
***Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Implementation –
Phase Two: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report***

Bronte Cemetery

32 West Street, Oakville, Ontario



Town of Oakville
Heritage Planning
February 2022

Approved by Planning and Development Council on April 4, 2022

Figure 1 (on front cover): Bronte Cemetery. June 2021

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to determine if Bronte Cemetery qualifies as a cultural heritage landscape. Cultural heritage landscapes provide a wider understanding of the context of how built resources, natural heritage and land uses function together as a whole.

Although the Province of Ontario has identified cultural heritage landscapes as a type of cultural heritage resource, there is no province-wide standard methodological approach for their assessment. To fill this gap, Town Planning staff authored the *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy* (the Strategy), which Council adopted in January 2014. The Strategy directs that a potential cultural heritage landscape should be evaluated using Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, (OHA).

In 1987, under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Town recognized Bronte Cemetery as a property of historic and architectural value and interest, and pursuant to By-law 1987-294 was protected as a Part IV designated property. However, the 1987 designation by-law does not formally identify the cultural heritage value, interest, nor heritage attributes of the cemetery, and as such requires amendment or replacement. Bronte Cemetery was therefore re-evaluated to determine if it has cultural heritage value per the Town of Oakville's *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy*, and to determine if it meets the latest iteration of Ontario Regulation 9/06.

Bronte Cemetery lies on land historically identified as Part of Lot 32, Broken Front Concession, which was subsequently renamed Concession 4 South of Dundas Street (or SDS). Today the property's municipal address is 32 West Street. The cemetery lies on the north shore of Lake Ontario, separated from the lake by the West Promenade Trail. Lakeshore Road West lies northwest of the cemetery, however, for ease of reference in this report it will be referred to as lying north of the cemetery, with the lake to the south. Residential development surrounds the cemetery, which lies cradled in the junction of the two legs of West Street.

Bronte Cemetery is a picturesque example of an early-19th century Ontario non-denominational cemetery, which is the result of "an initial social [and] religious imperative [which] developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment."¹ As a relict landscape, the Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape "is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at sometime in the past, either abruptly or over a period."² Significantly, the CHL's "significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form."³

Further, the subject property meets the Province's definition of a cultural heritage landscape, which is described as "a defined geographical area [which has] been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an indigenous community."⁴ The subject property includes "structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites [and] natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning and association".⁵

¹ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (Paris: World Heritage Centre, 2008), 86.

² UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Operational Guidelines*, 86.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020: Under the Planning Act*, (Province of Ontario, 2020), 42.

⁵ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*, 42.

Upon completion of the evaluation, and after considering the layered, nested, and overlapping aspects of the property, including the evolution of its land-use history and its current conditions, Bronte Cemetery is considered to meet UNESCO's criteria of an organically evolved (relict) cultural heritage landscape.

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1. Project Overview

1.1 Project Background

The Livable Oakville Plan provides that the town will protect and preserve cultural heritage landscapes by utilizing applicable legislation. Cultural heritage landscape provisions are included in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the *Planning Act* and the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*. While the Livable Oakville Plan does not require a specific strategy for cultural heritage landscapes, other heritage planning studies and policies identified the need to provide a consistent process of identification, evaluation and conservation. Further, during the 2012 *Bronte Village Heritage Resource Review and Strategy* process, the public indicated their support for additional heritage conservation tools. The result is the Town of Oakville's *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy*.

In January 2014, the Town of Oakville adopted the *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy*, which was created based on industry best practices. The purpose of the Strategy was to provide a “framework for the identification and protection of cultural heritage landscapes in the Town of Oakville and direction for protecting and managing these resources for the future.”⁶ Recognizing that “any landscape that has been deliberately modified by humans is a cultural landscape” the Strategy expands on that definition, indicating that “only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the community and are valued by the community can be identified as ‘cultural heritage landscapes’.”^{7, 8}

In February 2015, Town Council “requested staff to undertake a review of the town’s major open space areas in order to determine if they should be appropriately designated as a cultural heritage landscape”.⁹ In doing so, it was determined that the implementation of the *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy* be split into three phases, being: Inventory; Research and Assessment; and, Implementation of Protection.

In July 2015, Laurie Smith Heritage Consulting (LSHC) was retained to provide consulting services for the Phase One Inventory. LSHC’s report, entitled *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Implementation – Phase 1: Summary Report*, identified 63 properties. Eight were identified as high priority properties, sixteen as medium priority properties, twenty-seven as low priority properties and twelve properties for which no further action was recommended. Properties identified as being in the high and medium priority categories were deemed to be vulnerable to change (development pressures, natural forces, and neglect); to have insufficient existing protection; and/or, to have a high level of cultural heritage value or interest. Bronte Cemetery was identified as a medium priority property.

In February 2016, Council directed the eight high priority properties proceed to Phase Two: Research and Assessment. The objective of Phase Two is to build on the findings of Phase One and to complete cultural heritage landscape assessments for properties identified in Phase One. In August 2016, Letourneau Heritage Consulting Inc. was retained to undertake this work. The Phase Two assessment of the eight high priority properties was completed in October 2018.

Although Bronte Cemetery is protected pursuant to By-law 1987-294, a Part IV designation by-law, the standard at the time of its designation was such that only a very brief description of the property’s historic

⁶ Planning Services Department, Report, “Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy,” January 13, 2014, 1-2.

⁷ Ibid, 1.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *Town of Oakville - Urban Structure Review - Discussion Paper Draft*, Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd., October 2016. Page 42.

and architectural value and interest, and a legal description of the property was required to justify designation. There was no requirement within the OHA to include a statement of cultural heritage value or interest, nor a list of heritage attributes. Consequently, in May 2021, Planning Services staff began a Phase Two assessment of the Bronte Cemetery property, in order to update the 1987 designation by-law, and to determine if the property qualified as a cultural heritage landscape. This report is the result of that assessment.

1.2 Research and Assessment

The property has been approached as a comprehensive layered unit, including all structures and other potential cultural heritage resources on site (including known or potential archaeological resources).

Background research included consultation with, amongst others, Parks & Open Space, Town of Oakville; Land Registry Office; The Ontario Genealogical Society; Bronte Historical Society; Oakville Historical Society; Trafalgar Township Historical Society; and, Oakville Public Library (Central Branch). It also included the review of primary and secondary records held by these organizations including their archival collections; Town of Oakville files; and, a review of current and historical aerial imagery and mapping.

Many individuals generously shared their knowledge of Bronte and their own personal family histories. Thanks goes to Robert Bowen, Dorothy Kew, Linda Moore, Dalcyce Newby, Elizabeth Strong, Jane Watt and others who wish to remain anonymous. Your willingness to share freely your recollections with Heritage Planning staff make the report fuller and more authentic.

Site visits were undertaken by Planning Services staff in June and November 2021, in order to document current conditions and features of the property and relevant surrounding properties.

Opportunities for broader community consultation could be investigated, based on section 4.2.4. of the *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy*.

2. Cultural Landscapes and the Heritage Planning Framework

2.1 Understanding and Defining Cultural Landscapes

The term “cultural landscape” embodies a wide range of elements, including the material, the social, and the associative. The current understanding of cultural landscapes is that they are multi-layered entities that embody a community’s cultural values. A fulsome assessment of cultural landscapes relies on compliance frameworks entrenched in heritage planning policy, defined evaluation criteria, which considers both the physical and the cultural characteristics of the setting under study, and professional expertise. The result should reflect a holistic assessment of the subject property.

2.2 Heritage Planning Frameworks

2.2.1 Municipal

In its *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy*, the Town of Oakville describes a cultural heritage landscape as an area that displays “the recognizable imprint of human settlement and activities on land over time.”¹⁰ The Strategy goes on to clarify that, “[w]hile any landscape that has been deliberately modified by humans is a cultural landscape, only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the community and are valued by the community can be identified as ‘cultural heritage landscapes’.”¹¹

2.2.2 Provincial

The Provincial planning framework provides for the protection of cultural heritage resources, including cultural heritage landscapes. Under the *Planning Act*, the conservation of cultural heritage is identified as a matter of provincial interest. Part I (2, d) states:

“The Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board and the Tribunal, in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of provincial interest such as, the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.”

Details about provincial interest as it relates to land use planning and development in the province are outlined further within the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The 2020 PPS explicitly states that land use planning decisions made by municipalities, planning boards, the Province, or a commission or agency of the government must be consistent with the PPS. The PPS addresses cultural heritage in Sections 1.7.1 e) and 2.6, including the protection of cultural heritage landscapes. And in Section 6.0: Definitions, a cultural heritage landscape is identified as:

“...a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Cultural heritage landscapes may be properties that have been determined to have cultural heritage value of interest under the Ontario Heritage Act, or have been included on federal and/or international registers, and/or protected through official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanisms.”

¹⁰ Planning Services Department, PDF, “Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy,” 2.

¹¹ Ibid. 5.

2.2.3 National

Parks Canada's, *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, or simply the *Standards and Guidelines*, is a Pan-Canadian benchmark document that provides guidance on best practices in the field of heritage conservation. At its April 8, 2013, Planning and Development Council meeting, Town of Oakville Council endorsed the *Standards and Guidelines*, with the stated purpose of assisting "with the planning, stewardship and conservation of all listed and designated heritage resources within the Town of Oakville, in addition to existing heritage policies, plans and policies."¹² The document is intended to be used by Town staff, Heritage Oakville and Council when "reviewing proposals which impact heritage resources, such as heritage permits and development applications." Further, Town staff should consult the *Standards and Guidelines* "when developing new heritage studies, plans and policies."¹³

2.2.4 International

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, (UNESCO), describe cultural landscapes as places that "testify to the creative genius, social development and the imaginative and spiritual vitality of humanity. They are part of our collective identity".¹⁴ It identifies three categories of cultural heritage landscapes. They are the:

1. Designed Landscape - the "clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man."
2. Organically Evolved Landscape - that "results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed in its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment"; and,
3. Associative Cultural Landscape – which is "justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic, or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent."

Within the Organically Evolved Landscape category, two sub-categories were identified. They are the:

- *Relict landscape*, "in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past", and for which "significant distinguishing features, are, however still visible in material form."; and
- *Continuing landscape* which "retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and which the evolutionary process is still in progress."

These categories were adopted by Council in January 2014, as part of the Town's *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy*.

¹² Planning Services Department, Report, "*Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*," March 13, 2013, 3.

¹³ Planning Services Department, Report, "*Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*," April 8, 2013, 3.

¹⁴ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Cultural Landscapes*, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/> - accessed 7 May 2021

3 Subject property

3.1 Property description

Bronte Cemetery is known municipally as 32 West Street. It is an approximately 0.3546 hectare (0.88 acre) parcel of land, and its legal description reads:

PT LT 32, CON 4 TRAFALGAR, SOUTH OF DUNDAS STREET, AS IN TW32476; OAKVILLE/TRAFALGAR



Figure 2: Google aerial – 32 West Street, Town of Oakville, 2021

3.2 Context

The property at 32 West Street is an individually designated property, protected pursuant to designation By-law 1987-294, per Section 29, Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The designation by-law is attached as Appendix A.

The property owner is the Corporation of the Town of Oakville.

3.3 Current Conditions

Bronte Cemetery lies on land historically identified as Part of Lot 32, Broken Front Concession, which was subsequently renamed Concession 4 South of Dundas Street (or SDS). Today the property's municipal address is 32 West Street. The cemetery lies on the north shore of Lake Ontario, separated from the lake by the West Promenade Trail. Lakeshore Road West lies northwest of the cemetery, however, for ease of reference in this report it will be referred to as lying north of the cemetery, with the lake to the south. The cemetery lies cradled in the junction of the two legs of West Street, and is surrounded by residential development.

Bronte Cemetery is located on a flat, grassed parcel of land, dotted with a variety of mature trees and a few large shrubs. A tributary of Sheldon Creek, now channelized, cuts through the north corner of the property.¹⁵ Serving as a drainage swale, the channelized ditch is manicured and lined with paving stones. There are no buildings in the cemetery. The only structures on the property are grave markers. Site furnishings include two wooden benches, which are located at the bottom of the east leg of West Street, overlooking the West Street Promenade and Lake Ontario. There are also two signs on the property. One is a Town of Oakville sign, which identifies the cemetery by name, and the other is an interpretive panel, which was a collaborative effort of Oakville Community Foundation and the Town. It outlines a brief history of the cemetery.

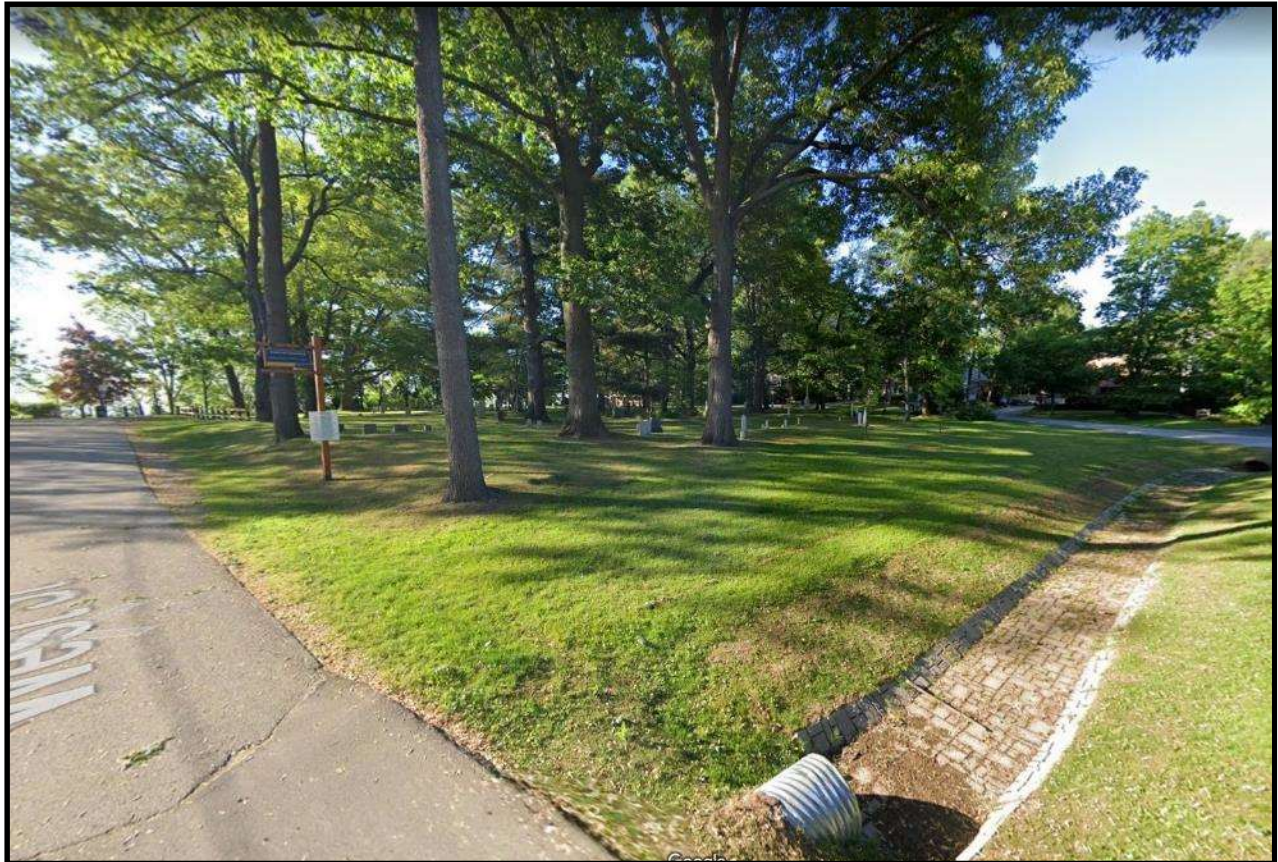


Figure 3: Google street view of 32 West Street, Google Maps. May 2021

In 2016/2017, the Town commissioned H.G. Hardwick & Sons Ltd. to undertake marker restoration at all early Town owned cemeteries. Bronte Cemetery was one of the beneficiaries of their work.

3.4 Structures and Landscape Features

As a cultural heritage landscape that developed as the result of “an initial social [and] religious imperative”, Bronte Cemetery was established as a place for people of “all orders, sects, nations and parties” to be laid to rest.¹⁶ It is noteworthy that the cemetery had no affiliation with a specific church or

¹⁵ Bronte Historical Society, *Erosion at Bronte Pioneer Cemetery*, per a transcribed Facebook post by Dave McCleary, 23 January 2019.

¹⁶ Town of Oakville, *Bronte Cemetery*, <https://www.oakville.ca/residents/cemeteries-bronte.html> (accessed 10 November 2021)

religious order. The cemetery is a simple space, set aside to meet the practical needs of early Bronte settlers as a place to bury their deceased. It is noteworthy for its variety of grave markers and monuments, and for its natural heritage features. These include a variety of large, mature trees; large clusters of ornamental grasses and hostas planted next to some headstones; open expanses of lawn; and, the steep, treed slope overlooking the north shore of Lake Ontario.

