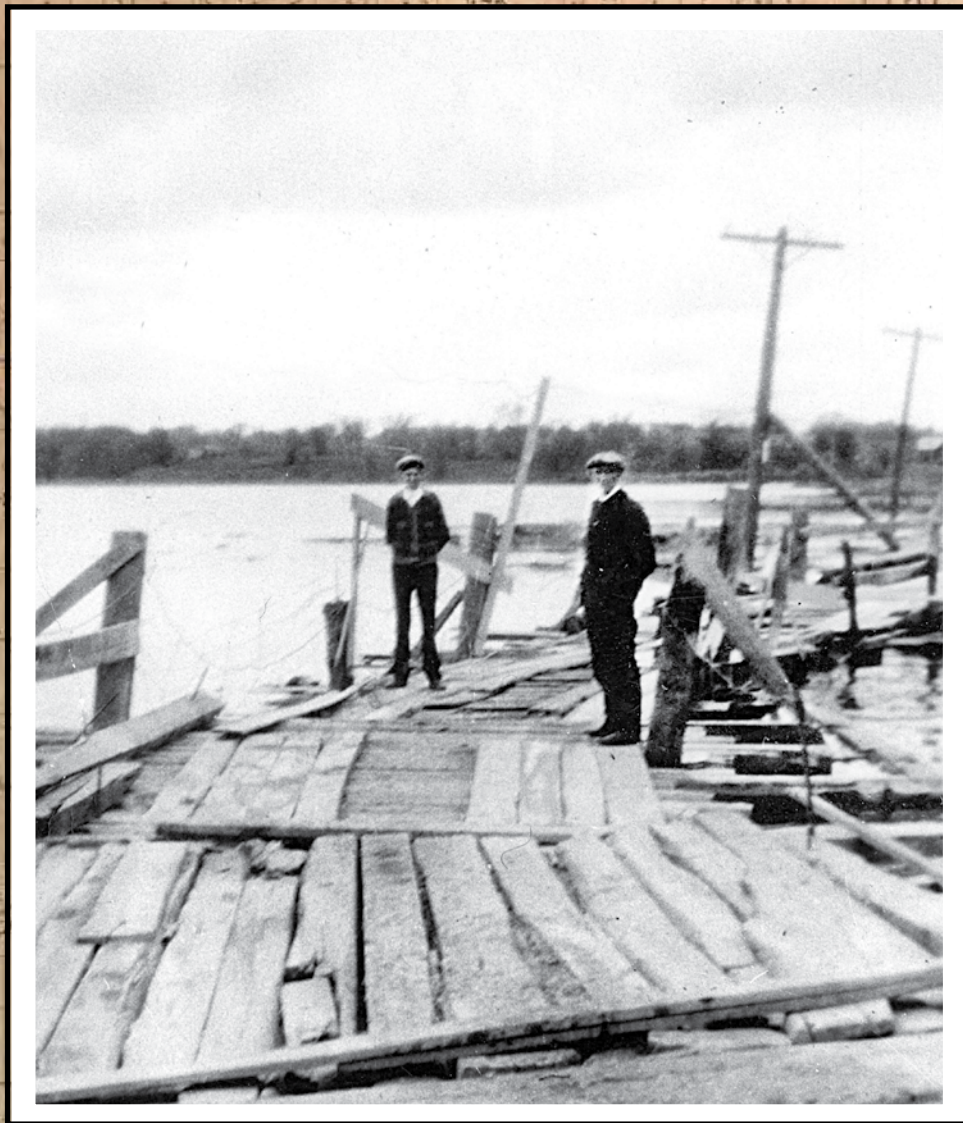


THE SCUGOG FLOATING BRIDGE



By J. Peter Hvidsten

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



Lake Scugog's Floating Bridge

By J. Peter Hvidsten

The first bridge to link
Port Perry with Scugog Island
was rickety, unstable,
and unreliable, but
it was agreed by all, that the
floating bridge was
better than no bridge at all.

The Scugog Bridge / Causeway

Researched and Published by J. Peter Hvidsten

Published - September 2017

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To contact publisher: 905-985-3089 Cell: 905-449-6690
email: jpeterhvidsten@gmail.com

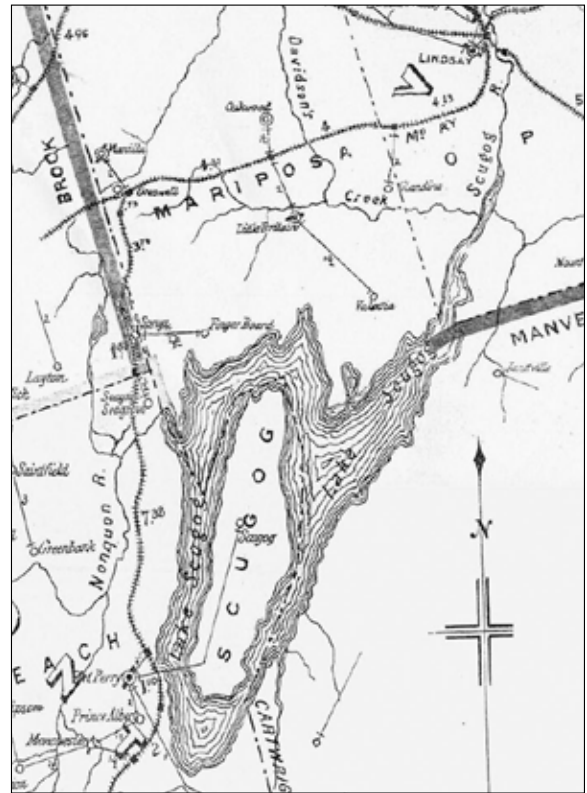
Before The Bridge

LONG BEFORE Lake Scugog was formed, and the Scugog Bridge was built, the lake we see today was primarily a dense marsh between the mainland and Scugog Island, with a narrow river winding its way north through a thick, lush carpet of rice fields and tamarack bush all the way to Lindsay.

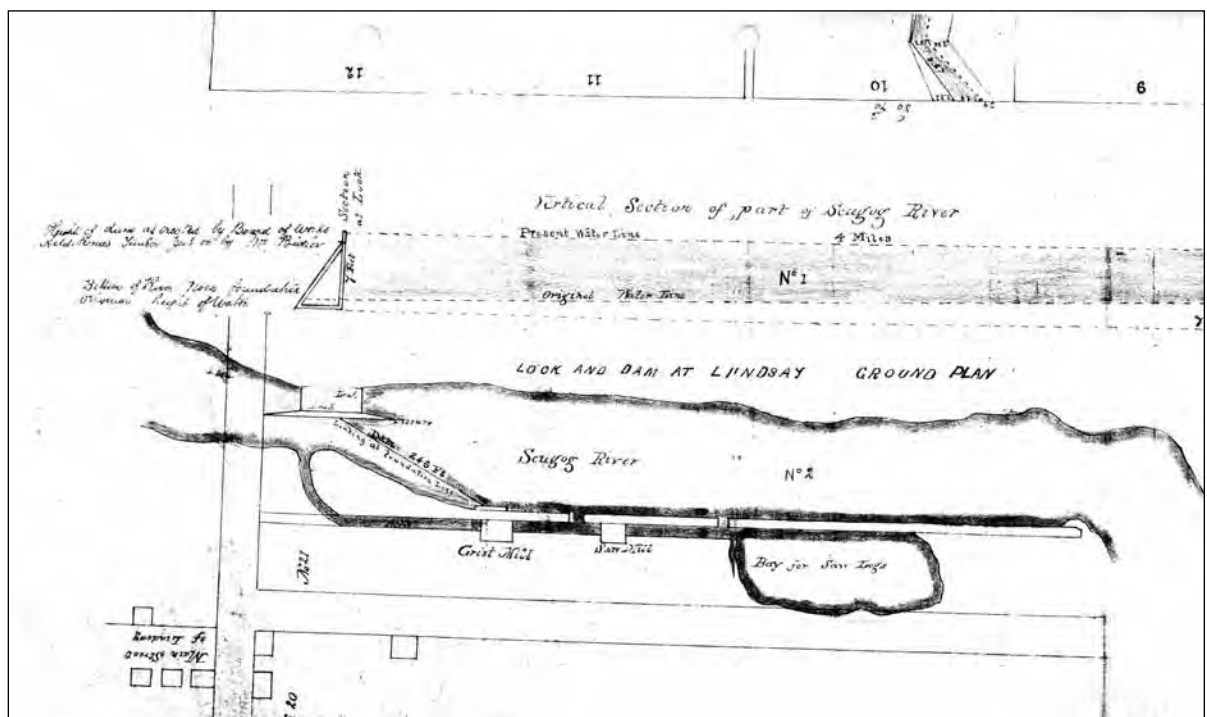
This all changed when William Purdy constructed a dam at what is now Lindsay. Purdy entered into an agreement with the government to build a saw mill and a grist mill on the Scugog River. Purdy's dam and the saw mill were completed by September, 1828. The water eventually filled the millpond to capacity in April, 1829. As the water finally reached the top of the dam, the pressure of the spring floods was too much for the structure. The dam broke. It took another year to rebuild. Thus the saw mill finally began its service in the spring of 1830.

The construction of Purdy's dam changed the entire face of the region. His original 1828 dam raised the level of the water ten feet. In 1829, the final dam was built at seven feet above the original water level. This raised water in the entire Lake Scugog basin by seven feet, thus doubling the surface area of the original lake and killing thousands of mature trees and flooding land.

The Purdy dam had backed the waters of the Scugog over some 60,000 acres of land adjacent to river and lake. The forest was drowned out, all



This 1871 map shows how Lake Scugog flows along the Scugog River into Lindsay where Purdy's Mill was located.



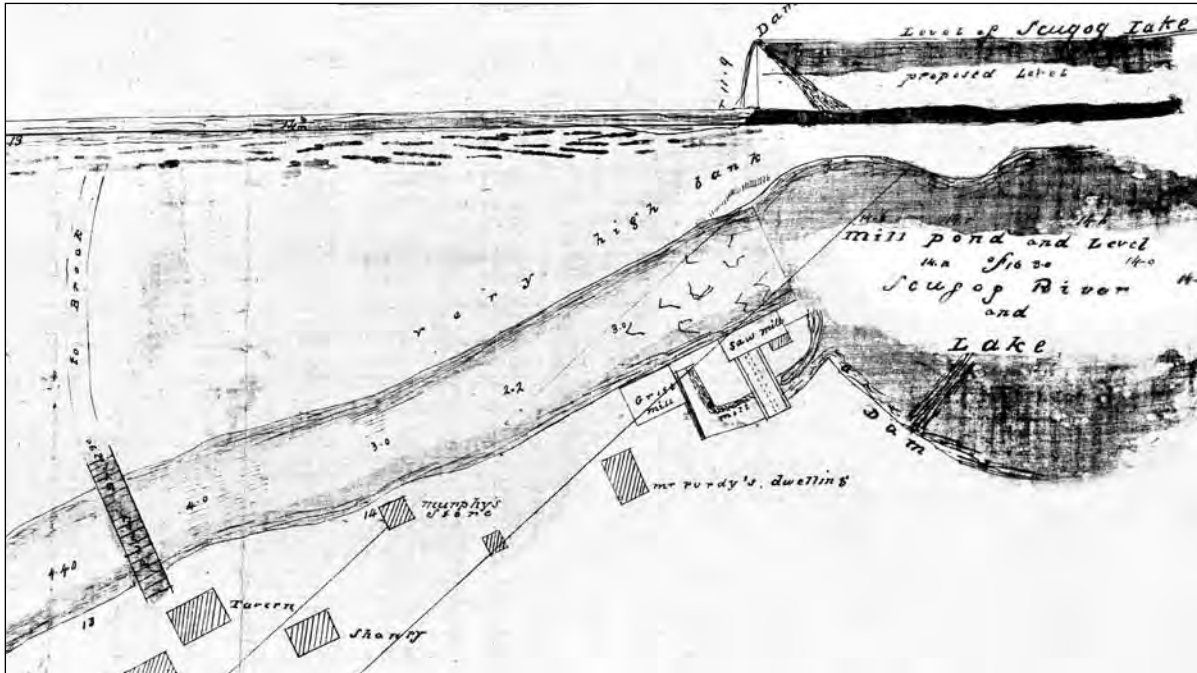
Plan of the new locks and dam to be constructed at Lindsay about 1842.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

vegetation rotted, and a plague of fever and ague carried off nearly one-third, of the population. There were hardly enough well men left to bury the dead.

Over the next ten years, Lindsay and the dam was subject to a series of armed invasions, the first coming in 1837. The second invasion came a year later a great band of farmers gathered, armed themselves with flint locks, pitchforks and axes. They marched to Lindsay and hacked away part of the dam.

The government meantime was planning a lock at Lindsay for navigation purposes and it was arranged that a new dam, situated in the present location, would serve both lock and mill. Dam and lock were begun about 1838, let lapse for a time, and finally completed in 1844.



Plan of the new locks and dam to be constructed at Lindsay about 1842.



