

Local History Project

for
Margaret Henry - Tuesday 1 pm.

by
John Lewis.

Subject

Elizabeth Woodbine - Glimpses of the
Past from 95 years on.

Enclosed:

Signed authority for use of material.

Part A. Audio cassette tape of interview.

Part B. Transcript of the audio tape.

Part C. Summary of the interview.

Part D. Essay on theme of interview

Glimpses of the Past from 95 years on,
Newcastle and Toronto.

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

OPEN FOUNDATION COURSE

1989.

I, ELIZABETH WOODBINE give my
permission to JOHN LEWIS

to use this interview, or part of this interview, for
research, publication and/or broadcasting (delete one of
these if required) and for copies to be lodged in
the Newcastle University
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for the use of other bona fide researchers.

Signed E. Woodbine

Date 11th June 1989.

Interviewer J. Lewis

Part. B.

Transcript of the
Interview of.

Elizabeth Woodbine.

by John Lewis.

Part. B.

This is an interview by John Lewis with Mrs. Elizabeth Woodbine, who was born in Eslington, before the turn of the century, in 1894.

J. Mrs Woodbine, what is your full name?

E. Elizabeth Phebe Grace Woodbine.

J. What was your maiden name?

E. Carpenter.

J. Where did your parents come from?

E. England, and mother's from Scotland.

J. And what was your father's occupation?

E. Carter.

J. I believe he went into the country a lot

E. Yes, him and my mother used to go in the country for a while. He was driving and shearing sheep. He was the cook for them, but we never heard very much with her, she used to - they say she used to say the Apghans used to trouble them a lot but they never - a few blacks around, they would come up and they would go on - would never stop and camp overnight where they were, but...

J. Never had any trouble with them?

E. No, oh, wanted tobacco and a few things like that, but you had to be pretty civil with them.

J. And where were you born?

E. Hubbard St. Eslington.

J. And when was that?

E. 7th June, 1894.

J. And your mother died soon after your birth.

E. My mother died on 17th June 1894.

J. And you were taken by Foster-parents.

E. Yes, Nick and Matilda Carpenter.

J. What relationship were they to you?

E. They were my father's brother and

sister-in-law.

J. And your foster mother died.

E. My foster mother died, Matilda, she died when I - I suppose between six and seven years old when she died and I - I didn't know nothing about it, I always thought that they were my parents, but I suppose when he married again he married a Ida Ada Barnes, and she was much younger person and I suppose I didn't get the knack of it... but I think - she said she .. she come in to be my stepmother, which wasn't very nice for in my position, but as for other things, but anyway carried on in life, they still had me, right, him and her, I don't know which it was, whether he stuck to me, or she stuck to me, whoever it was, but that was that part (of it) with them.

J. And what did your foster father do?

E. What did he do? Iron foundry.

J. Iron foundry.

E. Yes.

J. And what did they manufacture at the foundry?

E. Oh anything in iron - stones, sash weights, pieces for balconies and all, you know, anything like that - bring the pattern and ...

J. And where were they living?

E. Ploche St. Solington.

J. And what religion were they?

E. Church of England.

J. And which church did you go to?

E. Saint Mark's in Watland Rd. Solington.

J. And do you remember when you

began school?

E. Do I remember what?

J. When you began to go to school.

E. Oh, when I was a bit over seven

J. And what school was that?

E. To Islington Public School, Hubbard St.

J. Do you have any particular memories about going to school?

E. No, none whatsoever - oh just might have been - we used to always think very funny the headmaster wore his big top top (hat) and his swallowtail coat for them times

J. How many teachers were there?

E. I think in the infants I think there was only Miss Cameron and another one in the infants, and there was a Miss Hopper and Miss Bludray - Coleray and two Mr. Burkes and Mr Lane. That's all there were when I went to school.

