



Historic Gloucester

Newsletter of the

**GLOUCESTER
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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*Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!*

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President's Report

By Glenn Clark

I wish to extend my best wishes to all of you and your families as the Christmas season and the New Year approaches. Hopefully, we can all get together this year with family and friends, something that was much more difficult a year ago.

For 2022, it is hoped that in-person events will be possible, and we will be working towards an in-person annual general meeting in April. I hope you will join us when the announcement is made.

In this issue of Historic Gloucester, I discuss the events that led to the 1950 annexation. There were complications as the federal government developed its own plan for the National Capital with annexation discussions in progress. There was also some controversy in the weeks leading up to this momentous event. Happy reading!

I am sorry to report that as of this writing our Vice-President, Russell Johnston, is very ill in hospital. I ask you to keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Also, I have learned today, of the passing of Dorothy Meyerhof on November 24th. Our society has worked with Dorothy from time to time on her research on the Honey Gables neighbourhood. It is noted in her obituary that the manuscript on this subject was near completion, and it is hoped that her family will be able to bring it to publication.

Merry Christmas!



THE GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY ROOM WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY DURING THE WINTER MONTHS

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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 publications available, upcoming events and other items of general interest. Comments and suggestions regarding the Newsletter are always welcome.



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The 1950 Annexation

By Glenn Clark

Prior to the 2001 amalgamation, the biggest event in Gloucester history was the 1950 annexation. In the late 1940s, Gloucester was still overwhelmingly rural. Suburban development was mostly limited to Overbrook, Billings Bridge, and to the east of Eastview (Vanier) along Montreal Road including communities named Forbes, Quarries, and the village of Orléans. In 1949, Gloucester's population was 12,743.

Prior Plans Affecting Gloucester

There had been earlier suggestions that may have resulted in the expropriation of Gloucester land. First by landscape architect, Frederick C. Todd in 1903 mainly for parks and driveways. Then by the Holt Plan in 1915, which had recommended securing land for the relocation of railways and the establishment of heavy industry and finally in 1922 by Ottawa planning consultant, Noulan Cauchon.²⁶

However, signs of change were on the horizon in World War II. A housing crisis developed even before the war concluded as the war bureaucracy expanded. And this accelerated as the soldiers came home and quickly wanted to establish a family, a home, and a new life.

Gloucester responded by planning new subdivisions or in many cases, by dusting off old plans that had failed prior to World War I. But these new subdivisions needed city services, which Gloucester could not offer.

First Thoughts of Annexation

Although Ottawa expansion plans were being quietly discussed both in the city and in the neighbouring townships, it first became public on February 23, 1944. *"It has been known for some time that the development of Ottawa in a southerly direction is merely a matter of time"* said Mr. (Carmen) Guest, Gloucester Clerk.

At the same time, possible plans to annex Rockcliffe Park and Eastview were already being downplayed for very different reasons. *"Reeve D.P. Cruikshank, of the village of Rockcliffe Park, although expressing the opinion that Rockcliffe residents would have little to gain by becoming part of Ottawa, said he would be glad to co-operate with the city in any way, and be present at a talk on the subject"*. As stated by Ottawa Controller Goodwin: *"There certainly wouldn't be any increased debt in the taking over of Gloucester Township. The city wouldn't be fussy in taking over Eastview, however."*

It had also been reported that a law had been passed by the Ontario government allowing municipalities to join together if they so chose.¹

The City of Ottawa was also running out of space for new development. *"The erection of a large number of homes in various sections of the city, Ottawa East in partic-*

*ular, has left the city with only a few small lots"*².

In preparation for 'explosive' post-war growth, the Ontario government established the Department of Planning and Development. This was the beginning of planned communities to prevent excessive building of roads, sewers, hydro lines and schools that may otherwise arise from helter-skelter development and ribbon development along highways. There was also a call for regional planning that would involve establishing committees with representatives from neighbouring municipalities. By July 1944, an Ottawa Expansion Committee had already been established to study the expansion of the city boundaries³. The regional planning committee, known as the Ottawa Area Planning Board, became active on February 6, 1947.⁴

On September 26, 1944, representatives of the City of Ottawa headed by Mayor Stanley Lewis, and Gloucester Township headed by Reeve John David Boyce toured various parts of Gloucester Township. An observation was made: *"the party drove in five automobiles to Alta Vista, said to be highest point within seven miles of Ottawa. Here from an elevation of 250 feet above the city's lowest point, the Rideau Canal locks at the Chateau Laurier, the party surveyed a panorama of rolling farmlands. In this area, they visualized the choicest residential area of the Capital of the future"*. Discussions covered the Junction Gore (north of Walkley Road and west of St. Laurent Boulevard), which contained 4,500 acres excluding Eastview and Rockcliffe Park, almost matching the 6,000 acres of the then City of Ottawa. But Ottawa Controller G.W. Goodwin was of the opinion that the city should take the entire township, enough for the next 150 years. Furthermore, annexation was also going to be a condition of extending city water and sewer services further into Gloucester. The city was not going to repeat the mistake previously made with Nepean Township where the city willingly offered water and sewer services.⁵

Almost immediately Ottawa Board of Control named a committee to enter into discussions with Gloucester for the purpose of annexation⁶.

Gloucester Annexation in 1945?