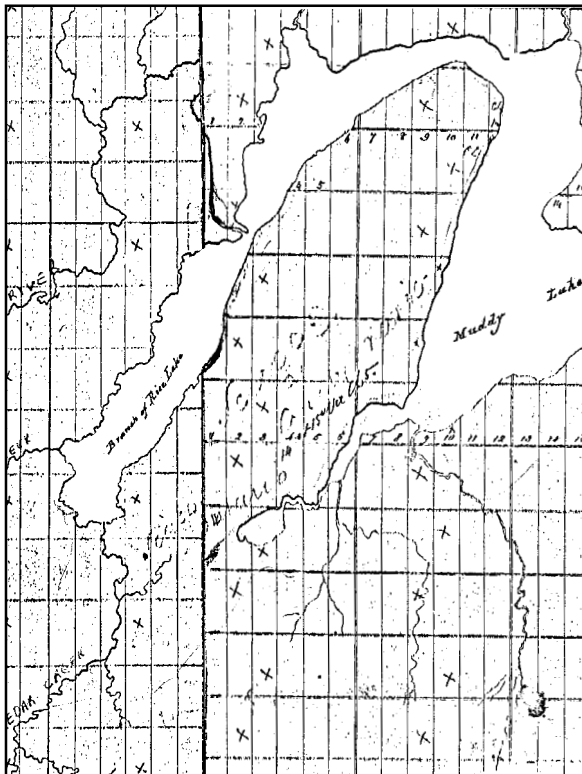
The old dam and locks at Lindsay, Ontario late 1800s, with Purdy's old mill to the right of picture.

The Scugog Floating Bridge

SCUGOG ISLAND as we know it today, was not always surrounded by a large body of water. In fact, for much of the early part of the 19th century, what is now referred to as Lake Scugog was little more than a shallow, murky river, meandering north through thick swamps and muddy bogs.

The formation of the Island came into being as the result of flooding caused by a man-made dam being erected near Lindsay on the Scugog River. The resulting floods isolated the high land, which until then was considered part of both Reach and Cartwright Townships, creating an entity of its own ... Scugog Island.

The dam, which known as Purdy's Dam, was the creation of William and Hassard Purdy, brothers who had entered into a contract with the government of the day to build lumber and grist mills along the Scugog River.



Samuel Wilmot's surveys of Reach Township (1809-1810) and Cartwright Township (1816).



This map of the Lake Scugog region of 1851 appears to show a road going straight east from Prince Albert through what is now the marshlands at the south end of Lake Scugog.

After constructing their dam, high water and floods burst and destroyed the dam during the spring of 1829. Undaunted, the Purdy's constructed a new ten foot dam in early 1830, which resulted in the flooding of thousands of acres of land along the banks of the river all the way south to the Scugog basin. Along with the flooding of huge tracts of tamarack bush, hundreds of acres of land just cleared by new settlers were swallowed by the rising water.

The settlers, upset by their losses, repeatedly objected to the dam and petitioned the government, using every legal means to have it removed, but failed in every attempt. By 1838 a deadly fever swept through the area killing a large number of people, and it was speculated it was due largely to the increased numbers of insects that infected the flooded land.

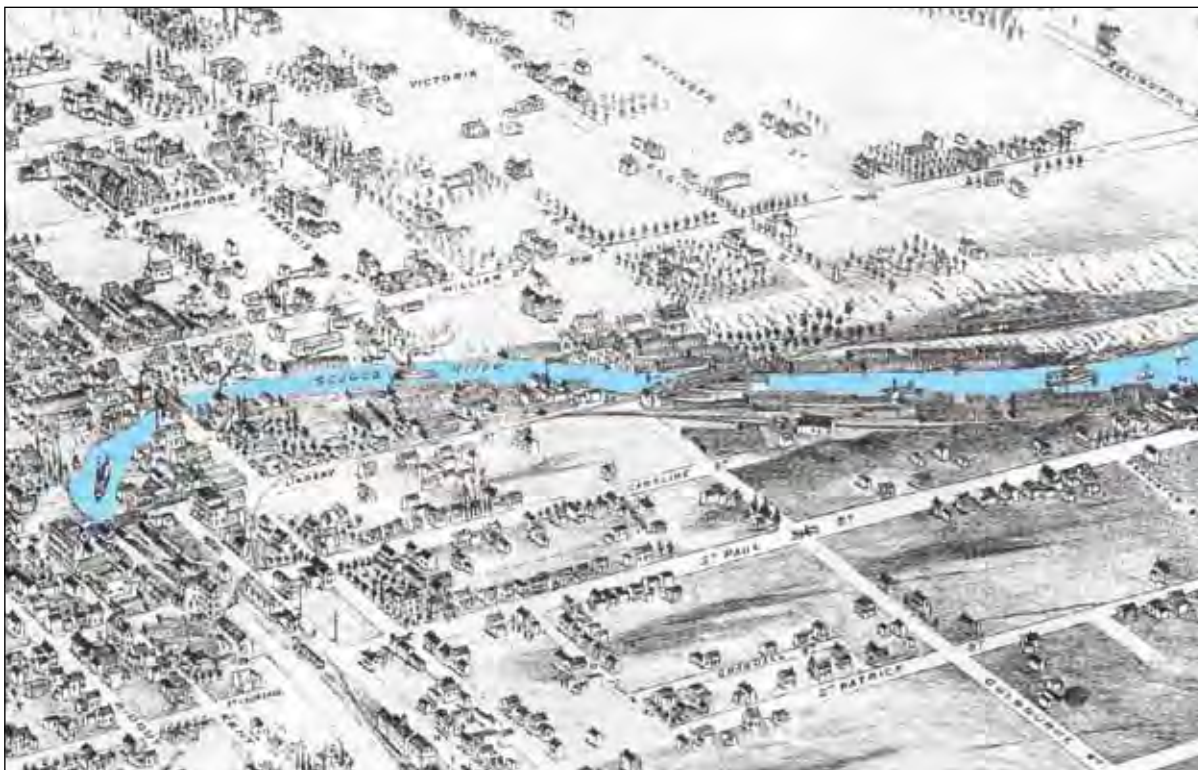
Purdy's Dam remained and Lake Scugog became a permanent feature of the area as new settlers arrived and the spread of settlements on Scugog Island and Reach Township increased over the next decade. But the newly formed lake, and the marsh around it, created plenty of traffic problems for those early settlers.

Boats and barges were operated during the summer season for travel between the mainland and the Scugog Island, and in the winter, travel to and from the Island was often across the frozen lake. This hazardous method

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



The dam and locks as they looked at Lindsay about 1899. This was the location of Purdy's Dam of 1830.



This birds-eye view of Lindsay shows the Scugog River winding its way past the locks and dam into the town.

The first rigs to pass over the floating bridge formed a funeral procession.

John Jackson had fallen from a load of hay and was killed. He and brother David had been working on the Island about five or six years when the accident happened.

The floating bridge was not quite complete, and several loose planks had to be laid on the stringers so that the body could be taken for burial in Pine Grove Cemetery

*From On The Shores of Scugog
By Samuel Farmer - 1913*



Horse teams used to cross lake during the winter.

of travel, often ended in tragedy as horses and wagons broke through the ice, especially in the early spring.

One such case was reported when a team of horses crossing the ice on Scugog Lake, hauling a load of maple lumber to J.B.



James S. Gamble

Lazier's factory, broke through the ice, and team, load and driver all went down. The team shot right under the ice and were both drowned, but the teamster was pulled from the freezing water by an Indian who was riding with him on the load.

It wasn't until after the formation of the County of Ontario in 1852 that talk of constructing a bridge across the south end of the lake began. The first request came in 1854 from John Snook and other inhabitants of Scugog Island to construct a bridge from the Island to the mainland.

During the January 1855 session of council, Joseph Reader and J.S. Gamble of Scugog Township, requested a grant to aid in the erection of a floating bridge across Lake Scugog between Reach and Scugog Island.

In September that year, at the urging of more than two-thirds of the residents of the United Townships of Reach and Scugog, council enacted a bylaw to raise the sum of £500 to wards "defraying the expense of construction a bridge across part of Lake Scugog between the Island of Scugog and the Township of Reach."

An advertisements, published on June 9, 1855 in a Whitby newspaper (*right*) requesting the increase in assessment, shows the name of those who favoured the action.

Reach and Scugog were governed by one council at this time, so the inhabitants of the Township of Scugog also requested to be separated from the Township of Reach, which the County undertook to do.

With this accomplished, the inhabitants of Scugog were determined to gain easy access to Reach Township, so once again petitioned the County for a bridge to be constructed between the 5th and 6th Concessions of Reach to Scugog Island.

To the Reeve and Municipal Councilors of the United Townships of Reach and Scugog.

WE whose names are undersigned, being upwards of Two-thirds of the resident Freeholders and Householdors rated on the Assessment roll of the United Townships of Reach and Scugog, representing in value upwards of one-half of the rateable property of the township of Scugog, do hereby request that a Bye Law may be passed by your Council under the provisions of an act passed in the sixteenth year of her Majesty's reign, and intituled "An Act to amend the Municipal Acts of Upper Canada," for levying by assessment on all of the rateable property within that part of the United townships of Reach and Scugog, which is situate within the bounds of the Township of Scugog, in addition to all other taxes, to be rated on such property the sum of five hundred pounds, for the purpose of defraying the expense of constructing a bridge across that part of Lake Scugog, which is situate between the lands in the township of Reach, and the lands in the township of Scugog, on the line between the fifth and sixth concessions, and that the said bye-law may be passed and the rate imposed be placed by the Clerk of your Municipality on the Collectors roll for the united Townships aforesaid, so that the same may be collected and paid over by the Collector to the proper parties before the expiration of the present year.

Dated this thirtieth day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five.

Joseph Reader, George Snook, John Snook, Robert English, Paul English, Aron Thompson, Wm. Rodman, Stephen Savill, Isaac Rodman, Henry Rodman, Lyman Savage, Andrew Oraer, Robert McKinley, Henry Coal, Joel Alldredge, John J. Fray, John Frayr, Paul Frayr, Thomas Finlay, Silvester Hadley, John Jackson, Charles Harper, Willis W. Cook, Nathaniel Thorn, Elbridge Foster, Solomon Freelick, Robert Gambol, Hector Williams, Arnold Kester, Charles Nesbit, Asa Burk, Asa Rogers, Jacob Burnham, Joseph Reader, Sen'r., Henry Smith, Wm. H. Foy, John Foy, Noah Sargent, D. Williams, John Henry, Stephen G. Pickel, William Reader, Jacob Pickel, J. W. Gamble, William Sweetman, Frederic Vinsen, James Dalton, John Bumby, William Burr, William Taylor, John Saddler, John Sweetman, James Sweetman, Rt. Crawford, Samuel Waketord, John Tupper, Joseph Thorn, Joseph G. Shell, Ezra W. Gambill, Samuel Burr, Joseph Green, E. Gerry, Aron Thompson.

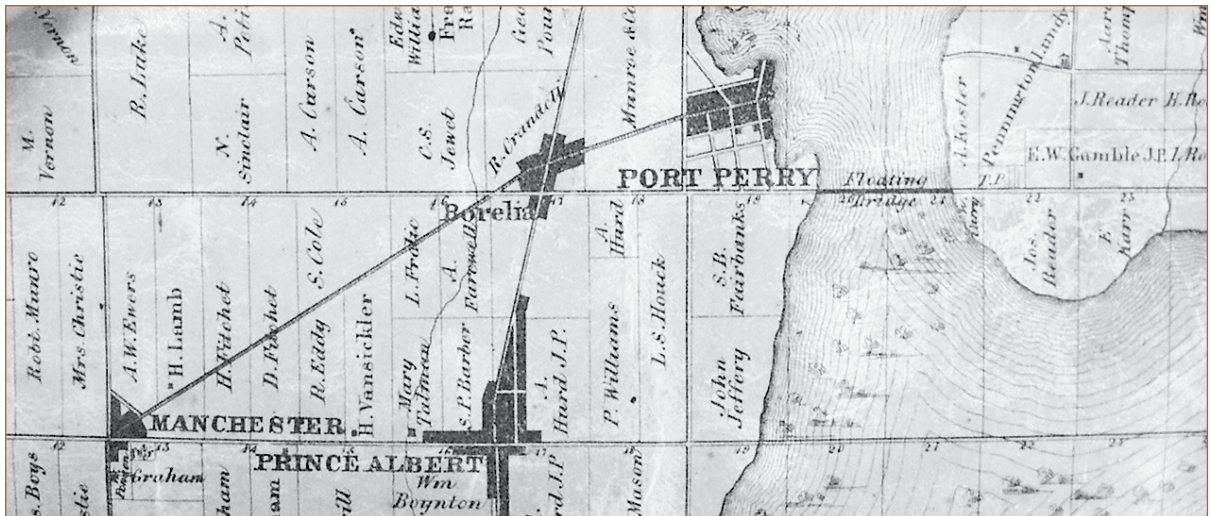
9th June, 1855.

3-111

Port Perry Floating Bridge



Looking west along the Port Perry to Scugog Island floating bridge during the early 1870s.