J. And what age would you be when you left school?

E. Oh, somewhere about thirteen.

J. There were no night schools in the district then?

E. No, there was none about anywhere.

J. And...

E. There were a few private schools and a few night schools.

J. Were there many hotels around your area?

E. There was four just in Writland Rd, just in our little thing; just down the street there was four.

J. Were there many drunks? -

were there 'til 11 o'clock of a night.

J. Any lawlessness?

E. Oh, not much, the police got onto them a bit, there used to be the "ragged thirteen" at the Bank boomer, they had a lot of trouble with them though, that went on there for ages.

J. Well there would have been a lot of sailing ships...

E. Yes, all sailing ships in there, and a couple into the port, there were a good few wrecks in them times and a oh say in June there was a fair few wrecks - you know come over the bar and then - but there was no big things come in at all.

J. Did you hear of much trouble with the foreign seamen?

E. No, we never went near Wickham or any of them places and that's where all the shipping come in to there.

J. There would have been a bit of black-bidding going on in those days.

E. Oh yes.

J. Did you hear much about it?

E. Not much, there used to be a big fellow, Black Harris, he used to swindle them onto the ships, but wasn't you know, not as I know of.

J. And do you know how he operated?

E. No, I suppose he operated with the hotels.

J. He'd frequent particular hotels?

E. Oh, I think Hudson's and the Bluebell, the Bluebell was a bad one, that's where the "ragged thirteen" used to hang around the Bluebell.

J. The Bluebell and Hudson's hotel.

E. Yes.

J. And what transport was there in the district then?

E. Oh, all the transport I know was horses, horse and sulkeys and carts, the buses drawn with horses - it was all horses used in them, there was no other transport.

J. And how would you get to Sydney in those days?

E. By boat, go down at 11 o'clock, go to - go aboard 11 o'clock and get into Sydney. daylight.

J. Do you remember what the fare would be?

E. No, very cheap, I know that now - I think I used to - I think I went for nothing. Used to be, I think so.

J. Do you remember what the street lighting was?

E. Ah, all I remember the street lighting was the lamps.

J. What sort of lamps?

E. Oh, I don't know what they were run with, a bloke used to come along with the oil on a stick and pull the little chain.

J. A lamplighter.

E. Yes.

J. It would probably be gas.

E. Gas I suppose it'd be.

J. And what sort of lighting did you have in the home?

E. We only had candles and kerosene lamps. That's all we had.

J. And what did you use for cooking?

E. A. The fuel stove, wood and coal.

J. How big was the house that you lived in?

E. How big was the house? Three bedrooms,

B x P

laundry. We used to bath in front of the stove with the galvanised tub.

J. What sanitary arrangements were there?

E. Sanitary? Oh just a cesspit.

J. After you left school, what did you do?

E. Nothing. Stopped home and did every jack of all trades - worked from when I got up till I went to bed.

J. And where did you do the shopping?

E. Lollington. Oh in Duffield's, and then from the foundry if there'd be any extra bills in we'd do some shopping with some of the, you know communicate with them and shop with them.

J. With the people who dealt with you at the foundry.

E. Yes.

J. And Banks - There was a bank handy, was there?

E. Oh, the bank we dealt with was the one at the bank corner, New South Wales.

J. Were there any Aborigines around Newcastle then?

E. Any what?

J. Aborigines.

E. Not as I know of the there could. I think the Aborigines of my time was more at Port Stephens because they used to come down there. I think they was more where you know where the water was, and I think there was more there. I never ever seen them. I have seen them on the station then going back.

J. Yes.

E. But I never heard of much of them.

J. And what did you do for entertainment?

E. Oh, only thing I know I got older and got a bit up, we used to go by boat up to Fern Bay and Tawago and them places picnicking there, no other, not much other. Go to the pictures you know - all outdoor pictures, no indoors, all outdoors. There wasn't much, oh people then still went to the races and the dogfights they used to have them with them.

J. And your parents had a place at the Lake.

E. Yes, we had a nice little place down at Belmont, it was very nice and we ended up there for ages, rain hail or shine, we went to Belmont.

