

March 2015



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## Henry Elliot, Architect of Evergreen House

Maida Follini

In the 1860's when Judge Alexander James planned to have a house built for his family outside of the city of Halifax, he chose architect Henry Elliot to design it. The result was a 20-room mansion located at 26 Newcastle Street built over a three-year period, from 1864 to 1867.

Henry Stephen Collins Elliot was born on January 25, 1824 in Dartmouth. The Elliot family is thought to be descended from Jacob Eliot 1st, elder brother of Reverend John Eliot, "the Apostle to the Indians". John Eliot came to Massachusetts on the ship *Lion* in 1631, and his brother likely came with him. Rev. John Eliot translated the Bible into the Wampanoag language and his mission brought Christianity to many Native Americans who lived in

several villages of "Praying Indians" near Boston. Both John and his brother Jacob had many descendants of whom one is thought to be Andrew Elliot, the father of Jonathan Elliot, Henry's grandfather. (Jacob's branch added a second L to their name, distinguishing them from John's branch.)

Jonathan married Almy Greene in Smithfield Township, Providence, Rhode Island. Almy was the daughter of Thomas Greene of Rhode Island, a noted Quaker preacher and descendant of Rhode Island's founder, Roger Williams. Jonathan Elliot and his wife were Quakers who came to Nova Scotia from New England about 1785, after the American Revolution. Thomas Greene also came to Nova Scotia, and preached at the Dartmouth Friends Meeting. He later moved to the Granville area of Annapolis Valley where he held Meetings in his home.

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*(Henry Elliott Continued from page 1)*

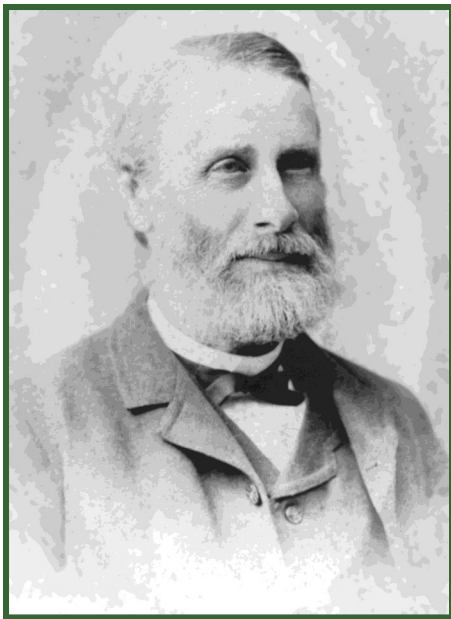
Jonathan and Almy lived in the Woodlawn area of Dartmouth with the children they had brought from New England. They went on to have six more children born in Nova Scotia. One of these was his sixth son, Jonathan Elliot (Jr.) born June 28, 1798. When the younger Jonathan was ten years old, his father died, May 18, 1807. Almy, left a widow with many children to bring up, married in 1808 Nathaniel Russell, a widower with children of his own. Russell was a carpenter and chair-maker. Almy and her Elliot children moved to the Russell home near Russell Lake, which was named after Nathaniel. Young Jonathan Elliot benefited from his step-father's training in carpentry and went on to become a successful builder.

In 1821, Jonathan Elliot the younger married Charlotte Susan Collins, of Collin's Grove. Charlotte was an Anglican and Jonathan was disowned by the Quaker Meeting in Dartmouth because their strict rules forbade members marrying outside the Quaker faith. Jonathan then joined the Universalist Church. He helped organize the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist) in Halifax and was a Deacon of this church.

According to the Elliot Genealogy Jonathan and Charlotte lived in a large house in Dartmouth. Jonathan maintained a lumber yard on what is now Edward Street for his business as a building contractor. Jonathan and Charlotte Elliot had 10 children. Two of their sons, Henry and Edward, became architects, and one, Thomas, was a builder. Jonathan worked with his son Henry on the design and construction of the Mechanics Institute on Ochterloney Street, which was built in 1843. (This building was demolished in 1961.)