This 1860 Temaine map of Ontario County shows the "floating bridge" crossing the south end of the Lake Scugog near Port Perry.

The county fathers agreed, providing a grant of £125 and entering into a contract with the people of Scugog Township to build a floating bridge between Reach Township and Scugog Island and assume ongoing maintenance, (Bylaw #26 - June 22, 1855). Scugog Township passed Bylaw #2 on February 25, 1856 authorizing the expenditure of £1000, or about \$5,000, for the bridge construction.

In his report to County Council in June 1856, County Engineer John Shier reported he had prepared plans and specification and accepted the tender of John Bowers of Port Perry to construct the Scugog Bridge and that work was progressing well and would probably be completed in August. (Seen report on next page).

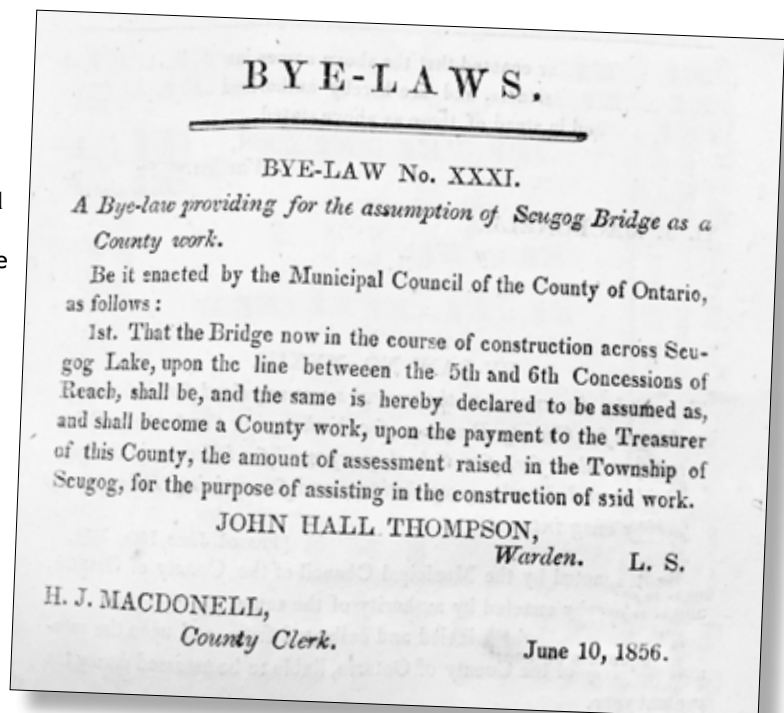
The work proceeded under the supervision of the County Engineer John Shier and in June 1856, Bylaw #31 was passed, which provided for the assumption of the Scugog Bridge by the County of Ontario.

Following the completion of the bridge, services of the Scugog Island ferry boat were discontinued. Dr. W.O. Eastwood, of Whitby, was then practicing at Port Perry and was the first to ride over the new bridge. Up to that time he had to keep a boat for visiting his Scugog Island patients.

Although the floating bridge proved to be a considerable benefit to both Reach and Scugog communities, and a vast improvement from previous methods, it was very unstable and unreliable.


In 1858, Mr. Shier received a communication from Silas J. Haight and Mr. Wilson Pitman stating it was impossible for them to finish the contract he had taken for erecting cribs at Scugog Bridge due to the soft nature of the bottom.

Building the bridge proved to be far more difficult than even the county engineers had imagined, due to the continual sinking of the embankment and ice damage each spring. In fact the bridge proved to be so difficult to build, Mr. Haight and Mr. Pitman asked to be relieved of their contract due to the difficulties.



PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

With regard to the Scugog Bridge—Your Engineer begs to report, that agreeably to the Report of the Standing Committee on Roads and Bridges, adopted on the 31st of January, 1856. Immediate after the adjournment of the Council in February last, he prepared plans and specifications for said Bridge, and advertised for tenders for the erection of the same. That on the 1st of March he accepted the tender of John Bowers, of Port Perry, to construct the said Bridge for the sum of £1125, with Isaac Fralick and William White, as sureties for the fulfilment of the contract. The Municipality of Scugog having passed a By-law appropriating the sum of £125, or so much thereof as the construction of said Bridge may cost over £1000, towards the erection of said Bridge, making the amount to be paid by the County £1000 as provided by the aforesaid report. That a Contract and Bond have been drawn up, and executed agreeably to the requirements of the said report, (which are herewith submitted.) That the work is progressing in a most satisfactory manner, and will probably be completed early in August. That Mr. Bowers has been paid on the contract the sum of £175, and that there is now due him the sum of £300. All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN SHIER, 
County Engineer

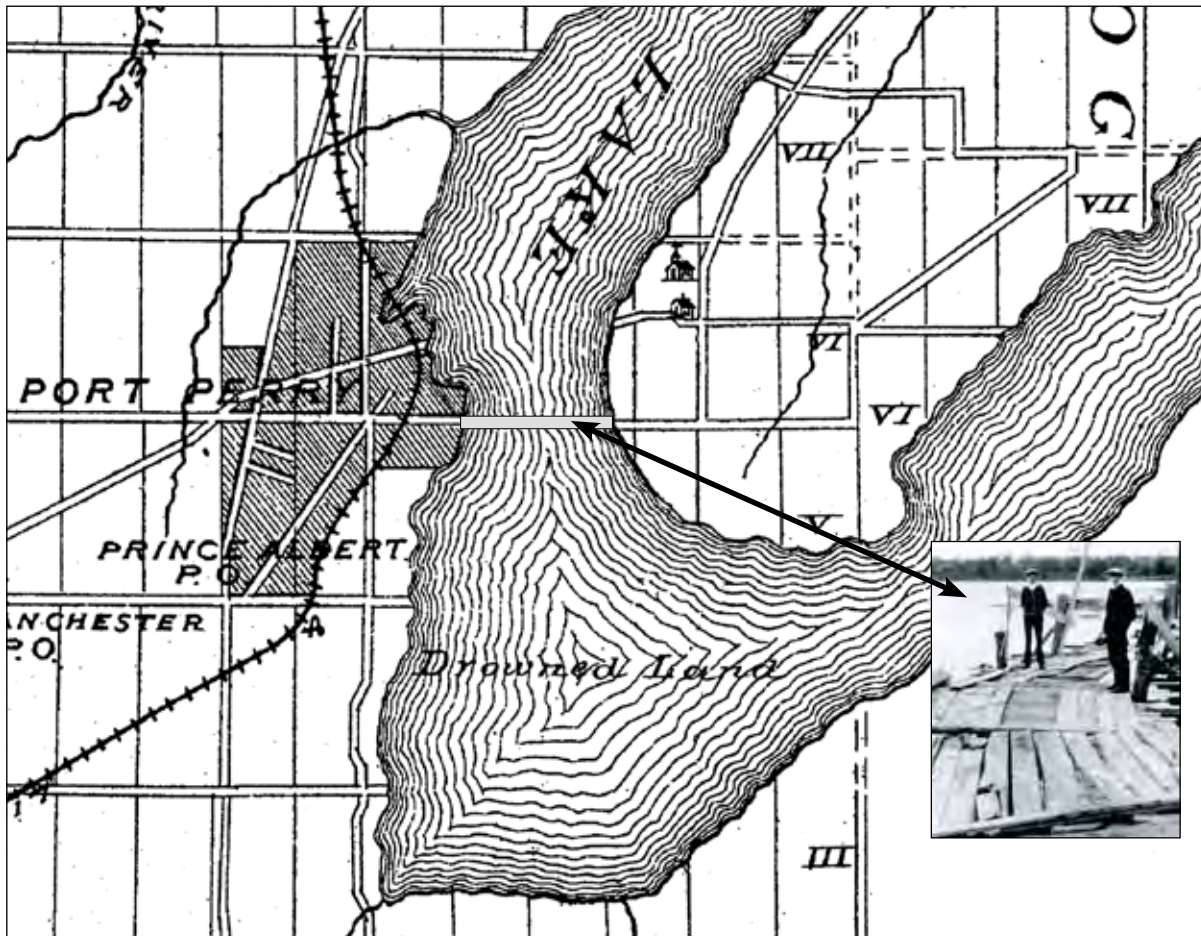
County Engineer's Office,
June 10, 1856.

The Roads and Bridges Committee, after weighing all the facts, agreed to release the men from the contracts and paid them a sum of \$670 for the work they had accomplished.

Spring was a particular hazardous time for the bridge, as it was often damaged by winds and ice during the thaw, and ongoing maintenance by the county began to mount, causing considerable grumbling by many members of the council. On one occasion, portions of it went floating down the lake, only to be pulled back by the steamer Woodman.

Despite the improved access to and from Scugog Island, the bridge was plagued by problems each year.

In June 1857, John Shire reported the cribs gave way during the breakup up of ice and the Bridge had been driven from its place by wind and drifted some distance amongst the stumps and logs in the lake, receiving great damage and expense to get it



Map of the lower end of Lake Scugog indicates where the floating bridge spanned the lake between Port Perry and Scugog Island.

back to tis proper position.

He added that the cribs were damaged and required repair and that the embankment at the east end of the brides had settled so that during high water it was nearly all submerged. "It will require to raise the embankment two feet above high water, 18' wider at the top, at an expenditure of about £100.

Again in the spring of 1858, the Scugog Bridge received considerable damage by ice, with a large portion being carried away.

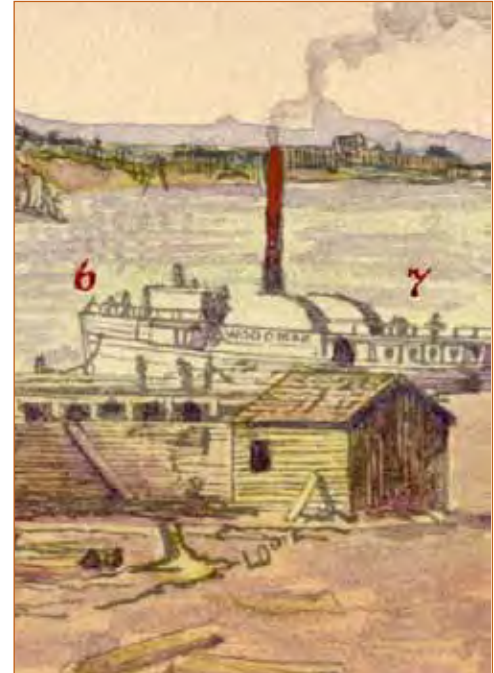
The Engineer reported in June 1858 that "on the breaking up of the ice, a large body of ice, several miles in extent, struck the bridge with great force, doing considerable damage to the bridge and cribs. Damage was repaired with piles put down in place of damage cribs, but the high water completely submerged it for some time."

In May 1869 the Ontario Observer reported, "the bridge suffered terribly in the spring floods and was in deplorable condition; being far from safe, it would require immediate attention and considerable outlay to repair."

The county earmarked \$100 for repairs, but critics of the on-going high cost to maintain the bridge insisted that the principal upon which it had been constructed was a huge blunder and it had cost 50 times more than it was worth in repairs.

The costly repairs of 1869 were the catalyst for a movement by some members of the County Council to put the responsibility for repairs back onto Scugog Township.

In June 1870, a report from Mr. Foy, Commissioner for the Scugog Bridge, stated the time had arrived when the parties immediately concerned (Scugog and Reach) ought to assume this work, and the committee recommended that the county by-law passed in 1854, for the building and maintenance of the bridge, be repealed. After more than two days of heated debate, County By-law #207, (returning maintenance of the Scugog Bridge to Reach and Scugog) was carried by a majority.



An 1853 sketch of the Woodman, tied up to the docks at the foot of Queen Street, Port Perry.

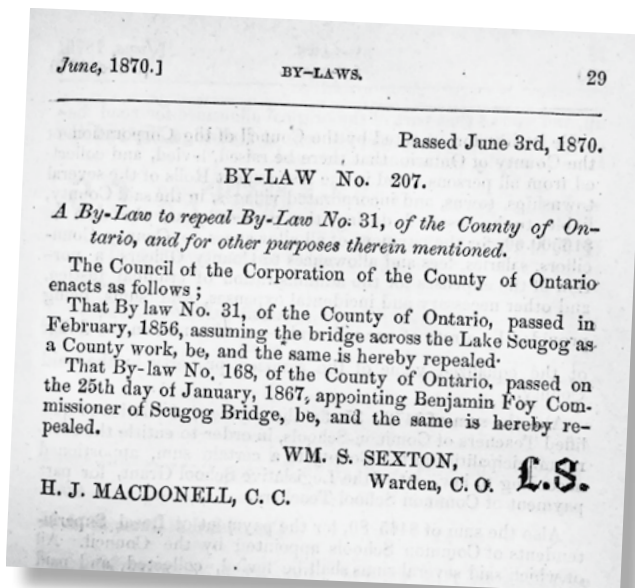
Reach and Scugog were not about to take this lying down, and warned the county it would take legal action to quash the new bylaw if necessary. They hired the Hon. M.C. Cameron, a noted lawyer, who submitted a report to the county in September, 1870.

