and detailed drawings on enemy and allied grenades, mortars, bombs and mines in his journal. He also noted some architecturally astounding buildings and statues.

While in training, on July 14, 1916, Walter was removed by the No. 9 Canadian Field Ambulance after being wounded accidentally in the arm. The injury was caused by a grenade explosion but proved not to be serious and he rejoined his unit four days later.

The 3rd Division had developed the reputation of having a "never say never" attitude. Its Brigades and Battalions were involved in many successful missions in the Battle of the Somme. That is why it was no surprise when the 3rd Division was charged with the very crucial task of providing protection for the Canadian Corps Reserve Army as it attacked the key German trenches of Regina and Desire in the Battle of Ancre (November 13-38, 1916) along the Ancre River, north of Thiepval. The 8th Brigade, which included Walter's 2nd CMR, was given the role of flank protection.



Walter (left) and Doug



As the bloody battle raged on, the allied troops moved forward through some of the worst weather seen in all of the Great War. Blinding sleet and frozen mud made it difficult for the Allied advance, but the troops surged ahead. It was likely here that Walter received the wounds that would eventually take his life.

The 8th Brigade War Diary for the period November 17-23, 1916, indicates that the only casualties for the 2nd CMR occurred on November 23, when there were “3 kill, 15 wounded.” His Casualty Form (part of the war record) recorded that he was wounded in action on November 20. However, the last of the Somme battles took place on November 18. If the latter source is accurate (and it is consistent with several other sources), it seems most likely that Walter was shot on that date.

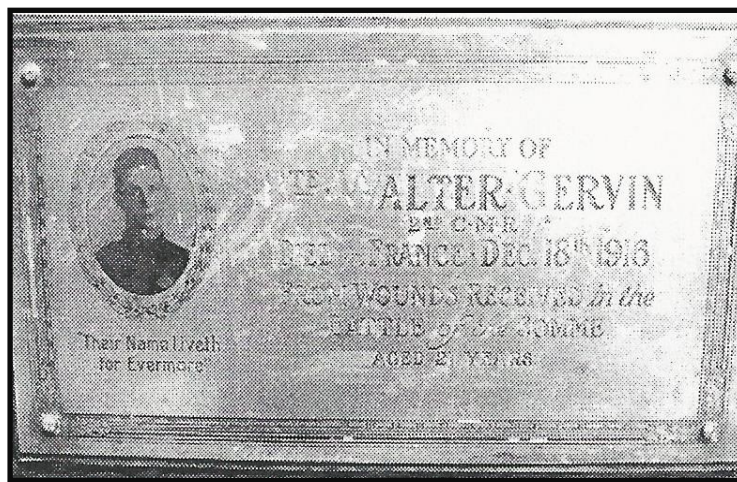
He was taken to the No. 42 Casualty Clearing Station (like a M.A.S.H. unit) on November 21-23, 1916. He was reported “dangerously wounded” with multiple gunshot wounds to his legs and right arm. On December 3rd his condition was reported as “seriously ill, slightly better.” Back at home, Walter’s family received a telegram that he was injured but recovering, and were no doubt anxiously awaiting his return home, or at least to a hospital in England for recovery.

However, Walter’s right arm began to appear gangrenous and was amputated on December 17th. But it was too late. Walter passed away the next day, December 18th, 1916, two months shy of his 21st birthday. The cause of death was reported as “died of wounds received in action.” Walter’s shocked family received notice that he had succumbed to his injuries. As far as we know (and there is no indication in his detailed war records to indicate otherwise), the family never knew about the amputation. Walter’s suffering during his last month is difficult to imagine.

Walter’s family had received a monthly cheque in the amount of \$15 for his service in the Canadian Corps. “The cheques stopped upon his death and altogether amounted to \$270.

Walter was laid to rest alongside 2,770 other Commonwealth soldiers who died for freedom and honour, in the “Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension – located south of the village of Aubigny-en-Artois (two miles east of Berles, nine miles north-west of Arras). His grave reference is IF-18.

His mother dedicated a brass memorial plaque to Walter, on a lectern at the Orange Lodge in Billings Bridge, where Walter had been a member. The lectern is now the property of the City of Ottawa, and is kept at the Gloucester Historical Society. The inscription reads “In memory of Pte. Walter Gervin, 2nd CMR. Died in France Dec. 18th, 1916, from wounds received in the Battle of the Somme. Aged 21 years. Their Name Liveth for Evermore.”