Jonathan, who had been in poor health, was coming back from a service at the Church of the Redeemer in Halifax on April 14, 1867, when he suddenly died. He was 69 years old.

Jonathan's son Henry went on to a long productive career as an architect. He is described as designing in the Italianate style. His work includes many notable public and commercial buildings as well as attractive and commodious residences. Among the public buildings designed by Henry Elliot and his firm of Elliot and Busch are St. Luke's Church School House, Queen St. at Morris St.; the Dartmouth Exhibition Hall & Ice Rink, Windmill Road at School St.; the Dartmouth Public School on Ochterloney Street; the North Baptist Church, Gottingen Street; St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Tobin Street; Alexander Keith & Son, Brewery, Lower Water Street; and the Provincial Normal School, Prince Street in Truro.



Henry Stephen Collins Elliott (1824-1892)

Among the residences Henry Elliot and his firm designed were: "Seaview" built for his brother Francis Coffin Elliot in 1867, and located on Church St. at Edward St. (demolished in 1965); "Evergreen" at 26 Newcastle St., built for Judge Alexander James, and now the Dartmouth Heritage Museum; the "Octagon House", for Gavin Halliday, on Dahlia Street, (demolished in 1969); "Pine Hill", on Francklyn Street, the residence of Edward Albro, a prominent hardware merchant; and "Hawthorn Place" on Gottingen St, the residence of A. Inglis Harrington. He designed the house at 99 Ochterloney Street, (now known as the Henry Elliot house) for his son Alfred Elliot, who served for many years as Dartmouth's town clerk.

Henry Elliot's houses are known for the architectural styles known as Italianate and Picturesque. Decorative elements include towers and cupolas, richly ornamented windows and doorways, and wide eaves with

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Henry Elliot Continued from page 2)*

many brackets. Rounded windows, porches with columns, and glazed doors are some of the attractions expressing the comfortable circumstances of their owners.

Henry and his wife Elizabeth Ann Bowes lived for a time in a house he designed at 22 North Street. He later moved to a more spacious house he had designed: "Brightwood", built 1868, which was set among wide acres and became Henry's "gentleman's farm". Here Henry and Elizabeth raised their 12 children who survived infancy (two others died as babies). Elliot's house and farm at Brightwood is now the site of the Brightwood Golf and Country Club.

Henry's younger brother Edward also became an architect and designed a number of important buildings in the Halifax area including the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist); the Halifax City Hall; and the Truro Agricultural College. Henry's youngest son, Ernest Henry Elliot, studied architecture in Halifax and Boston, and became an architect for the U.S. Government. He worked in the Treasury Department for 44 years and designing many post offices and courthouses in the U.S.



Elisabeth Ann Bowes Elliott  
DHM Collection



Joyce Elliot Earle

In 1891 Henry Elliot retired and moved to Boston where he had designed a house for his architect son, Ernest. Henry died on 18 May, 1892. His body was brought back to Dartmouth for the funeral which was held at the home of his older son, Alfred at 99 Ochterloney Street. His architect son Ernest retired from his professional career in 1937, and passed away in 1954 in Washington, D.C.

But the passing of these older generations of Elliot architects did not end the tradition in the family. It is carried on by Richard Elliot Earle, the great-great-grandson of Henry Elliot, who is a practicing architect in Nova Scotia. His mother, Joyce Elliot Earle the great-granddaughter of Henry Elliot, is a life-long Dartmouth resident, and has been a long-time volunteer at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum. And to round out the connections of past with present, Museum Society member Sally King's son Ned King lives at 22 North Street designed by Henry Elliot where Elliot lived prior to moving to "Brightwood".

In addition to those surnamed "Elliot" descendants with family names "Foster", "VanBuskirk", "Austen" and "Earle" as well as others still live in the Dartmouth-Halifax area.