Mr. Cameron contended that the County Council of Ontario, by way of a by-law passed in 1855, had assumed the work of building a bridge across an arm of the lake and since being completed the bridge had remained under the management and control of the County Council.

He wrote the following opinion:

"I am of the opinion that the Scugog Bridge is a County work, and that there is a contract between the County Council and the corporation of Scugog, and the private contributors which a Court of Enquiry would enforce, and so in neither case is it necessary, it appears to me, to take any legal proceeding to quash the repealing by-law."

There were several attempts to repeal By-law #207, but it wasn't until January 1872 a County committee consisting of Warden W.H. Gibbs, Reeve White of Pickering and Reeve W.S. Sexton of Scugog, were instructed to look into the matter of the Scugog Bridge, collect the facts of the case and submit them to the best legal authority of the province. The council agreed, in the event his opinion was



PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

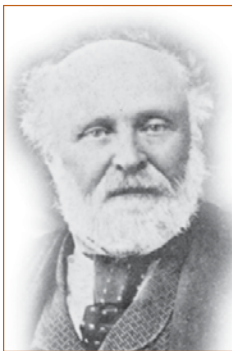


Warden W.H. Gibbs

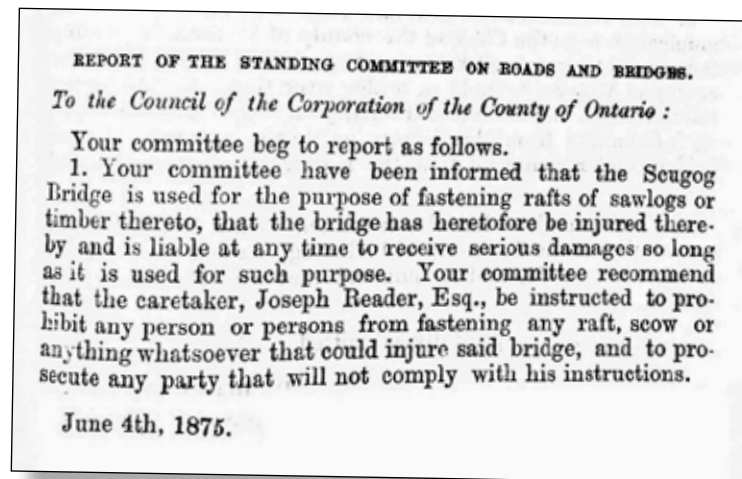
that the County is liable for the bridge, then it would proceed at once to repair it.

Six months later, James Gordon, Chairman of the Committee of Roads and Bridges, approved the action of the committee who had obtained legal advice regarding the responsibility of the council in the matter of the Scugog Bridge. He recommended Mr. Joseph Reader be appointed the Commissioner of the bridge and that a committee consisting of the Reeves of Reach, Scugog and Port Perry be appointed to inspect the bridge and if found necessary, to expend an amount on repairs not exceeding \$250.

Maintenance continued to plague the floating bridge, and on one occasion in 1875, damage caused by scows tying up to the bridge initiated an action by the County prohibiting anyone from fastening any raft or scow, by which the bridge could be damaged, and for Commissioner Reader to prosecute anyone who did not comply.



W.S. Sexton



Finally, during the Spring of 1876, work began on the first permanent bridge to link Scugog Island and Port Perry. In an article dated March 2, 1876, James Baird wrote the following report:

"The Reeve of Scugog has introduced a new departure regarding the Scugog Bridge, which from its inception has proved expensive, unsatisfactory and a bone of contention between the County councils and the minor municipalities concerned.

The old shaky concern has only hung in its place by the grace of the winds and floods, which might at any moment have cleaned it out and cut off all further communication between Scugog and Reach, except by boat.

To maintain the rickety concern as it was, caused an annual drain on the exchequer of the County, which made our County fathers fairly groan and every now and again seep to repudiate. But it was of no use, the law held them fast and they had only to grin and bear it year after year with the expectation staring them in the face of being called upon at any moment to build an entire new structure, the old one having been swept away.

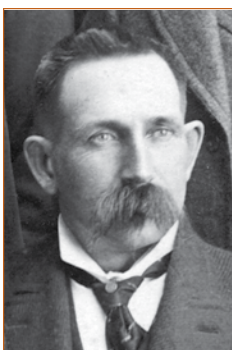
It remained for Mr. Graham, the active Reeve of Scugog to suggest and bring about a new departure as to the future of this bridge and with a view to this object the County Council at its late session granted him a Committee to investigate the matter and advise accordingly.

About the close of last week, the Warden of the county, the first Deputy Reeve of Brock and the Reeve of Scugog met at Port Perry, went and examined the Bridge and determined on an entire change of structure, to replace the present tottering, expensive, unreliable concern with a permanent structure as as early a day as possible.

The result was that a committee consisting of Messrs. James Graham and Joseph Bigelow was appointed to secure the proper brushing and covering of a length of

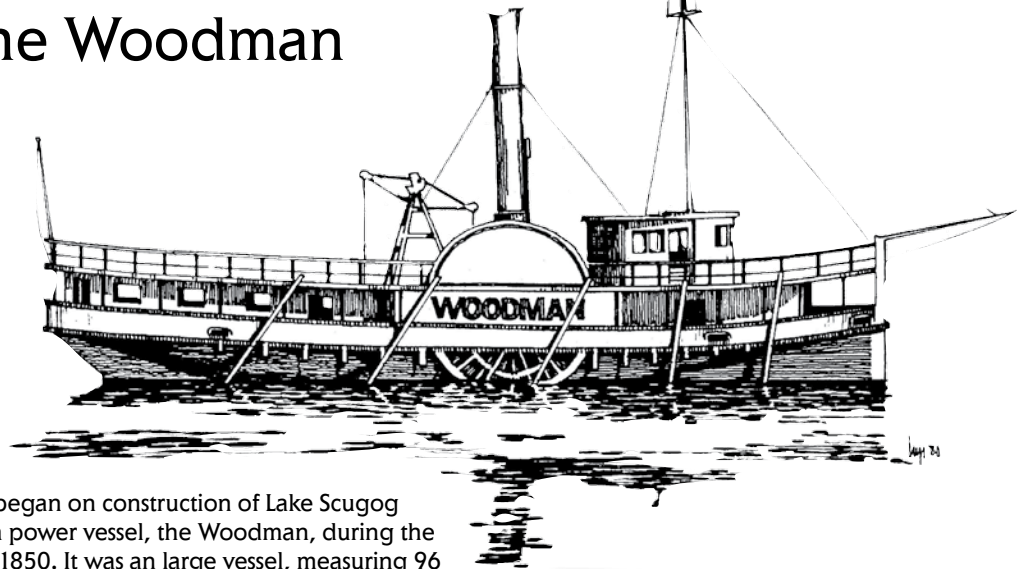


Joseph Reader



James Baird

The Woodman

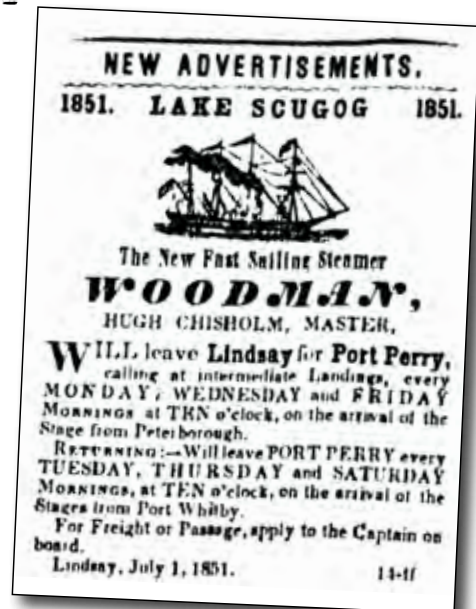


Work began on construction of Lake Scugog first steam power vessel, the Woodman, during the spring of 1850. It was an large vessel, measuring 96 feet long at the keel and had an overall length of 110 feet. Its huge 14 foot side paddlewheels gave it a total width of 30 feet.

There were two main decks. The lower deck had a large lounge as well as separate cabins. The upper deck was open except for the wheel house where the boat's captain commanded his vessel.

The Woodman was launched on August 29, 1850. Excitement ran throughout the whole of Lake Scugog and the Scugog River all the way to Lindsay when it was announced that the Woodman was to have its maiden voyage on April 25, 1851. Dignitaries from Toronto, Whitby and the small settlement of Oshawa came to Scugog Village to board the vessel.

The ship left her moorings at noon and she steamed her way to Port Hoover and Washburn Island. She continued way up the Scugog River to Lindsay where a gala reception was planned. After her maiden voyage, she made the daily trip from Port Perry to Lindsay and then return. Along the way, regular stops were made at Port Hoover and Caesarea.



Steamboat Woodman Specifications

Dimensions: Length: 110'. Beam: 30'. Gross Tons: 108. Propelled by side paddlewheels.

Horse Power: 25 hp Gartshore engine with a 12 flue boiler capable of speeds of more than 8 mph.

Building Details: Date of construction: 1850. Location: Port Perry. Builder: Hugh Chisolm.
First Owner: Cotton and Rowe of Whitby.

Remarks: The Woodman was the first steamboat to be built in the Kawarthas. Cotton and Rowe of Whitby financed the construction of the Woodman. Its maiden voyage was from Port Perry to Lindsay on April 25, 1851. Chisolm captained her for three seasons. Its primary journey was the 30 mile route from Port Perry to Lindsay, making stops at Port Hoover, Washburn Island and Caesarea. In 1854 it was badly damaged by fire while at the dock at Port Perry. The owners sold her to George Crandell. The Woodman ran three times per week between Lindsay, Bobcaygeon and Bridgenorth. By 1864 the Woodman had been relegated to towing and was taken out of service in 1866.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

600 feet on the west end of the bridge, which proved a long step in the way of a permanent, inexpensive structure."

Messrs. Graham and Bigelow advertised for sealed tenders to be left at the Post Office, Port Perry, until noon Saturday, March 4, 1876 for brushing 600 feet long, 25 feet wide and 5 feet deep for the west end of Scugog Bridge, and also for covering same with earth or sawdust 18 feet wide and 2 feet deep.

Three tenders were received for the work on the bridge: Mr. J.V. Thompson, \$2,350; Mr. Hulbert, \$1,925; and Mr. N.S. Dyer \$1,750. The contract was given to Mr. Dyer, being the lowest tender and he being considered a thoroughly competent man.

Mr. Dyer's crew began construction of the first section of a permanent bridge between Port Perry and Scugog Island immediately after the ice left the Lake Scugog that spring. Wooden slabs were packed tightly side by side, laid crossways to a thickness of two feet, and then covered with earth. Work continued throughout the summer on the 600 foot stretch of permanent road and in September 1876,

The following progress report was written by James Baird in the Ontario Observer:

"The new bridge over the Scugog now goes bravely on, Mr. Dyer is within forty feet of the limit of his contract with the laying of logs and slabs and the work of earthing is now progressing favorably. There can be no comparison between the new bridge and the old; the new bridge will be a permanent roadway, which once finished may be maintained in good repair at the smallest trifle of cost.

The pine logs and slabs being under



Scugog Reeve
James Graham

water will be permanent while the surface being covered with two feet of earth and nine inches of gravel over that will constitute a first class permanent roadway which compared with the old floating concern which it is replacing will form a striking contrast.

The old floating bridge was unreliable, unsatisfactory and expensive. Every spring it was threatened with destruction and it took a world of expense to keep it in order. The new Scugog Bridge will be a permanent monument to the intelligence and enterprise of the County Council of Ontario for 1876. The county will find that this has been a profitable investment; it is true that the present outlay may be considered a little steep but the little expense now will save ten times more in future.

When the Scugog Bridge is completed the new 23 foot wide roadway will be maintained at a nominal expense in place of an old rickety apology for a bridge about 12 feet wide."

Following the completion of this section, the Scugog Bridge came up for discussion

To the Warden and Councillors of the Corporation
of the County of Ontario
Whitby, Jan'y. 25, 1877.

GENTLEMEN :

Having been appointed by the Corporation to superintend: the work done by N. S. Dyer, the contractor for sinking six hundred feet of the west end of Scugog Bridge, and to construct a permanent roadway there, I have the honor to report as follows:

That before commencing the work, the Bridge was placed in a proper position, so as to be in a straight line with the roads at each end, (although part of it on which the work was done, was somewhat displaced by the pressure of a large number of saw logs driven against it by a strong north-west wind, and which could not be brought back to place by the united power of two steam tug, made fast to it for that purpose.) It was then sunk, in a horizontal position, by cross timbers placed thereon, twenty-five feet in length, and from two to three feet in depth, forming a good and sufficient foundation upon which to build the upper part of the roadway.

That on the timbers so placed was piled Pine Slabs and edgings, laid in different directions in order to bind them more firmly together and to a height of four or five feet as circumstances required, and on these were placed Cedar cross pieces, twenty-nine feet in length, eight feet apart, on which to erect the fence.

