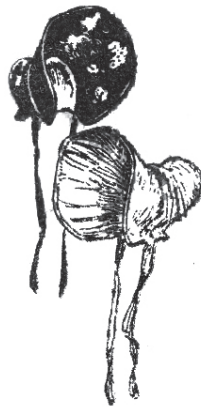


**HISTORICAL
SKETCH
OF SEAGRAVE**



By JOHN H. BROWN

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with additional files from
J. Peter Hvidsten

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By John H. Brown

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Seagrave in Colour



Wagons pull up in front of the Seagrave General Store circa 1900.



Ocean House hotel in the centre of the business district, Seagrave, about 1900.

Photos colourized by J. Peter Hvidsten

~ John H. Brown ~

John H. Brown was born in Brock Township about 1863, a son for his parents Charles and Maryann Brown. He was raised in a farming family and when he was 27 years old he married Jessie Ella Rogers, on March 31, 1890, in their home of Brock Township.

John and Jessie purchased a 150 acre farm on Lot 21, Conc. 13, Reach Township the following year. Their new home was near Seagrave, half a mile east of the Seagrave railway station.

In addition to farming duties, in the early 1900s John became a dealer of agricultural implements and machinery.

During the 1920s the John and Jessie moved to Toronto, while still owning their farm. They advertised the far for sale for rent in September 1927, stating it had a good house, a large hip-roof barn, stone stables, good water well and a running stream on the property.

John became seriously ill in 1936 and he passed away three years later at his home in Toronto. He was 76 years of age.

Historical Sketch of Seagrave

written by J. H. Brown

Published November 23, 1933
Port Perry Star

Seagrave is situated on Lots 23 and 24, Conc. 13, Township of Reach, County of Ontario. In the first part of the last century this part of Ontario, County was known as the district of Nassau, later the County of Ontario.

In the early, days, of 1800, the first road and bridge that crossed the Nonquon river in its flow to Lake Scugog, was east of the Village. The road followed the Mariposa townline over Mr. James McDougall's lot and crossed the river at this point, then through Mr. James Harding's field and on through Mr. Sleep's farm, and came out to the present roadway at the curve of the road at John Mark's.

From that point to Borelia and Prince Albert, which in those days was the centre of trade and commerce for the north country. The present roadway was built about 1849, to get away from the steep grades on both sides of the old bridge. The present road has much easier grades, both north and south.



At the time of the building of the new roadway there were a few log cabins on the present site, and the village was called, Nonquon. A little later a Post Office was established and given the name of Sonya, but through some unforgotten cause, the Post Office was later moved to the present Sonya.

As years rolled by a new Post Office was asked for and granted, which was called Seagrave, and the name has stuck.



This 1860 Ontario Map shows the hamlet of Sonya, which was later renamed Seagrave.



Clearing the land.

Illustration by C.W. Jeffreys

The Pioneers

Among the early pioneer settlers were the families of Palmer Carr, James Carr, L. Druchan, James Profit, George Silver, Benjamin Tripp, with a family of twelve sons, Ben. Pickle, Arthur Miller, Thorn Brothers, Moody Farewell, Emmerson Coryell.

West of the village were Christopher Graham, William Brown, Robert Stewart, McFarlane, James Gibbon, Philip Mark.

North and east were Aaron Tanner, W.L King, Alex. McLean, Paxton Brothers, Abe Madden, David Miller, John Miller, Moses Wells, Archie McLean, Peter Wilkinson, Robert Black, Thos. Wakeford, Alex. Black.

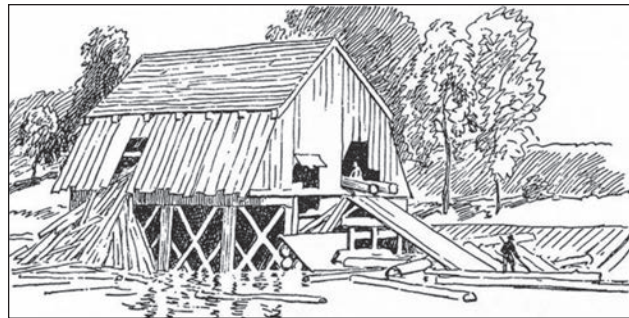
South were Fred Ottis, Samuel Sleep, Thomas Stevenson, Nicholas Mark, Salein Snyder, Jacob Orchard, William Rattenbury, John Shaw, John Munroe, James Moon.

The Industries

Before 1850 there was a sawmill on the river driven by water power. It was just below James Harding's barn, and supplied all the lumber required in the community at \$4.00 to \$6.00 per thousand. The timber was taken off the land close to the river.

The first store was built and, occupied by Mr. Snooks on the Wes. Frise lot. The second was a grocery and cobbler's shop and was occupied by John Tax, who was also a blacksmith. The cobbler's name is not known. A second blacksmith shop was run by Lorne Starr.

Palmer Carr, in the very early days, manufactured grain cradles, which had the reputation of being the very best



A pioneer sawmill.

Illustration by C.W. Jeffreys

implement of its kind. Mr. Carr also made scythes for cutting hay; also wood barley forks. This factory was on the lot now occupied by Mr. Reynolds.

Mr. John Allen had a factory where Mr. C. Sleep's house now stands and made brushes for house and stable use. He later moved to the Isaac Midgley lot, and continued to make brushes. He also was Postmaster.

Mr. William Brown carried on a weaver's trade for a number of years, making the best of fullcloth, and flannels.

On the lot occupied by Mr. Thomas Couch, was a cooper shop occupied by Thomas Wakeford. He made apple, flour and pork barrels, churns and butter tubs, as well as other household articles. Joseph Stephenson carried on the business of wagonmaker and manufactured wagons and sleigh for a number of years.

In the 1880s, Messrs. Miller and Johnston, had an implement shop where now stands the store shed, and did a large trade in implements such as plows made by Paxton & Tate, of Port Perry; Woods implements made in Bowmanville, and many other makes.

In the 1890s Mr. Edward Frise moved the implement shop across the corner and started a boot and shoe making business. He was the last shoemaker.

About this time Mr. Sandy Stewart carried on a harness business, and Mr. Britton Love carried on a tailoring business. There is not one of these trades carried on in the village to-day.



Log schoolhouse with fireplace.

Schools

The first Public School was held in a log building on the lot now belonging to S. McCoy. The present school was built in the 1860s. The contractor and builder was Joseph Letcher, of Port Perry. This building has always been kept in a fair state of repair down through the years.

Some of the teachers that wielded the birch were: James Taylor, Hugh Black, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Anderson, Miss Adams, (now Mrs. Robert Thompson); Miss Gilroy, the late Mrs. C. Sleep, James Sharrard, now Prof. Sharrard.



Methodist Episcopal Church near Seagrave 1860.

Churches

Some of the most enthusiastic church-goers used to walk from west of the present station and cross the rapids on stepping stones and very often at high water would remove their shoes and stockings to save getting them wet, and repeated the process on their way home.

They walked to Mark's Corner where there was a Methodist Church. Sometime later there were preaching services in the log school. These were the first public services in the community.

After the new school was built services were held in it for some time. About 1875 the first Methodist Church was built on the lot which is now the garden of the parsonage. A parsonage was built on the present lot a short time after which it was burned during the pastorate of Rev. T. W. Liggett, in 1892.

The present parsonage was built in 1893. The contractor and builder was Mr. John Stovin, of Port Perry. One of the workmen was Mr. Frank Mason, Ex-Mayor of Oshawa.

A short time after the building of the Methodist Church, a Bible Christian Church was built which is now a machine shop owned by Mr. Wesley Frise. The first pastor of the Methodist Church was Rev. Daniel Dennick, and as laymen preachers Messrs. Palmer Carr and George Hall.

The first pastor of the Bible Christian Church was Rev. Mr. Shultz. The Present United Church was built in 1906-7, started under the pastorate of Rev. J.W. Young, who died in the winter of 1907. The church was completed under the pastorate of Rev. J.U. Robins, and dedicated on October 19 and 20, 1907.