*(Thank you to Joyce Elliot Earle, Sally King, Ned King, and the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Archives for providing material for this article.)*

## The Director's Desk

Bonnie Elliott

My column in this issue is short as we have been very fortunate in receiving many interesting submissions resulting in a robust Spring issue. What is important for you to know is what we have been busy doing since December and the plans underway for the spring and summer.

If you haven't been to the museum recently you will notice some changes to the permanent displays. In the red parlour we've placed more focus on the story of the founding of Halifax and Dartmouth, and the significance of Joseph Howe in the life of this Province. The accompanying interpretation will be ready for the summer season. The front foyer is going to be spruced up with the help of the talented decorator Heather Pitts who is offering some much needed guidance. As well, the Archives will be consolidated on the second floor landing. At the beginning of April the museum will be closed to allow for the work to take place. June 5th will mark the opening of the HRM Bridal Gown exhibit which features eight 20th century gowns that have very interesting stories and that have never been displayed before. An exhibition catalogue is being prepared to accompany the display.

This winter we also struck a Steering Committee to undertake the planning of the new museum. We have been approached by a group of museum consultants with a very interesting plan to develop the museum. Although 90 Alderney is currently for sale again the new museum is much closer at hand. We hope to have further news at the AGM on May 20th so please come and join in on the discussion.

Happy Spring!



The red parlour at Evergreen House. The large portrait on the right of the picture frame is of John Howe, editor of the Royal Gazette, by William Valentine. Below is a model of the H.M.S. Alderney, one of the ships that brought settlers to the newly founded Halifax and Dartmouth communities. The portrait of Joseph Howe that was painted in 1851 by G. Debaussy is to the right of the frame.



Crystal Martin

No discussion of Helen Creighton would be complete without the mention of her melodeon. Having begun her work in 1928, it was easy enough for Helen to listen to and understand a song, but preserving it was much more problematic. Helen had taken piano lessons when she was younger, but had never been musically inclined. While she had no trouble writing down the words of the folksingers, she found it extremely difficult to transcribe the melody and record the notes that made up the songs. One suggestion of using a series of dots to indicate the rise and fall of the melody proved to be unsuccessful. Also, while recording equipment was available at the time, many of the houses Helen visited to collect song lyrics did not have electricity, making devices like a Dictophone

worthless. The answer to this came in the form of a small, wooden melodeon.

Helen was offered the melodeon by family friend Judge R.H. Murray. Unfortunately there seems to be a bit of confusion surrounding the origin of the melodeon. Helen was originally told by Judge Murray that it was used by his father, Rev. Robert Murray in his missionary work among the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. However, after publishing this in *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia*, it apparently caused



Helen Creighton and children on Devil's Island  
(with melodeon in wheelbarrow), c. 1929 DHM 1974.043.041 (A00743)

the Murray family some embarrassment. Clary Croft, who was mentored by Helen, says, "It seems the Judge, tongue in cheek, had made up the missionary story. In truth, he had spied the melodeon in a Halifax shop window and purchased it to play hymns at his dying father's bedside." Helen Creighton also referred to this story in her autobiography, stating the Judge told the Mi'kmaq story "with a twinkle we missed," learning the truth at a later date. It is interesting to note that reference has been found to a Mi'kmaq Bible once owned by Reverend Murray, so it appears that he did conduct missionary work, as stated. Is there a reason that Judge Murray made up the story, to make its origin seem more exciting, or perhaps there is another reason as to why the Murray family denied it?

*(Continued on page 6)*

The melodeon used by Helen while collecting folksongs seems to be quite unique. A reed organ with a single key board, it is shaped like a small, rectangular wooden box. If “Googled” online you get photos of either hand-held accordions or large piano-like organs, nothing similar to the one that belonged to Helen. According to the online dictionary, “a melodeon is a small accordion of German origin, played especially by folk musicians. It is also known as a small organ popular in the 19th century, similar to the harmonium”. Photos of harmoniums found online look more like that of Helen’s melodeon however, rather than the accordion-like bellows at the back that they seem to have, hers has a key-like handle on the front.