The cemetery's layout is reflective of the fact that it "developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment" with burials stretching from the bank adjacent to the West Street Promenade, overlooking Lake Ontario back toward the West Street road allowance.¹⁷ However, the layout is atypical in that some headstones are grouped together in small, compact rows, while others stand on their own, surrounded by large, open expanses of lawn. This layout seems to suggest that there may be cemetery plots between the existing headstones, which were never claimed; or, they were and over the course of the cemetery's 200-year history all signs of the headstones and monuments have been lost.

4 History of the area

Oakville is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the lands of the Anishinabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis, the lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history. This includes several centuries of human activity that occurred in the area.¹⁸ "The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation is part of the Ojibway (Anishinabe) Nation, one of the largest Aboriginal Nations in North America."¹⁹ "Before contact with Europeans and until the late 1600s," the Mississaugas were located on territory "just to the west of Manitoulin Island and east of Sault Ste. Marie."²⁰ Historians generally agree that it wasn't until the late 17th or early 18th century, after many years of military conflict and "full-scale regional warfare" between the Anishinabe and Iroquois, and after the Iroquois' final removal from the area, that the Mississaugas settled permanently in Southern Ontario, having "negotiated a peace treaty with the Mohawk Nation".^{21, 22} These Mississauga settlers "are the direct ancestors of the present Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation", now known as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.²³

At the same time, around the early to mid-17th century, and with more Europeans arriving and establishing colonies, Eastern North America's Indigenous peoples found themselves in "increasingly complex political, economic and military alliances with the two main competing European Nations – France and England."²⁴ Throughout the 18th century, the local Mississaugas were involved in the fur trade, and although they continued to follow a seasonal cycle of movement and resource harvesting, they also practiced agriculture of domesticated food crops.^{25, 26, 27}

¹⁷ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Operational Guidelines*, 86.

¹⁸ *The Mississaugas of the Credit: Historical Territory, Resource and Land Use - Movement and Settlement into Southern Ontario*, circa 2018 update. Department of Consultation & Accommodation (DOCA), Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Page 6.

¹⁹ Ibid. 4.

²⁰ Ibid. 2.

²¹ Ibid. 6.

²² Ibid. 7.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. 6.

²⁵ Ibid. 10.

²⁶ Ibid. 11.

²⁷ Ibid. 4.

“From the time of the conquest of New France in 1760, the British Crown recognized the inherent rights of First Nations and their ownership of the lands they occupied.”²⁸ Further, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 “prevented anyone, other than the Crown, from purchasing that land.”²⁹ In 1788, by proclamation under the Imperial Act of Parliament, the “first municipal organization of what is now the Province of Ontario, was made by Lord Dorchester.”³⁰ By 1792, the subject property lay within the Home District of Upper Canada.

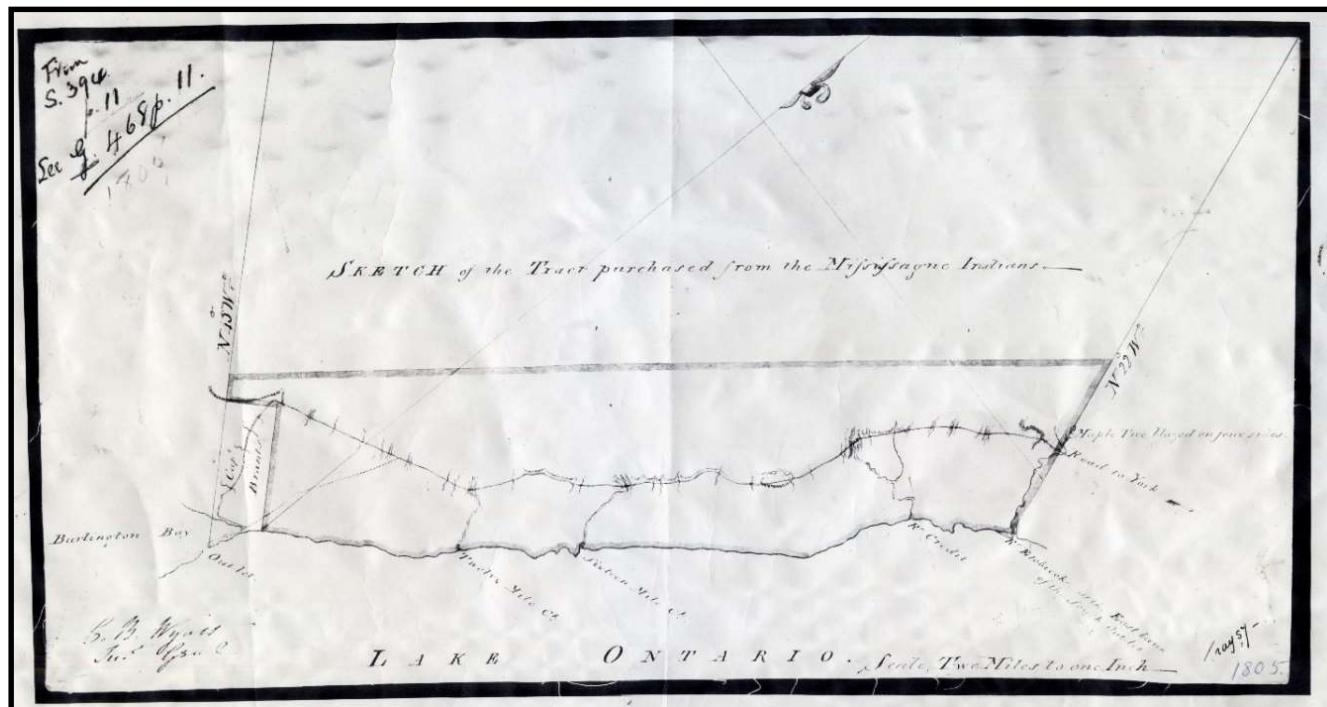


Figure 4: “Sketch of the Tract purchased from the Mississaugue [sic] Indians”, 1805. Oakville Public Library, OPLOIM10001³¹

On 2 August 1805, the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Crown entered into a provisional agreement, known as *Head of the Lake Treaty (provisional)*. The agreement saw the Mississaugas cede “70 784 acres of land bounded by the Toronto Purchase of 1787 in the east, the Brant Tract in the west, and a northern boundary that ran six miles back from the shoreline of Lake Ontario.”³² In return for the land, the Mississaugas “were to receive £1000 of trade goods and the sole right of fisheries at 12 and 16 Mile Creeks along with the possession of each creek’s flats.”³³ Thirteen months later, on 5 September 1806,

²⁸ *Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Treaties, 1781-1820 and Rouge Tract Claim, 2015*,

<http://mncfn.ca/about-mncfn/treaty-lands-and-territory/> - accessed 18 September 2018

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *The County of Halton, The Historical Atlas of Halton County, Ontario, Illustrated*, Walker & Miles, 1877. Page 54

³¹ Oakville Images, *Sketch of Land Purchase from the Mississauga Indians 1805*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/58491/data?n=1> (accessed 19 January 2022)

³² *Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Treaty Lands & Territory: Head of the Lake, Treaty No. 14 (1806)*, <http://mncfn.ca/head-of-the-lake-purchase-treaty-14/> (accessed 16 January 2019).

³³ *Ibid.*

the *Head of the Lake Treaty (provisional)* was confirmed with the signing of the *Head of the Lake Treaty, No. 14*.³⁴ The subject property lies immediately west of the lands covered by this treaty.

Upon the finalization of the land surrender, Samuel Street Wilmot, a Deputy Provincial Surveyor, conducted a survey of the area in order to facilitate European settlement. Known as the Wilmot Map, Dundas Street was used as the baseline for the survey, having, in 1793, already been surveyed as a military road. Wilmot's survey divided the area into three townships.

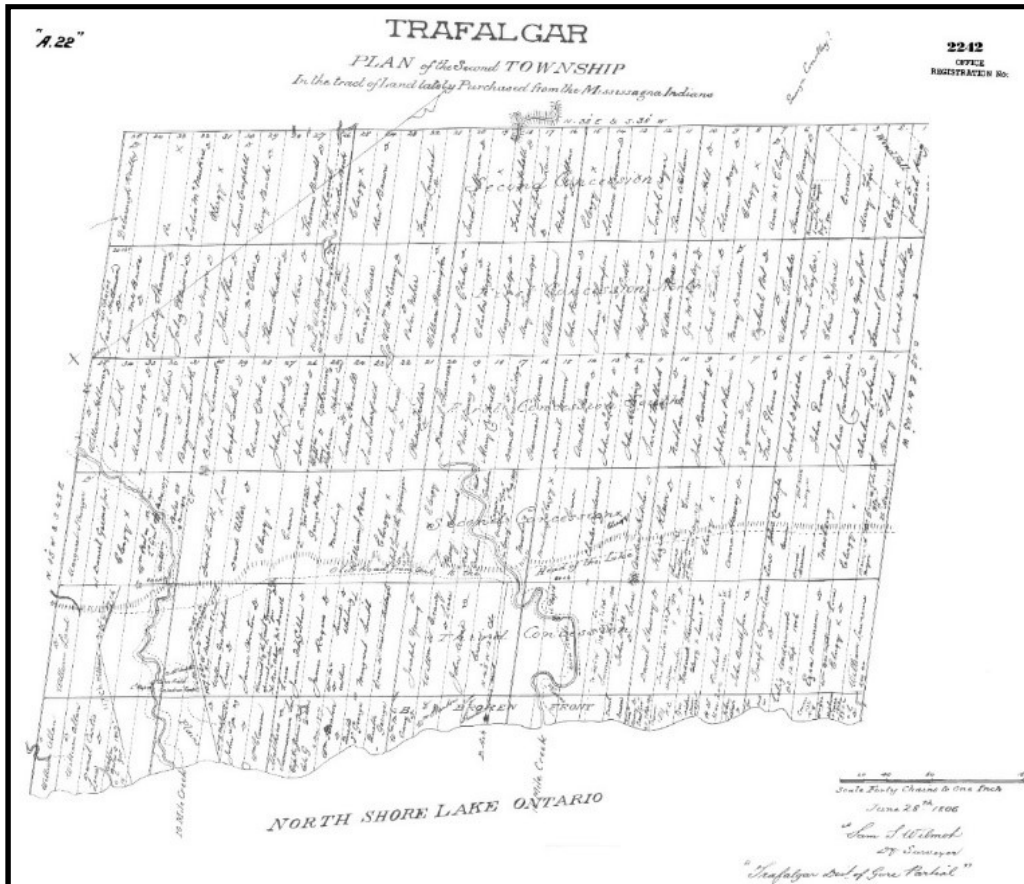


Figure 5: "Trafalgar, Plan of the Second Township, In the Tract of Land lately Purchased from the Mississauga [sic] Indians", by Samuel L. Wilmot, Surveyor. 28 June 1806

Originally, Township No. 1 on the east "was given the Indian name of Toronto. No. 2 was named Alexander and no. 3, Grant, in honour of the President and Administrator of the Government of Upper Canada, the Honourable Alexander Grant."³⁵ However, a few weeks later, during "Britain's greatest naval victory," Vice-Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson was fatally wounded during the Battle of Trafalgar.³⁶ The victory and Nelson's ultimate sacrifice overshadowed Lieutenant Governor Grant's accomplishments, and Grant's namesake townships were renamed to Trafalgar and Nelson respectively. Settlement quickly followed,

³⁴ Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, *Treaty Lands and Territory, Municipal Boundaries Related to the Head of the Lake Treaty, No. 14 (1806)*, <http://mncfn.ca/> (accessed 16 January 2019).

³⁵ Hazel C. Mathews, *Oakville and the Sixteen: The History of an Ontario Port* (University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1953), 6.

³⁶ *Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount Nelson*, Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horatio_Nelson,_1st_Viscount_Nelson – accessed 22 August 2018.

“effectively surrounding the Mississauga and depleting the forests, fisheries and other resources on which they depended.”³⁷

In 1807, the first settlers arrived in Trafalgar Township.³⁸ By 1820, the Mississaugas ceded all the reserves at the mouths of the Credit, the Sixteen and the Twelve, to the Crown.³⁹ And, although the “village began to take shape in the early 1800s,” it wasn’t until 1834 that the Village of Bronte was laid out on land that had been part of the Mississauga’s Reserve.^{40, 41} In 1853, the County of Halton was formed and consisted of the Townships of Esquesing, Trafalgar, Nelson, and Nassagaweya.⁴² In 1962, Trafalgar Township, including Bronte village, became part of Oakville.⁴³

4.1 Twelve Mile Creek

From its source in Beverly Swamp near Morriston, Ontario, to its mouth on Lake Ontario, Twelve Mile Creek is almost 51 kilometers (31.5 miles) long. The creek is a waterway in the Lake Ontario watershed, which runs through both Hamilton and Halton Regions. Indigenous people knew the creek as Esquisink (last out creek), Eshkwessing or ishkweessin (that which lies at the end).^{44, 45}

By 1760, when French surveyors identified the creek on a map of the north shore of Lake Ontario, they called it “Rivière de Gravois”, or gravelly river.⁴⁶ Historically, to the west of the entrance to the harbour, there were extensive marshes which continued nearly a mile north along the east bank of the Twelve.⁴⁷

At the northwest end of Lake Ontario, large creeks were named to indicate “their distance from the natural opening in the sand strip which divides Lake Ontario from” Hamilton Harbour.⁴⁸ Hence Twelve Mile Creek at Bronte and Sixteen Mile Creek at Oakville. Sometimes, these names were abbreviated to The Twelve and The Sixteen.

³⁷ *Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report: Bronte Harbour and Bluffs*, Letourneau Heritage Consulting Inc., June 2018 (last revised September 2018). Page 51.

³⁸ W. H. Irwin & Co., Compilers and Publishers, Hamilton, Ontario, *County of Halton Gazetteer and Directory For The Years 1881-5*, Toronto: G. C. Patterson & Co., Printers, 1880 via Ancestry.com, Canada, City and Area Directories, 1819-1906

³⁹ Brimacombe, Philip, *The Story of Bronte Harbour: The Early Days*, The Boston Mills Press, 1976

⁴⁰ Oakville Historical Society, *The Oakville Historical Society Newsletter, Bronte: Ever Growing, Ever Changing*, March 2012, 4

⁴¹ Mathews, *Oakville and the Sixteen*, 66

⁴² *The County of Halton*, The Historical Atlas of Halton County, Ontario, Illustrated, Walker & Miles, 1877. Page 54

⁴³ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/262/exhibit/2> - accessed 8 July 2021.

⁴⁴ Town of Oakville, *Bronte on the Twelve Mile Creek*, <https://www.oakville.ca/culturerec/bronte Harbour-essay1.html> (accessed 13 September 2021)

⁴⁵ Wikipedia, *Bronte Creek*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronte_Creek (accessed 13 September 2021)

⁴⁶ Brimacombe, *The Story of Bronte Harbour: The Early Days*

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Dorothy Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, (Dorothy Turcotte, 1993), 7.

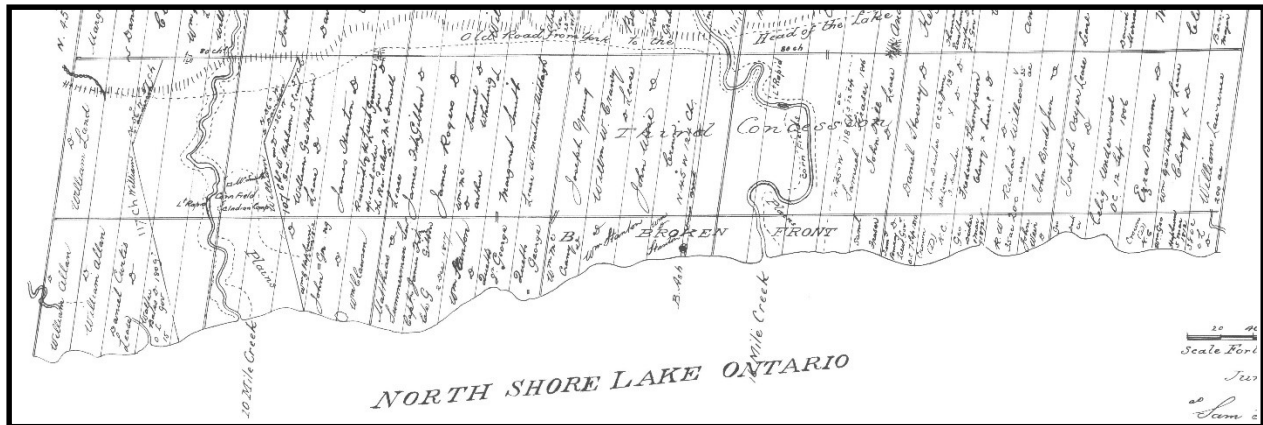


Figure 6: Part of Wilmot's 1806, "Trafalgar, Plan of the Second Township", with Twelve Mile Creek incorrectly labelled 10 Mile Creek.