By the start of 1945, Gloucester annexation appeared to be imminent. Meetings were to be held between Ottawa and Gloucester officials and if an agreement could be made, then the annexation process could start. However, it was not so simple. *"Before annexation can be carried out, City Council must pass a resolution stating the desirability of the move. Then the majority of municipal electors in the section to be annexed must petition the Ontario Municipal Board in favour of the annexation. Thirdly, the city must give the board and the township and county councils due notice of the resolution and petition. The board will then hold a hearing at Ottawa and after hearing evidence order annexation proceedings. Terms and conditions regarding adjustment of assets and liabilities and covering*

*the cost of services may be set by the Municipal Board, if city and township officials have not reached an agreement”*⁷

In the coming weeks, meetings took place but *“Gloucester is not so much interested in annexation as in getting a water supply from the city”*⁸. Overbrook was more supportive: *“The association (Overbrook Community Association) went on record as favourable of annexation of Gloucester Township to the city”*¹⁵. At a Billings Bridge meeting: *“John R. Murphy summed up the opinion of those opposed to annexation when he declared that if he had wanted city conveniences, he would have moved to the city. Alex Roger declared that township taxation would be almost double under annexation”*⁹. Yet a vote at the meeting favoured annexation 50 to 32 with supporters tending to be the younger generation.¹⁰

Later in 1945, it was clear that Gloucester was interested in purchasing city services as opposed to annexation. As a result, the City of Ottawa pushed for legislation at Queen’s Park to enable the desired Gloucester annexation. Ottawa Controller G.W. Goodwin told the Ottawa Citizen: *“We have had several talks with the township authorities but if we wait for the township, we will be helpless. The township is not at all interested in the expansion of Ottawa. It is interested in getting every possible service from Ottawa it can get. As far as we are concerned, we are not out to sell services to the township. As a corporation, it is our job to supply services to Ottawa citizens, to the taxpayers who pay the taxes.”* A Greater Ottawa Expansion Committee had been formed but its report had not yet been tabled.¹¹

While Controller Goodwin was encouraging the annexation of the entire Gloucester and Nepean townships, others on Ottawa City Council and Board of Control had a more modest objective.

Annexation Approved in Principle

Finally, on August 22, 1946, a report of the Ottawa-Gloucester Expansion Committee was tabled to a joint meeting of Ottawa Board of Control and Gloucester representatives and was approved in principle. This delineated the annexation boundary, which was somewhat similar to what was eventually adopted in 1950. *“The proposed expansion will extend southward from the city limits to a point just west of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, the line will proceed easterly to a point on the Borthwick Road just on the edge of the Mer Bleue, thence northward through Blackburn station on the Canadian Pacific Railway to a point on the Ottawa River opposite the westerly extension of Little Duck Island.”* *“Included within the expansion area but retaining their own autonomy are the Police Village of Rockcliffe, Eastview, Clarkstown and although within the proposed city limits, the RCMP and RCAF barracks, federal property is also to considered as not part of the future city of Ottawa.”*

At this time, industrial areas were identified as adjacent to the CPR and CNR travelling eastward from Hurdman’s Bridge, a Greenbelt was to be created beyond

the new city limits and a controlled access highway was to cross the city from Graham’s Bay in Nepean to Green’s Creek. This would become the Queensway. Also identified were locations for a water reservoir (which became the Alta Vista water tower), sewage disposal (near Green’s Creek) and garbage disposal (near the Mer Bleue on Dolman Ridge)¹².

There were some objections to the plans with concerns expressed about increasing tax assessments in the area slated for annexation, but services remained poor to non-existent. *“Information was requested as to provisions under the Municipal Statutes, whereby an injunction could be obtained to restrain the Corporation of the Township of Gloucester from exploiting ratepayers in the area which the Corporation of the City of Ottawa has intimated that it may annex until such time as administrative bodies, whoever they may be, have concluded their deliberations”*¹³.

Federal Plans

While the municipalities were negotiating Ottawa expansion, another important event took place. At the request of Prime Minister Mackenzie King, Jacques Gréber returned to Ottawa on October 2, 1945, to develop a report to plan the future of the National Capital¹⁴. What followed was the formation of the National Capital Planning Committee which was charged with developing this plan along with Jacques Gréber.

By July 1947, the federal government had already begun the expropriation of riparian (river front) land including substantial numbers of properties in Gloucester Township along the Rideau River. This was complicating matters as annexation plans ground to a halt. Two planning processes were taking place in parallel, a federal one and a regional municipal one. Meanwhile, the need for post-war housing was growing as was the pressure to extend water and sewer services both to Overbrook and a new subdivision being planned by the North American Life Assurance Company in conjunction with the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This latter plan was to include 200 to 500 houses and would eventually be known as River-view Park. As Ottawa and Gloucester continued to argue over annexation and extending city services, it was a real possibility that the proposed housing project could be cancelled, and the money assigned to a similar project in another Canadian city.¹⁶

At the provincial level, an amendment to the Municipal Act of Ontario made municipal annexations or amalgamations a little easier. The amendment allowed the Ontario Municipal Board to order an annexation *“if they are deemed advisable, whether the people in the affected area are agreeable or not.”* No longer was it necessary to petition for annexation with the support of the majority of the electors in the district affected.¹⁷

Unified Control

Annexation was brought closer to reality when the Ottawa Area Planning Board passed a resolution recommending ‘unified control’ of water and sewer services and

zoning. *"We are convinced there should be one governing municipal body on each side of the Ottawa River"* Mr. Bronson said, *"Unless the local municipalities are prepared to co-operate with the (federal) government in furthering the plans for the national capital, the work can be hindered for years."* Mr. F.E. Bronson was the chairman of the Federal District Commission and a member of the Planning Board. A second resolution moved by Ottawa Controller G.W. Goodwin was passed, asking for an advisory committee to submit recommendations covering the areas that should be annexed into Ottawa while considering the development of the national capital and in collaboration with the National Capital Planning Committee. There were concerns expressed that a study of the potential costs of annexation and the cost of extending services into township lands was needed. Nevertheless, it was clear that the development of Ottawa as the national capital could be damaged without annexation. *"E.K. Bunnell, Toronto, the city's town planning consultant, expressed the belief that the city must, in the light of the national capital planning program, acquire the land necessary for expansion. Ottawa must expand both from the residential and industrial standpoints, he said, and industrial sites could only be found outside the present city boundaries."* ¹⁸