J. How did you get there?

E. By sulkies. Had a rowing boat you know for fishing and we had a little punt, used to take us over to the point see, it was shallow where we were.

J. Which point would that be?

E. Oh, Belmont Point - right opposite Coal Point - right opposite - Oh, Markses Point, that one we could see Coal Point across from there.

J. And there were no Aborigines out there when you ...

E. No, I never ever known of some but they tell me that there was a terrible lot. We used to go across to the beaches at the back of where we were, right over to Comford, you know eh ...

J. Blacksmith's?

E. Yes, the beach and there were millions and millions of them cockleshells and they reckon that they was the blacks.

I don't know whether that's right but they said that's what it was, and we used to go down to Swansea fishing a lot, down to the channel, very good down there then it was.

J. Did you have much contact with your natural father during those years?

E. No, I never had much. I never had much contact with him. We used to go out and see him some - you know - sometimes, but it was a dirt track and it wasn't very good for travelling, but when he got old and finished up, he came in and lived with us, see.

J. And where was he living when you used to go and see him?

E. Where were we living?

J. No, where was he living when you used to go to see him?

E. We was living at Power st.

J. No - where was he living

note. (Mrs Woodbine is quite deaf.)

E. Where was he living?

J. Yes!

E. He was living at Warner's Bay - oh yes he was at Warner's Bay.

J. Could you tell me much about your courtship?

E. Not much - war was on - you didn't go very far. I met my husband and he was in the naval depot and guarding the ships and..

J. And what was his name?

E. Cecil Robert Woodbine.

* (correct name. Robert Cecil Woodbine).

J. And he was in the navy, and could you tell me anything of his family.

E. Oh, all I know about his father, he was a

wander at Watt St., his mother was a
laundress, and he worked there at one time
when he left school, but it was very short
lived for him, he didn't like it and I
think he went to Gilbert's, the big coach
works and went apprenticed to printing,
you know, for coaches and all things
like that, but that's all I really know
of them.

J. His family was associated with Wood's
Brewery too, weren't they?

E. Yes, that was on his mother's side, they
were Stow's, her father was the head
brewer at Wood's and he was also the
choir at the Presbyterian - the Methodist
Church, Hamilton.

J. And when were you married?

E. Oh 1st October, 1918.

J. And where was that.

E. Oh, at Hamilton - I don't know what
you call that chucker - it may be
Maitland Road, I should think, right
there near Steggle's. I don't know the
street. Methodist. Methodist church.

J. And where was your first matrimonial
home?

E. At home with my people, lived there
for a few months.

J. And what were the economic conditions
like then?

E. Oh, not very good, he never had much
work, never worked, went over to the
Dyke and worked there for a little while
and went another one from that on the
wharf but never kept nothing.

J. And where was your first child born?

E. Oh, Hankway St, Wrayfield.

J. And where were you living then?

J. And where were you living then?

E. At Islington, Power St.

J. And you left Islington after a short time.

E. Yes.

J. And what did you do then?

E. We went to Bradestown, along Lambton Road, started a bit of a milk run up; couple of cows and a bit of a cart and went around selling it; never got paid for the milk; the cows went dry and that ended that business. Well then we went from there, still on Lambton Road, Bradestown, up to Mr Beachie's, the pit manager's; he went up there for grass - he wasn't there long, ended up that lot, ended up then going back to Islington.

J. You sold the place at Bradestown?

E. Yes - oh we never got much for it, about five acres you know; land.

J. And when you went back to Islington you went back to your parents' place?

E. Yes, straight back to Power St. - yes.

J. And what did your husband do there?

E. Oh, selling a bit of fruit and vegies and anything you could get, not much.

J. From a cart - and your second home was born there?

E. Oh, - see one was born - oh Delma was born out at Bradestown, Lambton Road, - that's the second one.

J. Yes, and when was that?

E. August.

J. 1921.

E. yes.

J. And your third child was born when you came back to Eslington. Your second one was born at Charlestown, your third one was born when you came back to Eslington.