Problems arose because the same protocol was used to identify creeks along the south shore of Lake Ontario, relative to their distance from the Niagara River. Therefore, for a time, Lake Ontario boasted two Twelve Mile Creeks and two Sixteen Mile Creeks. In the 1930s, the Ontario Geographic Names Board renamed the north shore's Twelve Mile Creek to Bronte Creek, and Sixteen Mile Creek to Oakville Creek.⁴⁹ In 1976, Oakville Creek reverted to Sixteen Mile Creek "because the residents of Oakville cherished their creek's historical significance" and because the "southern Sixteen Mile Creek is not a major stream or of any historical importance, so confusion would not arise from the name duplication there".⁵⁰

Bronte Village lies on either side of the Twelve Mile Creek, later called Bronte Creek, in the area once set aside for the Mississaugas.

Stories about Bronte Creek abound, recalling the time when Indigenous people inhabited the area and the early days of European occupation and activities. From hauntings by a Mississauga Indian Chief and his white horse, to a sacred rock which was the site of "Indian rituals". They also commemorate the "famous cave on the...bank of the Twelve, where it is said William Lyon Mackenzie hid from the government forces during the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion", and where Indigenous prisoners of war were retained.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 8

⁵¹ Brimacombe, *The Story of Bronte Harbour: The Early Days*

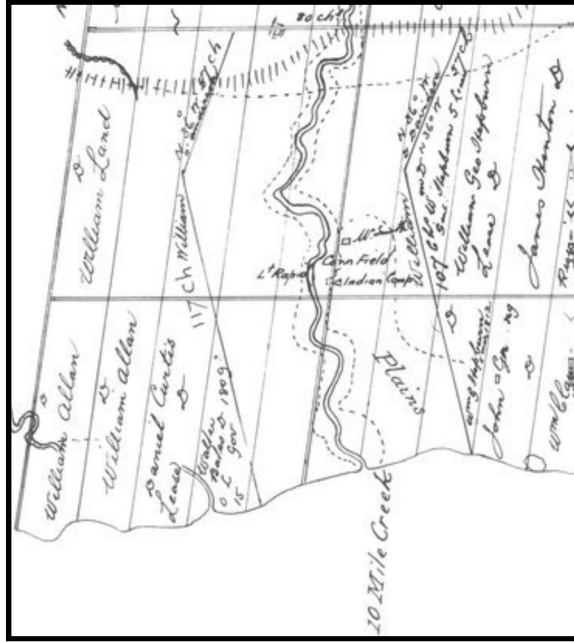


Figure 7: Detail of survey showing the tract of land set aside for the Mississaugas along Twelve Mile Creek, later Bronte Creek. (Wilmot, 1806).

Like other major streams that flow into Lake Ontario, the Bronte Creek watershed offered significant economic potential to early settlers. The land was “generally quite flat and very fertile”, and the surrounding forests yielded “the first exports of the area, lumber and potash”.⁵² Along the length of the creek were many excellent potential mill site locations. The mouth of the creek was determined to be a good site for a port, and it was from here that goods were shipped to ready markets in Toronto, Hamilton and western New York State.⁵³ With all these advantages, the development of Bronte village soon followed.



Figure 8: Postcard showing Twelve Mile Creek and its flats, undated⁵⁴

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Image courtesy of Bronte Historical Society, via Oakville Images

For more than one hundred years, Bronte harbour “played a prominent role among the many ports which once stood at the mouth of nearly every major stream flowing from the north shore of Lake Ontario”. Sleek sailing schooners, “like the “Peerless” and “Flying Cloud” journeyed to distant points with the cargoes of lumber and golden wheat”.⁵⁵ With the decline in the wheat trade, Bronte became the location of “one of Lake Ontario’s largest fishing fleets” and “was a major port in the stonehooking trade of western Lake Ontario, the only such economic activity of its kind on the Great Lakes”.⁵⁶ Before the arrival of the railway, and until the end of the 19th century “steamers like the “Southern Belle” and the “Greyhound” carried passengers and freight to and from Bronte Harbour”.⁵⁷ By the late 1940s, the last commercial mainstay of the harbour, the fishing industry, left Bronte Harbour for points “eastwards down the lake”.⁵⁸

The role that Bronte Creek and Lake Ontario played in the development of Bronte Village cannot be overstated. The lake and creek were the earliest settlers’ highway, grocery store, playground, and sometimes their graveyard. Beginning around the mid-20th century, most people’s connection to the lake and creek was limited to various forms of recreation. Long gone are the days when these bodies of water were the easiest means of transportation, and a major source of food and employment.

4.2 History of Bronte Village

In 1849, Smith’s Canadian Gazetteer described Bronte as a “small Village in the township of Trafalgar, on the Lake Shore Road, seven miles from Wellington Square, situated on the Twelve-mile Creek. It contains about 100 inhabitants, grist and saw mills, one store, two taverns, one waggon maker, one blacksmith, one cabinet maker.”⁵⁹ As with Nelson and Trafalgar Townships, Bronte village was named after Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson who held the title of 1st Duke of Bronté.⁶⁰ Even many years after Nelson’s victory, local enthusiasm for the “Battle of Trafalgar was still green in the memories of the many settlers who had fought in the Napoleonic Wars”, and the new village was named in Nelson’s honour.⁶¹

Early Bronte settlers included the Sovereign and Belyea families. They, along with other notable families, were “directly involved with the shaping of Bronte as a town”.⁶²

In 1799, the Sovereign and Culver families emigrated from the United States settling first in Norfolk County.⁶³ In April 1812, Philip (1778-1833) and his wife Nancy, nee Culver, (1779-1869), Sovereign “moved with his family to what was then called the “New Purchase” in the Township of Trafalgar”.⁶⁴ Sovereign was a “man of liberal views and great energy of character” who “farmed, ran a grist mill, saw mill, tavern,

⁵⁵ Brimacombe, Philip, *The Story of Bronte Harbour: Summary-A Flashback*, The Boston Mills Press, 1976

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Smith, William Henry, *Smith’s Canadian Gazetteer: Comprising Statistical and General Information Respecting All Parts of the Upper Province, Or Canada West ... With a Map of the Upper Province*, Toronto, Published for the author by H. Rowsell, p. 21,

https://books.google.ca/books?id=GkszAQAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=Bronte&f=false (accessed 16 August 2021)

⁶⁰ Wikipedia, *Dukedom of Bronté*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dukedom_of_Bront%C3%A9 (accessed 17 August 2021).

⁶¹ Mathews, 42

⁶² The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *The Sovereign Family & The Sovereign House*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=262&PID=6> (accessed 13 September 2021).

⁶³ Pope, J.H., *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ont., 1877*. Page 64

⁶⁴ Ibid.

[and a] distillery”.⁶⁵ On 25 November 1814, he purchased 100 acres of Lot 32, Concession 4 SDS, on the west side of the harbour.⁶⁶ The Sovereign farm extended along the lakefront, west of the reserve lands, on the Old Lake Road (subsequently renamed Ontario Street).⁶⁷

In 1815, Philip Sovereign built Bronté’s first log schoolhouse, which was located on his property.⁶⁸ At the age of 17, his son Charles Sovereign (c.1797-1885), taught there.⁶⁹

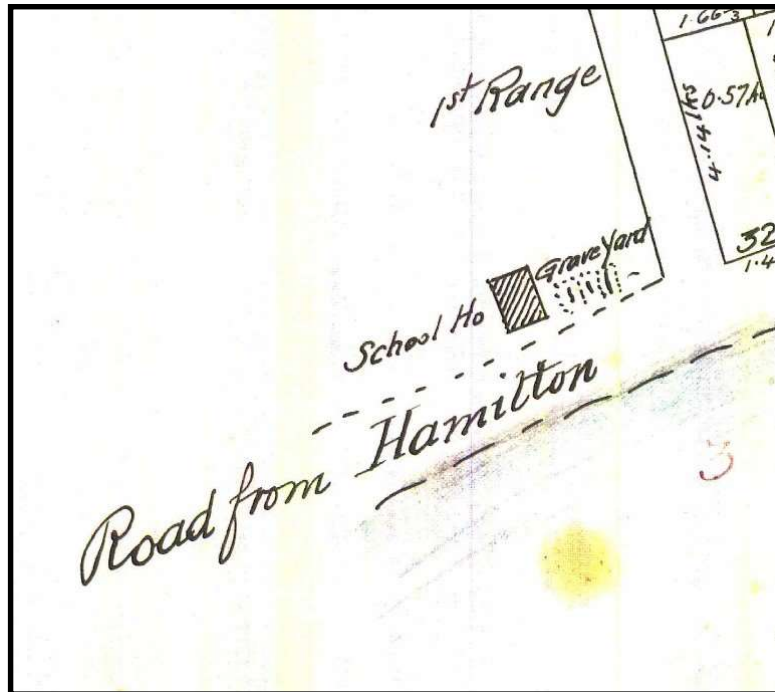


Figure 9: Part of “Plan of Town Plot on 12 Mile Creek 4th Concession Trafalgar, Surveyed by William Hawkins, D.P.S., Bronté, Indian Lands”, showing the location of Philip Sovereign’s school house and Bronté Cemetery. 1834

As well as being the year in which the village was officially founded, 1834 was the year that Bronté’s first sawmill was built.⁷⁰ Four years later Andrew Gage built the village’s first warehouse.⁷¹ Eventually, a “road from Toronto was constructed that closely followed the Lake Ontario shore.”⁷² This early road, called

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ ONLAND, Ontario Land Registry Access. Indenture 804B, being a Bargain and Sale dated 25 November 1814. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/20/books/23279/viewer/555880577?page=181> (accessed 1 September 2021). Historical Books, Halton County, Trafalgar Township, page 181. **Used on an as is basis with the permission of Teranet Inc.**

⁶⁷ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar township Cemeteries*, “Bronté Cemetery, Bronté Village, Trafalgar Township, Halton County, Ontario,” 1999, 1-1.

⁶⁸ The Village of Bronté: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/262/exhibit/2> (accessed 17 August 2021)

⁶⁹ The Village of Bronté: Preserving the Past, *The Sovereign Family & The Sovereign House*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=262&PID=6> (accessed 13 September 2021).

⁷⁰ The Village of Bronté: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://vitacollections.ca/multiculturalontario/262/exhibit/2> - accessed 17 August 2021

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Oakville Historical Society, *The Oakville Historical Society Newsletter*, *Bronté: Ever Growing, Ever Changing*, March 2012, p. 4

Ontario Street on William Hawkins' 1834 plan of Bronte, crossed Twelve Mile Creek, until about 1859 when the west leg of the "old road washed away into Lake Ontario" and the road was realigned to part "of the estate of Mahlon Bray in the centre of [T]riller Street, later renamed Lakeshore Road."⁷³

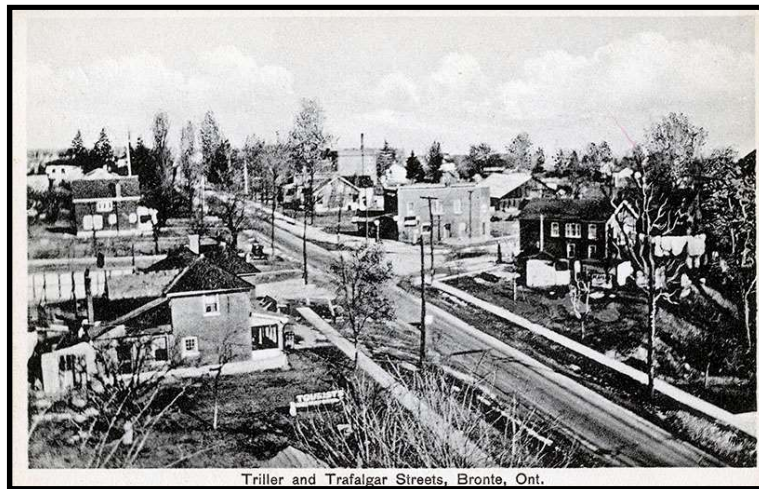


Figure 10: Triller and Trafalgar Streets, later renamed Lakeshore and Bronte Roads respectively, undated

By the 1850s, the village had two operating hotels, the Triller House Hotel and Thompson's Hotel, a blacksmith shop and the basket factory.^{74, 75}



Figure 11: Hand tinted photograph showing a fishing schooner beside fishing sheds, the 3 storey Bronte Steam Mills on the left, and the Triller House Hotel, identifiable by its cupola, on the right. Circa 1910.

⁷³ Trafalgar Township Historical Society, *Selected Information from the Trafalgar Township by-law Books 1856-1858*, By-law 226, 20 June 1859, <http://tths.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2014-Newsletter-Winter.pdf> (accessed 16 August 2021).

⁷⁴ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://vitacollections.ca/multiculturalontario/262/exhibit/2> - accessed 17 August 2021

⁷⁵ Wark, Ross. "Bronte: Ever Growing, Ever Changing," *The Oakville Historical Society Newsletter*, Oakville Historical Society, March 2012, p. 4.

Bronte Post Office was built in 1851. Until this time, Bronte residents had to travel to the Trafalgar Post Office, which was located in Alexander Proudfoot's general store, on the south-west corner of Dundas Street and Ninth Line.⁷⁶ It opened sometime around 1822.⁷⁷ Then after 1835, they only had to travel to Oakville to get their mail from the newly opened post office there.^{78, 79} By 1856, the harbour was completed and two years later, "one of the largest grist mills in the province", Bronte Steam Mill, opened.^{80, 81}



Figure 12: West Street, Bronte, looking north, c.1915. Note the headstone on the right side of photo⁸²

Bronte Village was built because of Twelve Mile Creek. Before it was a hub for the commercial fishing industry, the creek was the traditional hunting and fishing grounds of the Mississaugas. With European settlement, lumber became king. Trees were felled and mills were built. With work readily available and infrastructure being built, settlers flocked to the area. When the area's trees were depleted, men took up fishing and farming.

Bronte has a rich and distinct history. In many ways, it is very different from old Oakville. Canadian author, Mazo de la Roche captured the difference in her book, *Possession*, describing Oakville as "sedate, respectable, and very different from the rowdy, good-humoured poverty of Bronte".⁸³ Compared to the

⁷⁶ Mathews, 482

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://vitacollections.ca/multiculturalontario/262/exhibit/2> - accessed 17 August 2021

⁷⁹ Mathews, 128

⁸⁰ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *Timeline*, <https://vitacollections.ca/multiculturalontario/262/exhibit/2> - accessed 17 August 2021

⁸¹ Wark, Ross. "Bronte: Ever Growing, Ever Changing," *The Oakville Historical Society Newsletter*, Oakville Historical Society, March 2012, p. 4.

⁸² Photo Richard Bell, courtesy Jim Aitken, Town of Oakville

⁸³ Oakville Memories: Old & New: *Bronte Boys (1920s-1950s)*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=117&PID=9999820> (accessed 16 January 2022)

wealth found in neighbouring Oakville, Bronte was a relatively modest working-class community. Many residents were day labourers who learned to wear many hats, doing anything they could to make ends meet. Although some felt shame in their poverty, Bronte developed as a proud, tight-knit, hard working community.

Bill Cudmore recalled the poverty many in Bronte experience during the early 20th century, explaining that residents' dark humour helped them get through the hardship and rugged times. Cudmore recalled that life on the family farm included chores "like cutting asparagus before school and milking the cows after school".⁸⁴ As a teenager, he signed on to Jack Osborne's fishing boat, describing fishing as "a dirty, cold, hard, miserable, mean way to make a living," adding that there was "nothing nice about it".⁸⁵



Figure 13: Bronte Harbour, 1910

"Bronte, as I remember it, was a working class village, where the object of most people was to have a job tomorrow - clean some nets, paint a house, or maybe get a job at the basket factory for a week. It was looked on by Oakville as a low class area," Bill recalled.⁸⁶

Another lifelong Bronte resident, Ken Pollock knows first hand how cruel the lake can be. He remembers his father and uncles, "fishermen and mariners to the bone" would be "up before dawn and out on the lake, winter and summer, just to make ends meet."⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.



Figure 14: Picnicking at Bronte Beach Park, undated

By the mid-20th century, many people remembered Bronte as being a wonderful place in which to live and grow up. A former resident described their experience of the village as a “very small town where everyone knew each other”.⁸⁸ There were farms and open fields, and the beach was nearby without fences between properties, allowing children large areas in which to roam.⁸⁹ People lived in small homes and made do.

One woman, having emigrated from the Netherlands in 1953, recounted that when she became pregnant with her third child she and her husband wondered where to put the new baby’s cot in their rented, two-bedroom cottage. Her husband suggested that the cot “could be hung from the ceiling”.⁹⁰ She still chuckles at the memory.

⁸⁸ Interview, Bronte Historical Society volunteer, 20 October 2021

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Ibid



Figure 15: Bronte's Baseball team included many members whose families had long histories in the community, including the Cudmore, Flummerfel, Joyce, MacDonald, and Pickard families, amongst others. Undated ⁹¹

4.3 History of Bronte Cemetery

Bronte Cemetery lies just west of the historical limits of Bronte Village, on lands covered by the *Head of the Lake Treaty*. The cemetery is believed to be one of the oldest in Trafalgar Township.⁹² The almost 1-acre parcel of land was carved off from the southeast corner of Philip Sovereign's 100-acre property. Deputy Surveyor, William Hawkins' 1834 map shows the cemetery at the intersection of an unnamed road running north/south, now called West Street, and fronting onto the east/west oriented Ontario Street. (See Figure 9).