The end of 1947 brought an interesting municipal election result. In a very close and a controversial election with charges of unqualified and uninterested voters casting ballots, Alexander Roger defeated incumbent J.B. Potvin as Gloucester Reeve. Nepean Reeve Harry Parslow was re-elected and suggested an "Inter-Urban Administrative Area", a form of regional government, to allow for extension of water and sewer services and preventing the need for the townships having to develop their own parallel services. It was felt that the City of Ottawa was refusing to extend services unless annexation was permitted. This was preventing residential and industrial development. ¹⁹

The idea of 'unified control' was approved by Gloucester, Nepean, Ottawa, Eastview and Rockcliffe, but what did this really mean? The long-expressed opinion of Ottawa Controller Grenville Goodwin was repeated, that this meant annexation. But the Ottawa Planning Area Board disagreed and offered an alternative of a Metropolitan Area Board to administer 'unified control'. Also contained with the approved report was a plan to remove the cross-town railway tracks and the relocation of the Ottawa Railway station into Gloucester, south of Walkley Road. ²⁰

The Cost of Extending Services

In April 1948, the true cost of municipal services was explained. Millions (in 1948 dollars) would be needed to expand the Ottawa filtration plant, build a new trunk sewer and to install neighbourhood water and sewer pipes. Furthermore, it would likely cost double for Gloucester to build their own systems. It was a rude awakening that these services could not be provided while maintaining lower 'out of town' tax rates. ²¹

The hope that the Ontario Ministry of Planning and Development would provide clarity and direction was dashed. *"Mr. Dana Porter might have been expected to display at Thursday's national capital planning conference a degree of initiative, foresight and guidance. As events turned out, he demonstrated none of these things, lacking wanted leadership, and told plainly enough that the provincial government would not aid the capital plan financially, the conference dissolved in disappointment, no farther ahead than when it began."* *"An agreement in principle was reached four years ago under which Ottawa would annex Gloucester township, but the annexation was postponed pending emergence of a national scheme."* ²²

Nepean Annexation

On May 17, 1948, Ottawa City Council finally took the first concrete action on annexation when they passed a motion to annex a portion of Nepean Township including an area extending as far west as Graham's Bay and beyond Black Rapids to the south. The annexation plan was to be taken to the Ontario Municipal Board. Mayor Stanley Lewis opposed the motion as he did not believe the city should be using 'a big stick'. As was his history, Controller Goodwin was the only member of Ottawa Board of Control who favoured the motion. Also reaffirmed by motion was the idea of 'unified control' for services provided to Eastview, Rockcliffe Park and Gloucester Township. This was all seen as necessary to put a National Capital plan into effect, but Nepean was considered the top priority for annexation because it was the most easily developed with no river crossing required. ²³

The annexation of 7,420 acres of Nepean Township was ordered by the Ontario Municipal Board on December 6, 1948, and an appeal by Carleton County to Ontario's Court of Appeal was dismissed on February 24, 1949. ²⁴ Legislation was then presented at Queen's Park on March 15th and covered both annexation and some of the details relating to bus service and specifically Nepean Bus Lines and schools. ²⁵

Gloucester Annexation Preliminary Discussions

As the final details of Nepean annexation were being worked out for implementation on January 1, 1950, the realities of the National Capital Plan became apparent. *"Faced with the possibility of large scale appropriations of land, incident to the implementation of the National Capital Plan, Gloucester township council may approach Ottawa in discussions of annexation."* These appropriations could include the proposed industrial area east of Hurdman's Bridge, land for a relocated cross-town railway and a new railway station and freight yards south of Walkley Road and a proposed Gteenbelt. This could prove devastating to Gloucester's tax base. The shoe was now on the other foot as Gloucester was losing control of the agenda. It was no longer just about servicing new subdivisions.

By the start of April 1949, discussions between Gloucester and Ottawa concerning the annexation of 7,500 acres were quietly taking place behind the scenes. When asked, Ottawa Mayor E.A. Bourque, Gloucester Reeve Alex Rogers and Clerk-Treasurer Carmen Guest all denied that official negotiations were taking place. ²⁶

An Ottawa Citizen editorial on April 7, 1949, strongly supported Gloucester annexation as the only way forward to allow Ottawa to grow and to fairly distribute the costs of this growth. The previous method of make-shift arrangements in providing municipal services was no longer tenable. This was especially important, with a portion of Gloucester slated for heavy industry. Also, annexation would expedite the implementation of the National Capital Plan eliminating the need to negotiate with multiple municipalities. With the precedent of Nepean annexation already established through an Ontario Municipal Board order, it was clear that new provincial rules made Gloucester annexation both desirable and inevitable.

Official Discussions Begin

The first official meeting of Ottawa Mayor E.A. Bourque and Board of Control and Gloucester Reeve Alexander Roger and council concerning annexation took place on June 21, 1949. Also attending were the Ottawa Police Chief and Fire Chief. While the original 1946 proposal covered 15,000 acres, the latest discussions considered that 7,500 acres would be sufficient to implement the National Capital Plan including a 5,000,000-gallon water tower, a new Union Station, industrial land, a belt line highway (a proposed parkway south of Walkley Road that was expropriated but never built) and a sewage disposal plant near Green's Creek. ²⁷

By July, detailed reports were being prepared and there was already general agreement from Reeve Roger that annexation will proceed, likely with the Nepean land on January 1, 1950. ²⁸ By July 29th, annexation was mostly a fait accompli and the coverage had grown to over 10,000 acres, including areas as far south as the Ottawa Hunt Club, as far east as Hawthorne and as far north as Eastview and Cyrville. Cyrville would be included but Eastview excluded. There was the need for a Gloucester reassessment as there was a considerable discrepancy between Gloucester and Ottawa tax assessments and there was also a need to review the distribution of shared costs for the Carleton County courthouse and Ottawa Civic Hospital with the understanding that Ottawa's responsibilities would increase substantially following annexation. ²⁹