E. yes.

J. And which one was that - what was her name?

E. Louis - Louis was born in February

J. What year?

E. I wouldn't know.

J. 1924.

E. I wouldn't know - I'm very bad at those.

J. And after a short stay at Eslington again you went to Merewether.

E. yes.

J. Under what circumstances did you go there?

E. Very poor, we was on our own it was much better. We was on our own at Charlestown - ex Merewether, and we had another son born there, Mary St. Merewether and he's in September. Don't ask me the year because I wouldn't know.

J. And how did you come to get the place at Merewether?

E. Well, dad took - the one that reared me - he gave me a bit of money when I was married and he rigged me up - sent me to the timber mill some place up Gloucester way and we got a bit at that, built the place and that was that, so it was liveable and all in it never cost us much, somewhere, had no worry.

J. And about how the fruit and vegetables

your husband had a few chooks too.

E. Yes, we had a few chooks in the yard, they were all pretty good, they were all pretty well bred, and they were - held, been in a Wairland egg coop, thing, and run a Autumn to Spring trophy and that ended that bit of that, we ended up them with that - finished up.

J. And after some years there, about 1932, you moved out to Toronto.

E. Yes.

J. And what did you do there?

E. Poultry farming, we tried that out. We was living in my brother-in-law's house to see if it was going to be payable until we got on and then we sold our house and the land-house and built our place out here along...

J. About how many layers would you have had?

E. 3000 to 4000, but that wasn't always. We had to gradually bring them to that. When we first went there, each season would be so many chickens see, bring them up, sell the hens, keep the pullets. We began to do all right.

J. There was no laid on water?

E. No laid on water, we had a couple of tanks and we had wells at the end of the sheds to get the water.

J. And you had to carry the feed by hand?

E. Yes, three times a day we fed them and then we gave them lucerne for dinner again. Beside that, collected the eggs twice a day. That's all of them.

J. And when you collected the eggs?

E. Twice a day.

J. What did you do with the eggs then?

B. Put them into the Marketing Board. Carrier used to come twice a week.

J. You had to clean them and pack them?

B. Pack them, yes, we never graded them.

J. You grew your own lucerne?

B. Yes, we grew our own lucerne.

J. And you cut it up with a hand chaffcutter.

B. Yes, with a chaffcutter.

J. You had a son born when you were on the farm.

B. Yes.

J. Which one was that.

B. Donald.

J. And that would be about 1934.

B. About that.

J. During the years of the depression did you ever get the dole?

B. No, never.

J. Did you apply for it?

B. Yes, when Don was born I applied for endowment and they said I couldn't get it. I couldn't get a penny.

J. Because of your income?

B. Yes. They said no.

J. Where did you get your stock feed and groceries from?

B. Frith's. J. B. Frith's in Toronto.

J. They were the local merchants?

B. Yes, groceries and everything we got from Frith's.

J. And how did you arrange payment?

B. We had to wait 'til we got our eggboard cheque. We never had one thing coming in and we had to wait 'til we got that and then we used to give them the cheque. Sometimes we got nothing out

of it, sometimes we got something back.

J. Was there a doctor in Toronto when you went there?

E. No, no doctor.

J. Where did you have to go for a doctor?

E. I think you'd go to Lenalva.

J. And what about chemists?

E. Oh - no chemist.

J. About 1946 you sold the farm at Toronto West and moved to another farm about a mile out of Toronto, and you started up there again.

E. Yes.

J. Eggfarming again.

E. Yes.

J. In a much smaller way.

E. Very small.

J. And you didn't continue that operation very long.

E. No.

J. That ceased about 1955, and about 1959 the Department of Education commenced.

E. Yes - took the land off the back of the house, right across.

J. And what was that for?

E. To build the High School.

J. And your husband died in 1960.

whilst that was still under resumption

E. That's right, yes.

J. And you've been on your own ever since.

E. And I never got any money from the land for four years after it was sold to them.

J. And what did you live on during that time?

E. What we got from the farm out along Awaba Road, we lived on that. And I

never got a pension until oh, I think it'd be easy eighteen months after he died when I got the pension.