Originally, Ontario Street crossed Bronte Creek near its mouth and continued west along the shoreline, between the cemetery and the lake. Estimates indicate that 170 feet of cemetery land and road allowance "has gone into the lake since 1830."⁹³ By 1857, shoreline erosion was so extensive that the "western portion of Ontario Street was scarcely passable", and the road had to be re-routed to the northwest of the cemetery.⁹⁴ In 1915, the new Highway 2 was built even farther north.

⁹¹ Image courtesy of Bronte Historical Society, Persons file.

⁹² Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-1

⁹³ Bronte Historical Society, *Bronte Pioneer Cemetery, West Street at the Lake, Oakville (Bronte) Ontario, Officially Established in 1830*, newsletter, 2001.

⁹⁴ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 85.

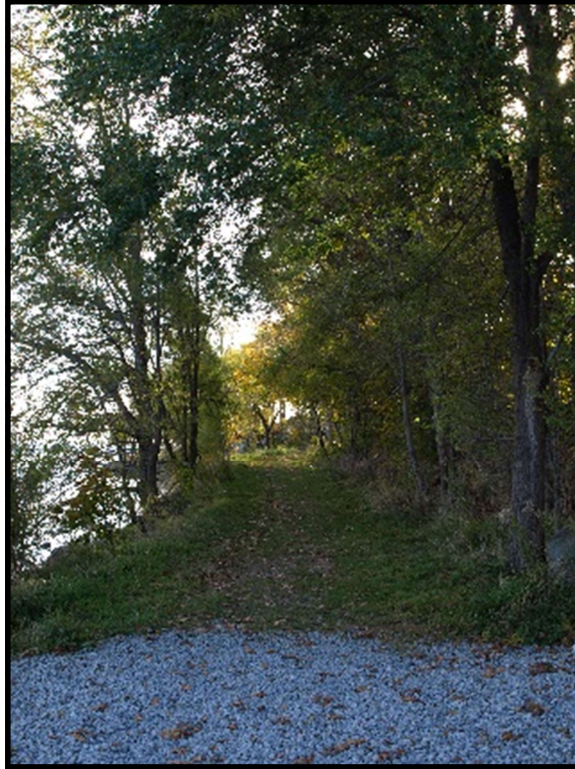


Figure 16: West Street Promenade, looking west. Lake Ontario is on the left and Bronte cemetery is on the right.
November 2021

Records indicate that the cemetery's first burial occurred in 1823, although Sovereign did not officially transfer the land for the burial ground to the cemetery's trustees until 10 May 1830.⁹⁵ On 28 October 1823, four-week-old Hannah S. Haviland died and is recorded as being the first person to be buried in Bronte Cemetery.^{96,97}

⁹⁵ ONLAND, Ontario Land Registry Access. Indenture 852, being a Bargain and Sale dated 10 May 1830. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/20/books/23279/viewer/555880577?page=181> (accessed 1 September 2021).

Historical Books, Halton County, Trafalgar Township, page 181. **Used on an as is basis with the permission of Teranet Inc.**

⁹⁶ Bronte Historical Society, *Bronte Pioneer Cemetery, West Street at the Lake, Oakville (Bronte) Ontario, Officially established in 1830, "Adams Family (Samuel-Sam)"* file, 2001.

⁹⁷ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999)



Figure 17: Headstone of 4-week-old Hannah Haviland, who died on 28 October 1823 and is the cemetery's first recorded burial. November 2021

Bronte Cemetery is significant as the final resting place of many of Bronte's earliest families many of whom played significant roles in the development of the community. These include John Belyea who was buried in April 1825; and Samson "Horatio" Sovereign, who died at two years, nine months old in July 1829.⁹⁸ Samson was the son of Charles and Elizabeth (nee Howell) Sovereign, and the grandson of Philip Sovereign, upon whose land the cemetery was established. Philip Sovereign joined his grandson in the cemetery four years later when he died in July 1833.

Also at rest in the cemetery are some of the area's earliest Black settlers, including a number of Adams and Butler family members.

4.3.1. The Adams and Butler families:

One of the families interred in Bronte Cemetery is that of Samuel Adams (c.1818-1895). Adams was a free Black man who came from Maryland with his family sometime in the early 1850s.^{99, 100}

With the passing of The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, many free and enslaved persons of colour left the United States in order to avoid the risk of being captured and returned, or pressed into bondage. During

⁹⁸ Bronte Historical Society, *Bronte Pioneer Cemetery, West Street at the Lake, Oakville (Bronte) Ontario, Officially Established in 1830*, newsletter, 2001.

⁹⁹ Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton, *Oakville's Black History: Leaders in the Community*, <https://www.ccah.ca/resources.html> (accessed 13 August 2021).

¹⁰⁰ *The Canadian County Atlas Digital Project, Full record for Addams, Samuel*, <https://digital.library.mcgill.ca/countyatlas/showrecord.php?PersonID=61696> (accessed 16 August 2021).

The 1850 United States Federal Census shows Samuel Adams living in District 1, Baltimore, with his first wife Martha (nee Hill, born c.1821) and their three children, Margaret, Rachel and John, who are 5, 4, and 2 years old, respectively.¹⁰⁷ By 1861, Samuel and Martha are living in Bronte, with seven children, in a 1-½ storey frame house, which according to that year's census record was built in 1854.¹⁰⁸ Samuel and Martha's daughter, Eliza Jane, is recorded as being the last of their children to be born in the US, in 1853.¹⁰⁹ The first of their children born in Upper Canada, as Canada was known at that time, was Martha Josephine Adams, who was known as Josephine. She was born in 1856.¹¹⁰

Adams is said to have brought with him a large amount of gold that he had managed to save.¹¹¹ With these funds he purchased a blacksmith shop on Belyea Street, "just east of Bronte Road, close to the present site of the Church of the Epiphany, just behind the Bronte Village Mall".^{112, 113} His blacksmith work included shoeing horses and outfitting schooners with hardware.¹¹⁴ Adams is also credited with making specialized equipment with which to lift stones from the lake bottom.¹¹⁵ Known as a stonehooking rake, it was a long handled tool with hooks at the end, which was used to pry up slabs of stone from the lakebed. There is some indication, but no definitive proof, that Adams not only made these stonehooking rakes, but that he invented it. The stones removed from the lake were subsequently shipped to many destinations, where they were used in building construction. Samuel Adams prospered and at one time was "the biggest land owner in Bronte."¹¹⁶ Adams was a philanthropist who offered financial help to enslaved people who were escaping from the United States.¹¹⁷

Samuel Adams was married twice. His first wife was the aforementioned Martha Hill. Martha was born c.1821 in Maryland. Martha and Samuel married on 21 November 1843 in Montgomery County, Baltimore, Maryland.¹¹⁸ It is not known when Martha died; however, she appears in the 1861 Census of Canada, alongside Samuel and their children Martha Ann; Rachel; John; Jeremiah; Eliza Jane; Josephine; and, 1-year-old James.¹¹⁹ On 3 September 1863, Samuel remarried, an indication that Martha has died.¹²⁰

¹⁰⁷ National Archives, *1850 United States Federal Census*, [Search Census Records Online and Other Resources | National Archives](#) (accessed 20 January 2022)

¹⁰⁸ Library and Archives Canada, *Census of 1861*, [Search Results: Census of 1861 - Library and Archives Canada \(bac-lac.gc.ca\)](#) (accessed 20 January 2022)

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Lawrence Hill, Ontario Black History Society, *The Alvin Duncan Interviews, 1991, A Transcription of Seven Hours of Recording with Alvin Duncan in his Home*, page 181.

¹¹² Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 98.

¹¹³ Bronte Historical Society, "A Look Back" *Sam Adams*, Bronte Historical Society newsletter, Spring 1998.

¹¹⁴ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 98.

¹¹⁵ Ibid

¹¹⁶ *Oakville's Black History*, Deborah Hudson, Curator of Collections, Oakville Museum at Erchless Estate, 2000.

¹¹⁷ Lawrence Hill, Ontario Black History Society, *The Alvin Duncan Interviews, 1991*, pages 178-180.

¹¹⁸ Town of Oakville, Oakville Museum, *Samuel Adams and Martha Hill Marriage Record*, photo

¹¹⁹ Library and Archives Canada, *Census of 1861*, [Search Results: Census of 1861 - Library and Archives Canada \(bac-lac.gc.ca\)](#) (accessed 20 January 2022)

¹²⁰ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; *Registrations of Marriages, 1869-1928* via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1938

Samuel's second wife was Eliza Davis.¹²¹ Records vary widely regarding Eliza's date of birth. They range from 1814 to 1839, however, they all agree that she was born in the United States, likely in Maryland.^{122, 123} Eliza Adams died in Oakville on 5 December 1904.¹²⁴

Jeremiah Bewley Adams (1851-1948), was one Samuel and Martha Adams' sons. Jeremiah was married to Eliza Grace Butler (1857-1948). She was the daughter of Reverend William James Butler (c.1833-1889) and Mary Isabell Moore (1837-1905).¹²⁵



Figure 19: Jeremiah Bewley & Eliza Grace (nee Butler) Adams, undated ¹²⁶

Rev. Butler and Samuel Adams are credited with forming Bronte's British Methodist Episcopal Church which opened in 1875. Its formation led to the 1892 opening of the Turner African Methodist Episcopalian Church. Turner Chapel stands today at 37 Lakeshore Road West, and is currently the location of an antique store.¹²⁷

¹²¹ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; *Registrations of Marriages, 1869-1928* via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1938

¹²² Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Collection: MS935; Reel: 115, via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1948

¹²³ Library and Archives Canada, *Census of 1881*, [Search: Census of Canada, 1881 - Library and Archives Canada \(bac-lac.gc.ca\)](https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/en/Discover/Research/Census-of-Canada-1881) (accessed 21 January 2022)

¹²⁴ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Collection: MS935; Reel: 115, via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1948

¹²⁵ Library and Archives Canada, *Census of 1881*, [Search: Census of Canada, 1881 - Library and Archives Canada \(bac-lac.gc.ca\)](https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/en/Discover/Research/Census-of-Canada-1881) (accessed 21 January 2022)

¹²⁶ Image courtesy of Dalcyce Newby, great granddaughter of Jeremiah & Eliza (nee Butler) Adams

¹²⁷ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *Samuel Adams*; <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/262/exhibit/5> (accessed 8 December 2021)

Jeremiah and Eliza Adams lived at 104 Burnet Street from 1909, when they purchased the property from Elizabeth A. McGill, until their deaths in 1948.¹²⁸ Jeremiah and Eliza raised five children there.



Figure 20: Adams homestead, undated ¹²⁹

Jeremiah is remembered as a “dedicated member” of, and volunteer at, the Turner African Methodist Episcopal Church.¹³⁰ Employed as a teamster at the Chisholm family mill, he was “well known in the community”, and is said to have attended the inauguration of General Ulysses S. Grant.¹³¹ As well as working at the Chisholm family mill, he also worked for Hazel C. Mathews, nee Chisholm (1897-1978), the great-granddaughter of Oakville’s founder, William Chisholm.¹³² Jeremiah and Eliza’s grandson, Alvin Duncan, recalled how Mrs. Mathews “used to come and sit with my grandfather and talk about the old days and write it all down and [she] put some of the information in” her book, *Oakville and the Sixteen*.¹³³

Mr. Duncan indicated that Jeremiah was a labourer. Most “of the labouring that he did with the Chisholms was [to] cut down” oak trees.¹³⁴ Duncan explained, “there used to be an awful lot of oak trees in Oakville and some of the early Chisholms helped cut down those trees and the wood was used by the British Navy for their boats and one of the ones that helped the Chisholms cut those trees was my grandfather.”¹³⁵

Martha Josephine (nee Adams) Wayner (1885-1961) was the second eldest daughter of Jeremiah and Eliza Adams.¹³⁶ In his interview with Lawrence Hill, Martha’s nephew Alvin Duncan, recalled that Martha

¹²⁸ ATA Architects, *104 Burnet Street, Oakville: Heritage Assessment Report*, May 2016, p. 10

¹²⁹ Image courtesy Dalyce Newby, great granddaughter of Jeremiah & Eliza (nee Butler) Adams

¹³⁰ Town of Oakville, “Honouring Oakville’s Black Community”, *Oakville News*, 27 November 2019, [Honouring Oakville’s black community - Oakville News](#) (accessed 29 July 2021).

¹³¹ Mathews, 248

¹³² Lawrence Hill, Ontario Black History Society, *The Alvin Duncan Interviews, 1991*, pages 91-92

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Ibid

¹³⁶ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; *Registrations of Births and Stillbirths, 1869-1913*; Series: MS929; Reel: 70; Record Group: RG 80-2 via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada Births, 1832-1914

helped raise Cecil Marlatt’s daughters.¹³⁷ Mary (Marlatt) Oliver described Martha as “our beloved cook” who lived with her family “from her childhood days”. Martha “contributed much cheerfully given comfort to us all”, and indicated that Martha’s father Jeremiah and his siblings “were highly respected citizens of Bronte all their lives.”¹³⁸ Martha married Albert Wayner (1895-1968), on 11 June 1927 in Hamilton, Ontario.¹³⁹ Voters’ lists show Martha and Albert living at 104 Burnett Street, in 1957 and 1958.^{140, 141} Both Martha and Albert are interred in Bronte Cemetery.^{142, 143}



Figure 21: Jeremiah and Eliza Adams with four of their daughters. Isabella Duncan, Ella Crowley, Nina Adams & Martha Wayner, after 1927 ¹⁴⁴

Eliza Grace Butler was from another prominent early Black settler family. Her father, Reverend William Butler is credited with touring “throughout Canada on lecture tours with then Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier”, and “meeting Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace to discuss with her how the African Americans were doing in Canada”.¹⁴⁵ Around 1860, Reverend Butler and Jeremiah’s father, Samuel Adams, began to organize a church in Bronte. By 1875, the British Methodist Episcopal Church was formed. Butler and Adams continued their work with the church, which led to the construction of the

¹³⁷ Lawrence Hill, Ontario Black History Society, *The Alvin Duncan Interviews, 1991, A Transcription of Seven Hours of Recording with Alvin Duncan in his Home*, page 98.

¹³⁸ Frances Robin Ahern, *Oakville: A Small Town (1900-1930)*. 3rd ed., (Oakville Historical Society in association with The Boston Mills Press, 1986), Page 181.

¹³⁹ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; *Registrations of Marriages, 1869-1928*; Reel: 831, via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1938

¹⁴⁰ Library and Archives Canada; Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; *Voters Lists, Federal Elections, 1935-1980*, via Ancestry.com, Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980

¹⁴¹ Ibid

¹⁴² Find A Grave, *Martha Josephine Adams Wayner*, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/83485229/martha-josephine-wayner> (accessed 7 January 2022).

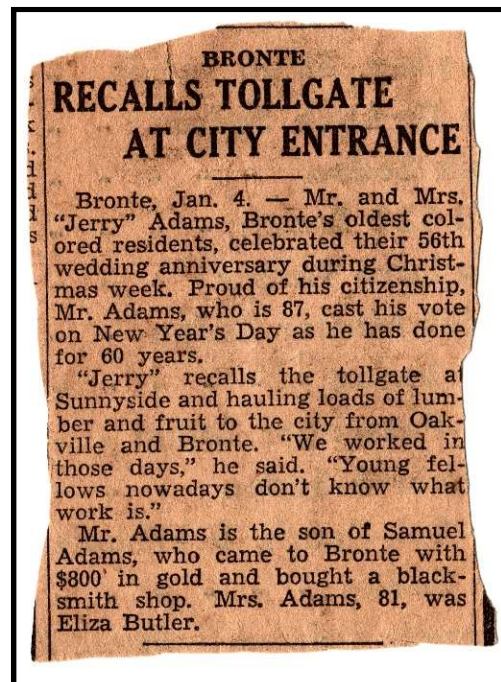
¹⁴³ Find A Grave, *Albert Wayner*, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/200964119/albert-wayner> (accessed 7 January 2022).

¹⁴⁴ Image courtesy of Dalcyce Newby, great granddaughter of Jeremiah & Eliza (nee Butler) Adams

¹⁴⁵ Oakville Memories: Old & New – Leaders in the Community, <https://news.ourontario.ca/exhibit.asp?id=117&PID=9999822> (accessed 28 September 2021)

Turner African Methodist Episcopal Church, the cornerstone of which was laid in 1890.¹⁴⁶ The structure survives today at 37 Lakeshore Road West, and currently houses Turner Chapel Antiques.