On this structure was deposited two feet of earth, twenty-three feet in width, then gravel was put, a twelve feet wide, and a foot or more deep, thereby furnishing a good and substantial Roadway twenty-three feet wide between the fences, and the top of which was four feet above the water in the lowest place, when the work was accepted from the hands of the contractor.

In addition to the contract price, that Mr. Dyer received for the work in question, he was paid for extras that were necessary, the sum of \$7140, made up in the following manner :

4800 ft. 2 inch plank for bottom boards of fence at \$11 per 1000 ft.	\$52.80
400 feet of plank used in approach at east end of Roadway to Bridge	6.60
100 lbs. of Nails	7.00
For use of Capt. Daws Steam Tug to replace Bridge	5.00
	\$71 40

In conclusion I must say the work was completed to my satisfaction .

I remain, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant

Prince Albert, Jan'y. 24th, 1877. W. E. YARNOLD, PLS.

again in January 1877 when James Graham petitioned for an additional 600 feet of bridge to be constructed the coming season, but Chairman Rowland of the Road and Bridges Committee refused to recommend any further extension of the work for that year, stating a large amount of money had been spent on the first section and they were still not sure if it would stand up. He said the committee hoped to proceed with the work, but warned ... should the construction prove to be a failure, it would be a great cost to the County.

Mr. Graham argued that he had not the slightest misgiving about the durability of the work. He said that the bridge as it was now, was of little service, being impassible the greater part of the year, as accumulations of snow and ice, load the bridge in winter and sink it.

He argued that it would be better to complete the work for a permanent roadway and suggested if the county didn't want to pay for it all at once, they could debenture the work over several years.

"Since 1854 the old structure has cost between fifteen and twenty thousand dollars in repairs. If the work is not proceeded with this year, the remaining portion of the floating bridge may require new planks, which would cost a good portion of the expense of another 600 feet," he said, but the arguments fell on deaf ears.

A year later the Roads and Bridges Committee had a change of heart and recommended that \$4,000 be debentured to complete the remaining 1,300 feet of the Scugog Bridge and for it to be constructed on the same principal as the first 600 feet.

But the idea did not sit well with many members of County Council, who argued that it had cost almost \$3,000 to build the first 600 feet in shallow water and comparatively little mud, so they could not be expected to build 1,300 feet in deeper water with up to 15 feet of mud.

The motion to construct the remainder of the bridge was defeated, but Scugog Reeve James Graham was not about to give up. Six months later, in June 1878 the matter was tabled again at County Council by the caretaker



Reach Reeve
Joshua Wright



Men begin repairs to the Lake Scugog floating bridge following extensive damage from ice during a spring breakup, circa 1876.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

of the Scugog Bridge, who recommended that \$4,000 be granted for the purpose of constructing the bridge and the money be raised by the issue of debentures.

Mr. Bickell, one of the strongest opponents suggested the bridge was not in a bad state of repair and \$200 would put it into a safe and comfortable condition. But Reeve Graham argued that repairs to the bridge would cost nearer \$1,000 as the timbers were rotting and the floating portion was in need of re-planking.

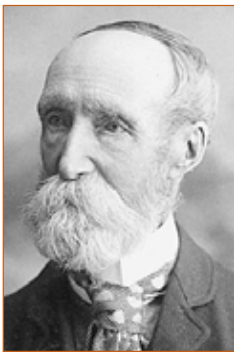
In an effort to salvage something for the Scugog Bridge, Port Perry Reeve Joshua Wright cleverly manipulated the County to approve having the east end of the bridge filled up in a similar manner to that on the west, and made into a permanent roadway.

A report in the North Ontario Observer, detailed the events of that session of County Council as follows:

"The Scugog Bridge came in for its annual airing and the Reeve of Scugog (Graham) fought like a very hero to secure a fat grant for that important work. The Reeve of Port Perry (Wright) and the whole Road and Bridge committee stood at his back, but it was no go. He was beaten back and finally compelled to surrender, and in place of his magnificent grant of \$4,000 as he expected, he was sent away with \$150.

But here the diplomacy of the Reeve of Port Perry fairly out generated the majority and led them into a grant even larger than the one they had just refused. Waiting 'till the members returned from dinner, pliable as wax, Mr. Wright innocently moved the report back to the committee to strike out the magnificent \$150 and insert the words that 600 feet be filled in on the east end of the bridge. The good natured council blandly complied and the amended report was adopted.

These will be the most difficult 600 feet and it may take four or five thousand dollars to accomplish the work so that all concerned are indebted to the diplomacy of Mr. Wright for the grant at this time."



W.E. Yarnold

An advertisement seeking tenders to construct the 600 feet of permanent roadway was placed in the Ontario Observer following the meeting by bridge commissioners Joshua Wright, George Wheler and James Graham. Four bids were opened at the Town Hall, Port Perry, on July 2, 1878. Bids included N.S. Dyer at \$4,300., W.E. Yarnold at \$2,500 and Jessie Ireland at \$2,350., and an undisclosed name at \$3,700. Mr. W.E. Yarnold was awarded the contract for the east end of the bridge.

A year later, in June 1879 a special committee of the County Council made an official inspection of the now famous Scugog Bridge, to determine its present condition and immediate requirements. Mr. Rowland, chairman of the special committee reported, "that it (Bridge) is in a dangerous condition, the floating part being much broken and displaced, and recommend that it be straightened and such temporary repairs made as will be necessary for present use."

The committee recommended the filling up and making a permanent roadway of the remaining portion of the bridge, as soon as practicable, and also the appointment of Reeve Wright of Port Perry, and Messrs. John Adams and Mark Currie to oversee the work. When asked if he had any idea as to what it would cost to complete the work, the chairman replied, "I have not the slightest idea."

**TENDERS
WANTED.**

SEALED Tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 12 o'clock, noon,
On Saturday, 6th July next,
For Constructing
**600 FEET
OF PERMANENT
ROADWAY,**
To replace that portion of the Bridge known as
Scugog Bridge.

Plans and Specifications can be seen at the offices of the undersigned Commissioners in Scugog, Port Perry, and Uxbridge.

The lowest nor any tender not necessarily accepted.

J. GRAHAM,
J. WRIGHT,
G. WHEELER,
Commissioners.

Port Perry, June 11, 1878.

**SCUGOG BRIDGE
TENDERS.**

TENDERS for the
BUILDING
OF AN
Earthway

Connecting the two sections already built of the Scugog Bridge, will be received by the undersigned up to and inclusive of
FRIDAY, JULY 18th, 1879,

At whose office Plans and Specifications can be seen.

The lowest nor any tender not necessarily accepted.

JOSHUA WRIGHT,
Chairman Board of Commissioners.
Port Perry, May 17, 1879.

Tenders for the building of an Earthway connecting the two sections of the Scugog Bridge already built, were advertised and 19 proposals, ranging from \$6,849 to \$11,200 were received for the work. The committee accepted the tender of Wm. Trennam, of Peterborough, and entered into a contract with him to complete the work by October 1, 1880. The contract was further bound to assure a safe means of crossing for people on foot, and that the bridge could not be closed down for any longer than ten days for the passage of wagons or other vehicles.

The contract to assure safety may have resulted from an incident in June 1880, when N.F. Patterson, Barrister-at-law, claimed \$40 in damage for Mr. John Way of Scugog, based on alleged injuries done to two head of fat cattle by reason of their getting off Scugog Bridge into the lake while Mr. Way was driving them over to Port Perry. The claim was disallowed.



John Adams

Reeve Wright came under fire at the County for his methods in tendering the work for the Scugog Bridge and for not accepting the lowest tender (\$6,849) submitted by Mr. N.S. Dyer, the contractor who had constructed the first 600 feet in 1876.

Reeve Wright contended he had accepted the \$7,300 tender of the Peterborough contractor because it was the lowest tender that was any good. He said the job Mr. Dyer had already done was bungled, filled in with rotten wood which was now sinking, and would cost an additional \$1,700 to have repaired. Six months later, June 1880, Mr. Wright was redeemed for his actions when the commissioners reported the work on the Scugog Bridge had been completed in a very satisfactory manner.

At the same time as work was underway to complete the bridge, a company named the Scugog Marsh Reclaiming Co. were given permission to begin construction of an embankment from Reach Township on the west shore of Lake Scugog, to Scugog Island. The embankment was to be built no more than six rods south of the existing bridge. (see opposite page).

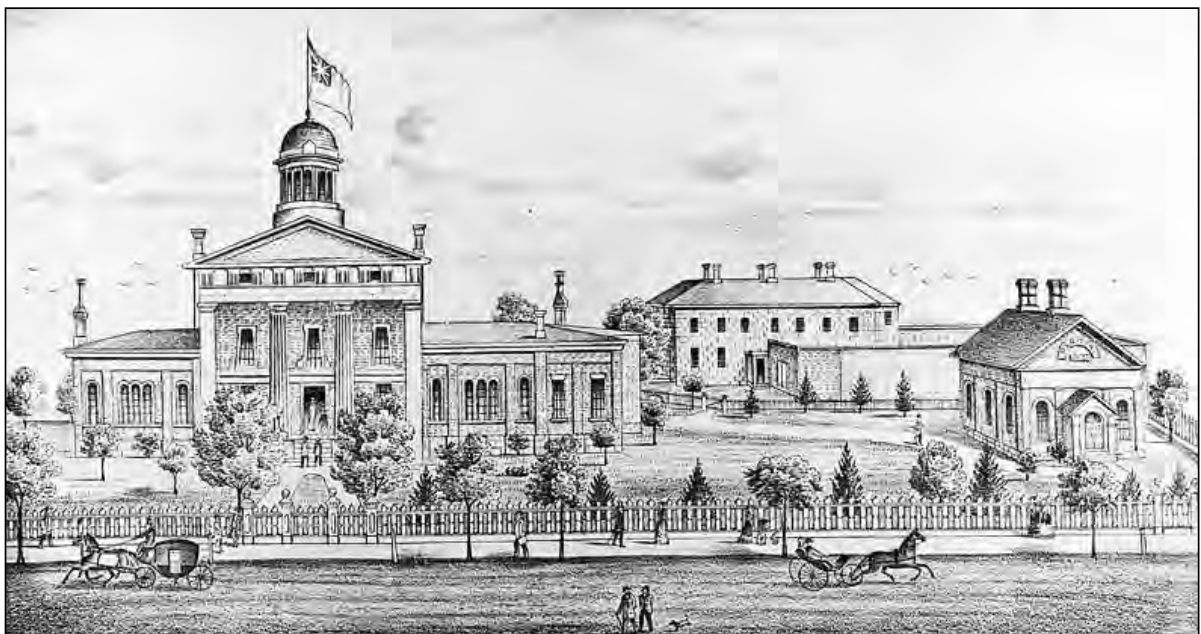
To avoid duplication of work, the reclaiming company approached the contractor, Mr. Trennam, with the intention of relieving him of his contract for the building of a permanent

November 1878

An application for an embankment or solid roadway was advertised as follows:

“From a point on the shore of Lake Scugog at or south of, and near to Port Perry in the Township of Reach, to the opposite shore at some point opposite to the place of commencement in the township of Scugog.”

The aim of the embankment was to drain that part of the lake south of the embankment and to reclaim the lands (see notice below).



The Ontario County Courthouse, Whitby, where Ontario county council sessions were held.

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO WHOM WAS REFERRED THE PETITION OF M. THWAITE RESPECTING MARSH LANDS AT LAKE SCUGOG.
 To the Warden and Council of the Corporation of the County of Ontario:
 The special committee to whom is referred the petition of M. Thwaite, asking this council to memorialize the Legislature to pass an act to allow the said M. Thwaite and others, to reclaim certain marsh lands in the vicinity of the township of Scugog, beg leave to report, that your committee, after due consideration of the matter, would recommend—
 That this council memorialize the Legislative Assembly, and his Hon. the Lieut. Governor, not to grant the prayer of the said petitioner, by passing the Bill now before the Legislative Assembly—
 But your committee recommend that a memorial be presented, praying that a charter may be granted to a company composed of the said M. Thwaite and the other petitioners mentioned in the said bill, and such persons as may be associated with them, empowering the said company to execute the works mentioned in their said bill, and to give them the privileges mentioned therein, but such charter of incorporation shall contain provisions to the effect following:
 That the capital stock of the said company shall be at least \$20,000.
 That fifty per cent of such capital shall be subscribed, and also that twenty-five per cent of such subscribed stock shall be paid within two years into some chartered bank, before the election of Directors.
 That the said company shall, within the like period of two years, expend in constructing the said embankment or roadways, at least \$2,000, and in each year thereafter a similar sum, until the completion of the said embankments or roadways.
 That the valuation of the lands, so to be reclaimed, shall be ascertained at the option of the owner, either as is provided by section 20 of "The Railway Act of Ontario," or as is provided in the said Bill now before the Legislature.
 All which is respectfully submitted.
 Signed, **MALCOLM GILLESPIE,**
 Chairman.
 Adopted February 1st, 1879.

section of the Scugog Bridge. This arrangement never happened.

Damage continued to plague the County, as almost every spring the bridge required repairs. Following heavy damage in the spring of 1884 the County treasurer was instructed to repair that portion of the Scugog Bridge, at a cost not to exceed \$300.