Helen’s melodeon measures less than three feet in length and one foot in width. It has a keyboard like an organ, but the sound comes from air pumped through its reeds by working a handle up and down with the left hand, while the right hand plays the melody on the keyboard. Somewhat awkward and heavy, it was encased in a little wooden box and carried to the house where Helen was collecting. Helen stated in *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia* that “wherever we went, people made a great fuss over it.”

Unfortunately, the method of transport that made Helen’s melodeon famous was also its demise. While collecting folksongs on Devil’s Island, Helen was forced to push it over the bumps and rocks of the island in a wheelbarrow. Sadly, “its heart was broken by the ignominy of this mode of transportation. Thus it gave a weary groan, a wheeze and a heavy sigh, but not until all had been accomplished that I required of it.”

After the passing of her melodeon (on which she worked out some 100 tunes), Helen finally graduated to a Dictaphone. She found this method of preservation to be much more satisfactory. It allowed the singer’s voice to be recorded, which meant repetition was not required. Helen was now able to collect 26 songs in one evening, where before she might have only gotten six. To Helen’s untrained ear, this helped to make collecting folksongs much easier.

Today the melodeon is proudly on display in Helen’s former sitting room at Evergreen House.



Answer to Know your Dartmouth– Answer

Pictured is the *Mont Blanc* Canon, which was blown from the narrows of Halifax Harbour when the *Mont Blanc* collided with the *Imo* on December 6, 1917. The great Explosion caused the 1200-pound canon to fly over 2 miles to Little Albro Lake. It was salvaged, and given to the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, which placed it in a small park at the corner of Albro Lake Road and Pinecrest Drive. The heat of the explosion caused the iron to soften and bend.



*The Dartmouth Heritage Museum*

*requests the honour of your presence at the*

*HRM Bridal Gown Exhibit*

*June 5th to October 30th, 2015*

*Evergreen House. Dartmouth, Nova Scotia*

*10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday*

## Heritage Museum Article: Town Plot Street Names

David Jones

John Martin offers a great deal of helpful information on this general topic of street names and starts out by saying: "Up to the end of the 18th century, only a few of Dartmouth streets had names. On property descriptions of that time, Wentworth Street and Dundas are marked 'Fourth' and 'Fifth' Streets respectively, as if they were numbered easterly from the harbor" (*Story of Dartmouth*, 100).

Original 1750 Town Plot:

11 blocks, 400 ft. length x 200 ft. width

1 lot = 50 ft x 100 ft

Dundas Street = Eastern boundary

North Street = North boundary

Alderney Drive = West boundary

Green Street = South boundary

Portland Street was known as Front Street.

"There were 53 families with a total population of 193 within the town of Dartmouth, according to statistics of 1752. (This might possibly include the township)." – p. 85, *Story of Dartmouth*.

Quaker Town Plot:

Blocks became 220ft x 220ft

1 lot = 60ft x 120ft

Streets widened from 55ft to 60ft

Chapel Lane (part of Edward Street) is a 'relic' of original town plot (1750).



Water Street now Alderney Drive, 1906.  
DHM 1968.006.001, pg8 c

### Street Name Changes and Origins

**Alderney Drive:** Named after the ship

*Alderney* that carried Dartmouth's first large wave of immigrants in 1750.

**Dundas Street:** *Fifth Street*, *Sherbrooke Street* and *Wallace Street* (1830s). The block from Queen to Ochterloney Street, according to Martin, was *Hanse Lane*.

**Edward Street** (from Queen Street to Park Avenue): *Prince Edward Street*. This is why we now have an Edward Street and a Prince Street... John Martin also notes that the section between Ochterloney and Queen was referred to as *Chapel Lane*.

"In 1894 the first street signs were put up, and certain changes made in street names. The southern section of **Prince Edward Street** was changed to **Prince Street**, and the northern part changed to Edward Street" (*Story of Dartmouth*: 452-453).

