

THE

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BEECHWOOD WAY

MAGAZINE



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Letter from the Editor

WITH THE START of a new year, the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation Team has been in full planning mode. We have been looking to work with different cultural groups and organizations to provide an interesting and educational series of historical evenings, where an expert will explore the history and heritage of different communities that make up the fabric of our city.

In January, we welcomed Donna McCart Sharkey who shared her book *Death in the Family: Stories Obituaries Tell* and her passion in reading and collecting obituaries and how important they are to tell a story of the life of a person.

In February, we celebrate everything that makes Ottawa a great city. This event welcomes two historians who will discuss their findings on two different periods of Bytown/Ottawa history with Paul Weber, a musical historian, playing a few songs between the two guest historians.

In March, Michael McBane will share the previously untold story of Bytown's Sisters of Charity and the extraordinary actions undertaken to save the lives of the Irish Famine Refugees. He will also draw on his expertise of Ottawa's Irish history and delve into the many people buried at Beechwood who played a role during that period.

In April, it's National Tartan Day, and we celebrate of Scottish heritage and the cultural contributions of Scottish and Scottish-diaspora figures of history accompanied by a bagpiper performance by the Sons of Scotland piper band.

Later in April, we will host an evening with the Khayrhaye Somali Cultural Museum Centre, where we will explore and celebrate the history, culture, and heritage of Ottawa's Somali Community. Beechwood Cemetery Foundation is proud to welcome Hersi Osman and Kaltoun Mussa, directors and historians at the Khayrhaye Somali Cultural Museum Centre. The Centre has carefully selected several unique artifacts to share as part of the evening. Each artifact tells a story of the community and how the Centre has worked to preserve and save them for generations.

We also are working on different commemorations and ceremonies to honour the members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Veterans, RCMP, CSIS and Ottawa Police Service.

We have also been working on new tours, with different themes that focus on specific sections and communities. More details later in this issue.

We hope you join us for different events in 2024.

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Thank you

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We want your feedback on how we are doing!

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From the Desk of the President of Beechwood Cemetery Company and Executive Director of the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation

By: Andrew (Andy) Roy

As this is the first issue of 2024, I wanted to share my deepest appreciation for the support the families, friends and guests of Beechwood have shown us for over 150 years. Our 150th anniversary was a celebration of everything that makes Beechwood unique and special in the community. We were extremely proud to have so many events where we welcomed people all year long

Beechwood has been able to provide service to our community, in the city, province and across the country. Our team continues to serve our community with the utmost care and dedication. It is the most meaningful service we can do, ensuring that everyone is treated with the respect, dignity, and care that you all have come to expect from us and deserve.

As we prepare for the next 150th years, we are constantly looking for new ways to serve you all and make sure we meet the needs of future generations. During the fall of 2023, we proudly expanded the Rockery and Hosta gardens, which were originally developed by community request. There are some new and exciting options available from natural boulders to more columbarium boulders.

We added columbarium in the National Military Cemetery, which is the first time we offer above ground urn space for our Canadian Armed Forces Members, Veterans, and their families. We also extended the National Military Cemetery with more room for cremation burials as well. In the fall, we will also replace the trees near the main monument with two rows of sugar maples, the symbol of Canada. It should look spectacular in the fall with the rich red leaves.

If you also visited the cemetery, we have rebuilt the pathways and will continue with an expanded parade square to better support families and our expanding remembrance and commemoration ceremonies. You will also notice the above ground gardens that were built and will be planted in the Royal Canadian Air Force colours for their 100th Anniversary.

In the Chinese Community Section, a new columbarium has been built to better serve the changing requests of the community. This is a new option for the community and has been designed to fit in with the existing features. We also replaced all the Cherry Blossom trees with new trees and they should look great this spring.

We have expanded the selection in the Botanical Gardens, with more options for family lots and an additional columbarium. We are working hard to ensure we meet the needs and wants of our community.

As we continue to look forward, we are looking at restoring the Macoun Marsh and cleaning out the plants that are suffocating the pond. It is a great project that will be started in the late summer-early fall. We have experts helping with this project to protect the wildlife and keep the marsh sustainable for generations to come.

As always, we have so many different projects, programs and offerings in the works and we will continue to be dedicated to you all, our community, and ensure we meet your needs for generations to come.

2023 was a year where we reflected on the last 150 years, 2024 is a year where we look excitingly forward to the next 150 year.