With both the west and east sections of the permanent bridge now completed, only 600 feet of floating bridge was left stretched precariously between Port Perry and Scugog Island. A section that would not be completed until four years later, after the entire business sector of Port Perry was destroyed by a devastating fire in July 1884.

In an effort to assist the business community rebuild the town, a special meeting of County Council was held in the Port Perry Town Hall on October 14, 1884 to discuss the granting of aid relating to the fires, and also to view and discuss the Scugog Bridge.

Following an inspection tour of the town and the Scugog Bridge councillors began their session. Council considered tenders which had been submitted for repairs to the Scugog Bridge, but none were accepted. Instead, they decided to expend a total of \$3,000 by private contract for the construction for the final 600 feet of the Scugog Bridge.

The work took place during the summer of 1885. A report filed in June noted that the timbers for the improvement were now ready and lying in the waters of Ball Lake, Pigeon Lake and Buckhorn Lake, and are marked and will in a short time be on their way to Scugog Bridge.

When the logs arrived they were lined



Application to Parliament

APPPLICATION will be made to the Parliament of Ontario at its next Session for an Act giving to Metcalfe Thwaite, Joseph Fisher Eby and Patrick George Close, all of the city of Toronto, and William Murdock, of the Town of Bowmanville, and such other person or persons as may hereafter be associated with them, power and authority to

CONSTRUCT AN EMBANKMENT OR SOLID ROADWAY

From a point on the

SHORE OF LAKE SCUGOG

At or South of and near to Port Perry in the township of Reach to the opposite shore at some point opposite to the place of commencement in the Township of Scugog – Also to construct a similar Embankment, or Solid Roadway from some point on the shore of the said Lake Scugog south of and near to Caesarea, in the Township of Cartwright, to the opposite shore or some point opposite to the place of commencement in the Township of Scugog.

To drain the part or portion of the said Lake Scugog so to be cut off lying to the south of the said Embankment and to rest all the land reclaimed thereby in the said Metcalfe Thwaite, Joseph Fisher Eby, Patrick George Close and William Murdock, and such other person or persons as may be associated with them, their heirs and assigns forever.

Dated at Bowmanville, this 19th day of November, 1878

ROBERT AMOUR
Solicitor for Applicants.

Advertisement printed in the Ontario Observer,
November 1878

In his address to County Council, Commissioner William Bateman reported, "that the sides of the said roadway which were support by brush had become decayed and wasted away, leaving the road to narrow for public travel.

He said that the road has been widened and raised up with timbers, brush and earth on each side to the new fence recently erected by this Corporation, a distance of 800 feet in length, and that the same is now in a good state of repair.

"The road would be very much improved by a course of gravel being placed in the centre of the road," which he recommended should be done.

Whitby, January 29, 1885

along the sides of the floating bridge and then the centre was filled with gravel and sand until the bridge sank, forming the foundation and completing the first solid, permanent roadway connecting Scugog Island to Port Perry.

Although spring damage was a common occurrence over the next couple of decades most repairs were of a minor nature until April 1908, when the bridge received one of its most severe pounding by ice since becoming a permanent roadway. Railings and telephone poles were snapped by heavy ice flows being pushed up over the roadway during the spring breakup.

When County Council met in July, Reeve Parrish of Port Perry and Scugog's Reeve were instructed to proceed with repairs. "It is recommended that piles be driven close to the outer edge of the bridge, where possible to retain the timbers forming the wall on the outside of the bridge; to raise part of the structure two feet; to use steel stringer to be covered with cedar timbers and iron rods to keep them in position. Roadway to be from 16 to 18 feet wide."

When completed, repairs to the Scugog Bridge had cost the county a total of \$1,640, but were described as "one of the best pieces of road building in the area."



The Scugog Bridge finally became a permanent roadway between Port Perry and Scugog Island in the 1880s.



The Scugog Bridge, lined with a protective fence, as it looked during the summer in the early 1920s.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

The next major undertaking to improve the Scugog Bridge came in 1925, when work commenced on widening the bridge to accommodate the use of motor vehicles. A piece of land near the lakeshore of Scugog Island was purchased by the County from Mr. T. Collins, and earth was hauled from the property. These cars, which moved along a light track, were used to spread the fill along the stretch of highway.

Three years later, in March 1928, the James Mitchell Co. of Toronto was contracted to build a concrete bridge to replace part of the old wooden structure. The section, which spanned only 20 ft., was 28 ft. wide and required 2,500 ft. of piles, 200 yards of gravel, 200 yards of stone and some 700 bags of cement. The piles were driven 32 feet into the bottom of the lake, through several feet of mud, two layers of clay, and finally imbedded into quicksand. The biggest hurdle was finding places to drive the piles where neither logs or large stones interfered.

During the six weeks of construction, a temporary floating bridge detour was built to accommodate the traffic. The 1928 reconstruction of the Scugog Bridge accommodated the needs of the people of the area for the next three decades, undergoing minor repairs from water and ice damage each spring.



A car makes it way from Scugog Island to Port Perry along the muddy causeway during about 1918.



A car waits for another vehicle to cross the flooded causeway during a spring in about 1940



Construction underway on the causeway bridge during 1928.



A car carefully makes its way across the floating detour, during construction on the bridge in 1928.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



Travelling from Scugog Island to Port Perry could be very dangerous during the early months of spring.



A cement pier, bottom left, of the concrete bridge constructed in 1928, which replaced a part the old wooden bridge.

Following a disastrous flooding in the spring of 1960, there were renewed calls for rebuilding and raising the level of the Scugog Bridge, which by this time was beginning to be referred to as The Causeway.

During April, 1960 water in Lake Scugog rose dramatically, with up to 30 inches of water covering sections of both the Port Perry and Cartwright Causeways. On a number of occasions, the causeway had to be closed down to traffic as washouts and ice flows created a hazard for anyone attempting to cross the open stretch.

Port Perry Star - April 21, 1960

CAUSEWAY FLOODED FOR MORE THAN A WEEK

Every spring there is a short period of time during which the causeways are under water. This year has established a record, if not for depth at least for the length of time that the water has remained.

On April 11th water was reported to be many inches deep on the Cartwright causeway. Since then it has reached a depth of up to 30 inches. The Port Perry Causeway has also been under water, up to 20 inches have been reported.

This depth of water has hidden the markers indicating the side of the road and the Dept. of Highways has set up special markers.

Many folks have driven through in spite of warnings and one man went barreling through although waved down with red lanterns. He ended up sitting on the roof of his car for a couple of hours.

Over the past few days, high winds and cakes of floating ice have added to the water hazard.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



Telephone poles were the only guide for motorists along the causeway during eight weeks of flooding. Below, boats and trucks were used to transport people across to the Island during the spring.



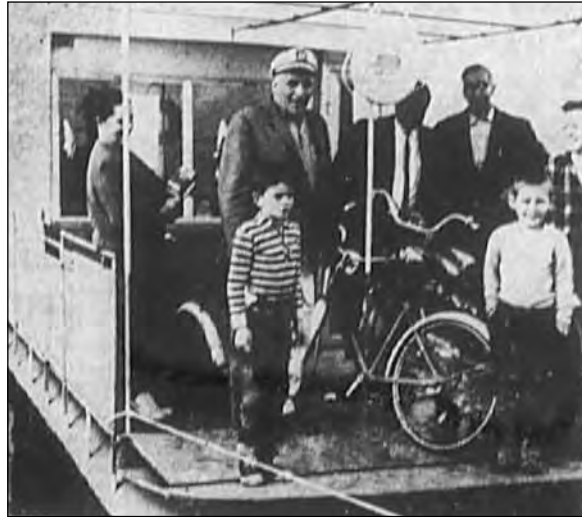
Milt Butson wading in water to take a picture of Lloyd Harrison in his boat during the spring of 1957. Water was almost waist deep over the causeway when this picture was taken. In background is the Island hill.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE

Another incident in April 1960 was reported as follows:

"During the noon hour on Monday, Mr. Lorne Hunt, a resident of Scugog Island, attempted to drive his Volkswagen to Port Perry. While crossing the causeway the car was pushed off the road by floating ice driven by a wind.

Someone saw the car leave the road and phoned the police, and Pargeter's Garage was also called. Chief R.J. Cameron and Pargeter's tow truck were soon at the scene. Don Wallace, driver of the tow truck and Robert Duff were able to rescue Mr. Hunt who had succeeded in getting out of his car and was found clinging to a pole in the icy waters. He had been marooned about 25 minutes and suffered from severe shock and exposure, and was rushed to Community Memorial Hospital."



Reeve J.J. Gibson, seen right, put his pontoon boat into service as a ferry for residents desiring to cross the causeway in May 1960. Late the Department of Highways provided a shuttle service by truck until the water receded. Above, two trucks wait at the "bridge" for a vehicle from the other direction to pass.



Drivers were taking their lives into their hands when trying to cross the causeway before it was rebuilt in 1960.

Media reports on rebuilding causeway

Port Perry Star - May 5, 1960

THE CAUSEWAY AND HIGHWAY 7A

Four weeks ago the water of lake Scugog rose high enough to flood the causeways. At the time we were no unduly concerned. This flooding had happened for a few days nearly every spring. If a driver was careful he could take his car through the water without harm.

Four weeks ago we didn't know that the water would rise and rise until it had reached a depth of more than two feet and remain that way for some weeks.

Of course no one HAD to drive through the water, but there are approximately 400 residents of the Island who like three meals a day and sooner or later the general store on the Island would run out of some supplies.

There are many residents with jobs who cross the water twice a day; people do get sick and require a doctor; children to go high school in Port Perry.

Folks from Cartwright have to drive many miles out of their way and have to drive as much as 40 miles out of their way to get to Port Perry, which is only six miles away.

This spring we are hopeful that something was being done. The Department of Highways have had survey crews working for some months, but surveys don't mean roads.

Let's not just wait until someone does something for us. Let's keep this problem of highway 7A a live subject until we have that good road which has been promised us.

Port Perry Star - August 11, 1960

MEETING RE - CONSTRUCTION OF CAUSEWAY AND THE DETOUR

At the request of Mr. Gordon Weatherall of the Department of Highways, a special meeting was called August 3rd in the Municipal Office to discuss the construction of the causeway and the detour.

Forty-one persons were present with representatives from Port Perry, Reach, Scugog Island and Cartwright.

Mr. Weatherall with five engineers from the Dept. of Highways, along with the Hon. Dr. M.B. Dymond, as well as members of the Port Perry Chamber of Commerce, the Yacht Club and the Rod & Gun Club attended, with Reeve J.J. Gibson acting as chairman.

The Contract for Grading to be let this month with work to be completed by the late summer of 1961 at an estimated cost of \$850,000.

Contract for Paving to be let during 1961 and to be completed during the summer of 1962.

The West Causeway to be started in about one month's time and to take about four months to finish. During the grading of the west causeway, traffic from Scugog would have to detour around by way of Carwright Bridge.

Total Cost of the Project to be approximately \$1.5 million dollars which makes it a very costly piece of road for the amount of traffic.

The road bed to be 42' with 22' of pavement.

Port Perry Star - August 23, 1960

IT'S ALREADY STARTED

Yes, work on the Causeway Project has already started!

Although there may have been some among us who were sceptical that anything would be done for many months to come, the work has actually commended on the gigantic undertaking.

Peacock and McQuigge, a Toronto company have secured the contract and have been busy moving men and equipment into the area. We have been informed that work is already in progress at Vine's corner where the new curve is to be built eliminating that bad corner.

A vast amount of gravel and earth will be required to raise the road bed and fill in the swampy area. Some say the large hill near the east causeway will all comedown to provide the necessary fill. One hears that the grade up the Island hill will be started about the middle of the lake.

It is quite obvious that the whole undertaking is an engineering feat quite beyond anything possible in 1937 when the idea was a major issue before the public. At those public meeting held about 1936 and 1937 when the "good road" was first promised to us, I am sure the people there had very little if any real conception of what the future held.

Machinery and equipment of that day would hardly have been capable of achieving the results that we hear are expected in the next two years.

PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



Cabins along the south shore of Lake Scugog during the 1940s and 1950s were flooded by high water in the spring.

The causeway was still partially submerged when a severe rainstorm hit the area in May 1960 causing the level of the lake to rise further. The heavy and prolonged rainfalls caused flooding in the area. The Bowling Green was covered with more than a foot of water, roads were washed out, basements were flooded and the lake rose, flooding the causeway with 14 inches of water.

More than eight weeks after the flooding began along the causeway, many spots were still not entirely free of water. During the high water, Port Perry Reeve J.J. Gibson put his pontoon boat, equipped with an outboard motor, into service as a ferry transporting residents across the causeway, and the Department of Highways also provided a shuttle service with large trucks.

Soil investigations had already been started along the causeways in mid-1958. Then in June 1960, after more than a decade of trying to get the causeway raised, Dr. M.B. Dymond, who was also the local MPP, announced the government was going to reconstruct 7A Hwy. from Port Perry to Caesarea. Construction was scheduled to get underway in September and be completed by the late summer of 1962 at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. The new roadbed would be 42' wide with 22' of pavement.