J. And you enjoy reasonably good health.

E. Yes.

J. Toronto must be a good place to live.

E. It's too. Happiest place I've ever lived at. Never had much money but have happiness.

J. In 1887 a pamphlet advertising land at Toronto predicted that a person dwelling on Toronto Estate, say three months in a year, adds 20% to his life. That prediction seems to have been realised in your case.

...

J. Do you think it's the lake air that...

E. I think so. I think you get a different person as you get older. You realise more of life. I do honestly.

J. Well you've just had your 95th birthday.

E. Yes.

J. And you're as fit as a fiddle.

E. Everybody says I am. Man that came with the meals on wheels on Wednesday said "Absolutely 95 and not out" he said "By gum" he said "That's something"

J. Mrs. Woodhine, thank you for your time.

E. Thank you.

Recording made at Toronto 11th June 1989.
John Lewis.

Part C.

Summary

of.

Interview

of

Elizabeth Woodbine.

Elizabeth Woodbine.
Glimpses of the Past from 95 years on.

Elizabeth Woodbine, born at Islington on 7th June, 1894, has not had an easy life. Her mother died ten days after accouchment; her first stepmother died when Elizabeth was about seven years old, and her first born child died aged seven years. Recessions, depressions and a long struggle for survival brought many changes to her family circumstances. From 95 years on, Elizabeth recalls some of those experiences.

On the death of her mother, Elizabeth was fostered by her paternal uncle, Nicholas Carpenter, who operated an iron foundry in Power Street, Islington, and his wife Matilda. Matilda had two adult children from a previous marriage, so Elizabeth grew up within an adult environment. On Matilda's death, when Elizabeth was aged about seven years, her uncle remarried. A much younger woman, Ida, the new stepmother immediately apprised Elizabeth of the family structure. Until that time Elizabeth had believed that her step-parents were her natural parents.

Elizabeth attended Islington Public School where she completed primary grades, after which she remained at home in domestic service.

The family home was of wooden construction, three bedrooms, parlour, dining room, kitchen and laundry. There was no bathroom.

Kerosene lamps and candles provided the lighting, and a solid fuel stove heating and cooking facilities.

Elizabeth married Robert Cecil Woodbine.

a nurse rating, on 1st October, 1918. They lived
at the bride's paternal home, Economic
Portsmouth were declining and they had
several successive jobs. Their first job
Robert was born at Solihull in 1919. After
after they bought five acres at Sutton Road
Erdington and began a small dairy affair
soon after. Their second child, Norma, was
born here, in 1921. Beech started as a
stable groom for a time manager at
Erdington for a short time.
The estate was sold and the family
returned to Solihull, the parental home,
from where Beech began a fruit and vegetable
garden with a horse and cart. The third child,
Igor, was born at Solihull in 1924.
The family then bought a block of ground
from the Duke, in Mary Street, Worcester,
with a house there and continued the
fruit and vegetable work, combined with
a small number of poultry. A fourth
child, Alan, was born there in 1926, and
the firstborn, Robert, died aged seven.
In 1932 the Worcester property was sold
and a 14 acre allotment was purchased
between Leicestershire and Avon. A house was
built, and the family began poultry plots
and began egg farming. Over a period of
14 years the farm was developed and
poultry brought, chickens, geese and ducks.
Igor, another son, Donald, was born here
in 1937.

A final name was made in 1946

relief or child employment

family never received unemployment

the movement was difficult years the

When the Toronto West farm was sold and a 5 acre block was purchased one mile west of Toronto township. Another egg farm was established on a small scale. That operation ceased in 1955. The property, excepting the Awaba Road frontage, was resumed by the Department of Education in 1959 to establish the Toronto High School.