The corner stone was laid by Mr. W.L. King. The building committee were Rev. Mr. Young, chairman; Mr. Robt. Thompson, W.J. Gibson, John Wells, W.J. Rogers, John Brown, Richard Reynolds. After the death of Mr. Young, Mr. Robins was chairman. The dedicatory services were conducted by Rev. Mr. Williams, of Hamilton.



Ocean House hotel, Seagrave about 1900.

Hotels

In the days of the stage coach carrying mail and passengers, the taverns as they were better known at that time, were a necessary evil. There was one at the townline between Reach and Brock, on the lot now occupied by Jimmie Campbell, another on James McDougall's corner, one at Snyder's and the Orser House at Honey's Corner.

After the changing of the roadway to its present place, Abraham Coryell built the Coryell House, better known in those days as the Nonquon Tavern, in 1850.

The frame and body of this building was built of a double thickness of two inch plank. Lumber was so cheap they could use any quantity which did not affect the price of the building to any extent.

One of the high spots in the early history of this house was 1876 and a few, years later, when, Mr. Elijah Tanner was the proprietor. This was during the building of the railway. Mr. Tanner is, and has been for many years a resident of the village. He spent many years in Michigan and Western Canada, but came back about 15 years ago to spend a well-earned rest, after a varied career. Long may he live to enjoy it. He is now over eighty.

The Ocean House was built by McKay and Fraser. The first landlord was James Broad. The last few years his house has served as a residence.



Sketch depicting a corduroy road in Ontario.

Corduroy Roads

In 1846 there was no road or hardly a path east of where William Brown lived to the Nonquon. The first attempt to build was from the railway crossing west about two hundred rods where a corduroy was laid.

About 1850 a contract was let to Charles and William Brown to cut the timber on the road allowance and place the logs crossways to form the foundation, then to cover them with earth. Along in front of Mr. S. Reynold's farm the bottom was very soft. You can see the ends of some of those logs to-day.

The First Butcher

The first butcher business was carried on by Daniel Stalker, on the ground where the Ocean House now stands. This was during the building of the railroad.

Building of the Railroad.

The building of the railroad was started in 1874, when the road was extended from Port Perry to Lindsay. During those days there was no depression around the Nonquon, as every labourer could get work on the railroad, and every farmer could spare a team or two for the job of grading.

The Coryell House, under the proprietorship of E. Tanner, accommodated 60 to 70 men with board and lodging for a number of months. And incidentally an occasional shot to warm the inner man.



The Seagrave Railway station, circa 1900.

During the building of the railroad the ground that the grain storehouse and station stands on was not any better than a boggle. There is a spring about 100 rods north of the station that took thousands of feet of logs and timber and several carloads of stone to make it solid enough for the roadbed.

Some of the early mail carriers from the station were: Ira Johnston, better known as Stub Johnston; James Bond, William McCoy, Thomas Flannery, Richard Reynolds, Samuel Moon.

This story would not be complete without bringing Mr. Robert Thompson into the scene. Mr. Thompson's first venture at storekeeping was in a small frame building where the present store stands. He fitted up a room on the ground floor about 10 x 12, and used the upper floor for living apartment. From that small beginning he built up through thrift and honesty and good. salesmanship, one of the best General Stores in that part of the country.

Later he built the present store. He and his wife are now enjoying a rest, living in Whitby.



Seagrave General Store, circa 1900.

Timbering

In the days of the early pioneers all of the land south of the first concession of Mariposa and west of King's Bay was part of Cartwright Township and was heavily covered with white pine. On the road onto Fish Point, that is concession A, Mr. Aaron Tanner had a farm lot which he and his sons took off the pine. Then all the pine east and south of Tanner's was taken off by Paxton Brothers and put into the lake or river and rafted down to Port Perry to be manufactured into square timber and lumber.

Mr. W.A. King was camp boss for Paxton Bros., and a good boss he made. Mr. King later got the farm now owned by Thomas Druean, where he lived for many years.

The Moon farm, the Ottis farm and the Sleep farm including the Joseph Orchard farm down to the mouth of the Nonquon River were all heavily timbered with pine.

Those were the days of pine knot and tallow candles for light, with whiskey retailing at 25¢ a gallon. The days of wild pigeons which gathered in the fall in flocks of thousands.

I think in those days the average man was stronger than the men of today, because they spent their lifetime in the lumber woods. Great axemen, great sawyers and and hewers of square timber, (if you, let them tell it.)



Illustration of clearing the land.

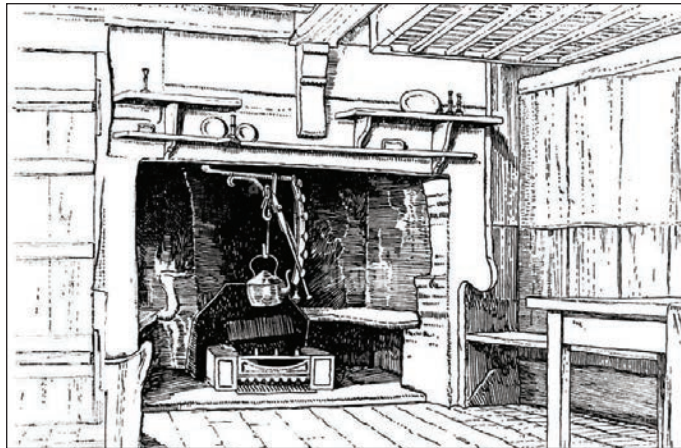
It is told that one man chopped, split and piled five cords of cordwood in one day. Two others are said to have sawed 20 cords of stove wood in one day. Those feats were always told in the harvest time and in the winter the theme was cradling grain and binding sheaves.

It is told by Mr. Elijah Tanner that he cradled a ten acre field of fall wheat in one day. Jim Carr said he could not do it. So they put up the magnificent sum of five dollars, and Elijah went out and repeated it in another field the same size.

Those were the days of the jumper, the ox-team, the logging bees and the wolves, along

with pine knots, tallow candles and open fireplace.

Then came the kerosene lamp, but no chimney, just a couple of candle wicks running up through the neck of the lamp bowl. There was quite a bit of smoke but still it was an improvement on the candle. Then came the coal-oil lamp with the flat wick and chimney. And this lamp still remains in most of the farm homes after 50 years. So the of the farm home now have electricity.



Pioneer era fireplace for cooking.

Heating and Baking

The early heating was by the open fireplace on one side of the room. The kettles were swung from a swinging crane over the fire for cooking purposes. The bread, very often, was baked in a flat iron pot with a cover, and placed down in the hot ashes and covered with live coals.

The ladies often took this bake kettle as they 'called it) out to log heaps just burned and place the kettle in the hot coals and ashes, and the bread baked beautifully.

One plan to keep a fire in the fire place was to have a large hardwood log placed at the back which would hold the fire for considerable time. If the fire went out they very often had to go to a neighbour to get some live coals. The log was very often got into place by hauling it to the door and fastening a chain around it, and put a chain through a hole in the back of fire place and hitch the ox-team on and draw it into place. Of course this was not done in all cases!



Oxen clearing the land.

The Beast of Burden

In those early days the beast of burden was the ox, and a good servant he was. He could stand the rough life better than the horse.

A farmer was considered fairly well to do, when he was able to do his farm work with horses. The horses were much more speedy than the ox.

The two-wheeled cart came first, then the wagon. The long pleasure sleigh was used in the winter, and very often was well loaded when the community had a dance.

There were no buggies, or cutters in the early days. First came the two-wheeled gig cart. Some of them hung on heavy straps instead of springs. These were used mostly by doctors and ministers. It was wonderful how the driver kept to his seat as the vehicle had a swinging motion and well as jumping up and down over the corduroy roads.

Then came the two seated democrat, heavy and strong, built for long life. Just a little softer than a wagon. Then came the buggy as the roads improved, and later the covered buggy and covered, carriages. These were the height of luxury. Along with the buggy came the light cutter. And now we have the automobile.