**Green Street:** Named, I infer, after Benjamin Green who was granted 10 acres at the point of Dartmouth Cove.

**King Street:** *King William Street*.

King Street is named after King William IV (Queen Victoria's uncle) who reigned from 1830 to 1837. King Street, as mentioned previously was named King William Street at one time. This King William was the same

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Prince of Wales who commanded in Halifax.

**North Street** marked the northern boundary of the original town plot.

**Ochterloney Street:**

*“the road from Skerry’s Inn.”*

Named for a Superintendent of the Maroons in Preston.

**Portland Street:** *Front Street, Princess Charlotte Street and Hartshorne Street.* From Canal Street to Burton’s Hill): *Eastern Passage Road.*

**Prince Street:** Formerly known as Prince Edward Street. Now there is a Prince Street and a separate Edward Street!

**Queen Street:** *Quarrell Street.* Named for Queen Victoria.

**Victoria Road** (from Portland to Ochterloney): *East Street, Warren’s Lane and Wilson’s Lane.*

Victoria Road is, like Queen Street, named for Queen Victoria.

**Wentworth Street:** *Fourth Street, Tremain Street (1830s) and Fitzwilliam Street.*

Named after Governor Sir John Wentworth.

*David Jones is a recent graduate of Saint Mary’s University with a degree in History and Anthropology. He is a life-long resident of Dartmouth, growing up playing hockey and paddling on Lake Banook. David is the author of the Dartmouth History Blog ([www.historydartmouth.blogspot.ca](http://www.historydartmouth.blogspot.ca)). His great grand uncle, Dr. John Patrick Martin, was the town historian for Dartmouth in the mid twentieth century.*

## Know Your Dartmouth

What does this picture show? Where is it located? For answer, see page 8.



# Dartmouth's Ice Harvest

Angie Raftus McLellan

Dartmouth has long been known for its many lakes which add beauty to the landscape and provide recreation year-round. Between the years of 1836 and 1954, Dartmouth's lakes were also a major site of industry. In those days ice was a valuable and necessary crop, and Dartmouth was well positioned to supply ice to Halifax, mainly to be bought by butchers and seafood vendors, and for the ice boxes of private homes. Each year, between one hundred and seventy-five and two hundred men were employed in the ice harvest in Dartmouth. The three lakes principally involved in the ice harvest in Dartmouth were First Lake (Banook), Second Lake (Micmac), and Maynard Lake.

The first to make the foray into the ice business in Dartmouth was the duo of Adam Laidlaw and William Foster. Laidlaw cut the ice and supplied it to William Foster, who built an ice house for storage near the canal bridge on Portland Street. Foster owned a shop near the ferry landing in Halifax, from which he sold ice in the summertime for a penny a pound. In 1840 he began delivering ice in Halifax by horse-drawn wagon, and later expanded his business to include delivery to homes in Dartmouth.

The failure of the ice crop in New England in the winter of 1880 was a boon to Dartmouth's ice industry. By this time many other families had joined in the ice harvesting business, such as the Glendennings, Carters, Chitticks, Hutchinsons, Waddells, and Ottos. There were ice houses lining the shores of the lakes, as well as on Portland Street and on the harbour front. Thousands of tons of ice were shipped to Boston and New York that summer, and sold for a premium price.



Ice Houses on First Lake. Photograph by C.F. Bell – DHM collection

The ice houses resembled barns made of unfinished wood. They measured roughly thirty metres long and 6 meters high. They could hold up to three thousand tons of ice. The walls of the ice houses were made up of three hollow sections. The middle section was empty, and the other two were stuffed with sawdust or sometimes ashes from the ferry, to act as insulation to keep the ice cool during the warm spring and summer months.

The ice harvest would typically begin in January and continue into February, until the ice

houses were fully stocked or until the spring thaw had arrived. To prepare the ice for harvesting, it first had to be cleared of snow. This was accomplished by having a horse pull a “scoop”. The ice would then be divided into grids called “pans” or “sets”. In the early days of the industry the ice was cut with a hand saw. The workdays were long, often 18 hours, and many lost their fingers to frost bite. The ice would be cut into 2 foot blocks to be loaded into the ice house. For safety reasons the cut areas of ice would have their borders demarcated by evergreen trees. In 1957, when Lake Banook was drained, the bottom was found to be full of old evergreens.

