

# PETER MCTAVISH

McTavish was born in Scotland c 1810. He may have become schoolmaster at Britannia School as early as 1845-47 when it was still a frame building. A former pupil remembered that “he had a long, heavy leather strap split in four thongs about 3 feet long which he used to thrash some scholars unmercifully”.



In the 1861 census he is said to have had ten acres of Lot 3 First Concession west (the school reserve). The trustees of school section #12 rented out the other 190 acres to help defray the cost of running the school. McTavish planted four acres in potatoes and hay. He kept a milch (dairy) cow and two pigs. He constructed a cow house and stable for the use of teachers. In 1861 McTavish gave his age as 52. His wife, who had been born in Canada West, was listed as 32 years old. Apparently they lived in a one-storey frame house on the school property or nearby.

In the 1865 assessment of Toronto Township, he still occupied the ten acres on Lot 3. He was described as 54 years old, a school teacher, and on the reserve list of the local militia.

William War, who was a 23 year old farmer on the first class service roll of the local militia, farmed the remaining 190 acres of school land. In the 1871 census he gave his age as 60, his religion as Canada Presbyterian, his profession as schoolteacher, and his father’s ancestry as Scotch. He may have been living in Chinguacousy at this time.

Fragments of refined white earthenware, glazed red earthenware, and hand painted wares were found on Lot 3 during an archaeological survey in 1989. Also found were mammal bone fragments, a white clay pipe stem, the rim portion of a metal cauldron, and a concentration of red brick fragments. This might be where McTavish lived.