Final Negotiations

On the September 7, 1949, the boundary between Cyrville and the Ottawa River and to the east of Rockcliffe Park and Eastview was still not established. A stumbling block arose with the school sections in Manor Park and the village of Quarries because the boundaries of those school sections may partly be annexed while other portions remained as part of Gloucester. It was at this point that the annexation of Eastview and Rockcliffe Park were off the table, if only temporarily. ³⁰

The process accelerated with the Ottawa Citizen reporting on September 12th that the annexation had grown to 14,600 acres. Other issues arose concerning the expansion of OTC bus service, the absorption of the independent transit firms including Eastview Bus Company, Cyrville Bus Lines and Uplands Bus Lines, establishing schools for the Rockcliffe and Uplands Emergency Shelters, the expansion of existing township schools, the redistribution of city wards and the reduction of Ottawa City Council which was slated to grow to 33 members. Four new councillors were expected to be added for annexed Nepean territory and two for the portion of Gloucester to be annexed. There was also a growing disparity on how tax assessments compared between wards. For example, the tax assessment for the proposed Gloucester ward was expected to be five times the assessment for Rideau ward. ³¹

With an agreement mostly completed on the annexation of both townships, the City of Ottawa declared that it had done its part to facilitate the National Capital Plan and it was now the responsibility of the federal government to proceed with its plan. At the same time, the City of Ottawa was hopeful for a substantial increase in its federal grant as federal properties were not subject property taxation. ³²

Reeve Alexander Roger issued a statement explaining annexation to both Gloucester and Ottawa rate-payers. He provided information on the Nepean annexation as an example, which was originally to include 13,000 acres and was to take place on January 1, 1949. The Council of Nepean Township filed an objection to the order of the Ontario Municipal Board which resulted in a stay of proceedings. This produced further negotiations, a reduction in the area to be annexed (to 7,420 acres) and a one-year delay before annexation took place.

This was followed with a history of negotiations between Gloucester and Ottawa. At a joint meeting on September 2nd *"a letter to Reeve Roger from the Board of Trustees of Township School Area No. 2 Gloucester, was read. This letter contained a motion passed unanimously by the School Board strongly urging the extension of the area proposed for annexation northerly from the McArthur Road to the Ottawa River and easterly to the Skead Road."* After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the annexation map be revised to accept this request. There was a general agreement of the terms of annexation at a further joint meeting on September 9th at which time Uplands airport and the emergency shelters located there and at Rockcliffe airport would be included within Ottawa jurisdiction.

Despite the increase in the area annexed, Gloucester's position on Carleton County council would not be jeopardized. It's relative size compared with the other townships in the county would maintain its position and representation at the county. Financial matters covered debentures and related interest and it was agreed that land

of 5 acres or more in continued agricultural use would have property taxes frozen at 1948 township rates from 1950 to 1954 when annexed into Ottawa.³³ At one point, concerns were expressed by war veterans who had acquired properties of 2 to 5 acres with the proviso that they could not be resold for 10 years. These properties did not qualify for the tax freeze and the owners could face major tax increases.

While all the negotiations and agreements were made at the political level, protests finally erupted at a meeting at Alta Vista Public School on September 16th when demands for a plebiscite were made. Other concerns were expressed about Ottawa elections that would potentially disenfranchise ratepayers within the annexed area until December 1950. Reeve Alexander Roger responded that annexation was inevitable, and it was the only path toward better municipal services. Those who felt that the existence of Gloucester Township was threatened with a potential merger with Osgoode Township were reassured that the remainder of the township would make out “all right” and the future of the township was toward “bigger and better”.³⁴

Gloucester Annexation Approved – September 20, 1949

Despite vocal protests from Gloucester farmers, the final plan for the annexation of 14,605 acres was approved unanimously by Gloucester Township Council at 12:37 a.m. on September 20th with a similar motion approved by Ottawa City Council by a vote of 20 to 5. Reeve Roger reminded those in attendance that the agreement with the City of Ottawa was far better than if Gloucester had refused annexation with the likelihood of a massive expropriation. About areas excluded: *“Sounding a pessimistic note, Ottawa Alderman Eric Query said he could make more ‘out of a jig-saw puzzle than the proposed Gloucester annexation. Why are Eastview and Cyrville being left out?’ he queried. ‘Their citizens are as good as the people of Ottawa.’ But he could understand why Rockcliffe was not being annexed. ‘Rideau Hall and those other places are in Rockcliffe, that’s why.’ Ottawa Controller McCann rejoined, that Gloucester did not want to give up Cyrville because it was largely a farming community. It would probably come into the city in due course. As to Rockcliffe and Eastview, Controller McCann related ‘we’ve already taken a mighty big bite.’ Works Commissioner Wight pointed out that Gloucester had no control over Eastview, so far as annexation was concerned. Regarding Cyrville, he felt it would come into the city in time. Rockcliffe and Eastview would also be dealt with in due course.”*³⁵

With massive changes about to take place in both Nepean and Gloucester Townships, what was to come of the annual municipal election? As of late September, Nepean Township elections were to be delayed until late December to allow for township reassessments to be completed but Gloucester elections remained unknown. It needed to wait until the ruling on the annexation plan by the Ontario Municipal Board.³⁶

The Ontario Municipal Board hearing on the joint

Gloucester-Ottawa annexation proposal was scheduled for November 10, 1949, at 10 a.m. at the Carleton County Courthouse with public submissions by interested parties welcome.³⁷ The details of the annexation area were published in Ottawa Citizen on October 31st.