Jeremiah and Eliza had eight children, three of whom predeceased their parents. They were Mary Olive Adams (1886-1899); Stanley Edgar Adams (1895-1911); and, Gladys Azalia Adams (1897-1898).^{147, 148, 149} In December 1947, Jeremiah and Eliza celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary and passed away two months apart from one another, in February and May 1948 respectively. The Burnet Street property was left to their daughter, Nina Amelia Adams (1901-1983). The house was demolished in 2016.¹⁵⁰



1938 newspaper article about Jeremiah and Eliza Adams' 56th wedding anniversary¹⁵¹

For many free and enslaved African Americans, Oakville Harbour “represented their very first view of “Canada” and their dream of newfound freedom”.¹⁵² Unfortunately, discrimination followed many of these early Black settlers. For although Philip Sovereign had deemed that the land he gave to the burial ground should be used by people of “any nation, creed or sect whomsoever”, in practice the area’s Black residents were buried toward the rear of the cemetery, away from the lake.¹⁵³ As an old man in his 90’s,

¹⁴⁶ Town of Oakville, *Register of Designated Heritage Properties Under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act*, Section A, <https://www.oakville.ca/assets/general%20-%20business/1%20-%20Section%20A%20-00721.pdf>, 1 July 2021, p. 18 (accessed 22 December 2021)

¹⁴⁷ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Collection: MS935; Reel: 115, via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1948

¹⁴⁸ Ibid

¹⁴⁹ Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current, Gladys A. Adams, via Ancestry.com

¹⁵⁰ Town of Oakville, “Honouring Oakville’s Black Community”, Oakville News, 27 November 2019, [Honouring Oakville’s black community - Oakville News](#) (accessed 29 July 2021).

¹⁵¹ Oakville Historical Society, “Bronte: Recalls Tollgate at City Entrance”, 1997.20.1

¹⁵² *Oakville’s Black History*, Deborah Hudson, Curator of Collections, Oakville Museum at Erchless Estate, 2000.

¹⁵³ Jordan, Richard. “Blacksmith of Bronte did thriving business at the turn of the century.” *Toronto Star*, 24 Mar. 1987, p. L13

Jeremiah Adams was known to remark “with a twinkle in his eye”, that “they buried us in the back and now we are at the front” a reference to the erosion suffered by the cemetery.¹⁵⁴

Although official documentation of the location of Samuel Adams’ burial location was not found, the Bronte Historical Society states, in their Spring 2008 newsletter, that he “is buried in Bronte Cemetery, but there is no stone bearing his name.”¹⁵⁵ Samuel’s second wife Eliza (nee Davis), his son Jeremiah, Jeremiah’s wife Eliza (nee Butler) and three of Jeremiah and Eliza’s children, Stanley Edgar (1895-1911), Mary Olive (1886-1899), and Gladys Azalia Adams (1897-1898), all rest in Bronte Cemetery.^{156, 157, 158, 159}



Figure 22: Headstones of Jeremiah Adams, his wife Elizabeth Grace (nee Butler) Adams and three of their children, Stanley, Mary & Gladys Adams. November 2021

4.3.2. The Belyea family

Another early Bronte settler was John Belyea (1776-1825), who came from Philipsburg, Westchester County, New York.^{160, 161} John was the son of a United Empire Loyalist, John Bulyea (1739-1813), and his wife Susannah VanSniffen (or Sniffin) (1745-1843).^{162, 163, 164} John Sr. fought in the King’s American Regiment between 1776 and 1779, and then again with the Loyal American Regiment from 1779-1783.

¹⁵⁴ Jordan, Richard. “Blacksmith of Bronte did thriving business at the turn of the century.” *Toronto Star*, 24 Mar. 1987, p. L13

¹⁵⁵ Bronte Historical Society newsletter, Spring 2008, *The African American Community in Bronte*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Milton Digital, Canadian Champion (Milton, ON), *Oakville*, 15 December 1904, p. 2, <https://news.milton.halinet.on.ca/details.asp?ID=1470233> (accessed 21 January 2022)

¹⁵⁷ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-5.

¹⁵⁸ Find a Grave, *Eliza Grace Butler Adams*, [Eliza Grace Butler Adams \(1854-1948\) - Find A Grave Memorial](#) (accessed 6 October 2021)

¹⁵⁹ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-5.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 1-1.

¹⁶¹ Oakville Historical Society newsletter, *The Belyea Family of Bronte*, by Julie Thompson, Volume 51, Number 2, June 2017, page 7.

¹⁶² United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada, *Information on the Loyalists*, <http://www.uelac.org/Loyalist-Info/detail.php?letter=b&line=232> (accessed 16 September 2021).

¹⁶³ *The New England Historical & Genealogical Register, 1847-2011*, via Ancestry.com

¹⁶⁴ Oakville Historical Society newsletter, *The Belyea Family of Bronte*, by Julie Thompson, Volume 51, Number 2, June 2017, page 7.

After joining the British Army, the Bulyea/Belyea family was forced from their farm when it was confiscated.¹⁶⁵ Having lost everything, John Sr. relocated his family to the St. John River Valley in New Brunswick.¹⁶⁶ He was a boat builder by trade.¹⁶⁷

The younger John Belyea Jr. married Isabella Goodwin in 1799, fought in the War of 1812, and “then moved his family to Bronte”.¹⁶⁸ Like many Bronte families, the Belyeas were commercial fishers.¹⁶⁹ An example of the communication challenges endured by early settlers is a story which tells how John and Isabella entered into an agreement “with the government to feed any Mississauga chief who passed by their farm”.¹⁷⁰ However, in 1829, after the widowed Isabella petitioned for some farmland she believed still belonged to the Mississaugas, she learned that she had been feeding the chiefs for years after the agreement had ended with the signing of Treaty 22 in February 1820.^{171, 172}

Belyea Street in Bronte commemorates the family, where they settled on the east bank of Twelve Mile Creek. Allegedly, some of the apple trees in Bronte are descendants of those brought by the Belyea family when they fled New York State.¹⁷³ Many of the Belyea family were mariners. One of John and Isabella’s sons, Jesse Belyea (c.1802-1892), leased and ran the Frontier House hotel, which was located at 29 Navy Street in Oakville.^{174, 175} In his project diary, Deputy Provincial Surveyor, William Hawkins recorded that “he hired three of the Belyea Brothers” to assist him carry out the 1834 survey of Bronte.¹⁷⁶

¹⁶⁵ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 92

¹⁶⁶ Oakville Historical Society newsletter, *Unearthing Oakville's Loyalist Roots*, Fred H. Hayward UE, UELAC, Volume 42, Number 1, March 2008, page 4

¹⁶⁷ Oakville Historical Society newsletter, *The Belyea Family of Bronte*, by Julie Thompson, Volume 51, Number 2, June 2017, page 7

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁹ Brimacombe, Philip, *The Story of Bronte Harbour: The Gloucester of Ontario*, The Boston Mills Press, 1976

¹⁷⁰ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 83

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*

¹⁷² Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, *Treaty Lands & Territory: 12 Mile Creek, 16 Mile Creek and Credit River Reserves – Treaty Nos. 22 and 23 (1820)*, <http://mncfn.ca/treaty2223/> (accessed 1 October 2021)

¹⁷³ Turcotte, *Places and People on Bronte Creek*, 92

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁵ Oakville Historical Society, *The Walker's Guide to Old Oakville: 29 Navy Street, The Frontier House c. 1838*, 1994, 3

¹⁷⁶ Walton Memorial United Church, *Walton Memorial United Church 150 Years, Chapter 1 – The Community of Bronte*, pg. 2



Figure 23: Vernon Leroy Belyea, the great-grandson of John and Isabella (Goodwin) Belyea, top row, far right. Oakville High School class photo. 1922¹⁷⁷

John Belyea died April 14 1825 aged 50 years, and is buried in Bronte Cemetery with his young son Benjamin.¹⁷⁸

4.3.6. Malcolm Wallace Bowen

Malcolm Wallace Bowen was born on 28 November 1920 in Toronto, Ontario to Howard Prime Bowen (1862-1921) and Janet Anne Robson (1878-1921). Malcom's parents died months apart from one another, less than a year after he was born. His mother died in June 1921 and his father in July 1921. Malcolm spent his early life living with relatives, including with his stepbrother and an aunt.¹⁷⁹

In late December 1941, Bowen was awarded a Silver Merit medal for his work as "a physical training instructor at the St. Thomas Technical Flying school" in St. Thomas, Ontario, where he had been teaching for two years.¹⁸⁰ Bowen was awarded the "rarely given silver merit medal [was] presented to personnel who make an outstanding contribution to the school's welfare by personal effort".¹⁸¹ Bowen was the "lightweight boxing champion and physical training instructor at the school for more than two years".¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Image courtesy of Oakville Historical Society, *Oakville High School, 1922*, catalogue number 2013.18.1

¹⁷⁸ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-1.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Robert Bowen, Malcolm Bowen's son, 21 October 2021

¹⁸⁰ "Wins Silver Medal", *Toronto Daily Star*, 20 Dec. 1941, p. 12

¹⁸¹ "Present Flying Officer With Wings at Aylmer: Silver Medal Presented", *The Globe and Mail*, 20 Dec. 1941, p.8

¹⁸² Ibid

In 1942, Bowen married Mary Ann McKay (1923-1992), and joined the RCAF when he was 22 years old, after the birth of their first child. On 23 July 1942, Leading Aircraftman Bowen was one of seven men who were involved in a mid-air collision at RCAF Station Dafoe, the location of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan's No. 5 Bombing and Gunnery School.¹⁸³ Bowen was one of four airmen who were severely injured when they fell "out of a flaming 'plane as it crashed on the airport at Dafoe".¹⁸⁴ Although he had suffered serious burns, Bowen returned to the plane to help other crewmembers, an act for which he was later awarded a medal for bravery.¹⁸⁵ The collision cost three men their lives.¹⁸⁶



Figure 24: Malcolm W. Bowen, undated¹⁸⁷

Bowen, and Aircraftman Ron Ward, were both severely burned in the accident. They were treated first at the station hospital at Dafoe, where they were taken after the accident "alive, but not much more".¹⁸⁸ Then, after "months in Deer Lodge hospital, Winnipeg, they were brought to [the] Christie Street hospital" in Toronto.¹⁸⁹ From there, Bowen recalled, "We were coming in for a landing", and that he "was only a week away from graduation as a wireless air-gunner".¹⁹⁰ When Bowen was released from the burn unit, he returned home to his family in Bronte.¹⁹¹

In Bronte, Malcolm Bowen worked as a bookkeeper for a local lumberyard, and on the production line for Langmuir Paints. He also trained as a radio technician and fixed radios as a sideline. Malcolm is remembered as being cheerful and was popular in the neighbourhood, where he was known as Mac. Despite his limp, Mac could still swing a bat. He played baseball with his children and took them on trips to Oakville and occasionally to Toronto. In Toronto, they visited relatives and saw Riverdale Zoo. A

¹⁸³ Wikipedia, *RCAF Station Dafoe*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RCAF_Station_Dafoe (accessed 14 October 2021)

¹⁸⁴ "Injured R.C.A.F. Members Recovering", *The Ottawa Journal*, 25 Aug. 1943, p. 27

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Robert Bowen, Malcolm Bowen's son, 21 October 2021

¹⁸⁶ "Dafoe Crash Kills Saskatchewan Man", *The Leader Post*, 25 Jul. 1942, p. 6

¹⁸⁷ Image courtesy Bowen family

¹⁸⁸ "Trapped in Flaming Plane Pair Make Medical History", *Toronto Daily Star*, 25 Aug. 1943, p. 9

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

¹⁹⁰ Ibid

¹⁹¹ Interview with Robert Bowen, Malcolm Bowen's son, 21 October 2021

highlight for the boys was a visit to Maple Leaf Gardens, where they watched the Detroit Red Wings play the Leafs.¹⁹²

Malcolm, who was the father of five small children at the time of his death, died in Bronte on 14 January 1954, at the age of 33.¹⁹³ Bowen's death was attributed to the injuries he sustained in the airplane crash in 1942.¹⁹⁴ He was interred in Bronte Cemetery, and his is the only military headstone there.

4.3.3. The Dorland family

Almost a third of Bronte Cemetery's headstones "belong to children; others to mariners" including one dedicated to William (c.1860-1886) and Byron Dorland (1862-1886).¹⁹⁵ The Dorland brothers were the sons of Emanuel "Manuel" Dorland (1828-1903) and Eleanor Clemence (b.1839). Manuel Dorland is also commemorated on the obelisk.



Figure 25: Headstone of the Dorland brothers, William and Byron (misspelled Biron). June 2021

William and Byron were fishers who "were lost east of Bronte in the great gale and snowstorm of December 1886. Both left young families".¹⁹⁶ A contemporaneous newspaper account indicated that the brothers "were returning after work with a number of other fishermen in boats and were within 200 yards of the shore, opposite the Smith farm, when a gale of wind or hurricane with a driving snow storm sprung up very suddenly. It lasted only a few minutes, but during that time, they were capsized or thrown out of their boat. The other fishermen did not miss them until the gale blew past, when a hat belonging to one of the missing men was seen floating on the water. They were both young men and married, leaving widows and small families. Their bodies were recovered" four days later.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² Interview with Robert Bowen, Malcolm Bowen's son, 21 October 2021

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ "Malcolm Bowen, 34, Service at Oakville", *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 Jan. 1954, p. 17

¹⁹⁵ Town of Oakville, *Bronte Cemetery Information Station*, <https://www.oakville.ca/culturerec/is-brontecemetery.html> (accessed 1 October 2021)

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

¹⁹⁷ Canadian Champion, *Drowned*, 9 December 1886, [Dorland, William & Byron: Halton News \(halinet.on.ca\)](http://www.halinet.on.ca) (accessed 23 June 2021)

The Dorland family were not the only ones whose lives were impacted by the vagaries of the lake. Lifelong Bronte resident, Ken Pollock recalled that, in February 1935, his uncle Byron, Archibald K. “Skin” MacDonald, and another crewmate, Mike Joyce, almost perished on Lake Ontario, when they were lost for three days on the lake.

"I still remember sitting on my mother's lap on the veranda of Glendella," Pollock related, "looking out at the lake and waiting. The fishermen went out on a Friday morning and didn't come home Friday night. People drifted down to the lake wondering where they were. Men on the shore were yelling and they actually heard the guys in the boat talking, but there was heavy ice all along the shore and thick fog. The voices drifted away. They fired shots in the air."¹⁹⁸

Pollock recalled that the next morning an airplane from Toronto joined the search, unsuccessfully. Later an ice-breaker tug came to help, again with no luck.

"On the third day a fish boat from Bronte - Bill Bray's boat - went out because Bray figured they knew the ice and the lake. They found them alright, after a few hours, and towed them in, half froze, and hungry as bears. My uncle said they could have eaten the leather out of their shoes."¹⁹⁹

Archibald “Skin” MacDonald (1908-1971) also rests in Bronte Cemetery.²⁰⁰

4.3.4. The Pickard family:

Headstones are significant as sometimes they can be all that remains to prove that a person once lived, as appears to be the case with young Arthur Pickard (1883-1889).



Figure 26: Marker commemorating Arthur Pickard (1883-1889). June 2021

¹⁹⁸ Oakville Memories: Old & New: *Bronte Boys (1920s-1950s)*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=117&PID=9999820> (accessed 16 January 2022)

¹⁹⁹ Ibid

²⁰⁰ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-9.

In the 19th century, when infant mortality rates were a lot higher than they are today, parents frequently commemorated a deceased child by naming subsequent children after ones who had died. This may have been the case with Arthur, as resting in Bronte Cemetery is another, earlier, Arthur Pickard. Arthur Elijah Pickard (1877-1883) is one of six Pickard family members who rest in Bronte cemetery. Tragically, the latter Arthur also died very young. He drowned in 1889, when he was just 6-years-old.²⁰¹



Figure 27: Arthur Pickard, undated²⁰²

Records indicate that the Pickard family settled very early in Upper Canada.²⁰³ James Pickard, who died circa 1803 in Upper Canada, is believed to have been born in the United States; to have immigrated to Upper Canada in 1783; and, he was a Private with Butler's Rangers.²⁰⁴

James' son, Elijah Pickard (c.1795-1883), was born at "Niagara Twp. Four Creek".²⁰⁵ Four Creek likely refers to Four Mile Creek, which feeds into Lake Ontario at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Elijah's wife was Harriet Van Fleet, who was born around 1813, also in Niagara Township, Upper Canada. Harriet died c.1892 in Bronte.²⁰⁶ Based on birth records for their daughter Evaline, Elijah and Harriet appear to have settled in the Bronte area by the early 1850s, however the first definitive proof that they were here comes from the 1861 Census of Canada.²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Ibid. 1-5.

²⁰² Image courtesy Bronte Historical Society, from the Margaret Overland file.

²⁰³ "Van Fleet family pedigree chart." Record Group 5, Series C, Private Papers. Van Fleet Collection. Oakville Collection, Access to Oakville History, Oakville Public Library, Oakville, ON.

²⁰⁴ Oakville Public Library, Access to Oakville History, *Pickard's of Butler's Rangers 1783*, Microfilm, Record Group 5, Private Papers. Series C, Van Fleet Collection.

²⁰⁵ "Van Fleet family pedigree chart." Record Group 5, Series C, Private Papers. Van Fleet Collection. Oakville Collection, Access to Oakville History, Oakville Public Library, Oakville, ON.