Some of those heavy democrats stood up against the bad roads and heavy loads for 50 years. That beats the auto.

Before we draw this pioneer history to a close, we must say a word of commendation in the interest of the ladies of the middle of the last century. Every one of those mentioned here were the real founders of the present church, along with their devoted husbands

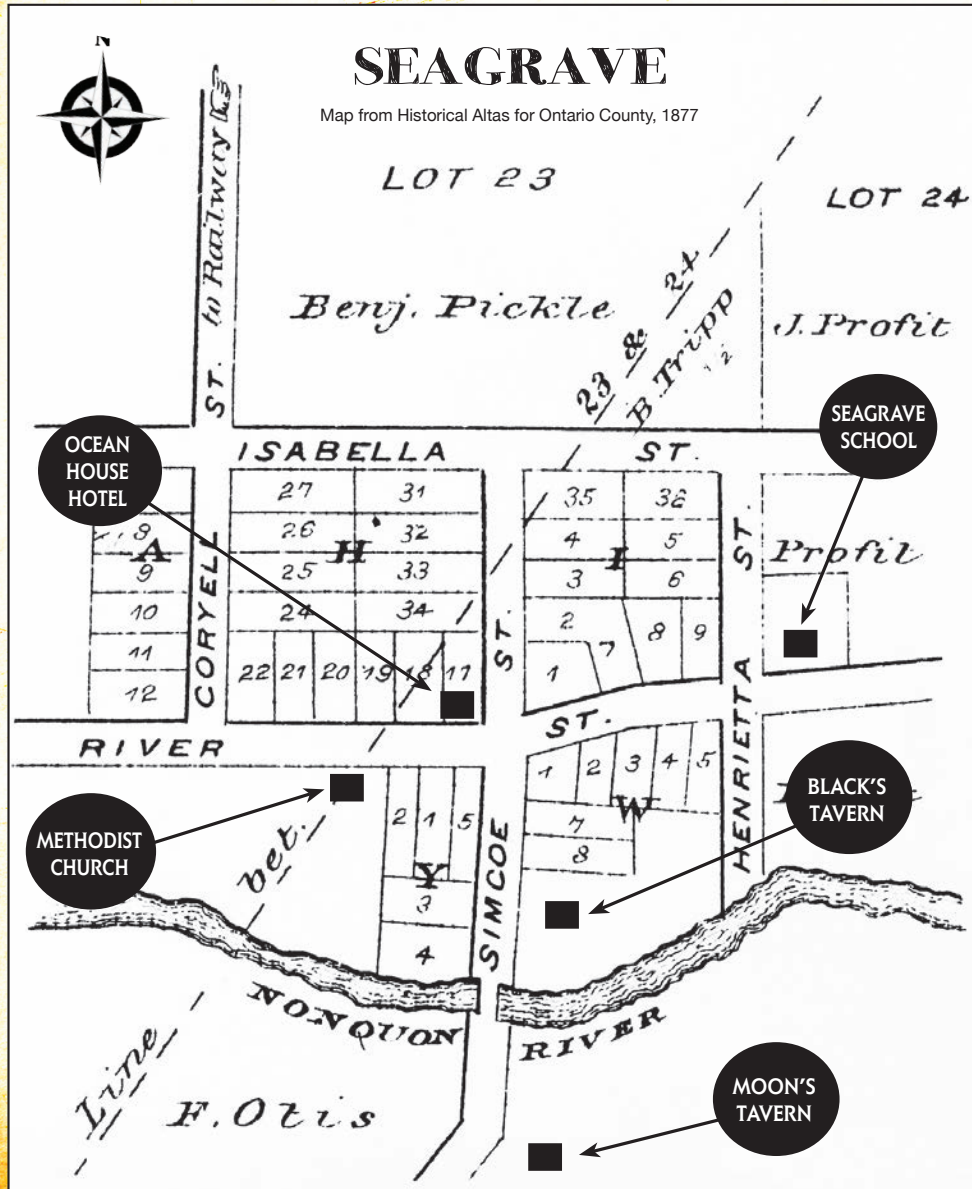
Mrs. William Brown and Mrs. Christopher Graham would not miss their church service even if they had to walk eight or ten miles. Mrs. Samuel Sleep and Mrs. Fred Otis, devoted members of the Methodist church, were also real pillars of that institution.

Others were Mrs. Thompson, Sr., and Mrs. Arthur Miller, who took the responsibility of leaders in the singing and were wonderful supporters in the Sunday School. Mr. Robert Thompson held the responsible position of Superintendent of the Sunday School for many years.

SEAGRAVE

PART TWO

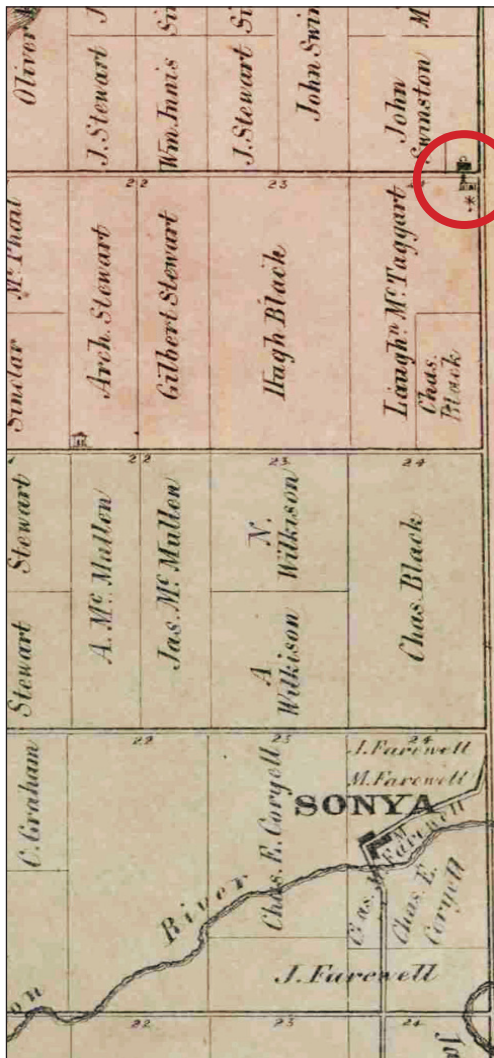
By J. Peter Hvidsten



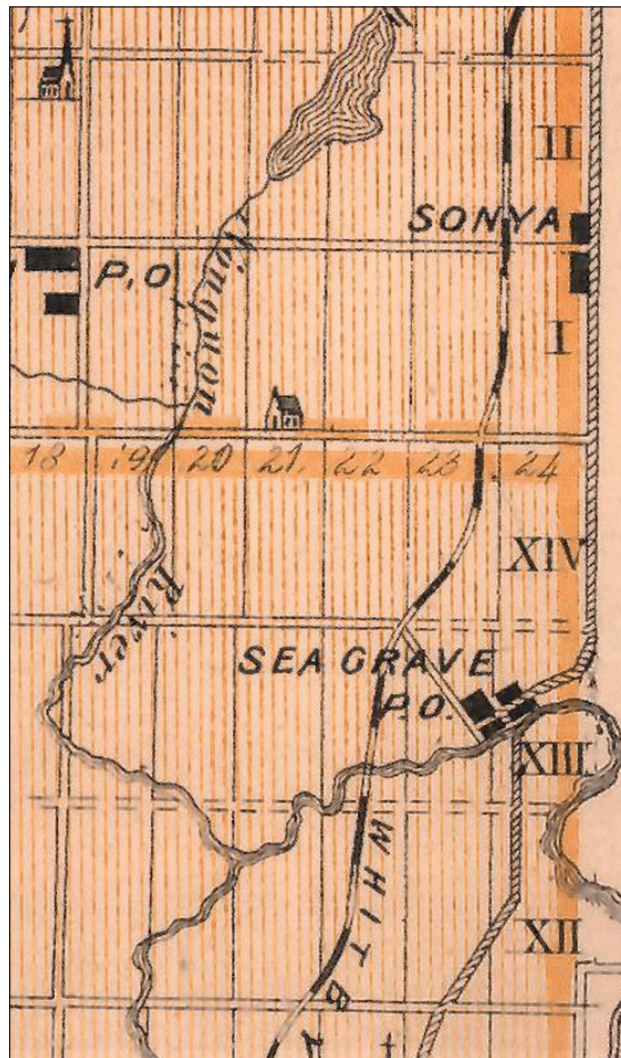
Sonya & Seagrave

The 1860 Tremaine map of Ontario County (left) shows the village of Seagrave was originally named Sonya. The hamlet of Sonya did not have a name at this time although the maps shows the existence of a church and one other building (circled)

In 1861 the Post Office and the Sonya village name was moved about a mile north into Brock Township. The 1879 map (right) shows the renamed village of Seagrave, with Sonya just over the Reach/Brock boundry line five minutes north.