December 28th was election date announced for the new Westboro and Carleton wards, representing the former Nepean district. But without a ruling by the Ontario Municipal Board concerning Gloucester, both township and Gloucester ward elections remained up in the air.³⁸

Ontario Municipal Board Hearing – November 10, 1949

The Ontario Municipal Board hearing had unexpected results: *“The city was caught today with its ‘plans down’. Eastview leaped unexpectedly into the Gloucester annexation picture to inform the Ontario Municipal Board that the town would seek to take over the portion of Gloucester Township – about 6,000 acres – lying east of the town. The disclosure made by A.C. Hill, KC, counsel for Eastview, was a bombshell, coming as it did at the opening of the Board’s hearing of the city’s application to a large portion of Gloucester including the area now sought by Eastview. City Solicitor Gordon C. Medcalf, KC, said that the Eastview move was a complete surprise to him, and he objected to it on the grounds that the city had not previously been informed of the town’s intention. Mr. Hill replied that it was not until very recently that Eastview had become aware of the full extent of the city’s annexation plan for Gloucester.”*

This was followed by further comments on ‘unified control’: *“Asked by Mr. Medcalf if the plan could be carried out in cooperation with the adjacent municipalities or only through unified control by the city, Mr. Wight replied: ‘This could only be accomplished by one control – the city which will be asked to supply all the necessary services.’ He explained that Gloucester annexation has been under consideration since 1946 when a joint committee of the city and Gloucester Council approved the inclusion of 23,000 acres. Later under the Ottawa Area Planning Board, this was cut to 14,000 acres as the minimum area necessary for the expansion of Ottawa in conformity with the National Capital Plan.”*³⁹

Another surprise arose from the hearing: *“Many Gloucester Township residents do not favour annexation by Ottawa, Carmen Guest, Gloucester clerk-treasurer, told the board, late yesterday afternoon, when he staged a one-man rebellion against the township administration in its alignment with Ottawa annexation.”*

“‘On whose instruction did you prepare your submission?’ he (Mr. Medcalf) asked Mr. Guest. ‘Were you advised to do so by the reeve and council?’ Mr. Guest said he had been asked to secure the information by citizens and when pressed named Thomas Keenan, a former councilman, and J.B. Potvin, a former reeve. He said he received the petition late Wednesday night and had not consulted with Gloucester Reeve Alex Roger, or members of council,

before preparing his submission. 'Are you not a loyal employee of Gloucester Township?' asked Mr. Medcalf. 'Do you not think you should have discussed this with the reeve and council? You know they were in agreement with regard to annexation.' Mr. Guest said he was speaking as a Gloucester citizen, not as the clerk-treasurer. 'It was the right of any citizen to ask for, and get, information on matters relative to the township.' 'Nevertheless, you are the clerk treasurer of Gloucester.' Mr. Medcalf insisted. 'It was your duty to see that the matter was referred to your council. Further, it should have been conveyed to Ottawa since you knew that your council and the city were conferring on this very subject.'"⁴⁰

Carmen Guest was dismissed as township clerk-treasurer on November 12th.



Carmen Guest cheered as he enters the Township Hall at Billings Bridge on November 14, 1949, following his abrupt dismissal. There was a unanimous resolution at that meeting for his re-instatement. *Ottawa Citizen*, November 15, 1949, p.1

Stormy Protest Meeting

Mr. Guest's abrupt dismissal produced a stormy meeting of 400 Gloucester residents at the township hall at Billings Bridge on November 14th. Many residents were sympathetic to Mr. Guest's position on annexation, and they yelled down council members when they attempted to speak. Nevertheless, Mr. Guest had been a disloyal servant of the township.

"Jamming their way into the upper assembly hall of the township administrative building, more than 200 men and women jeered the reeve and council while they cheered Mr. Guest. As many more people, unable to gain admission to the hall, remained outside to add their voices as best they could to the protest meeting. Invited to attend the meeting to state the reasons for Mr. Guest's dismissal, Reeve Roger, Deputy Reeve Joseph Cyr and Councillors Earl Armstrong and Fred Barrett were booed and jeered as they entered the hall. The elected representatives gave their version of the Guest dismissal, but the crowd declined

to accept that version. But it was the reeve himself who won the most pronounced disapproval of the crowd when he announced flatly that he would not remain in the hall if Mr. Guest was asked to speak 'I will not engage in public debate with a servant of the township either past or present.'"

*"Councillor Fred Barrett informed the gathering that he did not agree with Deputy Reeve Cyr when the latter informed the press yesterday that there was a long list of complaints. Against Mr. Guest. 'There is no long list as far as I am concerned.' Said Mr. Barrett. 'I voted in favour of Mr. Guest's dismissal. Because I felt the clerk-treasurer had not performed his duty of living up to the policy laid down by the council, that he failed in his duty. When he went as clerk-treasurer to testify before the Ontario Municipal Board on a matter already agreed upon by the township and by the city of Ottawa. Last Thursday, we (township and city) made a joint representation to the Municipal Board, and I was very much surprised at that time to see Mr. Guest sitting beside counsel who represented interests which were defeated in this township at last year's election. Those interests were the men who shoved Mr. Guest to the fore in this unfortunate matter and were more responsible than he for this dismissal. When Mr. Guest refused to accept the policy of council-although he had never mentioned to us his disapproval of annexation, I moved for his dismissal. I think I was justified in doing so.'; the councillor said. Mr. Barrett then claimed that candidates defeated by present council members last year, were responsible for the stirring up of most of the annexation controversy. Former deputy reeve Adam Scharfe, present in the crowd shouted, 'Don't you include me in that remark, Mr. Barrett!'. Councillor Barrett smilingly disassociated Mr. Scharfe from the allegation and later agreed again that the former deputy reeve had not displayed active opposition to annexation. When questioners from the audience persisted in cross-examining Mr. Barrett on the reasons behind the Guest dismissal, the councillor finally retorted: 'We are duty bound, you known, to report our actions on a weekly basis. I believe that Mr. Guest's actions were an attempt to make fools of the council and of the township at large. This is why I favoured his dismissal.'"*⁴¹