Elizabeth's husband, Cecil, died in 1960; her eldest daughter, Delma, died in 1983, and in 1987 and again in 1988 she underwent major abdominal surgery. Living alone, she enjoys relatively good health, pottering in the yard and garden. Elizabeth considers her life to have been unexceptional.

Past. ID.

Essay

of

Theme of Interview

of

Elizabeth Woodhewer.

Theme

Glimpses of the Past.
From 95 Years On.

Newcastle and Toronto

It was passed after 1900. Formerly laws
were loose.

A group of citizens met in 1865 under the
management of an individual to form a company
to manufacture and distribute gas in Newcastle.
On 2nd December 1866 an act to incorporate the
City of Newcastle Gas and Coke Company (Limited)
was enacted. A pit of 1 acre 3 rods at
Perth was purchased in that street from
the A.H. Company in March 1866. By December
1867 gas was being supplied to private houses
and public edifices; street lighting from
December 31st 1875; gas cooking in the 1890s. A
larger works was erected at Light Street
Stamilton, in 1913, and marketing of S.F.G. in
Cylinder, began in 1969, amalgamation with
the A.G.L. Company in 1979 and changeover to
natural gas occurred in 1982.

December 1885 marked the commencement
of Newcastle's reticulated water supply, built from
hydrocarbons obtained from water from wells
in Newcastle Macquarie, shared by the people
after was taken from sewage in time of drought
periods in 1875-1877, when citizens petitioned
the government to provide a water supply
system for the district.

A scheme was proposed in 1875 to utilize the
natural gas as a source. This was rejected.
In 1877 the government commenced an
engineer to design a system to supply water to
Perth, and Newcastle suburbs. The relevant

2. See also, e.g. Shipping Masters of the Newcastle Coast
1969. Pp. 2-66. Passim.
3. That 100 years of the City of Newcastle has and

Chimpoa Site the Past

Key glimpses at the evolution of a district, Aconcagua settlement, in particular huerfano and Cerro, with attention to the supply of cereals to meet the demands of the communities and the effects of the depression on these communities.

The site of Huerfano was discovered in 1797 by Lieutenant Orellana which looking for edaphic terraces. Orellana named the Hunter River after Governor Hunter, but for many years it was known as Coe River. In 1801 the first settlement was established at Coe River to harvest coal. Energy generator, a surveyor, wrote such a serious message over that to start to arrive in this fine harbor, the hearing of the river through one report the other, breaking with that noise on the steep rocks of the site (hobby) and generally rolling in to the points of the opposite shore, medicinal with care the most intricate manner.

The settlement was abandoned in 1802, in March 1802, under the command of Lieutenant Muzia, the settlement was re-established and in 1813 work began on the building of a freshwater between valleys below and beyond. Construction was difficult and expensive and the work was not completed until 1816, when Huerfano was declared a free port

Huerfano was a difficult port to enter, and many ships were wrecked, up until 1921, there were 243 ships wrecked in the area of these

municipalities adopted the scheme in November 1877. With changes of government, political procrastination and shortage of capital, it was three years before the scheme was authorised in October 1880, and another five years of droughts and epidemics before water flowed into the Newcastle reservoir in December, 1885.⁴ But it was not until 1911-13 that there was widespread expansion of the water and sewerage services to the general community. Within the current Water Board area there is a population of 410,000 of which 96.5% have water supplied and 82% have sewerage.⁵

Electricity became available in Newcastle on 1st January, 1892, when the Newcastle City Council built a power generating plant in Sydney Street. The station was extended in 1912 and decommissioned in the early 1950s.⁶ The Railways Department built a generating plant at Zaara Street in 1920. This became Newcastle's main power source until the mid 1950s. Taken over by the State Electricity Commission in 1953, its output was reduced when Wangi came into operation and demolition began in 1977 and was completed in 1978. The Hunter Region now produces 88% of the State's electricity and supplies 200,000 regional consumers.⁷

Newcastle at the turn of the century was an impoverished settlement of about 45,000. Two