Tremaine's 1860 Ontario County map showing the hamlet of Sonya, in Reach Township. It was later renamed Seagrave.



This 1879 map of Ontario County shows Sonya relocated into Brock Twp., and the village formerly known as Sonya in 1860 renamed Seagrave.

SEAGRAVE

~ A Brief History by J. Peter Hvidsten ~

A few miles north of Port Perry, nestled in a picturesque valley beside the Nonquon river, is the community of Seagrave. Just how it got its name is a mystery, but at least one legend suggests it was originally intended to be called "Seagrove", but somewhere along the line the name was changed.

It is also said that before being named Seagrave, the village was known as Sonya, but in 1861 the post office and the village name was moved a mile north to the present day Sonya.

Long before the village had any identity, Solomon Orser arrived from Kingston, Ontario with two steers and a dog. Mr. Solomon is estimated to have arrived towards the end of 1830, settling on 100 acres of land described as lot 9, concession 8.

The earliest days were by no means easy for him, due to dangers from wild animals and with few visits from pioneers or local natives. But here he settled and began clearing the land for farming. He was also built a small tavern near his home.

More than a year after Solomon Orser arrived, John Mark became a settler. He was followed by Solmon's brother Jeremiah, James Moon and Charles Black and Thomas Shaw. Mr. Moon's homestead was located south of the Nonquon, where he opened the Nonquon House tavern. Mr. Black settled on the north

side of the river, opening a tavern on his property.

Charles and Elizabeth Coryell moved to Seagrave and took over one of the hotel in the village in 1850. He named it the Coryell House. Charles died in 1872 and Elizabeth sold their property moved back to her home in Whitby. Coryell St. and Henrietta St. are named after the family.

The Coryell House hotel was taken over by W.S. Latimor, but burned to the ground eight years later. The following year, 1881, a new hotel, the Ocean House was built across the road and that building survives today .

In 1873 a post office was reopened with the name Seagrave. Abraham O'Coryell (Coryell) became the first postmaster, serving in that position until 1877.

The first church to serve the congregation of Epsom and surrounding countryside was the Methodist Episcopal church which is believed to have opened in the 1840s.

About 1860 pioneer John Shaw donated a piece of land across the road from his home, south of Seagrave for a new church. It was completed in 1863 and became known as Bethel Church.

The first Methodist Church was built in the village about 1873. A second church was erected in 1893 and the present United Church was opened in 1906.

SEAGRAVE

HOW IT GOT ITS NAME?

Just how the village of Seagrave was named is a mystery, although prior to 1861 it was known as Sonya.

Research shows 'Seagrave' is usually of English origin and is a locational name is taken from the village of Seagrave in Leicestershire, England.

The name is derived from the old English words 'set', meaning an animal pen or enclosure and 'graf meaning a ditch or grove.

Using this analogy, the early settlers may have literally used the meaning of the name – thinking of the Seagrave valley as a 'grove or pen' where animals roamed free.

Or it could simply have been named after the town of Seagrave in England.

Seagrave in Colour



The Seagrave railway station was built about 1873, when the line was extended from Port Perry to Lindsay.



Seagrave United Church, from a 1909 postcard.

Seagrave Postmasters

Abram Coryell became the first postmaster for the village of Seagrave in 1873. Mr. Coryell was the grandson of one of the village's earliest settlers, Abram Coryell, and son of Charles E. Coryell who arrived in the village in 1850 and died in 1872.

Abram resigned the position in January 1877, which began a series of short term postmasters.

The first person to take over as postmaster after Abram Coryell was Nathaniel Thorn, who held the position for just over one year, resigning the end of August, 1878.

Richard N. Snooks was the next postmaster, but after less than a year, in May 1879, he passed away. Following Mr. Snooks, to temporarily fill the post was Timothy Brabazon who served as postmaster until resigning in October 1879.

The first man to take on the job full time from his general store was John Allin. He became postmaster in April 1880 and served six years, resigning the end of December 1886.

General store owner Robert Thompson became the longest serving postmaster during the 1800s, assuming the position in 1887 and holding the post for 21 years, before resigning in 1908.



Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church, circa 1880

Seagrave & Bethel Churches

In 1828 the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada was founded. Five years later in 1833 this church united with the Wesleyan Methodists of England but in 1834 the Methodist Episcopal Church was reconstituted. It was to this branch of Methodism that Bethel and Seagrave Churches belonged until the union of all Methodism in 1884.

Services continued from about 1845 until 1860 when pioneer Thomas Shaw donated a triangular piece of land across from his Simcoe Street home, to be used as the site of a

church and cemetery. The congregation responded to his generosity and construction of the new Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church got underway.

Services took place in this church until 1912 when the Bethel membership was transferred to Seagrave Church. The Bethel church was closed and sold in 1928.

The old Bethel cemetery still remains but no burials have taken place in many years. Names prominent in Bethel records are Shaw, Sleep, Moon, Rose and Purdy.

The first church and parsonage in Seagrave were built in 1873 on the Lot 14 Isabella Court, Seagrave. Not long after the parsonage was erected it was destroyed by fire in 1892.

The Methodist Episcopal congregation of Seagrave erected a tidy, comfortable Church and dedicated it on the 28th day of January 1877.

As the population grew, interest became keener for a larger church. Plans were started for the present church in 1906. The first sod was turned by Mr. C.W. Moon with a horse and single plow.



The Seagrave Public School, circa 1890.

Seagrave Public School

It is believed the first school house for children of settlers in the vicinity of Seagrave was 1845. This information comes from an article written by Rev. Weir reporting the first school for which children was built between the 13th and 14th Concession in 1845.

A second school, known as the Nonquon school, was built south about 1.5 miles south of the village in 1848.

The picture, above, taken in the early 1900s, is the Seagrave school, which was located one block east of the general store.

By February 1870, a report on the schools of Reach Township shows a total of 19 schools in operation with a total of 800 students attending classes.



The Seagrave railway station, circa 1900.

Seagrave Railway Station

The Seagrave railway station seen above, was constructed about 1873, after the rail line was extended from Port Perry to Lindsay.

The original Port Whitby and Port Perry Railway (PW&PPR), began at Whitby and passed through the communities of Brooklin, Myrtle, High Point, Manchester, Prince Albert and terminated at Port Perry. The first train arrived in Port Perry in 1871.

Three years later the company obtained the rights to extend the railway northward to Lindsay through Seagrave, Manilla, and Cresswood. It was then renamed the Whitby, Port Perry and Lindsay Railway. A formal opening, and the first regular train over the new extension line to Lindsay took place on July 30, 1877 to great fanfare.

With the success of the railway accomplished, in March 1877, James Holden, managing director of the line, called for tenders to erect of grain store houses at Seagrave, Oakwood and Little Britain.

While the arrival of the railway, north of Port Perry was greeted favourably, the service wasn't always reliable. On one occasion in October 1877, residents complained to railway officials, reporting a train whistled by 100 passengers at Seagrave and Sonya stations, while they were waiting to be picked up and taken to the Lindsay Central Fair.