Carmen Guest had been clerk-treasurer since 1927 and was a well known and popular figure in the Gloucester administration. The outrage concerning his dismissal continued through until the following meeting held on November 22nd. At the November 14th protest meeting, a resolution was passed unanimously demanding the re-instatement of Mr. Guest. This was presented to Gloucester Council by Councillor Earl Armstrong and there was agreement to deal with resolution at the November 22nd meeting. After a 4-hour meeting, it was adjourned without a decision and the matter was deferred until the December 5th meeting. Despite the impending annexation, it was also revealed that a secret meeting took place on November 18th approving a debenture issue of \$134,000 for the construction of a new public school in Township School Area No. 2, and within the area to be annexed. ⁴²

Ontario Municipal Board Ruling

The Ontario Municipal Board ruling was made public on December 2, 1949. It approved the proposed annexation by the City of Ottawa and at the same time rejected Eastview's request for a portion of that land. In its ruling, it considered Eastview's expansion plans including sewage disposal through Rockcliffe Park and a separate water system developed through sinking a deep well was either inadequate or not economically feasible.

Amended provincial legislation allowed the matter to be forced before the provincial legislature and those opposing annexation planned to immediately circulate a petition amongst ratepayers in hope of achieving the 10% requirement.

Property Taxes to Increase Substantially

The tax implications of annexation were finally reported and would substantially impact those within the annexed area. On average, tax increases of close to 40% were expected compared to township rates. This was the cost of delivering city services to the new district. But there were many benefits including improved police and fire protection, reduced insurance rates, lower rates to access services at the Ottawa Civic Hospital, Ottawa Transportation Commission bus service at lower city fares, regular garbage collection that had been previously charged separately by the township, lower city hydro rates at half the cost of the provincial rates, improved snow removal, access to city health and social services and consistent charges for accessing public and separate schools including collegiate institutes (high schools). At the township level, each school area or school section had separate budgets and different tax rates. ⁴³

Anti-Annexation Petition

While a petition opposing annexation circulated, another petition was being prepared in favour of annexation. In some cases, those signing the first petition, had changed their minds, and were signing the second petition as well. Meanwhile, federal officials stood back allowing the democratic process to move forward, knowing that the Ontario Legislature was unlikely to overrule the Ontario Municipal Board decision. ⁴⁴

The deadline for an anti-annexation petition was set for December 23rd at midnight, while at the same time Gloucester was preparing for the elections finally scheduled for January 2nd both at the city level and within the township. On December 23rd, confusion reigned supreme at the township hall as voter lists were being prepared, nominations were being finalized and the petition was being submitted for certification by the new clerk-treasurer, W.E. Doughty, a requirement of the Ontario Municipal Board. Surprisingly, Reeve Alexander Roger suggested that Mr. Doughty did not need to be present for the nomination process and he left the building. This left the supporters of the petition in an impossible position to meet the required deadline.

Nominations were also a confusing affair with

some candidates running both at the city level and the township level, not knowing whether annexation was proceeding with certainty. Reeve Alexander Roger was running for both Gloucester Ward on Ottawa City Council and Reeve of Gloucester Township, however, if annexation proceeded, his candidacy at the township level would be disqualified as he only owned land within the annexed area. Interestingly, former clerk-treasurer Carmen Guest was also running for the position of Gloucester Reeve. ⁴⁵

When the midnight deadline passed, Thomas Keenan, leader of the anti-annexation forces telephoned W.P. Near, chairman of the Ontario Municipal Board who extended the petition deadline to December 24th at midnight. There were claims that there was a deliberate effort to frustrate the wishes of those supporting the petition, with fingers being pointed directly at Reeve Roger. ⁴⁶

When word was received on December 27th that the petition was refused by the Ontario Municipal Board, supporters claimed that they had been cheated. Although the petition had been submitted, it had not been properly certified by Mr. Doughty who claimed that "*it had been physically impossible for him to personally check over every name on the list Friday*". This left one last ditch effort to prevent annexation through an injunction. ⁴⁷

The petition had been signed by almost 20% of the township ratepayers but when it was refused, this left the supporters with an unlikely interim injunction to stop the January 2nd election. With no sitting of the Ontario Supreme Court in Ottawa until later in January, and lower court judges having no power over the Municipal Act, those opposed to annexation had run out of options. ⁴⁸

Annexation was a fait accompli.

Would Eastview and Rockcliffe Park be next? As early as 1951, as many believed at the time. ⁵³

Elected in the January 2nd election were A. Edgar Davidson as Reeve, J.B. Potvin as Deputy Reeve, and councillors Earl Armstrong, Arthur Parisien and Thomas Keenan. Elected as City Councillors for Gloucester Ward were Alexander Roger and Newman Archibald. ⁵⁰

In a further strange turn of events, W.E. Doughty was appointed to a position in the city building department and Carmen Guest was to be re-instated as clerk-treasurer at the first meeting of Gloucester council on January 9, 1950. ⁴⁹ He would hold that position until his death on December 1, 1959 and he was succeeded by Fred Meldrum.

Post Annexation Challenges

The first obvious challenge was the reduction in the population from 12,743 to about 4,500 and the associated reduction in the tax base. Furthermore, the Gloucester township hall, equipment garage and fire hall were all located at Billings Bridge, well within the annexed area. It would take years before new facilities within the new township boundaries could be afforded and built. This did not

take place until 1962 when a new township hall and fire station were opened at Leitrin.