²⁰⁶ Ibid

²⁰⁷ Library and Archives Canada, *Census of 1861*, [Search Results: Census of 1861 - Library and Archives Canada \(bac-lac.gc.ca\)](https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca) (accessed 20 January 2022)



Figure 28: Headstones of Elijah (1854-1930) and Mary nee Joyce (1857-1946), and their son Arthur Elijah (1877-1883) Pickard. November 2021

Elijah and Harriet’s son William Elijah Pickard (1854-1930), who, like his father, was also known as Elijah, married Charlotte Mary Joyce (1856-1946). Both Elijah and Mary are buried in Bronte Cemetery, along with two of their sons, Arthur Elijah (1877-1883) and John “Jack” Laister Pickard (1882-1907), their daughter Hattie May (1890-1907), and Elijah’s older brother Isaac Pickard (1846-1916). Unfortunately, because of the lack of official records, no relationship between the Pickard family members buried at Bronte Cemetery, and the other, undocumented Arthur Pickard, can be established.



Figure 29: Hattie Pickard, before 1907²⁰⁸

Figure 29 shows Hattie Pickard, who may have been Hattie May Pickard, one of Elijah and Mary (nee Joyce) Pickard’s daughters. Hattie May died on 28 May 1907, at 16 years old.²⁰⁹ Both Hattie May and her elder

²⁰⁸ Image courtesy of Bronte Historical Society, from the Margaret Overland file.

²⁰⁹ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-5.

brother John “Jack” Laister Pickard, who died seven months later on 13 December 1907 from typhoid fever, are buried in Bronte Cemetery.^{210, 211}

4.3.5 The Sovereign family

Philip Sovereign was born on 9 December 1777 in Sussex County, New Jersey.²¹² He was married to Nancy Culver, of New England.²¹³ In 1799, the Sovereign and Culver families emigrated from the United States, settling first in Norfolk County.²¹⁴ In April 1812, Philip and Nancy Sovereign moved their family to Trafalgar Township.²¹⁵ A few months later, with the outbreak of the War of 1812, Philip Sovereign took up arms and left his family behind to serve his country.²¹⁶ Once hostilities ceased, Sovereign returned to Bronte, where, in November 1814, he purchased Lot 32, Concession 4 South of Dundas Street, the property upon which he established his farm and where Bronte Cemetery was later located.²¹⁷



Figure 30: Philip Sovereign's headstone, left forefront. November 2021

²¹⁰ Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Collection: MS935; Reel: 130, via Ancestry.com, Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1948

²¹¹ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-5.

²¹² Bronte Historical Society, *Sovereign Family* file. Untitled, undated family tree showing Philip Sovereign's parents, spouse Nancy Culver, her parents, and their son Charles' birth, death and some marriage dates.

²¹³ New Jersey, U.S., Marriage Records, 1670-1965, via Ancestry.com

²¹⁴ Pope, J.H., *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ont., 1877*. Page 64

²¹⁵ *Ibid*

²¹⁶ *Ibid*

²¹⁷ ONLAND, Ontario Land Registry Access. Indenture 804B, being a Bargain and Sale dated 25 November 1814. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/20/books/23279/viewer/555880577?page=181> (accessed 1 September 2021).

Historical Books, Halton County, Trafalgar Township, page 181. **Used on an as is basis with the permission of Teranet Inc.**

In June 1833, Sovereign granted 100 acres “with the exception of 1 [acre] out of the [easterly] corner” of his property to his son Charles Sovereign.²¹⁸ Philip “worked away at his farm until his death” on 2 July 1833 at the age of 55.²¹⁹

Philip and Nancy’s son Charles was born on 21 December 1798 in Sussex County, New Jersey.²²⁰ A diligent student, he “obtained the best education the country at that time afforded”, eventually going on to teach, and later becoming “superintendent of schools for Trafalgar”.²²¹ After teaching for a number of years, including as a 17-year-old at the log schoolhouse built by his father, Charles returned home and worked with his father on their farm.^{222, 223} In June 1835, Charles married Elizabeth Ann Howell (1805-1864).²²⁴

Elizabeth Howell was descended from two other early Trafalgar Township settler families: the Howells and the Trillers. Trafalgar Township Historical Society records indicated that Sampson Howell, Elizabeth’s father, was from the United States, and that he came to the area in 1806. Howell settled with his wife, Mary Charity Triller (1776-1854), and four children on Lot 24, Concession 1 South of Dundas Street, located west of Sixteen Mile Creek. He was a farmer and a proprietor.²²⁵



Figure 31: Glendella, Ontario Street, Bronte. May 1989

²¹⁸ ONLAND, Ontario Land Registry Access. Indenture 331G, being a Grant dated 17 June 1833. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/20/books/23279/viewer/555880577?page=181> (accessed 20 September 2021). Historical Books, Halton County, Trafalgar Township, page 181. **Used on an as is basis with the permission of Teranet Inc.**

²¹⁹ Pope, J.H., *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ont., 1877*. Page 64

²²⁰ Bronte Historical Society, *Sovereign Family* file. Untitled, undated family tree showing Philip Sovereign’s parents, spouse Nancy Culver, her parents, and their son Charles’ birth, death and some marriage dates.

²²¹ Pope, J.H., *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ont., 1877*. Page 64.

²²² *The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past: The Sovereign Family & The Sovereign House*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=262&PID=6> (accessed 13 September 2021).

²²³ Pope, J.H., *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ont., 1877*. Page 64.

²²⁴ Ibid

²²⁵ Trafalgar Township Historical Society Digital Collections, *Howell House, Trafalgar Township*, <https://images.ourontario.ca/TrafalgarTownship/2288519/data?n=27> (accessed 4 October 2021)

In 1846, Elizabeth's aunt, Catherine Thompson, nee Triller (1788-1868), purchased "Glendella" from James Belyea a year after he constructed the building. Thompson turned it into a hotel, which her son Edward ran for many years.²²⁶ The Smith-Triller Viaduct, commemorates the Triller family as one of "two pioneer millers on the Sixteen Mile Creek valley".²²⁷ The bridge spans Sixteen Mile Creek at Middle Road.

Charles Sovereign was a prominent member of the Bronte community. He served as a Justice of the Peace, and as the Secretary for the Bronte Harbour Company.²²⁸ After his wife Elizabeth died in 1864, and as his three adult sons had all moved to the United States, there was speculation about what Charles would do with the original homestead. However, he pushed on and in 1870 he bought and moved to a farm that ran from Bronte Creek west to Mississaga Street, and from Rebecca Street south to Lakeshore Road West. Mrs. John Speers, Mary Simmons by birth, who was widowed with four children, kept house for Charles, while her son William Henry Speers tended the farm.^{229, 230} After Charles Sovereign's death, William Speers purchased the Mississaga Street farm from Charles' surviving son, who was living in the States.²³¹



Figure 32: The Sovereign House, courtesy Bronte Historical Society, undated and unattributed

The two-storey brick Sovereign House was constructed c.1825 by Charles Sovereign. The house, which was originally located on Shoreline Drive, was relocated to its current site at 7 West River Street in 1988. Others notable people who lived in the house, in its original location, were Dalt McDonald, one of Bronte's

²²⁶ David Ashe and Joyce Burnell, *Oakville Street Names & Landmarks*, (Burnell-Creighton Publishing, London, ON, 2007), 40.

²²⁷ Town of Oakville, *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Implementation – Phase Two: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery, 1150 Dundas Street West, Oakville, Ontario*, October 2020, 16

²²⁸ The Village of Bronte: Preserving the Past, *The Sovereign Family & The Sovereign House*, <https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/exhibit.asp?id=262&PID=6> (accessed 8 July 2021)

²²⁹ Interview with Elizabeth Strong, Historian (retired) Bronte Historical Society, 23 January 2022

²³⁰ Bronte Historical Society, *The Life and Times of Charles Sovereign (1798-1885)*, Bronte Historical Society, Oakville, Ontario

²³¹ Interview with Elizabeth Strong, Historian (retired) Bronte Historical Society, 24 January 2022

most well known shipbuilders who was also involved in many building projects in the Bronte area, and Canadian author Mazo de la Roche.^{232, 233} The house is now home to the Bronte Historical Society.

Charles and Elizabeth had seven sons and one daughter, most of whom predeceased their parents. Philip Sovereign, his son Charles, and Charles' wife Elizabeth, along with at least four of their children, are buried in Bronte Cemetery."²³⁴



Figure 33: Headstones of Philip and Charles Sovereign. June 2021²³⁵



Figure 34: Elizabeth Ann (nee Howell) Sovereign's headstone. November 2017²³⁶

²³² Town of Oakville, *Heritage Register*, <https://www.oakville.ca/business/heritage-properties.html> (accessed 24 January 2022)

²³³ Town of Oakville, *Inventory Report: 7 West River Street, Sovereign House*, January 2016, 26-4.

²³⁴ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-1.

²³⁵ Philip and Charles Sovereign's headstone photos, June 2021, Planning Services staff.

²³⁶ Elizabeth Ann (nee Howell) Sovereign's headstone photo courtesy of H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., Hamilton, Ontario, November 2017.

4.3.6 The Triller family

Several Triller family members rest in Bronte Cemetery. In 1805, Philip Triller (1749-1821) and Mary Catherine Young (1750-1844), or Catharine as she was known, along with their 10 children, left Knowlton Township, Sussex County, New Jersey for Canada. Their first stop was at The Forty in Grimsby, where they stayed for a year, near Green's mill.²³⁷ In 1806, they left Grimsby and settled in Trafalgar Township, where Philip owned 1,000 acres of land between Burlington and Bronte.²³⁸ Philip, along with his sons and his son-in-law, Sampson Howell, "sawed a great quantity of lumber for building purposes and this was floated by raft along the shore of Lake Ontario to the Twelve Mile Creek".²³⁹

In 1834, Triller Street in Bronte was named after Philip Triller (1786-1866), one of Philip and Catherine's sons. It was later renamed Lakeshore Road West. Philip and his sister Catherine Thompson sold and donated land for the establishment of Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery, located on Dundas Street West.²⁴⁰



Figure 35: Shared headstone of Anne (nee Belyea), Samantha A., and Selena Triller. June 2021

Joseph C. Triller (1798-1874), another of Philip and Catherine's sons, is interred in Bronte Cemetery. In the 1869-1870 County of Halton Gazetteer and Directory, Joseph was listed as a Captain who was living in

²³⁷ Oakville Public Library, Access to Oakville History, *Triller*, Microfilm, Record Group 5, Private Papers. Series C, p. 25

²³⁸ Ibid

²³⁹ Ibid

²⁴⁰ Town of Oakville, *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Implementation – Phase Two: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery, 1150 Dundas Street West, Oakville, Ontario*, October 2020, 16

Bronte Village.²⁴¹ Joseph's first wife was Anne Belyea (1809-1845).²⁴² Both Ann, and their 10-year-old daughter, Samantha A. Triller (1834-1845), rest in Bronte Cemetery. Samantha predeceased her mother by just six months, dying in March 1845.²⁴³ Ann followed in September.²⁴⁴ Also commemorated on their headstone is Selena Triller (1850-1851), Samantha's half-sister and the daughter of Joseph and his second wife, Jane Triller (c.1832-1865).²⁴⁵

Joseph and Ann Triller's son, Joseph Marcus "Mack" Triller (c.1838-1900) was the proprietor of the Bronte House Hotel, which was, according to the 1869-1870 County of Halton Gazetteer and Directory, the only hotel in Bronte Village in 1870.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ W. H. Irwin & Co., Compilers and Publishers, Hamilton, Ontario, *County of Halton Gazetteer and Directory For The Years 1881-5*, Toronto: G. C. Patterson & Co., Printers, 1880 via Ancestry.com, Canada, City and Area Directories, 1819-1906

²⁴² Oakville Public Library, Access to Oakville History, Microfilm, Record Group 5, Private Papers, Series C.

²⁴³ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-7.

²⁴⁴ Ibid

²⁴⁵ Ibid

²⁴⁶ W. H. Irwin & Co., Compilers and Publishers, Hamilton, Ontario, *County of Halton Gazetteer and Directory For The Years 1881-5*, Toronto: G. C. Patterson & Co., Printers, 1880 via Ancestry.com, Canada, City and Area Directories, 1819-1906

5 Design and features of Bronte Cemetery

5.1 The Rural Cemetery

When Bronte Cemetery was established in the early 1820s, western burial practices had begun to change significantly. Up until the 19th century, burials in Europe were rooted in the traditions of the Roman Empire. Bodies were placed in niches cut out of stone or in catacombs. As populations increased, burial grounds became overcrowded. Cemeteries became too full, and sometimes bodies were buried too close to the surface, causing significant health and safety issues, especially in urban areas. In response, older remains were disinterred and stored elsewhere to allow for more burials, a practice which elicited negative responses. These suboptimal conditions painted cemeteries as dismal, neglected, and gory spaces.²⁴⁷ Religious Dissenters also reacted to the overcrowding situation. As people “whose religious convictions separated them from the established Church”, and not wanting to pay burial fees, nor to be laid to rest in ground consecrated by an Anglican bishop, they acted on the then radical idea of establishing a cemetery “rather than a churchyard”.²⁴⁸ In 19th century England, most of the great English cemeteries were established “outside of the liturgical and economic control of the Church of England”.²⁴⁹

A pioneer cemetery, Bronte Cemetery was a result of a social and religious imperative, with no overt association to any one specific Christian sect. Philip Sovereign deemed that the land he gave was to be used as a cemetery where “all orders, sects, nations and parties” could be laid to rest.²⁵⁰ Bronte cemetery is a utilitarian space, which at best can be said to have evolved as a vernacular version of the Rural, or Garden Cemetery style of cemetery design. Introduced two decades after Bronte Cemetery was founded, the Rural Cemetery ideal strove to beautify burial grounds, creating park-like settings in which the deceased were laid to rest in a dignified manner, amidst rolling grounds, winding pathways, groves of trees, architectural features such as small chapels and groundskeeper’s cottages, and even water features.²⁵¹ The bereaved were to be soothed by an attractive, calming space in which to grieve and commemorate their loved ones. The Rural Cemetery ideal had a significant impact not just on cemeteries in England and throughout Europe, but also on cemeteries throughout the British colonies. Therefore, although Bronte Cemetery lacks the detailed design of a Rural, or Garden Cemetery, it boasts the peaceful, bucolic setting.

5.2 History and design of Bronte Cemetery

Bronte Cemetery is representative of early 19th century cemetery design. Its layout and location on the outskirts of the village is a reflection of its early history as a rural cemetery, in a community of relatively modest means. The layout is simple, and lacks elaborate mausoleums and markers. Because of the cemetery’s small size, there are no internal roads or pathways, nor perimeter fencing, as is often the case with larger graveyards.

Bronte cemetery is notable for its close proximity to Lake Ontario; its predominantly grassed open space punctuated by mature trees and a few large shrubs; and, its variety of markers and monuments. The cemetery’s existing headstones are laid out in neat rows. However, much of the cemetery consists of

²⁴⁷ Jane Irwin, *Old Canadian Cemeteries: Places of Memory* (Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books Ltd., 2007), 29

²⁴⁸ Ibid

²⁴⁹ Ibid

²⁵⁰ Town of Oakville, *Bronte Cemetery*, <https://www.oakville.ca/residents/cemeteries-bronte.html> (accessed 10 November 2021)

²⁵¹ J.C. Loudon, *On the Layout Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries; and on the Improvement of Churchyards* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1843), 11.

large, open expanses of lawn, with some headstones grouped together in small, compact rows, and others standing on their own. This unusual layout may indicate that cemetery plots between the existing headstones were never claimed; or, they were, and over the course of the cemetery's 200-year history all signs of the headstones and monuments have been lost. A tributary of Sheldon Creek, now channelized, cuts through the north corner of the property. The cemetery's vegetation and absence of large buildings provides a visual break in the surrounding residential pattern. Although modest, these elements form a park-like setting, which form an attractive, peaceful space in which to grieve and remember.

5.3 History and design of grave markers and monuments

Bronte Cemetery has cultural heritage value and significance in its design, evolution, and association with locally significant individuals. The cemetery also provides an understanding of the history and evolution of Bronte Village, Trafalgar Township, and modern Oakville. The cemetery's markers and monuments, from the oldest to those from the early days of the 21st century, demonstrate a range of materials, sizes and designs, and together they provide an understanding of how the cemetery has developed and evolved over the past 200 years. The cemetery's markers and monuments are heritage attributes that physically represent this heritage value and significance.

One of the aspects that makes Bronte Cemetery so visually appealing is its variety of grave markers and monuments, which range from standard upright headstones, subtle flat headstones, and more elaborate obelisk headstones. The size, material and design of the grave markers and monuments reflect the era in which they were produced, the personal preferences of the people for whom they were made, and possibly their level of wealth.



Figure 36: Individual and clustered headstones, and mature trees dot Bronte Cemetery's open spaces. November 2021

Bronte Cemetery reflects the evolution of 200 years of existence. Graves have been lost to severe storms, the effects of which are inevitable this close to the lake's edge. Over time headstones have been lost and not replaced, resulting in a landscape of open spaces interspersed with clusters of headstones, some of which form family plots.

Bronte Cemetery is associated with the area's earliest settlers, including the Sovereign and Belyea families. Figures 37, 38 and 39 below show some of the earliest grave markers and monuments in the cemetery, including those of the Sovereign and Belyea families.