In July 1881, the grain warehouses at the Seagrave railway station of the Whitby, Port Perry & Lindsay Railway were destroyed by fire.



Ocean House and General Store, circa 1900.

Hotels & Taverns

Solomon Orser, the first settler in the village of Seagrave, also became the settlement's first innkeeper, constructing a small tavern near his home in the early 1830s. Although there are no records, it may have been known as **Orser's Tavern**.

A few years later, James Moon arrived in the small settlement and he is reported to have opened a tavern on the south side on Simcoe Street, just south of the Nonquon River. It is unclear if he ever operated it since he was reported to have been a farmer during his time in Reach.

In the early 1860s the tavern was operated by a J.C. Wesley and was known as the **Half-Way House**. L.D. Brown became the next tavernkeeper in April 1864 and it's believed it was he, who renamed it the **Nonquon House**. He died in 1872 after moving to Darlington, Ontario.

The **Nonquon House** continued to serve the residents of Seagrave for many years, with a Mr. Dennison being the owner during the 1870s. In May 1878 there was a report Mr. Dennison was renovating his hotel.

One year later, William S. Latimor, a 25 year old man from Cartwright, advertised he has purchased the **Nonquon Hotel**. It is not known how long Mr. Latimore owned the hotel, but this is the last we hear of the *Nonquon House*.

Not long after James Moon opened his tavern, a Mr. Black arrived in Seagrave, settling on the north side of the Nonquon River. Here he opened another small tavern.

At some point in the 1860s the property was sold to James Dewart, who operated the hotel and tavern until March 1873 when it was destroyed by fire. Mr. Dewart was on his way home when he noticed the house was ablaze. Efforts to save some of the chat-

tels was unsuccessful, although he was able to save part of the barn.

Charles and Elizabeth Coryell moved to Seagrave and opened a new hotel in the village in 1850. He named it the **Coryell House**. Charles died in 1872 and Elizabeth sold their property moved back to her home in Whitby. Coryell St. and Henrietta St. are named after the family.

The **Coryell House** hotel was taken over by W.S. Latimor, and operated it for eight years before it was destroyed by fire during the morning in April 1880. The fire took hold of the large hotel and in short time had destroyed the hotel and its outbuildings.

The following year, 1881, a new hotel which was named the **Ocean House** was built by James Broad on the north side of River St. This hotel, which is now a residence, still remains today.

Mr. Broad, operated the **Ocean House** from its opening until selling it to Robert Brown in May 1896. Mr. Brown had experience as a bartender at the *St. Charles Hotel* in Port Perry before purchasing the **Ocean House**. In an attempt to attract patrons, Mr. Brown advertised he would provide rabbit and fox hounds, and duck boats to hotel guests staying at the hotel, for hunting purposes.

A year later hotel owner Robert Brown was faced with having to close his bar as over two-thirds of the residents of Seagrave signed a petition against him. Fortunately for Mr. Brown the petition was not successful, but a year later, in May 1898 his liquor license was cut-off.

There are no known records regarding the Ocean House through the first decade of the next century before May 1913 Mr. Coolidge, proprietor of the Ocean House began renovations to the inside of the hotel. In 1914 Frank Hatley took over the hotel and although there were many owners after that time, it appears that old Ocean House became a residence for most of those after Mr. Hatley.

NOTE: The history of the hotels and taverns in Seagrave and Reach Township is very difficult to accurately determine due to the large number of different property and business owners, with little or no detailed records. As today, properties were frequently owned by individuals for years, with their buildings leased back to tenants, often for short terms. It wasn't uncommon in the 1800s for hotels/taverns to change operators, and business names, every two or three years with little record of the proprietorship of the business.

Every effort has been made in this document to be as accurate as possible, with extensive research through Ontario Land Registry documents, Ancestry.ca records and stories found in Prince Albert, Port Perry, Whitby and Lindsay newspapers. Unfortunately gaps in the research leads to assumptions being made where details are lacking. We hope, any unintentional inaccurate, or missing details can be corrected through future research.

Nonquon Navigation Company

It's unlikely many people have heard about "The Nonquon River Navigation Improvement Company," but this company was actually incorporated in 1854. Following are extracts from the incorporation document:

"Be it Remembered, that on this nineteenth day of June, in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, we the undersigned stockholders met at Harmony, in the Township of Whitby, in the County of Ontario, and Province of Canada, and resolved to form ourselves into a company to be entitled "The Nonquon River Navigation Improvement Company," ... for the purpose of constructing a dam six feet high, above high water mark, across the Nonquon River or Creek, in the thirteenth concession of the Township of Reach, and slide in connection therewith, so as to facilitate the transmission of timber down the said river; and we do hereby declare that the capital stock of the said company shall be one thousand pounds, to be divided into two hundred shares at the price of five pounds each, ... and we do hereby nominate Abram Farewell, R. Hudson, Job Wilson Fowke, Hugh Bowie, and Charles Farewell, to be the first directors of the said company."

Following is a description of the work to be undertaken:

- Dam, six feet above high water, forty yards long.

Total estimated cost of construction £800.

An estimate was made from the best available sources of the quantity of different kinds of timber expected to pass down the river yearly:

- 1000 pieces of pine timber.
- 500 pieces hardwood timber.
- 5000 sawlogs.
- 5000 cords of wood.
- 200 cords of shingle bolts.
- 100 cords of hoop stuff.
- 200 cedar passes.
- 600,000 staves.

It appears this company never did more than take out its incorporation papers and receive the sanction of the County Council. These facts were taken from the *"Journal of Proceedings of the Municipal Council of the County of Ontario."*

*Excerpt from Samuel Farmer's book,
"On The Shores of Scugog"*

Early Seagrave Settlers

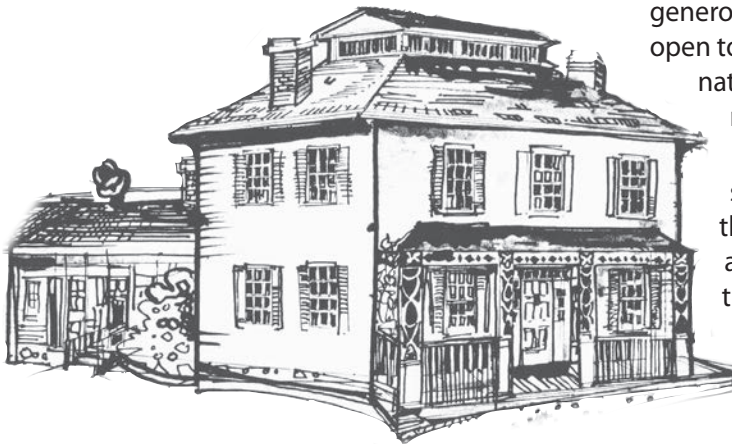
Thomas & Charlotte Shaw

Thomas and Charlotte Shaw left their home in York (Toronto) in 1841 and made their way to Reach when it was little more than a wilderness. The adventurous young couple and their two infant sons settled on Lots 23 and 24, Conc. 11, becoming the lone pioneers of this remote section of the township. It was more than three months after their arrival before Catherine was to see the face of a white woman.

Thomas was a man of considerable means and great force of character so he was not easily discouraged. He immediately cleared a small piece of land and erected a modest log cabin making it as comfortable as possible for his family.

Not satisfied with this crude home, it was not long before he constructed a more comfortable frame home. This was the first of two homes he built. The next home, built about 1863, was far more stately and for its time was considered the most comfortable, commodious and valuable farm dwelling in the township.

The new frame home featured a widow's walk



Sketch of the home of Thomas and Charlotte Shaw circa 1875

on top of the roof, surrounded with small paned windows. From the interior the windows were at eye level, providing a fine view in all directions. Originally these observation decks were used by wives awaiting their husbands' return from the fields or trips to town.