It was also discovered by an expert from the Department of Municipal Affairs, that nearly \$80,000 in water and sewer work in Overbrook had not been taxed to local property owners. This discovery did not take place until after Overbrook had been absorbed into the City of Ottawa. This presented a problem as Gloucester could no longer legally levy those costs to the property owners. In the spirit of cooperation, the City of Ottawa stepped in and offered to levy those taxes for the services already provided and re-imburse Gloucester Township.⁵¹

There was also confusion over the rights of independent transit operators to continue to provide bus service within the new annexed area as of January 1, 1950. It was believed that the Ottawa Transportation Commission had exclusive franchise over bus service within the city limits. As a result, there was a brief interruption in bus service in the annexed area until there was clarity that the independent bus companies could continue to operate for the time being. The Ottawa Transportation Commission was not in a position to offer bus service to the annexed area immediately. Negotiations would take several months in order to both replace bus service and to compensate the independent bus companies for their facilities and equipment. Uplands Bus Lines service was replaced on July 1, 1950, Cyrville Bus Lines service was replaced on December 26, 1950, and Eastview Bus Company service was replaced on December 29, 1950. In a few cases, bus routes were truncated when the independent bus companies had formerly offered service significantly beyond the new Ottawa city limits.

As a result of the reduced tax base, Gloucester council was also forced to reduce its fire department from three full-time firemen to a volunteer department with two paid part-time firemen. The Ottawa Fire Department was not interested in the firemen who were losing their jobs.⁵²

As the National Capital Plan was implemented, large tracts of land east of Hurdman's Bridge were expropriated for industry, and south of Walkley Road for railway yards, and surrounding the city for a Greenbelt. At the same time, additional land was expropriated to expand Uplands airport, almost entirely within Gloucester.

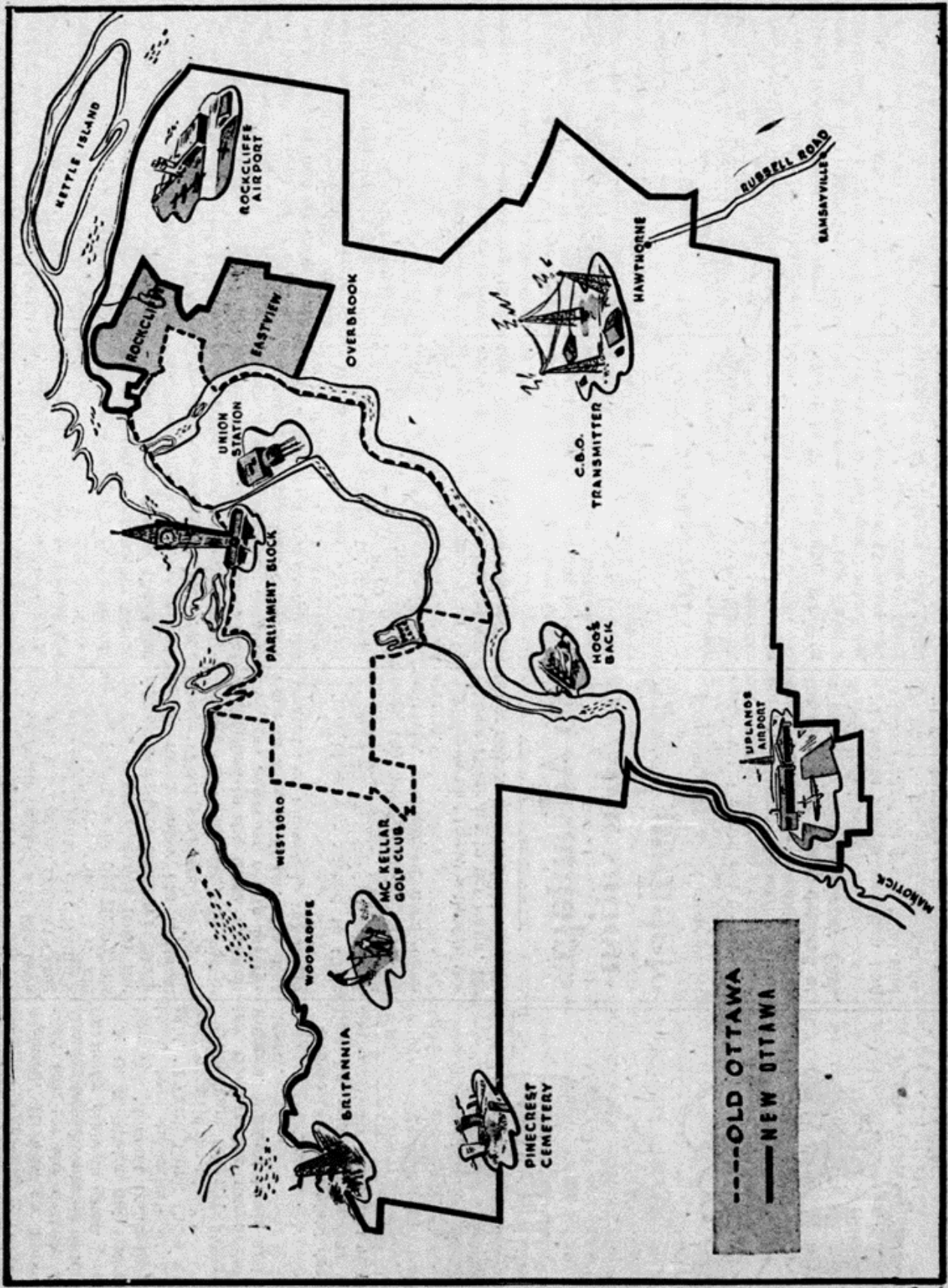
Many of Gloucester's oldest families were forced to move as a result of those and other federal expropriations. Gloucester would never be the same again.