Work on the Causeway highway project progressed quickly, with the large hill at the east end of the causeway being cut down and back, decreasing the slope. Much of the gravel and material for the new roadbed came from that site.

The existing causeways were both closed as the adjacent marsh was excavated up to 20 feet deep in order to insure a proper foundation for the permanent roadway. Nearby properties were purchased for the sole purpose of excavating for fill, which was trucked at a continuous rate. Over 8,100,000 cubic feet of organic material was removed from the marsh and 12,494,574 cubic feet of fill placed over the three years of construction.

During the causeway construction period, traffic was re-routed along the Shirley Road and north to Blackstock along the Old Scugog Road.

Work on 7A Highway from Port Perry to the Caesarea cut-off, including the causeway, was completed on schedule in 1962, and the highway has changed little since that time. It took more than 140 years for the Scugog Bridge to evolve from a rickety old floating bridge, to the modern provincial causeway it is today.

But this short section of 7A Hwy, which spans Lake Scugog between Port Perry, Scugog Island and into Cartwright Township continues to serve the needs of the travelling public today, just as it did in its infancy more than a century ago.



*Dr. M.B. Dymond
Ontario MPP*



Construction finally got underway in August 1960. The existing causeways were both closed as the adjacent marsh was excavated up to 20 feet deep in order to insure a proper foundation for the permanent roadway.



REPORT ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PORT PERRY CAUSEWAY

by G. A. Wrong - October, 1962

Materials and Research Division, Ontario Department of Highways,

In August 1960 the grading, drainage, and granular base course contract was awarded on Highway 7A between Port Perry and the Caesarea Sideroad.

By the end of that month the contractor had started his excavation and backfilling operations north of the existing Western causeway, working in the direction away from source of borrow on Scugog Island.

As outlined in the recommended procedures, it was expected that the top 10 ft of peat would be excavated and the underlying marl (sedimentary soil) would displace into the open excavation and also be excavated. However, it became evident shortly after construction commenced on the Western Causeway that because of the fluid state of the peat and marl it would readily displace laterally under the weight of the fill.

Most of the displacement of the marl on this causeway section resulted from the very effective use of the D-8 bulldozer working off the existing causeway embankment or the newly placed fill.

The backfill material was trucked from the borrow pit at a rate of about 180 cubic yards per hour. By October 26 the new Western Causeway was completely constructed to its subgrade elevation. During this two month period 91,350 cubic yards of organic material were excavated or displaced and 137,762 cubic yards of backfill placed.

During the months of September and October, the contractor carried out his excavation and backfilling operations adjacent to the existing Eastern Causeway.

Because of slight shifts in the alignment, the excavations on this causeway section were carried out both to the north and south of the existing embankment. The backfill material was obtained from two borrow sources requiring an average haul of 3600 ft to this causeway section.

The construction methods used here were similar to those employed in the construction of the western Causeway. The major difference was that excavation only was necessary since the depth of peat to firm bottom over one third of its length was less than 12 ft.

The sections where no lateral displacement of the peat and marl occurred are easily recognizable since the excavated organic material was piled high

adjacent to the embankment. In the spring of 1961 it was necessary to trim up these piles of organic material and to cut ditches.

Because of a drainage channel lying approximately 75 feet north of and parallel to a 1,500 foot section of the Eastern Causeway, the disposal area for the excavated organic material was restricted.

It was specified in the contract that approximately 20,000 cubic yards of organic material at this location be hauled away and disposed of in a borrow area.

On the Eastern Causeway section approximately 217,800 cubic yards of peat excavation was required and 325,000 cubic yards of backfill material placed.

In order to establish the effectiveness of this swamp treatment, a detailed drilling investigation was carried out through the new causeway embankments by the Materials and Research Division, in the spring of 1961.

As illustrated in Figures 3 (b), 4 (b) and 4 (d), all of the compressible, organic materials have been excavated or displaced from beneath the new causeway fill.

It was considered that possibly some minor consolidation or settlement might occur in the new causeway fills, therefore it was decided to stage pave these embankments. In the summer of 1961, two inches of H.L.4 binder course was laid over the causeway sections. In the spring of 1962, the performance of the asphalt binder course indicated that no settlement had occurred.

SUMMARY

Many problems were contemplated in the reconstruction of these causeway embankments during its pre-engineering stage. These were due primarily to the fact that the causeway sections were located over long moderately deep organic deposits and also because traffic had to be maintained on the existing embankments.

The swamp treatment employed at these locations proved however, to be extremely effective. This can be attributed to the wise selection of the new alignment, the method of construction, the quality of the densely graded till material used as backfill, and to some extent on the ideal weather conditions during construction.



Work continued on 7A Highway and the causeways from Port Perry to the Caesarea cut-off, and was completed on schedule in 1962



PORT PERRY'S FLOATING BRIDGE



This view from the top of Scugog Island hill, shows the washed-out condition of road on the hill and construction under-way on widening and raising the roadbed, further west on the causeway, near Port Perry.



Looking west, across the causeway towards Port Perry, from the top of Scugog Island hill in 2017.

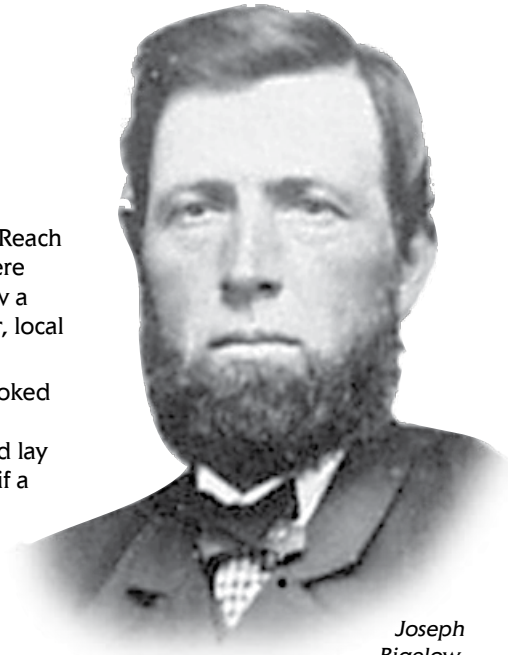


The west causeway linking Port Perry with Scugog Island - June 2017.

The Cartwright Causeway

WHEN THE FIRST permanent roadway across Lake Scugog linking Reach with Scugog Township was completed in 1885, local businessmen were pleased to see business increase dramatically. The Scugog Bridge now a solid roadway, made access to Port Perry from Scugog so much easier, local businesses began to flourish.

One of Port Perry's leading businessmen, Joseph Bigelow, now looked further east for other markets to improve trade with the village. A visionary, he had recognized years earlier that east of Scugog Island lay Cartwright Township, a large and prosperous area. He believed that if a more direct route to Port Perry could be provided, local business would benefit immensely. The long, tiring trip from Williamsburg (Blackstock) and other areas of Cartwright, around the south end of Lake Scugog, a trek of 15 or more miles, and then back north to the village provided little incentive for residents to use Port Perry as their main centre of trade.



Joseph Bigelow

Bigelow's dream was to construct a road connecting Scugog Island with the westerly boundaries of Cartwright, but in order to accomplish this feat he had to overcome a major obstacle, more than 2.5 miles of swamp and wetland.

Although a causeway through the marshland didn't become a reality for almost two decades, as early as 1872 Charles Paxton and Joseph Bigelow began to petition Ontario County Council regarding the erection of a bridge from Scugog to Cartwright. The County refused to take any action at that time, but agreed to set up a committee consisting of Mr. Holman, Scugog Reeve W.S. Sexton and Port Perry Reeve J. Bigelow to confer with the councils of Darlington and Cartwright Townships regarding the construction of the bridge.

Over the next few years, many attempts were made to get the Cartwright Causeway constructed. One of the best chances came when the Lake Scugog Marsh Lands Drainage Co, agreed to build the roadway if they received some financial support from the municipalities. A vote by the residents of Port Perry, in December 1882, defeated a by-law intended to assist the Land Drainage Company, thus ending any chance of the roadway being completed at that time.

Despite the setback, the dream of connecting Scugog to Cartwright with a good roadway flourished, and due to the perseverance of Joseph Bigelow, work finally got underway in 1889 on the connecting causeway. The project plodded along slowly until May 1890 when a special meeting of Port Perry Council was held for the purpose of considering the advisability of the corporation of Port Perry in assuming the work of construction of what had by then become known as the Port Perry-Scugog-Cartwright Roadway.

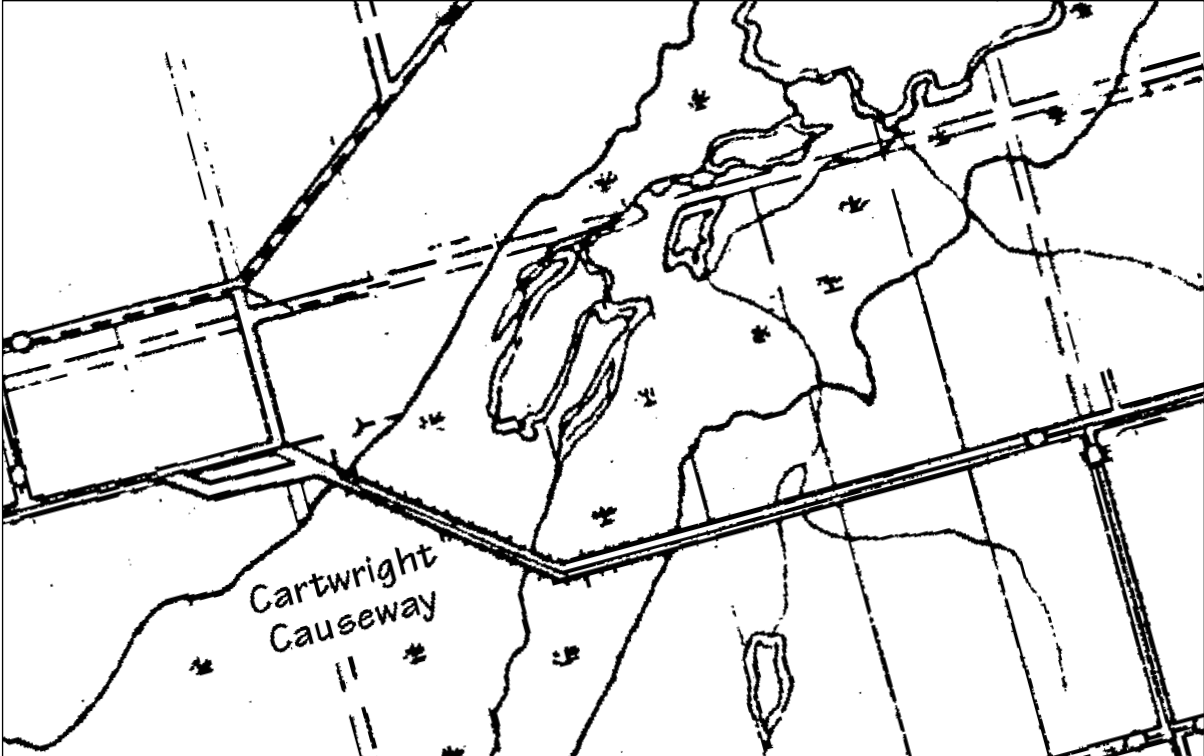
Reeve Bigelow proposed that the corporation finish the uncompleted work, finance the construction, collect the uncollected stock and bonuses and pay off all liabilities contending there would be a surplus left for the community.

But the plan met with strenuous opposition from Councillor Boxall, who said he was a "strong advocate and supporter of the construction of the Roadway and would assist to the utmost of his power in the prosecution and early construction of the work by every legitimate means. But, he requested the corporation solicitor, Mr. N.F. Paterson, to give council his opinion as to the power of council assuming such undertakings."

Mr. Paterson advised, should council enter into the proposed contract it would certainly exceed its legislative powers, so the matter was dropped. Undeterred by the lack of additional support from the corporation, Mr. Bigelow and his advocates proceeded with the job of construction, using money secured by grants and by way of public subscription.

Grants towards the construction were received as follows:

- Port Perry - \$4,000,
- Grand Trunk Railway - \$1,500,
- Ontario Government - \$1,500,
- County of Ontario - \$500
- Counties of Northumberland and Durham - \$500.



Above: Early map of the stretch of road known as the Cartwright Roadway, or causeway, constructed in the 1890s.

Below: An aerial photograph taken in 1954, shows how the Cartwright Causeway cuts across the bottom end of the east arm of Lake Scugog and then makes it's way toward Blackstock along Highway 7A.



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Joseph Bigelow also raised more than \$2,300 by way of public subscription from the residents of the three neighbouring communities.

With enough money to proceed, construction began and by September 1890, the Port Perry-Scugog-Cartwright Roadway was well on its way to completion and the editor of the North Ontario Observer described its progress as follows:

"We had the pleasure of a drive over the new roadway from Scugog to Cartwright on Saturday, last, and was surprised to find it so far advanced towards completion.