Through his sheer energy and perseverance, the wilderness the Shaw's had settled years earlier, was converted into a veritable paradise. No finer lands could be found than the farms possessed by Mr. Shaw, and in his honor the growing community was christened "Shaw's Neighborhood."

By 1846, at his own expense he donated a portion of his land across from their majestic home and erected a log schoolhouse and for many years paid for a teacher. The school became known locally as Shaw's School, and later became a branch of the Methodist Church with Miss Sophia Shaw as a missionary collector.

The Shaws owned the first buggy in the township and were noted far and wide for their generosity and hospitality. Their doors were open to all, irrespective of their color, creed or nationality, and were on all occasions treated royally.

Not content with having provided a school, the Shaws continued to help build the community by providing more land for a cemetery near the school, and in 1863 all the neighbors gathered for a bee to raise the Shaw church.

Thomas Shaw was only 51 years old when he died on December 9, 1863, not long after completing a new home for his family. He was buried in Bethel

Cemetery, the cemetery he created years earlier beside the Shaw church.

Charlotte Shaw died 38 years later, at the residence of her daughter and son-in-law in Port Perry on Saturday, February 16th, 1901 at 80 years of age. She was survived by three daughters.

Following the death of Mrs. Shaw, an iron box of 17th century construction, the property of the family, was opened and among the contents was a Crown Deed, dated 1817 conveying large portion of the eastern part of Little York (now Toronto) to Mr. Shaw's father, and a letter over one hundred years old.

Charles Black

Charles Black was born about 1806 in Scotland and as a young man he immigrated to Canada and settled in Reach Township during the mid-1830s.

It is believed sometime after arriving he established a small tavern on the north side of the Nonquon River, in the village which named Sonya (now Seagrave).

On January 23, 1837, he was married to Mary MacNeil, of Brock Twp, at a ceremony held in Whitby, of the Home District. They raised a family of eight children during their marriage.

Charles purchased a 200 acre parcel of land described as Lot 24, in Conc. 14, Reach Twp. Located about half a mile north of Seagrave, it was one of the first settled in that vicinity of the township and by 1851 he had cleared 60 acres, of which 48 acres were crops and 12 for pasture. On the property he constructed two frame homes, a large 34'x66' frame barn and stables.

After a farming for more than 40 years, Charles Black passed away at his home in Reach Twp. on July 16, 1879. He was one of the areas earliest pioneers and was esteemed by his community, and an active member of the community, in particular everything tending to the religious and moral standing of society.

Charles wife Mary, 50, predeceased him ten years earlier on April 26, 1869.

James Broad

James Broad was born in Cornwall, England in 1829. In 1853, when he was 24 years old James married Roxanna M. Phillips and they had two sons before immigrating to Canada during the early 1860s.

By 1871 James and Roxanna settled into Port Perry in a large home on Lilla St. He worked as a clerk until he opened "Broads", a general store selling meats, groceries, liquors and wines in December 1874. While a resident of Port Perry he became one of the leading and respected businessmen of the community.

In January 1877, tragically his wife Roxanna passed away at the young age of 51 years. A few months later, Mr. Broad decided to leave Port Perry and move to Guelph. An auction was held to sell his residence on Lilla St. in May 1877 but the sale was unsuccessful, still being offered for sale as late as October 1881.

James either built, or purchased the Ocean House about 1881 and worked as the innkeeper there until April 1896, when he sold the Ocean House to Robert Brown.

Not long after selling the hotel he moved to Parry Sound to live with his daughter and son-in-law. James Broad, 75, died at Kearney, Muskoka on May 16, 1904, and was interred at Pine Grove Cemetery, Prince Albert.

Palmer Carr

Palmer Carr (Palmer Karr) was born in Whitby, Ontario, September 27, 1831, one of 11 children for his parents, Jermie and Elizabeth Carr (Karr). The family is believed to have arrived in Reach Township in the early 1840s from the New York, USA. His father passed away while living in Reach, in October 1848.

Palmer was 18 years old when he married Mary Lock in Whitby, on March 3, 1852. They had two children during their life together. He and his wife Mary settled near Seagrave and for many years

he operated a small factory manufacturing grain cradles, getting reputation of being one of the best implements of its kind in the area. In addition to the cradles, he also manufactures styles and wood barley forks.

He took a keen interest in his community and for many years served as a returning officer for local and provincial elections.

Palmer retired from business in 1882 and immigrated to Michigan, USA, the of his parents. Palmer Carr passed away when he was 83 years old in Michigan on May 23, 1915.

Charles E. Coryell

Charles Emerson Coryell was born on April 12, 1816, New York, USA. His parents, Sarah (Emerson) and Abraham Coryell immigrated to Canada about 1830 and settled into farming in Whitby Township.

When Charles was 20 years old, he married Elizabeth Farewell on February 29, 1836 and during their marriage they raised 11 children. Charles and Elizabeth moved to Reach Township in 1850, they opened a hotel and called their new venture the "Coryell House. This would be when "Seagrave" was still known as "Sonya".

After opening the Coryell House in Seagrave, he served the community as hotelkeeper for more than 20 years, until his unexpected death on May 5, 1872 in Seagrave, Ontario, at the age of 56.

His wife, Elizabeth, sold the hotel and moved back to Whitby following his death.

Abraham N. Coryell

Abraham was born in Ontario about 1848 in Ontario, one of eleven children for his parents Charles E. and Elizabeth Annis (Farewell) Coryell.

Abraham Coryell (O'Coryell) became the first postmaster for the village of Seagrave in 1873. Mr. Coryell was the grandson of one of the village's earliest settlers, Abram Coryell, and son of Charles E. Coryell who arrived in the village in 1850 and died in 1872.

Following the death of his father, his mother

returned to Whitby, but the young Coryell, who was 24 years old, became the first postmaster for Seagrave. Abram Coryell resigned the position in January 1877, which began a series of short term postmasters.

James L. Crooks

James Loudon Crooks was born on June 19, 1849, in Calder Vale, Yorkshire, England. Just when the Crooks immigrated to Canada is unclear. James was 24 years old when he married Isabella Kelly in Windsor, Ont., on May 12, 1874. They moved to Reach Township, and on April 1, 1878 he was appointed station master at Seagrave for the Grand Trunk Railway station.

In April 1913, tragedy struck the popular Seagrave couple. Mr. and Mrs. Crooks luckily escaped their station home when fire woke them up during the middle of the night. With fire crackling all around them, James on crutches led his wife out of the building, before it burned right to the ground. They lost everything, including Mr. Crooks artificial limb.

Mr. and Mrs. Crooks had worked for the railway for 35 years, before the fire destroyed the station and their residence.

Five months later, on September 18, 1913, James Crooks passed away while visiting friends in Port Perry. He had not been in good health ever since the fire. His widow, Isabella, and three children Letta, James and Alfred were left to morn his loss.

James Dewart

James Dewart was one of Ontario North's early hotel/tavern owners, operating a small facility on the north side of the Nonquon River, at Seagrave, as early as 1865.

Born in Ireland about 1932, he immigrated to Canada when he was a young man, first settling in Haldimand County, Canada West.

By 1861 he had settled on a parcel of land in Mariposa, Victoria South, where he became one

of the area's two hotel operators. His tavern/hotel was located in Sonya, which was later renamed Seagrave. In March 1873, as he was returning home in his wagon, he noticed flames in the distance, and he neared found it was his hotel, which despite efforts was completely destroyed by fire.

James left the Seagrave area and settled in Port Perry where he became hotelkeeper at a number of hotels. These included the Queen's Hotel, Railroad House Hotel in Port Perry and Commercial Hotel in Williamsburg.

James Dewart was married to Jane Burgess, and the couple had three children. He was still listed as a Port Perry hotelkeeper when he passed away on August 19, 1888. His wife Jane died January 22, 1914. They were both interred in the family plot in Pine Grove Cemetery.