Move over Colonel By: The Irish helped found Ottawa too

By: Eamonn McKee, Ambassador of Ireland

I don't have a problem with Colonel By. He was decent fellow by all accounts, a great engineer, and hard done by the Whig Government that unfairly accused him of going over-budget. The Rideau Canal, whose construction he oversaw, is rightly regarded a marvel of construction. Today, a fine statue of Colonel By overlooks the locks of his creation as the Rideau Canal dramatically enters the Ottawa River.

The issue I have is that he alone is credited as the founder of Bytown, renamed Ottawa in 1855. He certainly played a part with the construction of the canal, begun in 1826. However, he was only one of a number of key figures who collectively created Bytown/Ottawa. Bytown was not created ex nihilo but arose from a convergence of figures who made key decisions. This included the economic development of the Ottawa Valley twenty years earlier before the canal, the actual decision to build the canal, and the development of Bytown after Colonel By left in 1832 from a sprawling work camp to a thriving if rough lumber town.

Firstly, the height overlooking the conjunction of the Rideau and Gatineau Rivers with the Ottawa River was from time immemorial a meeting place of the local Anishinaabe and the other Indigenous groups that converged there to meet and trade. The Algonquin 'Odawa' is thought to mean literally to trade.

The Anishinaabe population of the area was, like all the Indigenous communities, decimated by diseases brought by early Europeans. After the American War of Independence, settlers infiltrated the Ottawa Valley. As local historian Jim Stone records, Algonquin Chief Constant Pinesi and his warriors allied with the British in the War of 1812. Yet his many appeals for the British to recognise his people's traditional lands, including the hunting grounds around the Rideau River, fell on deaf ears.

Further reduced by the cholera epidemic which killed Chief Panesi and his wife, the local Anishinaabe were unable to resist settlement and deforestation of their unceded lands. Ottawa was a microcosm of the wide Indigenous fate.

It is important, vital even, to put Colonel By's role in perspective. He was there to do a job at the behest of Britain's greatest soldier, Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington. Wellington was an Irishman, born in Dublin, raised in Trim and a lifelong member of his Masonic Lodge in Ireland. His family had deep roots in Ireland going back to the 16th century and bore, until his grandfather's time, the surname Colley. Wellington was outraged at the US invasion of 1812, seeing it as a stab in the back at the climax of the struggle between Britain and France for global hegemony. He resolved to fortify Canada. Under his authorization, the Rideau Canal was built to relieve Montreal from Kingston should the Americans try to take the City from the St Lawrence River. No Wellington, no Rideau Canal, no Bytown, no Ottawa.

The reason why Bytown endured after the canal's construction was completed was not because of any commercial traffic on the canal but because of the local economy developed by the Hamiltons from Ireland. The economy of the Ottawa and Gatineau Valleys received a major boost when the mills at Hawkesbury were taken over by George Hamilton, from Dunboyne, in 1811. Hawkesbury was on the Ottawa River halfway between the Gatineau and Montreal, with an island that created an ideal location for lumber mills. Hamilton had established himself as a major businessman after he arrived in Quebec in 1804, thanks to the entrée offered by his uncle-in-law and fellow Irishman, Henry Caldwell. Caldwell, a major figure in the military and business affairs of Quebec, had convinced the Admiralty in 1804 to source their timber in Canada since the supply of Baltic timber was interrupted by the Napoleonic blockade.

Hamilton realised that the only way to meet this demand was by exploiting the vast untapped forests of the Ottawa Valley, and later the Gatineau Valley. Hamilton's operation employed hundreds of men in the lumber industry, cutting the logs into boards at his mills in Hawkesbury and rafting them in vast quantities to Quebec. Between 1808 and 1811, Canadian timber exports to Britain tripled. By the time his sons had developed the business, the Hamiltons were one of the largest exporters of lumber from Canada, its main export throughout the 19th century. At its peak around 1870, the mills at Hawkesbury were employing 1,000 men, producing 700,000 feet of lumber a week or 40 million feet over the year. All that remains today is their stone office, now the Chenail Cultural Centre (worth a visit).



If there was another key figure in the development of Bytown from a work camp to an actual town, it was the Scotsman Thomas MacKay. Having successfully built the Lachine Canal, MacKay won the contract to build the Rideau Canal, working closely with British Army sappers at difficult points along the route. While his partner John Redpath invested his money from the project in Montreal, MacKay invested his in the development of Bytown. He sponsored factories along the river at today's Sussex Drive and developed New Edinburgh. Governor General Charles Monck, from Tipperary, chose MacKay's estate to be the official residence, Rideau Hall in Rockcliffe Park. The main entrance gates were made by Irish born William Clendinneng at his foundry in Montreal.

