

JOHN CARBERRY

(1837-1932)

The Carberry family occupied the eastern half of Lot 1 Concession I east for 124 years. John Carberry's parents emigrated from Armagh, Ireland in 1825. They purchased the farm in 1836. John Carberry was born there a year later. From his reminiscences in 1929 we gain some insight into the life of the pioneers in the Britannia area.

When the Carberry settled on their land the area was covered with forest. Deer were plentiful and the family enjoyed meals of fresh venison. To protect his oxen from wolves while clearing the bush Carberry's father used to build a great fire. Cedar logs cleared from the land were sold by the family.

The Indians were frequent visitors to the pioneer log house in the early years. In a back field there was a large rock where the Indians came to hold their religious ceremonies. The bones buried beneath the rock were identified by "authorities" as those of an Indian, presumably a chief.

The Carberrys were Roman Catholic. They helped to build and then attend St. Joseph's in Streetsville. John Carberry attended the school on Lot 3 Concession I West. He recalled that it was a frame building heated by a big fireplace. Boys sat on benches on one side of the room and girls on benches on the other.

Carberry studied to become a priest but was forced to drop out of St. Michale's College in Toronto because of illness. He worked for a short time in Petrolia and then worked as a cook for the Northern Army during the American Civil war. In his 30's he married, had a family, and took over the running of the family farm. The 1877 Atlas of Peel showed one residence which faced south onto Baseline (Eglinton) and an orchard on the property.

The Carberry house, built in 1846 of Credit Valley stone, was the site of an unsolved murder in 1960. Peter Carberry, John's son, was beaten to death. No one was ever charged with the crime. The house was demolished in 1985. At the time of its demolition it was covered with stucco which obscured its nature as a typical early Ontario farmhouse.



**Does
anybody
have a
picture of
him?**