Abraham Farewell

Abraham Farewell, was primarily a resident of East Whitby, but records show although he did not ever live in Seagrave, it was he who built and opened first steam saw mill in the village during 1854.

Mr. Farewell was born about 1812 in Upper Canada and spent most of his life in Whitby, working as a carpenter and farmer. He also served Whitby as Deputy Reeve for a number of years during the 1850s.

In his book "Ontario County", J. E. Farewell wrote about the Seagrave sawmill, saying that Abram's mill was not raised on the day appointed because he refused to supply intoxicating liquors for the "raising".

Farewell's sawmill was later raised by Sons of Temperance members from Oshawa, Raglan and Port Perry and other temperance men from the Township of Reach. When published in 1907, Mr. Farewell noted that "Reach now is and for years has been the only Local Option municipality in the county, except Scugog and Pickering."

Nicholas Mark

Nicholas Mark was born on June 4, 1804, in Luxulyan, Cornwall, England, one of 13 children for his parents, John and Elizabeth Mark. He married Ann Udy on April 30, 1825, in Lanlivery, Cornwall, England and during their life together they raised nine children.

About 1831, John and his family immigrated to Canada and by May 1883 they had settled in Reach Township, becoming one of the pioneer settlers near the fledgling hamlet then known as Nonquon, later to be known as Sonya, and then in the 1860s renamed Seagrave.

Twenty years after arriving in Reach, an 1851 census identifies the family living at Lot 19, conc. 8, on a 100 acre property of which 50 acres were cultivated. Nicholas and Ann farmed the land with the help of their eight nine children. When Nicholas was about 60 years of age he retired as an active farmer, but continued to live on the family farm.

Six years after the death of his wife Ann in November 1875, Nicholas offered for sale by auction his farm stock and implements. About one year later, on June 29, 1882 he passed away and was buried at Pine Grove Cemetery, Prince Albert.

James Moon

When James Moon was born on January 18, 1819, in England. His parents were James and Sarah Moon. The Moon family emigrated to Canada about 1833 and it is believed he opened a tavern, which became known as the Nonquon House, beside the Nonquon River near Seagrave.

By 1861 Mr. Moon owned 150 acre parcel of land in Reach Township, on Lot 13, Conc. 10, which he farmed for most of his life. He married Catherine A. Marks on January 18, 1849, in Ontario. They had seven children in 17 years.

James Moon died on October 3, 1898, in Reach Twp., Ontario, having lived a long life of 79 years. Buried at Pine Grove Cemetery.

Solomon Orser

Solomon Orser was born in Kingston Ontario about 1805 and arrived in Reach Township about 1829, along with his brother Jeremiah.

Solomon married Sarah Hadley of Port Perry (Scugog Village) on September 5, 1831. The young couple settled at Seagrave, where he farmed and they raised eight children.

Sometime in the mid-1840s, Solomon opened a small tavern just south of the Nonquon, which became known as Orser's Tavern.

An 1851 census shows Solomon owning 100 acres of land on Lot 19, Conc. 8, along with his brother Jeremiah who owned 75 acres.

His wife Sarah died on July 14, 1890.

Solomon died in 1895 when he was 90 years old at Saranac, Michigan, USA.

Benjamin Pickle

Benjamin was born in 1816 in Upper Canada, and lived with his parents William and Nancy Pickle in East Whitby where he worked on the family farm located at Lot 5, Conc. 3.

Benjamin was 33 when he married Elizabeth, 20, about 1849 in East Whitby, where they lived in a log home on the family farm until as late as 1861. During the 1860s they moved into Reach Township, and purchased property near Seagrave. It was here they raised a family of six children.

Research reveals very little information about the Pickles although an 1877 map shows Benjamin Pickle owning a large piece of land bordering on Coryell and Isabella St. in the village of Seagrave.

Benjamin Pickle was 65 year old when he passed away April 29, 1880, at his residence in Reach Township.

James Profit

James Profit was born in January 1840 in England, the only child for his parents, James Henry and Agness Profit. When the Profit family immigrated to Canada is not known, but the family

eventually settled in Brock Twp.

James Jr. was a labourer on his family farm and when he was 19 years old, he married Mary McPhadden on October 5, 1859 in Brock Twp. and following the marriage the couple moved to Reach Two., where they had three children together.

Mary was only 40 years old when she passed away on Valentine's Day, February 1877. James remarried in January 1879 to Louisa Grove Burgis in Cannington and had two children during their marriage.

Mr. Profit relocated to Reach Township, near Seagrave during the early 1860 to farm his property, and during his time in that community invested in real estate, purchasing at least three properties bordering Seagrave.

He died on October 18, 1922, in Fairgrove, Michigan, USA, at the age of 82, and was buried in Caro, Michigan, USA.

Note: Profit was also spelled "Proffit, Proffitt, or Proffitt".

William Rattenbury

William Rattenbury was born on May 29, 1837, in Devon, England, one of eight children for William Fishleigh and Francis "Fannie" Rattenbury.

The Rattenbury family immigrated to Canada about 1846, eventually settling on Lot 22, Conc. 12 of Reach Township, just south of Seagrave (Sonya).

William Jr., was married to Margaret Elizabeth Groat on April 18, 1859, in the brides hometown of Whitby, Ont., and during their life together they raised six children.

Following the death of their father in 1850, William and his brother James took over ownership of the farm and operated it together until 1876 when William order the sale of the farm stock and implements. William's son Charles became the next owner of the family farm which later became known as "Sunnyridge Farm".

William Rattenbury died at the home of his daughter where he had lived since the death of his wife about a year earlier. His death came on Friday,

Feb. 16, 1912, following a brief illness. His body was returned home and he was interred at Pine Grove Cemetery in Prince Albert.

Robert A. Thompson

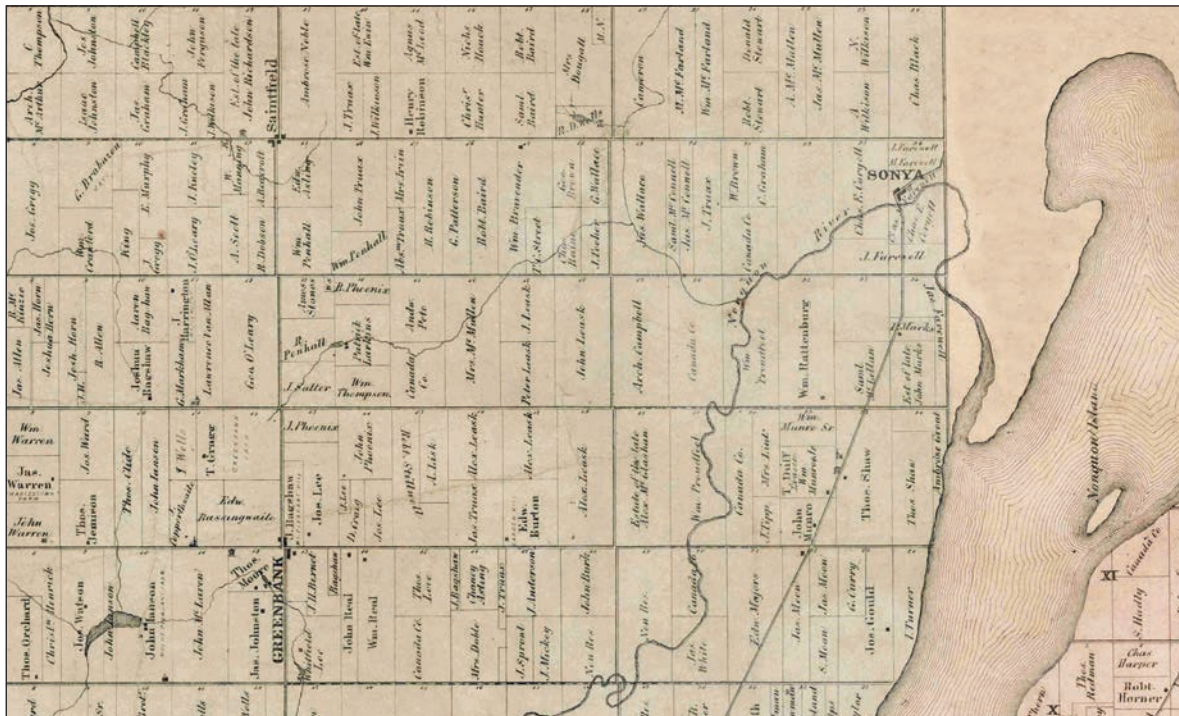
Robert Alexander Thompson was born on March 27, 1860, in Ontario, one of two children for his parents, James and Annie Thompson. He married Henrietta Adams on December 26, 1883 and they raised four children during their marriage.