Philip Sovereign transferred the land upon which the cemetery was established. Although not the earliest headstone in the cemetery, Philip Sovereign's is one of the cemetery's earlier markers. It commemorates his death on 2 July 1833, just three years after he deeded the land to the cemetery trustees. Like many of the stones in the cemetery, Sovereign's stone was restored in 2017.



Figure 37: Headstone of Philip Sovereign who died in July 1833. June 2021

The Belyea family were involved in Bronte's early commercial fishing industry. John Belyea fought in the War of 1812 and was the great-grandson of Louis Boulter, a Huguenot from Saintonge, France, "who came to North American following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685."^{252, 253}

²⁵² Oakville Historical Society newsletter, The Belyea Family of Bronte, by Julie Thompson, Volume 51, Number 2, June 2017, page 7.

²⁵³ United Empire Loyalists, David Hongisto, <http://www.uelac.org/Loyalist-Info/extras/Belyea-John/Belyea-family-history-David-Hongisto.pdf> (accessed 18 November 2021).



Figure 38: Early grave markers include the combined headstone of John Belyea (1776-1825) and his son Benjamin (1825-1835). June 2021

The headstones of Jacob (1754-1837) and Frances Young (1769-1842), are made of limestone. Limestone is a sedimentary rock typically composed of calcium carbonate, and it “forms when shells, sand, and mud are deposited at the bottom of oceans and lakes and over time solidify into rock”.²⁵⁴ Upon closer inspection, limestone usually reveals fossil fragments such as bits of shell. Although convenient as a source material because it is readily available locally, limestone as a material of choice for headstones has faded from popularity because it is porous and lacks durability. This is evident in the loss of detail seen in the Young’s headstones over the course of just four years.

²⁵⁴ U.S. Geological Survey, *How do you recognize limestone and marble?*, <https://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/acidrain/4.html> (accessed 18 November 2021)



Figure 39: The limestone markers of Jacob and Frances Young, after restoration in November 2017, and in November 2021. Note the extensive weathering and loss of detail in just four years.²⁵⁵

Jacob and Frances Young's final resting places are also notable for their footstones. Like a headstone, a footstone is a small marker used to mark the boundaries of a grave. Placed at the feet of the deceased, the footstone typically only contains the person's initials, but sometimes it also contains additional personal information. As well as providing information about the deceased, a footstone can prevent accidental excavation and overcrowding of the graveyard. Footstones also help to indicate the extent of

²⁵⁵ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Bronte Cemetery Conservation Recording Form, Jacob Young*, November 2017.

the burial plot, so that visitors can avoid inadvertently walking over the grave, something considered disrespectful and bad luck.²⁵⁶



Figure 40: France and Jacob Young's footstones. November 2017 ²⁵⁷

Throughout the 19th century, other than wood, marble was the most commonly used material for grave markers and monuments. It was sometimes sourced locally in Ontario, but much of it came from places like Vermont and even Europe.²⁵⁸ Mary Cramer's headstone is made of marble.



Figure 41: Mary Cramer's marble headstone in November 2017 and November 2021

Marble starts as sedimentary limestone. The natural rock forming process of heating and squeezing cause sedimentary limestone grains to recrystallize and form marble. Typically, marble is light coloured; it is

²⁵⁶ Paul Hawes, *Funeral Companion, Is A Headstone Put At The Head Or Feet? Find Out Why*, <https://funeralcompanion.com/headstones-head-or-feet/> (accessed 25 November 2021)

²⁵⁷ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Bronte Cemetery Conservation Recording Form, Frances and Jacob Young*, November 2017.

²⁵⁸ Tamara Anson-Cartwright, ed. *Landscapes of Memories: A Guide for Conserving Historic Cemeteries*, (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2003), 7.

composed of crystals of calcite locked together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; and, it may contain coloured streaks that are indicative of the inclusion of non-calcite minerals.²⁵⁹

Like limestone, marble grave markers and monuments also tend to experience considerable decay from acid rain, snow and fog. Sulfuric acid and acid gases in rain often create layers of a dark gypsum crust on headstones that eventually leads to the loss of the surface, including the stone's historic inscriptions.²⁶⁰

This deterioration is visible in Figure 42 below on the headstone shared by Jeremiah and Eliza Adam's children, Stanley, Mary and Gladys.



Figure 42: Stanley, Mary and Gladys Adams Vermont marble headstone immediately after restoration (November 2017) and four years later (November 2021)

On older monuments, many visual patterns and designs were repeated. In *Old Canadian Cemeteries: Places of Memory*, Jane Irwin notes that, "Such conformity confirms the undeniable fact that we are all travelling to the same end and is oddly reassuring."²⁶¹ These symbolic images have both public and private meaning and continue to pass on important messages and life lessons to passers-by today.

An open book found on a headstone can represent many different things including the Bible, faith, knowledge, or the book of life, and a thistle is associated with earthly sorrow as well as with the crown of thorns worn by Christ.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ U.S. Geological Survey, *How do you recognize limestone and marble?*, <https://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/acidrain/4.html> (accessed 18 November 2021)

²⁶⁰ Anson-Cartwright, ed. *Landscapes of Memories*, 8.

²⁶¹ Jane Irwin, *Old Canadian Cemeteries: Places of Memory* (Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books Ltd., 2007), 223.

²⁶² Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2004), p. 55.



Figure 43: Headstones of Rev. Robert Johnson (c.1799-1884) and Sydeny Francis Butler (1858-1880) include open book icons. November 2021

The cross is thought to be humankind’s oldest symbol. Predating Christianity by thousands of years, in its simplest form, the two equal length lines make an X, as in “X” marks the spot. All cultures use the X sign as well as the + plus sign cross, and the circle. The ancient + plus sign cross had many meanings among pagan cultures, but most notably it symbolized the divide between heaven and earth. It is the + plus sign cross that was adopted by Christianity and is now known as the Greek Cross.²⁶³



Figure 44: The Shaw and Bowen headstones include the Greek Cross icon. November and June 2021 respectively.

After the cross, the urn is one of the most commonly used cemetery monuments. The word ‘urn’ derives from the Latin ‘uro’, meaning "burn", and is believed to testify to the death of the body and the dust into which it turns, while the spirit of the departed eternally rests with God.²⁶⁴ An urn and stylized weeping Willow trees adorn the headstone of Richard English Sr. English, who was a native of Cumberland, England, died on 19 October 1867 when he was almost 82 years old.²⁶⁵

²⁶³ Keister, *Stories in Stone*, 172

²⁶⁴ Thought Co., *Photo Gallery of Cemetery Symbols and Icons*, Draped Urns, <https://bit.ly/2yKZ6T3> (accessed 20 February 2020).

²⁶⁵ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-6.



Figure 45: Headstones with weeping willows. Richard English Sr. (1785-1867) and Mary Ann Hager (1810-1850).
November 2021

In the early 1800s, Weeping Willow trees were a popular funerary art symbol. Weeping Willow trees are usually easily identifiable with their broad crowns and drooping branches. As on Richard English Sr.'s headstone, it was not uncommon to see other Greek symbols used alongside of the tree, including items such as an urn, a nymph, or a Grecian pedestal. However, they also can stand alone, as it does on Mary Ann Hager's (1810-1850) headstone. The trees' very name seems to invoke the tears of the loved ones of the deceased. However, a weeping willow tree on a headstone also represents happiness and immortality.²⁶⁶

As the lion is known as the King of the Beasts, Oak trees are known as the King of Trees.²⁶⁷ Oak leaves and acorns are often used on a headstone to represent the mighty oak tree which symbolizes "strength, honor, longevity and steadfastness".²⁶⁸

On the headstone of young Wilbert Wallace are two oak leaves. Wilbert, who died at 2-½ years old in 1874, was the son of Eveline and Warren Wallace. He is one of four of the Wallace's children who are buried at Bronte Cemetery; the youngest being Mary A. who died in February 1864 at just 1 year and 7 months old, and the eldest being Joshua, who died in October 1866 at 17 years old.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Chris Raymond, Funeral Help Centre, *Cemetery Headstone Symbols: Weeping Willow Tree*, 28 April 2021, <https://www.funeralhelpcenter.com/cemetery-headstone-symbols-weeping-willow-tree/> (accessed 25 November 2021).

²⁶⁷ Keister, 62

²⁶⁸ Thought Co., *Photo Gallery of Cemetery Symbols and Icons, Oak Leaves & Acorns*, <https://www.thoughtco.com/photo-gallery-of-cemetery-symbolism-4123061> (accessed 25 November 2021)

²⁶⁹ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-4.



Figure 46: Two oak leaves decorate the headstone of Wilbert Wallace (c.1871-1874). November 2021 ²⁷⁰

During the Victorian period, which in Canada corresponded to Queen Victoria's reign of 1837-1901, graveyard symbols changed from those warning the living of their mortality and the need to repent (grim skulls and flying hourglasses) to those that represented love and comfort (lambs, laurel wreaths and clasped hands). These new motifs suggested solace after death. Clasped hands specifically symbolised "a farewell to earthly existence, God's welcome into heaven, friendship, solidarity, unity, partnership and matrimony, particularly if both masculine and feminine sleeves are present".²⁷¹



Figure 47: James Baker (1849-1877) and Catharine Van Fleet (1782-1867). November 2021

Bronte Cemetery includes a few examples of obelisk markers. Originating in Egypt during the time of the Old Kingdom, which existed between roughly 2650-2134 B.C., obelisks are representative of a ray of sunlight. The sides of Egyptian obelisks were often inscribed, and the pyramidal top was covered in a veneer of gold which reflected sunlight.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ Halton-Peel Branch, The Ontario Genealogical Society, *Trafalgar Township Cemeteries*. (Oakville, Ontario: 1999) 1-4.

²⁷¹ Foster, Gary S., and Lisa New Freeland. "Hand in Hand Til Death Doth Part: A Historical Assessment of the Clasped-Hands Motif in Rural Illinois." *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1998-) 100, no. 2 (2007): 128-46. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40204677> (accessed 15 January 2022).

²⁷² Keister, 16



Figure 48: From left to right, the Dorland and Triller family obelisks, November 2017, and the Sovereign family obelisk. November 2021 ^{273, 274}

As one of the larger and more complex markers in a cemetery, obelisks often mark the graves of the community's wealthier residents.²⁷⁵ Years since their deaths, the Dorland, Triller and Sovereign families' obelisks serve to remind the community of their relative wealth and position in early Bronte society.

The Dorland family obelisk commemorates Manuel (Emanuel) Dorland (1828-1903) and his sons William G. (c.1860-1886) and Biron (Byron) Dorland (c.1862-1886). The Dorland brothers perished together on Lake Ontario in a winter storm in December 1886. The Triller obelisk commemorates Jacob Triller (1792-1858) and his daughters, Amaranda (Mandan) Marlatt (1828-1864) and Malissa (or Melissa) Triller (1836-1836). Jacob Triller was the son of Philip and Catherine (nee Young) Triller. The Sovereign obelisk is dedicated to the memory of Charles Sovereign (1798-1885), his wife Elizabeth Ann (nee Howell) (1805-1864), and four of their children, Triller Howell Sovereign (1838-1860), Mary Green Sovereign (c.1830-c.1860), Charles Richmond Sovereign (1836-1858), and the aforementioned Horatio Sovereign (1826-1829).

Not surprisingly, Bronte Cemetery, as a cemetery for a community that exists because of its location on Twelve Mile Creek and on the north shore of Lake Ontario, includes a number of nautical themed headstone embellishments. Archibald K (Skin) MacDonald (1908-1971), has one such headstone.

²⁷³ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Bronte Cemetery Conservation Recording Form, Manuel, William G., and Biron Dorland*, November 2017.

²⁷⁴ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Bronte Cemetery Conservation Recording Form, Jacob Triller*, November 2017.

²⁷⁵ Irwin, "Old Canadian Cemeteries," 231.



Figure 49: Archibald Macdonald's headstone is engraved with a ship, and one of multiple buried "McDonald" family plot markers. November 2021

The Vermont marble headstone of Joseph C. Triller and his second wife Jane is decorated with an anchor afloat on a body of water.²⁷⁶

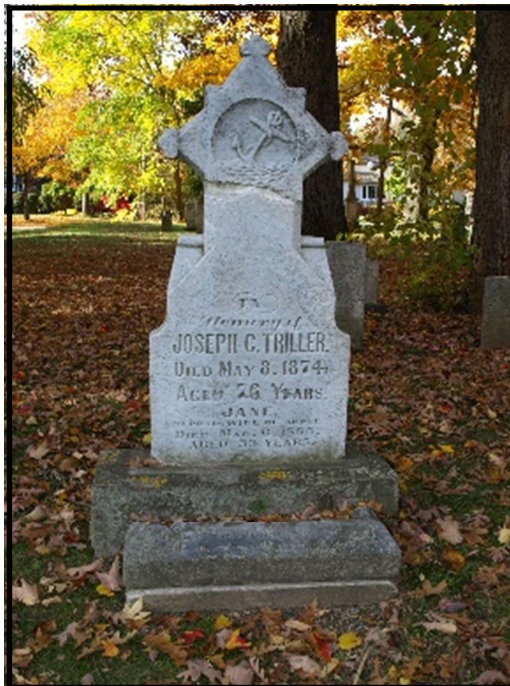


Figure 50: Vermont marble headstone of Joseph C. Triller and his second wife Jane. November 2021

The Vermont Marble Company was the largest manufacturer of marble goods in the United States by the turn of the 20th century. The company's use of mass production and product catalogues allowed it to establish a national distribution network. The Vermont Marble Company became a critical force in the

²⁷⁶ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Bronte Cemetery Conservation Recording Form, Joseph C. Triller*, November 2017.

standardization and distribution of headstones across the U.S.²⁷⁷ Bronte Cemetery includes a number of examples of Vermont marble headstones.²⁷⁸

The anchor on Joseph C. Triller's headstone represents hope. It is a reference to the New Testament's Epistle to the Hebrews, whose "essential purpose was to exhort Christians to persevere in the face of persecution".²⁷⁹ One of the three theological Virtues, Hope is almost always depicted with an anchor, "an ancient symbol of hope".²⁸⁰

By the late 19th century, granite became the more popular type of stone used for monuments and remains the most popular material today because of its solidity and durability.²⁸¹

Roses are the quintessential emblem of earthly love.²⁸² In Victorian era cemeteries, roses often grace the graves of women, and a broken rosebud was often used to decorate the graves of children.²⁸³



Figure 51: Infants, Jacqueline (born and died 1935) and Bonita (1936-1937) Van Fleet, are commemorated in granite embellished with flowers. November 2021

Bas-relief roses embellish Mary Cramer's monument.

²⁷⁷ *Monumental mass marketing: how the Vermont Marble Company standardized memorials in early 20th century America*, https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1709&context=hp_theses (accessed 14 January 2022)

²⁷⁸ H.G. Hardwick & Son Ltd., *Oakville Final Con Records 2017 Bronte 1*, Town of Oakville, Heritage Planning files, November 2017.

²⁷⁹ Keister, 111

²⁸⁰ Keister, 103

²⁸¹ Anson-Cartwright, 9.

²⁸² Stoneletters, "Gravestone Symbols and Carvings - Meaning and Inspiration, Rose," <https://stoneletters.com/blog/gravestone-symbols> (accessed 27 February 2020).

²⁸³ Keister, 43



Figure 52: Mary, wife of William Cramer, died in 1844 at the age of 46. November 2021.

Bronte Cemetery contains no intact family plots. However, evidence of past family plots remain in the four marble corner markers of an unknown family. The post have holes at the top, where chains or metal rods would have sat, enclosing the plot. Also in the cemetery are multiple small square stone markers that demarcate the McDonald family plot.



Figure 53: One of four marble corner markers, demarcating the limits of an unnamed family plot. A McDonald family plot marker. November 2021

In 1915, Fabian Ware, a Commander of a mobile British Red Cross unit, founded the Graves Registration Commission. He felt that a huge injustice would be done if the final resting places of the war dead were not somehow recorded and commemorated. In May 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter. The Commission was, and subsequently Veterans Affairs Canada remains, responsible for officially honouring each fallen soldier by name. Regardless of how or where they fell, a soldier is commemorated with either a headstone, or, if the location of their remains is unknown or

inaccessible, with a memorial plaque.²⁸⁴ Sergeant Malcolm Wallace Bowen's final resting place is marked by a Veteran Affairs Canada headstone.



Figure 54: Headstone of Sergeant Malcolm Wallace Bowen. November 2021

As granite markers and monuments became more popular and as technology improved around the turn of the 20th century, more elaborate designs began to appear on headstones. Moving beyond the basic inscriptions commonly found on 19th century markers and monuments, headstones became more decorative: images were etched, engraved, or added onto the marker including descriptions of the deceased, their homes, their pets or symbols representing their livelihood or hobby. Figure 55 below shows an example of a granite marker with decorative etching.



Figure 55: The Osborne's late 20th century headstone is decorated with an etched truck arriving at the pearly gates. November 2021

²⁸⁴ Canada.com, "The Great War 1914 – 1918, Grave matters," [Grave matters | World War I \(archive.org\)](https://www.canada.com/World-War-I/Grave-matters/) (accessed 25 January 2022).