Glendenning pioneered the use of horses to haul the ice, and his ice houses on First and Maynard Lake were the

*(Continued on page 11)*



Cutting blocks of ice with the saw and then using horses to transport them. C.F. Bell Collection, DHM

first to incorporate slides to move the ice. He was also the first to build an ice house on the far side of Portland Street opposite

Maynard Lake, and to run a slide overhead. This operation was later taken over by the Otto Ice Company.

Following the Titanic disaster of 1912, the Otto Ice Company sent twenty tons of ice aboard the Mackay-Bennett along with one

hundred and fifty coffins, to ice the bodies of victims retrieved from the water.



C.F. Bell Collection, DHM

As the years passed and technology advanced, so did the methods used in the ice harvest. In 1923 gas-powered saws replaced hand saws, and tractors fitted with plows and special gauged saws to clear and cut the ice soon followed. In this pre-World War II era, the ice

(Continued on page 12)



The photographs of the ice harvesting are from the C.F. Bell Collection.

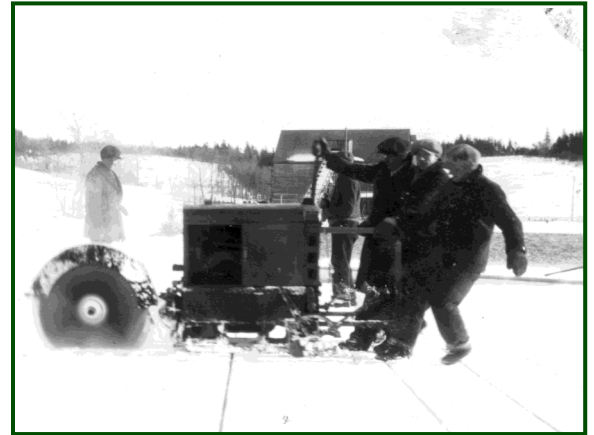
Top Left: Ice Harvest, Dartmouth. Feb. 6, 1932.

“Across Portland Street”.

Left middle: Ice cutting machine. Jan 28, 1931

Right middle : Ice harvest. Otto’s Walker set.

Below: First Dartmouth Lake from Silver’s Hill.



industry in Dartmouth was still booming, bringing in revenues of four hundred thousand dollars a year.

The dawn of the 1950s brought with it the demise of the ice industry that had so long been a way of life in Dartmouth, and had employed so many. Several unseasonably warm winters in a row, coupled with the recent affordability of electric refrigerators meant the end of the era of the ice harvest. The last ice house in Dartmouth was demolished in 1954.



# EVENTS & EXHIBITS



The Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society’s **Annual General Meeting** will be held at **7pm the 20th of May, 2015 at Christ Church Parish Hall, lower level.** (off Dundas Street)

Please join us and meet your new Board Members and renew your membership. Refreshments served.

**HRM Bridal Gown Exhibit** opening and **Summer kick-off!** We have been busy making changes at the museum and we’re inviting members and guests to see first hand what we’ve done. Please join us on June 4th from 4-7pm.

The Bridal Gown Exhibit will run from June 5<sup>th</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2015.

Evergreen House, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Members and children under 12 free. Admission \$2.00

Summer Hours: 10 am-5pm Tuesday until Sunday. Closed 1-2pm Sat. & Sun.

DHM Society Donors:

Each year Society Members give over and above the membership fees to help us run our programs at the Museum.

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Rodney Simpson &	Lorna Huestis	Brian Vandervaart
Christina Dadford	Betty Pitt	Kathryn Stanfield

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*Protecting, Preserving & Promoting  
our Heritage*

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A \$10 tax receipt will be issued, you will receive our newsletter by mail, and membership will entitle you to free admission to museums . (Evergreen and Quaker House) upon presentation of your card.

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