The Thompson's arrived in Seagrave about 1880, and he began his career as a general store merchant working from a small frame building which also served as their residence on the upper floor. From that small beginning he built up a successful business. He later constructed a new two-store brick building on the same site and his business grew to be one of the best general stores in that part of the country. The building served as a general store under multiple ownership until about 2015.

The Thompson's general store was also the post office, and Robert became the longest serving postmaster in the area, serving the position 21 years, from 1887 to 1908 when he resigned. Robert was also deeply involved in the community, serving on the building committee of the Bible Christian Church, and hold the position of Superintendent of the Sunday school for many years.

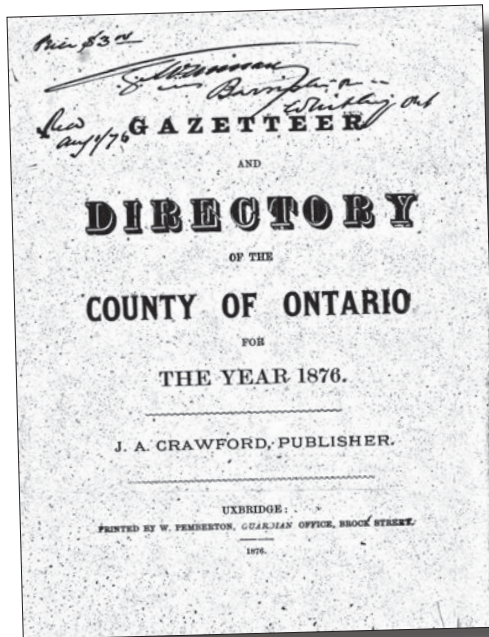
Following his retirement, he and his family moved to Whitby, but before he left more than 200 people gathered at the Methodist Church to honour him and the family for their contributions to the social, commercial and political welfare of the village.

He spent the remainder of his life living in Whitby. On March 13, 1945, Robert Alexander Thompson, 79, passed away at his daughters home in Toronto and he was buried at the Beaches Cemetery, Toronto.



This section of Tremain's Map, County of Ontario shows the northeast section of Reach Township, including Sonya, 1860.

Ontario Gazetteers & Directories



Gazetteers and Directories list or describe towns and villages, identify residents and their occupations. Example at left is a Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Ontario for the year 1879.

SEAGRAVE 1884-85 - A village on the Mid. div GTRy., in Reach township, Ontario County, 25 miles north of Whitby, the County seat and north of Port Perry, the nearest bank location. It contains Methodist and Baptist churches, and public school, and ships grain and produce. Population 100. Telegraph, GNW Express Canadian. Mail daily. John Allen, postmaster

- Allin, John, general store and brush factory
- Broad, James, hotel
- Crooks J. L., railroad and exp. agent
- GNW Telegraph Co.
- Laidlaw, Rev. W.H., (Methodist)
- Millar, John, grain dealer
- Millar, Arthur, grain dealer
- Starr, Laurence, blacksmith
- Thompson, Robert, general store.

SEAGRAVE 1882 - A post village in Ontario County, on the Whitby, Port Perry, Lindsay railway. It has 2 churches. Montreal Dominion and Great Northwestern Telegraph Cos. Lines have an office here. Distance from Port Perry 7 miles, from Toronto 56 miles. Population 100.

- Allin, John, general store, brush factory
- Broad, James, hotel
- Carr P., & Son (P. and Manly Carr), grain cradle manufacturers
- Crooks, J.L., agent Whitby, Port Perry and Lindsay Railway and Canadian Express Co.
- Ferguson, James, boots and shoes
- Johnston, Winthrop & Beattie, Arch, agents agricultural implements.
- Miller, Arthur, grain dealer
- Pomeroy, rev. W., Episcopal Methodist
- Starr, Lorne & Carr, Manly, blacksmiths.

SEAGRAVE 1886 - A country post office on the Mid. div GTRy, in Reach township, Ontario County, 25 miles north of Whitby, the County seat, and 7 miles north of Port Perry, the nearest bank location. It contains Methodist and Christian churches and a public school, and ships grain and produce. Population 100. Telegraph GNW Express, Canadian. Mail daily John Allin, postmaster.

- Allin, John, general store, brush manufacturer
- Beattie, A., agricultural implements
- Broad, James, hotel
- Grand Trunk Railway
- Miller, Arthur, grain dealer
- Scott, Rev. N.E., methodist
- Starr, Lawrence, blacksmith
- Thompson, Robert, general store.

SEAGRAVE 1888 - A country post office on the Mid div GT Ry, in Reach tp, On-tario Co, 25 miles north of Whitby, the county seat, and 7 north of Port Perry, the nearest bank location. It contains Methodist and Christian churches and a public school. Population, 100. Telegraph, GNW. Express, Canadian. Mail daily.

Robert Thompson, postmaster.

Allin John, brush manufacturer

Beattie A, agriculture implements.

Broad James, hotel.

Deckell, B., grain dealer

Flannery Thomas, blacksmith.

Frise Edward, shoemaker.

Miller Arthur, justice of peace.

Miller John, grain dealer.

Stevenson Joseph, carriage maker.

Teckell Belding, grain dealer

Frise, Edward, boot and shoe maker

Thompson Robert, general store.

Wakford Thomas, cooper.

SEAGRAVE 1892 - A post office on the Mid div. GTR, in Reach Twp., Ontario Cty, 25 miles north of Whitby, the County seat, and 7 miles north of Port Perry, the nearest bank location. It contains Methodist and Christian churches and a public school. Population 100. Telegraph GNW Express Canada Mail daily. Robert Thompson, postmaster.

Broad, James, hotel

Can. Express Co., James Crooks, agent

Crooks, James, express and railway agent

Flannery, Thomas, blacksmith

Frise, Edward, shoemaker

Grand Trunk Ry., J. Cronks, agent

Griffin, Samuel, carpenter

Kenney, Rev. George, H. (Methodist)

King, David, agricultural impliments

Ding, David N., insurance agents

Leggott Rev. T.w. (Methodist)

McKinley, James, agricultural impliments

Miller, Arthur, J.P., grain and produce

Miller, John, grain and produce

Pickell, Belding, grain and produce

Sleep, Alfred, general store

Stevenson, Joseph, carriage maker

Thompson, Robert, general store, post office

Wakeford, Thomas & Sons, coopers.

SEAGRAVE 1895 - A post office on the Mid div GTRy, in Reach Twp., Ontario Cty, 24 miles north of Whitby, the County seat, and 7 miles north of Port Perry, the nearest bank location. It contains Methodist and Christian churches and a public school. Population 100. Telegraph GNW Express Canada. Mail daily. Robert Thompson, postmaster.

Broad, James, hotel

Crooks, James, express and railway agent

Flannery, Thomas, blacksmith

Frise, Edward, shoemaker

Grand Trunk Ry., J. Cronks, agent

Griffin, Samuel, carpenter

Kenney, Rev. George, H. (Methodist)

McKinley, James, agricultural impliments

Miller, Arthure, J. P., grain and produce

Miller, John, grain and produce

Pickell, B, grain and produce

Sleep, Alfred, general store

Stevenson, Joseph, carriage maker

Thompson, Robt., general store & post office

Wakeford, Thomas & Sons, coopers.