Footnotes

- 1 *Ottawa Citizen*, February 23, 1944, p.10, *Ottawa Journal*, February 23, 1944, p.5
- 2 *Ottawa Journal*, April 15, 1944, p.19
- 3 *Ottawa Citizen*, July 20, 1944, p.7
- 4 *Ottawa Citizen*, February 7, 1947, p.3
- 5 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 26, 1944, p.26

- 6 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 29, 1944, p.20
- 7 *Ottawa Citizen*, January 2, 1945, p.1.
- 8 *Ottawa Citizen*, February 15, 1945, p.22
- 9 *Ottawa Journal*, March 29, 1945, p.3
- 10 *Ottawa Citizen*, March 29, 1945, p.22
- 11 *Ottawa Citizen*, August 1, 1945, p.10
- 12 *Ottawa Citizen*, August 23, 1946, p.1, 12
- 13 *Ottawa Citizen*, October 11, 1946, p.15
- 14 *Ottawa Citizen*, October 2, 1945, p.1
- 15 *Ottawa Citizen*, March 1, 1945, p.5
- 16 *Ottawa Citizen*, July 30, 1947, p.4, *Ottawa Journal*, July 30, 1947, .3
- 17 *Ottawa Citizen*, August 7, 1947, p.4
- 18 *Ottawa Citizen*, August 7, 1947, p.4, *Ottawa Journal*, August 7, 1947, p.7
- 19 *Ottawa Journal*, December 7, 1947, p.9
- 20 *Ottawa Journal*, February 7, 1948, p.10
- 21 *Ottawa Citizen*, April 13, 1948, p.28
- 22 *Ottawa Citizen*, May 7, 1948, p.31
- 23 *Ottawa Journal*, May 18, 1948, p.15
- 24 *Ottawa Citizen*, February 25, 1949, p.13
- 25 *Ottawa Citizen*, March 15, 1949, p. 1, 16
- 26 *Ottawa Citizen*, April 4, 1949, p.8
- 27 *Ottawa Citizen*, June 22, 1949, p.2028 *Ottawa Citizen*, July 16, 1949, p.1 and 1229 *Ottawa Citizen*, July 29, 1949, p.1 and 1430 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 7, 1949, p.31 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 12, 1949, p.1 and 1632 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 12, 1949, p.11
- 33 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 16, 1949, p.18
- 34 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 17, 1949, p.27
- 35 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 20, 1949, p. 12
- 36 *Ottawa Citizen*, September 27, 1949, p.12
- 37 *Ottawa Journal*, October 18, 1949, p.1
- 38 *Ottawa Citizen*, November 8, 1949, p.16
- 39 *Ottawa Citizen*, November 10, 1949, p.1 and 20, *Ottawa Journal*, p.1 and 40
- 40 *Ottawa Citizen*, November 11, 1949, p.35
- 41 *Ottawa Citizen*, November 15, 1949, p.1, 16, 17, *Ottawa Journal*, November 15, 1949, p.3
- 42 *Ottawa Journal*, November 23, 1949, p.3
- 43 *Ottawa Journal*, December 2, 1949, p.1 and 2, *Ottawa Citizen*, December 3, 1949, p.6 and 32
- 44 *Ottawa Citizen*, December 8, 1949, p.1 and 20, *Ottawa Citizen*, December 10, 1949, p.5
- 45 *Ottawa Citizen*, December 23, 1949, p.1 and 16
- 46 *Ottawa Journal*, December 24, 1949, p.1 and 13
- 47 *Ottawa Citizen*, December 27, 1949, p.1 and 12
- 48 *Ottawa Citizen*, December 28, 1949, p. 1 and 12
- 49 *Ottawa Citizen*, January 4, 1950, p.1
- 50 *Ottawa Citizen*, January 3, 1950, p.17
- 51 *Ottawa Journal*, January 11, 1950, p.1, *Ottawa Citizen*, January 12, 1950, p.1 and 16
- 52 *Ottawa Journal*, February 16, 1950, p. 18
- 53 *Ottawa Citizen*, January 3, 1950, p.1

Ottawa Becomes Five Times Bigger Tomorrow



—Map by G. Trotter

Annexation map—Ottawa Citizen, December 31, 1949, p. 17

What is Volunteering?

Volunteering is not about helping to do mundane and drudge-like tasks. Instead it is a worthwhile way of helping others and yourself. Most volunteers get great satisfaction out of providing assistance to others. Wouldn't you like to be able to help those seeking to trace their roots, looking for where their families came from or just learning more about their neighbourhood or the area where they grew up.

We have a suggestion for you.

As a member of the Gloucester Historical Society you already volunteer your time to come to our events and hear our speakers tell about Gloucester's past. But there is another way you can contribute. That is to be more active in our day to day activities. There are many ways you can do this.

We need board members as we have several vacancies at this time. This is not an onerous task. It involves attending meetings which are held monthly except for the summer months, helping out at events

– greeting people and answering questions about the GHS and assisting people who come to the Research Room looking for information. You are free to devote as much or as little time to them as you can spare. You will find it is really very enjoyable and rewarding meeting so many people with like interests as you.

Everyone has unique gifts and talents which are often wasted because people are afraid to come forward and use them. With GHS there is no set time commitment involved - it is up to you how much time you want to contribute.

If you would like to give it a try, please let us know by e-mail, or by telephone, both listed elsewhere in this newsletter, or in person.



To renew or become a new member, please complete this form and return it to the address below with your cheque. Memberships may also be purchased on our website.

Membership Form—Gloucester Historical Society/Société historique de Gloucester
(Membership year runs from April 1 to March 31.)

Please note that we added a new category of long term (10 year) membership and discontinuing life memberships. Current life members will continue to be honoured. Details are below.

Annual Membership/ - \$20.00 for one year..... 10 year Membership \$150.00

NAME: _____ Email Address: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Telephone # _____

CITY: _____ PROV _____ POSTAL CODE _____

Donations are always welcome. We are a registered charitable organization and provide tax receipts.

Mailing Address: Gloucester Historical Society
4550B Bank Street.
Gloucester, Ontario
K1T 3W6