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Cassay, Writter, N.Y.

Grade VIII

Ida Blayck Fraser

Hopewell

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Hopewell is a small but pretty village situated on the West Branch of the East River. A little less than a half century ago Hopewell was called "Melltown", on account of a large grist mill being the most prominent industry of the place. This mill was built by a Mr Duff, a Scotchman, who afterwards sold it to a Mr Alexander Fraser, afterwards called "Squire Fraser", a name much honoured in that time. Mr Fraser remained here for a number of years, and built the house now occupied by Miss Anne Gray. He then sold his farm-house and mill to Mr Donald Gray, grandfather of the present Grays, now residing on either side of the river. The village (property) at that time was composed of an iron forger, Mr. Mack, a saddler by trade, and a leather by profession, and whose descendants now live in Antigonish, John Falconer (big), a blacksmith, Duncan Falconer, tanner, John Gunn, shoemaker, (afterwards post-master for over forty years), Hector McLeod, (a general merchant), and Wahlen McQuinn.

shrewaker, and violinist. Who afterwards moved to Stebban, where some of his descendants still live. There, his layers were soon surrounded with a dozen or more pioneer families all of whom were Scotchmen. Donald Gray (brg), and his sons, Thomas Muir and his sons, John Grant, Alexander Barclay, Duncan Mc Donald (red), Hector Mc Donald (Mac Duncan), Alexander Mc Donald, Duncan Mc Donald (Doctor), John Mc Lean (red), Donald Mcintosh and his sons Charles and Falconer, Alexander Fraser (tailor), and Donald Fraser (tailor). With three exceptions the descendants of these men still occupy the old home. The next addition to the village was a Mr. Rae, who conducted a general store and a Mr. Gordon, a blacksmith and a blacksmith by trade. His blacksmith shop was on a level east of the present Post Office, and his dwelling house where Mr. Levanagh's house now stands. He lived here for over twenty years, and then removed to Quinapoh, where he still

Mr. Leod, a Scotchman, also the father of the
present conservative members for Cumberland
had kept a general store in the house now
occupied by James W. McDonald, and it was
he who gave the village of "Melltown" the name
of "Kirkwell". At this time the villagers and all
the surrounding districts were Presbyterians, but
as there were two bodies of that name, "Kirk"
and "Cartersburgh", they each had a minister,
but only one church, and thus they occupied
turn about. The church was on a site a few
yards from where the present St. Columba
Church now stands. The Kirk minister was the
Rev. John McRae, who lived on the farm now
owned by Samuel Henry Hopewell, and the
other minister was the Rev. James McRae
who lived and died at Springville. In the year
1745 there was a disagreement in the Kirk
Church in Scotland which extended and affected
the churches here. Rev. McRae resigned. A few
months later the congregation decided to have
their own church of their own, so in the year 1755

They began building the present Union Church,
and the other people a few years later built
the present St. Columbia Church. Rev. John
W. Remson then became minister of the Union
Church. He gave twenty dollars annually out
of his own salary to discontinue liquor selling
in the place. He was minister of the Union
Church for nineteen years. Then he returned to
Scotland where he died about fifteen years ago.
The first minister of the Irish congregation was
the Rev. Simon Mc Gregor, M. A. it was he who
named the St. Columbia Church. In a few years
he also went to Scotland, and was in charge of
a church there for twenty-five years. He resigned
later on account of ill-health. The two congregations
at present have had five ministers since — Mr. J. W.
Galbraith, Mrs. Melville, Mrs. Nutman, and now
Mr. J. J. O'Connell. The Union Church has had three — Mr.
W. J. O'Connell, Mr. Fraser, and now Mr. J. J. Nichol.
In 1866 new residents were coming into
the place and the Irish were very much. The

Intercolonial Railway was built in 1855, and
 the ~~Station House~~ House in the same year. At this
 time a woollen factory was in operation and
 employed over thirty hands, also a brickyard.
 There were six general stores, and a tannery
 owned by the late Henry J. Leach, later on a
 second tannery and also a spool factory were
 in operation. For a time everything seemed very
 hopeful, but the spool factory soon failed,
 and the woollen mill was turned down, and
 this caused a lull in the business of the
 village. About this time the rum-seller began
 his trade and still continues it. In the year
 1867, Francis Arthur was in Hopewell for a few
 hours, he was on his way to hunt and fish
 in the mountains, and he was accompanied by
 Indian guides. They were ~~at the~~ at
 the entrance of the station, and there was an
 address given by the Rev Simon J. & Regor. Mrs
 (Mrs) M. Mason who was an Edinburgh lady
 reported that if Hopewell should ever be large
 enough to name its streets, that the street from

White Cottage (which was then her home) to the
 upper end of the village, would be named
 Prince Arthur Street in honour of his being
 here. Lord Macarthur was in Hopewell also on
 a hunting expedition. From the six pioneer
 families there are now five hundred and ninety
 eight inhabitants, and from the few houses
 there are now sixty-one houses. The same
 doctor has been living here thirty-five years.
 There are only two of the second generation now
 living — Mrs John Gray, and Mrs Murdoch
 McLean, and only five of the third, the oldest
 men in the village now are Mr Enou McDonald,
 Mr John McDonald (Nector), Mr John McDonald
 (Laid), Mr Peter McPhee, and Dr Macdonald.
 The school house was built when the village
 was small, it was a log building with a chimney
 between the logs filled with snow, and a chimney
 or fire-place to heat it. Some of the first
 teachers were the late Peter Ross Esq, Alexander
 McKeig, afterwards Rev, and some others. The first
 school house was a frame building on the level

between the present school house and Mr. Dugan's
summer's house. The late Rector Mr. Keizer of
Stellarton taught there for a number of years, the
late Daniel Mc Donald (afterwards Inspector of schools)
and many others. About the year 1850 the present
school house was built and a number of years
later the second part was built and for a time
they employed two teachers but now employ one