Rideau Park – 1948

On May 17, 1948, Gloucester Township By-Law 17 of 1948 was approved to number houses in Rideau Park as follows. This is a record of those who were living in Rideau Park at the time. All houses have subsequently been renumbered but as a guide 76 Stanley Avenue is now 276 Pleasant Park Road

River Road (now Riverside Drive)- Southeast side
Bank Street intersection at Billings Bridge

Wilfred Laplante	2
Ray Irvin	4
K. Tuttle	6
Billings Bridge Public School	8
J.E. Muller	20
M.O. Benson	36
Harold Hayley	38
John Lebreton	42
Earle Clarke	44 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Harry Stewart	46 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Charles Weiss	48 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
William Stewart	50 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Richard Craig	52 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
George Craig	54 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Bertal T. Walsh	58 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Allan R. Pearson	64 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
L.P. Meyer	66 (within Rideau Park subdivision)

Billings Avenue intersection

Frank Carrol	90
Edward Fobert	106
E.J. Faubert	110
Frank Ambridge	112
Wilfred Elias	116
Grace B. Facto	122
Maurice Potvin	160
Ferne Bruyere	162

River Road – Northwest or Rideau River side

All of these properties were expropriated as part of the Greber Plan in the 1950s.

Bank Street at Billings Bridge

Romeo Larocque	17
Eugene Brule	19
Olivier Grenier	23
Milton Talon	25
Mrs. Bertha Mockett	37 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Mrs. Marjorie Lebreton	39 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
James Gilmour	39A (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Mrs. Jessie Flesher	45 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
J.H. Bennett	47 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
T.C. Rooney	53 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Richard A. Craig	55 (within Rideau Park subdivision)
Daniel Bennett	57 (within Rideau Park subdivision)

Billings Avenue intersection

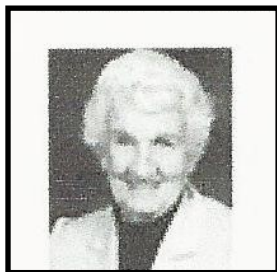
Alfred Jones	87
Thomas Jones	101
Jerry Swain	111

Stanley Avenue (now Pleasant Park Road) – south side Rideau Park

Rideau River

Louis Kerezi	2 & 4
Edward A. Work	6
Toth Balint	8
Leonard Askwith	10, 12, 14, 16
Charles Shierlaw	18, 20
Richard J.C. Fabry	22, 24, 26
W. H. Saunders	28, 30, 32, 34
C.F. Snook	36, 38
Christopher Kerr	40
Leslie Moore	42
A.J. Hayley	44, 46, 48, 50

(This article will be continued in the next issue.)



Lois Kemp

Once again we have lost a long-time member of the Gloucester Historical Society. Lois Kemp died on July 16, 2015 at the age of 85 years.

When the GHS was named the Gloucester Historical Society and Museum in 1989, Lois Kemp was the President. She was very active in the society for many years. For 15 years she published *The Gloucester Leader* and she also wrote the book *Gloucester Roots*. Lois was a tireless community volunteer and a founder of many Blackburn institutions, including the Banar, Fun Fair, and Girl Guides. She was also a Sunday School teacher and school trustee.

Lois became the first woman to be inducted on the Ottawa-Gloucester Sports Club's "Wall of Fame" for her contribution in bringing the sport of ringette to Gloucester. Her passions included coaching and playing ringette, the Gloucester Historical Society and her beautiful flower gardens around her home. Lois inspired others to live life to the fullest and she will be greatly missed.

Lois was predeceased by her husband, Eldon Kemp, son Gordon and great-granddaughter Gwenevere, as well as several sisters and brothers. She is survived by her children and their spouses Susan Crosby, Evelyn and Don Budd, Murray and Judy Brewer, Kevin and Camille Scully, Diane, Randy and Judy Boys, and David. Her 22 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren were her pride and joy. She will also be missed by her sister Lee, stepsister Lois Long and several brothers-in-law.

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP, OR IF YOU WISH TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT IN WITH YOUR CHEQUE. (Membership year runs from April 1 to March 31.)

Membership Form—Gloucester Historical Society/Société historique de Gloucester

Membership/Adhésion - \$20.00 for one year..... \$150.00 for life membership.....

NAME:_____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY:_____ PROV_____ POSTAL CODE _____

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