4. Jones, Glennie. The Movement for Newcastle's First Water Supply 1875-1885. 1967 p.9.

5. The Hunter Valley Research Foundation
This is Newcastle and the Hunter Region 1989. p.60

6. Newcastle. Herald. 4.1.86.

7. The Hunter Valley Research Foundation This is... p.60-61.

in fine were under 15 years of age; 30% of all deaths were children under one year, the average infant mortality rate was 143 per 1000 deaths. Food was scarce, children were suffering from malnutrition. Of the population, 40% lived in houses of 4 rooms, without bathrooms, and lacking sanitation and water supply. Doctor John Harris reported that in 1903 poverty was greater than 20 years previously. ⁸

By the 1920's the population had doubled, and economic conditions had worsened. Thousands of families were close to starvation and whole communities of shanty towns had sprung up in the suburbs, notably at Adamstown Rifle Range, Stockton, Carrington, Jesmond, Platts Estate and Horseshoe Beach. Some of these communities remained into the 1950's. ⁹

Lake Macquarie was discovered by accident. The 30 ton schooner "Martha" under the command of Captain William Reid left Port Jackson in July 1800 for a cargo of coal from Coal River. Reid mistook the entrance to Lake Macquarie, then undiscovered, for the Hunter River. He found coal in abundance and returned laden to Port Jackson where he learned of his mistake. The location was then named "Reid's Mistake" ¹⁰

Reverend Shuckold, in 1825, established an Aboriginal mission on a 10,000 acre grant located north of Reid's Mistake and encompassing

8. Ashely, J. B. Newcastle, The Making of an Australian City. 1983. p. 222-223.

9. Grey, Shelagh. Newcastle in the Great Depression. 1984. pp. 12, 17-19.

10. Clouten Keith, Reid's Mistake 1967. p. 10.

Belmont Bay. The mission house, was located where the Belmont township is now sited. The mission, for various reasons, was abandoned in mid 1828.

Governor Neilson granted Thielkeld 1280 acres of land in 1829 on the opposite side of the lake, comprising the area known then as Desahbambah or Punte, and now known as Toronto and Coal Point. Thielkeld named the grant Ebenezer, and began mining coal at Coal Point in 1841. (11)

The opening of the main railway line in 1877 aroused new interest in the Punte estate. A hotel opened that year on Mulberry Hill and the estate was renamed Toronto after the Canadian city of that name on Lake Ontario.

In 1891 the Excelsior Land and Investment Company obtained a franchise to build a standard gauge railway between Fassifern and Toronto. Varied means of locomotion were employed including a horse drawn trolley. Engines used were the "Loffa Pot", "Pygmy" and Steam Motor No. 67A. The line reverted to the railways in 1911. (12)

The outstanding pioneering businessman in Toronto was Thomas Charles Smith. Mr Smith opened a store in Becharoo on 1st January 1900. Six years later he took over a store in Tealpa, and in 1924, he opened a general store in the Boulevard, Toronto, now operated by third generation Smiths. T. C. Smith was active in local government, church and social

11. Ibid p. 33.

12. Newcastle Morning Herald. 5.8.1971.

affairs. He is credited with founding the State Ambulance Service. The firm established the first pharmacy in Toronto and made available premises for the first doctor and dentist, and premises for a bank and a police station. ⁽¹³⁾

Following Threlkeld's mining enterprise in 1841, distinct mining has continued. Other activities since then have included fishing, fish canning, sugar-milling, boat building including housecraft construction, orchards, brew factory, charcoal burning, tea tree oil distillation, timber, power generation, egg production and eckered farming.

Census figures for 1986 show Newcastle population as 129,490 and Toronto 16,355. ⁽¹⁴⁾ Both areas have undergone great evolutionary changes in industry, commerce, and lifestyle to accommodate the changing economic circumstances, and regional society has shown its resilience by successfully adapting to the changes.

13. Lake Macquarie Herald 12-3-70.

14. The Hunter Valley Research Foundation Hist. p121.

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