Mr. Bigelow, the instigator and promoter of the scheme, has taken every precaution so that when the roadway is completed it will be a permanent one and a credit in every respect to his perseverance and indomitable pluck, for had he not taken hold of the scheme we question whether it would have had an existence today.

He was not only the instigator and promoter but he has most successfully financed for the undertaking throughout, and although at times when managing this most important part - the financing - the prospects were anything but bright, he never faltered but pressed onward until his efforts were crowned with victory, and shortly he will have the pleasure of declaring this important highway open to public travel."

With construction now nearing completion, Messrs. J. Bigelow and J.H. Brown appeared before Scugog Township council urging them to grant \$100 to fill in a large hollow in the road by the 5th concession to make that portion of the road the same level as the new roadway. The grant was approved and Reeve W.R. Ham, Mr.



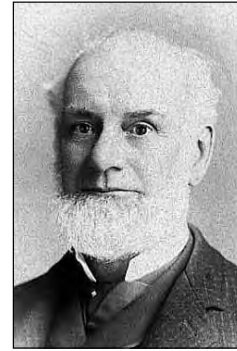
The Scugog-Cartwright Roadway, looking south, as it looked during the turn of the century, after trees had grown along the sides, lining the route.

Turner and Mr. Dunn were appointed commissioners to oversee the work on behalf of the corporation.

By December 1890 the Port Perry-Scugog-Cartwright Roadway was nearing completion and Mr. Bigelow and the directors of the company issued the following report in the North Ontario Observer.

The following is a statement of the particulars in connection with the building of the roadway between the Township of Scugog and the Township of Cartwright over the water and marsh land separating these two townships, the former of which has always been known as Scugog Island.

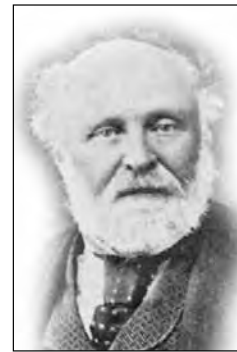
In the spring of the year there is from one to three feet of water over the marsh permitting small boats to pass over it. During the summer the water subsides to about a level with the marsh. Formerly more or less timber grew on



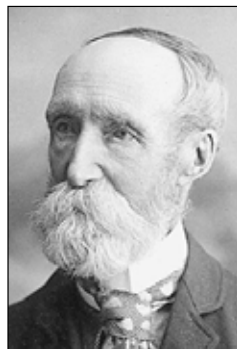
Aaron Ross
President



Jno. E. Farewell
County Clerk



W.S. Sexton
Director



W. E. Yarnold
Engineer

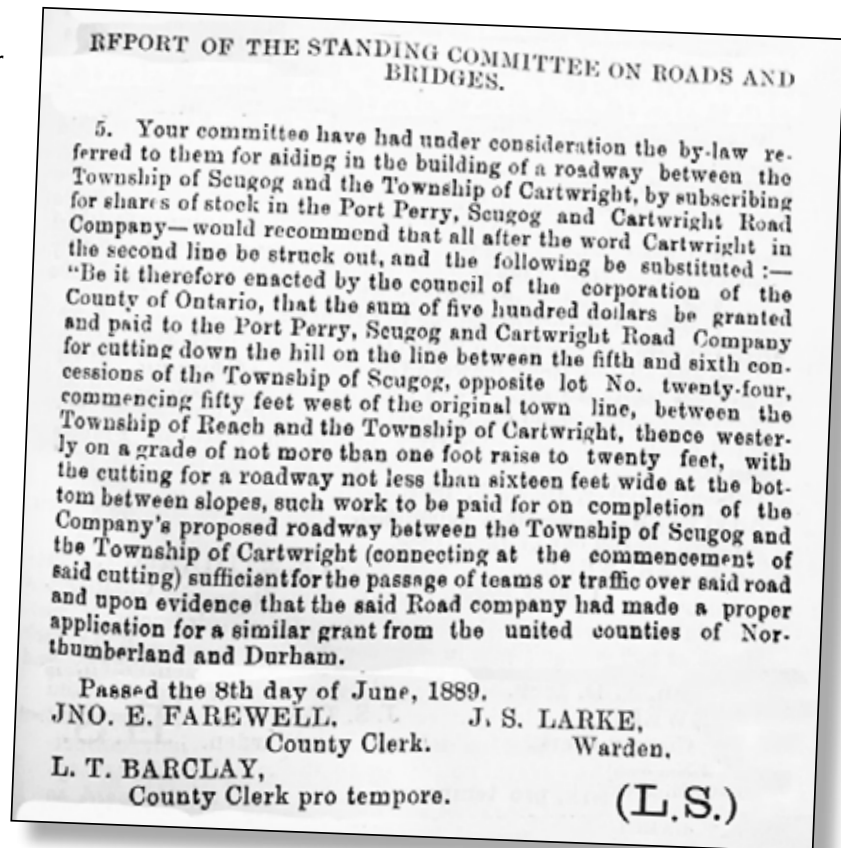
this marsh but the building of locks at Lindsay for the improvement of the navigation of Lake Scugog and river is the cause of this overflow which rendered the construction of the new roadway much more expensive than it otherwise would have been.

This roadway has been talked of as a most desirable object to be accomplished for the past twenty years, the completion of which would accommodate a large section of country and the best evidence of its necessity is the liberal subscriptions which have been given in aid of the work.

The bridge or roadway from Scugog Island to Port Perry, thoroughly about half the length of the proposed roadway, and built by the County of Ontario, is said to have cost about \$25,000. These facts embark in the work, or the promoters of the proposed undertaking, who however, came to the conclusion if it was not commenced it would never be finished.

In order to carry on the work a company was formed under the General Road Companies' Act to obtain a legal standing, with the following gentlemen as directors and officers:

- Aaron Ross, President
- N.F. Paterson, Director
- Joseph Bigelow, Director
- Thos. Courtice, Director
- Jas Graham, Director
- W.E. Yarnold, Engineer
- J.H. Brown, Treasurer



At the first meeting of the directors, Mr. Bigelow was appointed secretary with general powers to proceed with the work, who with Mr. Yarnold, the company's engineer, conjointly with the president and directors have completed the undertaking to the satisfaction of the public and all concerned, including the Ontario Government and Grand Trunk Railway Company's engineers, who after examination report the work as satisfactory and much better than they expected to find it.

The whole length of the road over the marsh is 2.6 miles, of which 1.2 miles is formed of brush and timber from three to five feet deep, 24 feet wide, the cedar posts, 12 feet long, for the fencing of the roadway being first driven, cutting holes through the ice to do so, giving a twenty foot roadway. The timber and brush work being built around them on the ice during the winter, in the construction of the 1,485 yds., 27 acres of heavy cedar and tamarack swamp has been used, or an average of one acre of timber to every ten rods the average drawing of the timber being one and a quarter miles.

Almost 500 yards of the marsh was built by throwing up the marsh, and earth drawn on, the whole roadway was then covered with earth from three to four feet deep in the centre and twelve to fifteen inches at the sides with ten inches of gravel in the centre to finish.

The length of the approach at the Scugog end of the roadway is about 1.25 miles making the whole

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roadway upon which work has been performed 7-1/2 miles in length, along which 18,000 feet of lumber was used for fencing.

The Township of Cartwright has, in addition to the private subscriptions of its people, built the eastern approach, some 160 rods in length (1/2 mile), over low marshy, partly timbered land, at a cost of between \$1,200 and \$1,500 forming a direct connection with the graveled road from Bowmanville to Caesarea, one mile north of Blackstock.

In February 1891, North Ontario Observer editor James Baird set out on a journey across the new Cartwright roadway, after which he published final report:

"A recent trip along the Scugog-Cartwright Roadway convinced us more than ever before of the importance and future usefulness of that road as a viable channel of trade between Port Perry and the townships to the east of it.

The very fine, extensive farms of choice land, well-appointed and magnificently stocked, offered a legitimate inducement to the people of Port Perry to seek a shorter and more direct channel of trade between the Port and the prosperous farmers to the east.

At the same time the sum paid by the Township of Cartwright to secure the road will be found to be a profitable investment in-as-much as it gives them access to a first-class market for all they wish to buy or sell. The road when properly completed may be kept in order at a small cost. Of course it will require an expenditure of five or six hundred dollars to complete the job.

There is a cut near the Scugog end of the road from which a couple of hundred tons of earth will have to be removed, otherwise it will remove itself before the month is out.

As far as the fencing goes it is simply a burlesque and if meant for any use, most of it will have to be done over again. The roadway is fairly well built, and all may be completed for six hundred dollars, then the people concerned will have a road of which they will feel proud, and which after a year or two of travel will be thoroughly consolidated and can be maintained as a first-class road at very little expense.

This road will prove a lasting monument to the unflinching energy and indomitable perseverance of Mr. Bigelow. Many years hence when that gentleman shall have passed away the Scugog-Cartwright road will remain a lasting monument of his indefatigable energy and good judgment."

The Cartwright Roadway proved to be an invaluable link between the residents and businesses of Cartwright and Reach Township, providing adequate passage for many years.

But as the years passed, traffic on the roadway became increasingly busy, and it was suggested that the narrow roadway, which had become flanked by brush and full grown trees, was in need of widening. An article in The Port Perry Star in April 1925 suggested the road was alright in the old days when people had time to wait at a "turning-out-place" for rigs to pass, but in these days of hurry and autos there was not time to stop and chat with folks.

This important link to Cartwright was the main east-west roadway, however, due to the soft soils and clay on which the causeway was built, it sank at a continuous rate and still required maintenance to keep it above water during the spring thaw.

In 1928, both the former Scugog Bridge and Cartwright causeways were reinforced, widened and heightened in response to growing automobile usage.

The roadway was assumed by the Department of Highways in 1938 and about a year later, in October 1939 the former dirt road between Port Perry and Blackstock was paved.

The King's Highway 7A was created in June 1944. The original route established for the highway was along Queen Street through downtown Port Perry, then south on Water Street and finally east along Scugog Street to meet up with the causeway. This route lasted for almost two decades before being re-routed, eliminating the section through the downtown and moving it to Scugog St., to the head of the causeway (old Scugog Bridge).

During the late 1950s, spring flooding began to become problematic on both causeways, prompting the Department of Highways to reconstruct them and the approaches.

Soil investigations were carried out over the length of the road in mid-1959, and in August 1960 contracts were tendered for construction. The existing causeways were both closed, and the adjacent marsh was excavated up to 20 feet deep.

BY-LAW NO. 536

A BY-LAW TO ASSUME IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UNITED COUNTIES OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM, A PORTION OF THAT ROADWAY KNOWN AS THE PORT PERRY, SCUGOG AND CARTWRIGHT ROADWAY, EXTENDING FROM THE EASTERLY SHORE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SCUGOG SOUTH-EASTERLY TO THE SHORE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CARTWRIGHT, IN THE UNITED COUNTIES OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM.

The Council of the Corporation of the County of Ontario enacts as follows:—

1. That that portion of the Port Perry, Scugog and Cartwright Roadway, commencing on the northerly limit of the original allowance for road between the fifth and sixth concessions of the Township of Cartwright, south seventy-eight degrees west, three chains from the south-east angle of lot number three; thence south seventy-eight degrees west along the north limit of said allowance for road thirty-one chains ninety-five links to a point south seventy-eight degrees west six chains from the south-west angle of lot number two; then north sixty-two degrees east on lot number two in the sixth concession

twenty-eight chains and sixty-five links more or less to the limit between lots one and two; thence on in the same direction on lot number one twenty-eight chains more or less to the west side of the marsh at the Scugog shore, the said road being one chain in width and the above described line forming the north and east limit thereof is hereby assumed jointly with the Council of the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham as a public highway.

2 That this by-law shall not come into force or operation until a similar by-law shall have been passed by the Council of the Corporation of the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham assuming with this county the said roadway.

Passed this 26th day of June, 1897.

JNO. E. FAREWELL,
County Clerk.

CHAS. KING,
Warden, (L. S.)

Nearby properties were purchased for the sole purpose of excavating for earth for fill, which was trucked at a continuous rate. More than 8,100,000 cubic feet of organic material was removed from the marsh and 12,494,574 cubic feet of fill placed over several years.

Now, almost 150 years after Joseph Bigelow began pushing for this efficient new route to Cartwright, the former inadequate road across the swamp has been widened, rebuilt and become a main corridor for traffic flowing east and west through Cartwright and Port Perry.

We're sure Joseph Bigelow, the visionary who conceived the idea and lead the charge, would be proud to see the final results of his dream.

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QUEEN STREET, PORT PERRY, ONTARIO

The original route of Highway 7A was along Queen Street through downtown Port Perry. A directional sign can be seen in front of the Royal Bank building, at 210 Queen Street, during the summer of 1946.



Aerial view of a section of the Cartwright section of the new road being constructed during 1960-1962. The road coming off the Island, bottom left, was re-routed and a new road bed was constructed heading towards the Cartwright causeway.



A man paddles along what should be the Cartwright section of the 7A causeway during a spring flood in the late 1950s.



The same section of Cartwright causeway (above), now Highway 7A, leading to Blackstock, as it looks today.



Tremaine Map 186