Figure 56: The Martin and Patterson family marker is an example of an early 21st century marker added to an earlier headstone. November 2021

Bronte Cemetery plays an important role in the grieving and commemoration process, and its grave markers and monuments are tangible heritage attributes representative of the history of the individuals and of their lives in Bronte village. Rather than a purely individual experience, these memorials serve as long-term public reminders of Bronte’s community and its people, facilitating bereavement and commemoration.

The process of selecting a memorial is significant as it is reflective of the individual’s values, religion, background, and status within the community. As a lasting physical reminder of the life of an individual, memorials provide a tangible connection to a person long after their death. As stated by Jane Irwin in *Old Canadian Cemeteries: Places of Memory*, “memories attach themselves to material things and places.”²⁸⁵ As a place to reflect upon the lives of loved ones, a headstone, and the cemetery as a whole, are personal, public, and permanent heritage attributes which provide a sense of continuity for grieving family and friends.

The cemetery physically embodies the community’s changing values and customs pertaining to death and burial, be they secular or religious. These changes, driven by both technological and cultural developments, articulate the ongoing evolution of the cemetery and community. Bronte Cemetery exemplifies the transformation of the cultural heritage landscape that occurred between the 19th and 21st centuries. The memorials of those who died in the early and mid-19th century are of particular significance because they may be the only record of their existence. Landscape designer John Claudius Loudon compared the cemetery to a history book or biography, “every grave...a page, and every head-stone or tomb a picture or engraving.”²⁸⁶ Through conserving the cemetery and memorials of Bronte Cemetery, the preservation of the personal and communal history, identity, and memories of the community is ensured.

²⁸⁵ Irwin, 271.

²⁸⁶ Loudon, *On the Layout Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries*, 13.

5.4 Natural heritage landscape features of the cemetery

Beyond the grave markers and monuments, Bronte Cemetery has cultural heritage value for its natural heritage features including its close proximity to Lake Ontario, and its predominantly grassed open space punctuated by mature trees and a few large shrubs. The result is an attractive, peaceful park-like setting that provides a quiet setting for visitors.



Figure 57: View to Bronte Harbour from close to the southeast corner of the cemetery. June 2021



Figure 58: Headstones, mature trees and shrubs punctuate the cemetery's open spaces. November 2021

On the cemetery's north most boundary runs a tributary of Sheldon Creek, now channelized, which would originally have been an unconstrained natural stream. The cemetery is dotted with a variety of large trees and a few large shrubs. Between the vegetation, the cemetery is predominantly grassed open space. The most striking natural heritage landscape feature of the property is its proximity to Lake Ontario, which has shaped and defined the cemetery over the course of its existence. The sound of the lake is one of the

first sounds you become aware of, gently and persistently superimposing itself over the quiet of the cemetery.

For many, bereavement involves visiting and maintaining their loved ones' burial site. Placing flowers and small trinkets and adding permanent plantings to the grave is part of the grieving process. Over its history, the cemetery's shrubs and trees have grown into large specimens, which provide shade and visual interest, and combine to create a calm oasis within a suburban setting.

In addition to these natural heritage landscape features, the cemetery contains a variety of site furnishing features including two wooden benches and two signs; one which identifies the cemetery by name, and the second an interpretive panel. The benches are located at the bottom of the east leg of West Street, overlooking the West Street Promenade and Lake Ontario. As well as commemorating Peter Lowe, "Our Dad", and Peter Huyberts, the benches also provide visitors to the cemetery a place to rest, reflect, and take in the beauty of the surroundings.



Figure 59: Hardscaping features are limited in Bronte Cemetery but include memorial benches and interpretive signage. November 2021

The two signs include a smaller one, which identifies the cemetery by name, and a larger interpretive panel, which outlines a brief history of the cemetery, including its origins and information on people interred in the cemetery, including early settlers and sailors lost to the lake.

The cultural heritage landscape's value is embodied in the natural heritage and hardscaping features that combine to create a site of commemoration and reflection. It is a multi-layered site that encompasses both individual and collective cultural experience.



Figure 60: Mature trees and shrubs dot the cemetery property. June 2021

6 Evaluation of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Bronte Cemetery has previously been identified as having cultural heritage value and interest. In 1987, it was identified and protected by designation By-law 1987-294, attached as Appendix A.

6.1 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The *Ontario Heritage Act's, Ontario Regulation 9/06: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest*, attached as Appendix B, guided the evaluation of the cultural heritage value of Bronte Cemetery. The *Town's Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy* guided the evaluation of the subject property as a potential Cultural Heritage Landscape. Evaluation of the subject property considered the components, layout, and evolution of Bronte cemetery.

6.2 Summary of Evaluation Findings

Per UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) categories of cultural heritage landscapes, which the Town adopted in its 2014 *Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy*, Bronte Cemetery falls within the Organically Evolved (Relict) Landscape category. The cultural heritage landscape at Bronte Cemetery is the result of "an initial social [and] religious imperative [which] has developed in its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment."²⁸⁷ The Town, as the cemetery owner and administrator, has deemed Bronte Cemetery to be an "inactive or pioneer cemetery", meaning that burial plots are no longer being sold, however historic interment rights continue to be honoured.²⁸⁸ As such, Bronte Cemetery can be categorized as a relict landscape "in which an evolutionary process came to an end at sometime in the past", but its "distinguishing features are...still visible in material form."²⁸⁹ The property articulates 200 years of the cemetery's evolution, as well as Bronte Village's spiritual and burial needs and practices.

Per the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*, Bronte Cemetery qualifies as a significant *cultural heritage landscape*, which is described as "a defined geographical area that [has] been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community."²⁹⁰ Further, Bronte Cemetery includes "spaces, views, archaeological sites [and] natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning and association".²⁹¹

6.3 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Significance

Description of Property

Bronte Cemetery is an approximately 0.3546 hectare (0.88 acre) cemetery, located on the north shore of Lake Ontario and is bounded by West Street on its west, north and east sides. The property is surrounded by residential development on three sides and Lake Ontario to the south. Historically the property forms part of Lot 32, Concession 4 South of Dundas Street (or SDS), which is also known as Broken Front Concession (or BF). Today it's municipal address is 32 West Street.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

²⁸⁷ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 86.

²⁸⁸ Interview with Lisa Yourkevich, Cemetery Administrative Clerk, Parks & Open Space, Town of Oakville, 27 October 2021

²⁸⁹ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 86.

²⁹⁰ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 42.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Bronte Cemetery is an Organically Evolved (Relict) cultural heritage landscape that has significant religious and spiritual value to the families of those who rest there, to Bronte, and to Oakville as a whole. It is significant as a cemetery that was established specifically to provide a resting place for people of all orders, sects, nation and parties. The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape is a vernacular rural cemetery. Although it predates the rural, or garden, cemetery movement by a few decades, the Bronte Cemetery CHL is significant as an early 19th century cemetery that, throughout its evolution, has incorporated elements associated with the movement. To mitigate overcrowding and health concerns, rural cemeteries were typically located between one to five miles (1.6 to 8 km) outside of city limits. Bronte Cemetery was established just west of the historical limits of Bronte Village. Bronte Cemetery is an inactive cemetery; meaning that burial plots are no longer being sold and only those who can prove they have historic interment rights are being laid to rest in the cemetery. The limitation on new burials, and the cemetery's pattern of widely spaced markers and monuments, gathered in clusters with large expanses of lawn between, is indicative of the fact that the CHL is a place where an evolutionary process has substantially come to an end. As such, Bronte cemetery qualifies as a relict, organically evolved, cultural heritage landscape.

Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape has design and physical value for its collection of early and representative markers and monuments which display a variety of materials and styles typical of 19th, 20th and 21st century monuments, including some that display a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit. Predominantly created as a utilitarian space in which to bury the community's dead, the Bronte Cemetery CHL has evolved to include many examples of monument design which is reflective of the changing attitudes towards death that was occurring shortly after the cemetery was established. Images of hope and immortality replaced symbols of puritanical pessimism. Winged cherubs, oak leaves, roses and willow tree emblems replaced death's head, with its stylized skull with wings or crossed bones.

The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape also has design and physical value for its natural heritage features, including a variety of large, mature trees; its open expanses of lawn; and, the steep, treed slope overlooking the north shore of Lake Ontario. Plantings, such as large clusters of ornamental grasses and hostas adorn some headstones.

As with rural cemeteries, the Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape's combination of natural heritage attributes, and its variety and placement of markers and monuments has evolved into a peaceful, bucolic setting. It is a place where families of the deceased can grieve, remember and reflect, and where the public can enjoy the outdoors amidst art and sculpture, which historically was often an opportunity only available to the wealthy.

The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape has historical and associative value as one of the earliest cemeteries in Trafalgar Township. The first documented burial occurred in 1823, roughly seven years before the land was deeded to the Cemetery Trustees, and eleven years before Bronte Village was established. The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of the early settlement of the village. The CHL is significant as the burial site of many of the village's earliest settler families, including some of the area's earliest Black settlers. Many of these early settlers played significant roles in the development of the community, including the Sovereign family who provided the land upon which the cemetery was established, and who deemed that the cemetery was to be open to people of "all orders, sects, nations and parties". Other significant early settler families who rest in the cemetery include, but are not limited to, the Adams, Belyea, Dorland, Howell, and Triller families. As a vernacular rural cemetery, the cultural heritage landscape yields, or has the potential to yield, an understanding of the evolution of 200 years of

burial practices. Further, as a cemetery with no affiliation to a specific church or religious order, the cultural heritage landscape yields, or has the potential to yield information about the early Bronte Village community.

As a place inextricably linked to the history of the Bronte Village, the Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape defines, maintains, and supports the historic character of the area. It is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings; and, it is a landmark within the community. The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape has significance as a park-like open space that supports the character of the area. The CHL is physically linked to the natural spaces of the adjacent West Street Promenade Trail system and beyond that to Lake Ontario. Functionally, Bronte Cemetery has contextual value as it has retained its original purpose as a burial ground in its original location, uninterrupted for 200 years. Bronte Cemetery is historically linked to Bronte Harbour and to Charles Sovereign's home, the Sovereign House. The Bronte Cemetery cultural heritage landscape is a landmark within the community.

Heritage Attributes

Key heritage attributes which contribute to Bronte Cemetery's overall cultural heritage value and significance as a cultural heritage landscape include its:

- defined geographical area which has been modified by human activity;
- location in Bronte on early settlement grounds; and
- relationship between the property's topography, natural elements, and its variety of markers and monuments.

Key geographic, natural and hardscaping attributes which contribute to Bronte Cemetery's overall cultural heritage value and significance as a cultural heritage landscape include its:

- location adjacent to the West Promenade Trail, overlooking the north shore of Lake Ontario;
- views and vistas within the cemetery, and toward the West Promenade Trail and Lake Ontario;
- placement and variety of mature trees that form a canopy above the headstones, which include mature Red Oak, White Pine, Mulberry, Sugar Maple, Black Locust and Black Cherry; and new plantings of Oak and Tulip trees;
- placement and variety of mature shrubs;
- channelized, tributary of Sheldon Creek, that cuts through the north corner of the property, that is kept manicured and lined with paving stones, and serves as a drainage swale; and,
- park-like setting.

Key built heritage attributes of the markers and monuments, including fragments of markers and monuments, which contribute to the cultural heritage value and significance of the cemetery at Bronte Cemetery include their:

- location and orientation;
- range of size and sophistication, from modest to elaborate;
- variety of styles, materials and symbolism represented;
- shape and form, including decorative elements;
- surviving inscriptions;
- various construction methods and techniques;
- remnant posts of a family plot demarcating an unknown families' family plot; and,
- multiple small square stone markers, demarcating the McDonald family plot.

6.4 Evaluation of Provincial and/or National Historic Significance

A cultural heritage landscape may have values that are significant, to one or multiple communities, at a local, provincial and/or national level. In these instances, it may be necessary to apply a range of interpretive and interdisciplinary tools and approaches to understand a property. Should it be determined that the subject property be evaluated for its Provincial or National significance, a third party will be engaged to undertake this assessment.

7 Conclusion

The creation of the Town of Oakville's *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy* came about, in part, as a result of heritage conservation policies outlined in the *Livable Oakville Plan*; the *Planning Act*; the *Provincial Policy Statement*; and, the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The purpose of the *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy* is to provide a framework for the identification and protection of the town's cultural heritage landscapes, and to provide direction for protecting and managing these resources for the future. Cultural heritage landscapes provide a wider understanding of the context of how built resources, natural heritage and land uses function together as a whole. This report was undertaken to determine if Bronte Cemetery satisfies the criteria to be identified as a cultural heritage landscape.

The evaluation of the property's potential cultural heritage value and significance was based upon criteria outlined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Ontario Regulation 9/06 (*Ontario Heritage Act*); Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*; and, the aforementioned Town of Oakville *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy*. Specifically, the assessment considered the layered, nested, and overlapping aspects of cultural heritage landscapes.

Based on this approach, it has been determined that Bronte Cemetery has cultural heritage value as an Organically Evolved (Relict) cultural heritage landscape.

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9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A: Designation By-law 1987-294

By-law 1987-294 - A by-law to designate a certain property as a property of historic and architectural value and interest (Bronte Cemetery) as passed by Council on 5 November 1987.

NO 21167


THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF OAKVILLE
BY-LAW 1987-294


A by-law to designate a certain property as a property of historic and architectural value and interest (Bronte Cemetery)

THE COUNCIL ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The property known as Bronte Cemetery is hereby designated as a property of historic and architectural value and interest pursuant to The Ontario Heritage Act, for the reason set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law.
2. The property designated by this by-law is the property described in Schedule "B" attached to this by-law.

PASSED by the Council this 5th day of November, 1987


MAYOR


CLERK

SCHEDULE "A"
to By-Law 1987-294

REASON FOR DESIGNATION

One of the oldest cemeteries in Trafalgar Township, the burial grounds on West Street date from the 1820s. The site was deeded by Philip Sovereign to Trustees of the cemetery in 1830.

Of Palatine German descent, Philip Sovereign (1778-1833?), arrived in Bronte in 1814 from Sussex County, New York. His son, Charles Sovereign (1798-1885), farmed the lands to the west of the cemetery until his death.

The first burial to take place in this cemetery was that of Hannah S. Haviland, aged 4 weeks, who died on October 28, 1823.

The following early settlers' names appear in Bronte Cemetery: Adams, Belyea, Butler, Dorland, Lucas, MacDonald, McWane, Osborne, Ribble, Sovereign, Triller, and Williams.

SCHEDULE "B"
to By-Law 1987-294

ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying, and being in the Town of Oakville, Regional Municipality of Halton, and being composed of Part of Lot 32, Concession 4, South of Dundas Street, more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at the Northeasterly angle of the said lot;

THENCE N 66° W, 396' (6 chains);

THENCE S 38° W, 132' (2 chains);

THENCE S 66° E, 396' (6 chains);

THENCE along the water's edge of Lake Ontario 132' (2 chains) to the point of commencement;

Now containing all that land bounded on the Northeast by the Southwesterly limit of West Street and bounded on the Southwest and the Northwest by the Northeasterly and Southeasterly limits of the Old Lakeshore Road as shown on a plan registered in The Registry Office for Halton as Number 198 and bounded on the Southeast by the high water mark of the Northwesterly shore of Lake Ontario. As in Instrument No. 32476 for Trafalgar registered on the 17th day of May 1955.

9.2 Appendix B: Ontario Regulation 9/06:

Français

Ontario Heritage Act

ONTARIO REGULATION 9/06 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

Consolidation Period: From January 25, 2006 to the [e-Laws currency date](#).

No amendments.

This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.

Criteria

1. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 29 (1) (a) of the Act. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (1).

(2) A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
 - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
 - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
 - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
 - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
 - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
 - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
 - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
 - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
 - iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

Transition

2. This Regulation does not apply in respect of a property if notice of intention to designate it was given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the Act on or before January 24, 2006. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 2.

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9.3 Appendix C: Definitions of cultural heritage landscapes

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states that:

Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man".²⁹² They continue, advising that these areas are "illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal."²⁹³

UNESCO's definition of an Organically Evolved Landscape is a landscape that "results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features."²⁹⁴ Further, within the Organically Evolved Landscape category, two sub-categories were identified. They are the:

- Relict (or fossil) landscape, "in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features, are, however still visible in material form."²⁹⁵; and
- Continuing landscape which "retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time."²⁹⁶

The Province of Ontario states that a:

Cultural heritage landscape: means a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Cultural heritage landscapes may be properties that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest under the Ontario Heritage Act, or have been included on federal and/or international registers, and/or protected through official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanisms.²⁹⁷

The Town of Oakville states that:

*A cultural heritage landscape is the recognizable imprint of human settlement and activities on land over time. But while any landscape that has been deliberately modified by humans is a cultural landscape, only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the community and are valued by the community can be identified as 'cultural heritage landscapes'. Cultural heritage landscapes can include any combination of built structures (i.e. houses, barns, shops, bridges), natural heritage (i.e. trees, hedges, lawns), transportation routes (i.e. roads, pathways, trails) and viewscapes or vistas, providing that these features demonstrate the required significance and value.*²⁹⁸

²⁹² UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 85.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid, 86.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 42.

²⁹⁸ Planning Services Department, PDF, "Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy," 5.

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