Enter John Egan. Born in Connemara in 1811, Egan arrived in the Ottawa Valley penniless and rose to become one of the richest lumber barons in the area, as well as a leading politician and advocate for Bytown's development. He greatly encouraged the settlement of the Irish in the area as farmers, notably up the Gatineau Valley. He founded Aylmer and was also instrumental in securing the land for Kitigan Zibi, the Anishinaabe reserve at Maniwaki. His son was also a major business figure, partnering with the Hamiltons.

Egan's timber rights on the Madawaska River in what is now Algonquin Park were bought in 1867 by J.R. Booth, a son of Irish immigrants. By 1890, and based in Ottawa, Booth was the largest lumber baron in the world. Credited with the development of the Ottawa Valley through lumber, railways, and the hydro-electric dam at Chaudière Falls, Booth was described by Prime Minister McKenzie King as a founding father of Canada. Another son of Irish emigrants, inventor and business magnate Thomas Ahearn, brought electricity to Ottawa.

Of course, the lumber industry was dominated by the French until the Irish arrived in numbers from their work on the completed Lachine Canal. The Irish violently muscled in on the lumber industry once the Canal was completed in 1832 but the French as a community was a key component of early Bytown, notably sharing Byward with the Irish.

So when I say move over Colonel By, I mean the man no injustice. Indeed, he can rightly be seen as a representative of British Army that played such a crucial role in Ottawa's founding. By played a leading part in that, but I am sure that even he would agree that the honour of founder might be justly shared. If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to make a town. And in looking to this wider group of Indigenous, French, Irish, and Scots, we see a truer picture of the rich and fascinating history of the Capital city.



Antecedents: The New Edinburgh Burial Ground, the McKay Vault, and the McKay Lots at Beechwood Cemetery

Text and Photos By: Bruce S. Elliott

In her authoritative 2005 history of Rockcliffe Park village, Martha Edmond quoted a 1923 typescript “Recollections of New Edinburgh” by John Askwith (1841-1925) as saying, “The first burying ground west [should be east] of the Rideau was opposite the Dundonald place on Lisgar Road and was a portion of the present part of Rockcliffe Park which contains the Royal Shanty (Pine Hill). A number of the MacKay family were buried there, but the bodies were all removed to Beechwood Cemetery.” Askwith’s father, John Askwith Sr. (1814-1895), a Yorkshire carpenter, had been hired by Duncan Rynier MacNab to build his residence in Rockcliffe in 1837, just north of the McKay property. (Edmond, *Rockcliffe Park* 6, 8, 263 n 14) The “Dundonald place” is Crichton Lodge, built by Thomas McKay’s son-in-law Thomas McLeod Clark about 1880 at 160 Lisgar Road, since 1949 the residence of the Norwegian Ambassador. Edmond concluded from Askwith’s typescript that when former Rideau Canal contractor, District Warden and Legislative Councillor the Hon. Thomas McKay died in 1855, he was buried at Pine Hill, and that “after Beechwood Cemetery was established in 1873, the graves were moved there.” (Edmond 264 n 46, 18) Both accounts are a compression of a much more complicated history.

The McKay-Keefer lot is today to be found in Sec. 62, Lot 65 of Beechwood Cemetery, near the Peter Bryce lot. For many years, a family vault (free-standing and partly above ground) stood there, but it was demolished over seventy years ago and its footprint was cemented over. But the vault was not newly constructed at Beechwood. In the 1860s, it stood in the Presbyterian section of the Sandy Hill Cemeteries. When the funeral of Capt. F.B. Glover was held there in February 1867, “the coffin was placed within the McKay vault” for interment in the spring. (*Ottawa Citizen* Feb. 1, 1867, 2; 4 Feb. 4, 1867, 2) In June of 1875, 60 to 70 feet of fencing on the western side of the Presbyterian cemetery were blown down in a storm, “just a little to the south of the family vault of the McKays”. (OC June 29, 1875, 1). This fencing would have been along Charlotte Street where it formerly ran through the centre of what is now Macdonald Gardens Park. The press reported a few months later that the remains of Thomas McKay were “removed to the lot adjoining Beechwood Cemetery” in September of that year, and it was noted that “The McKay vault is also being removed there.” (OC Sept. 27, 1875, 1)

THE WILLIAM MCKAY FAMILY

There was an early burial ground in New Edinburgh, but aside from Askwith’s recollections I have seen only one other reference to it. The interment register of St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Bytown records the interment of Farquhar Urquhart on October 26, 1838 “in the burial ground at New Edinburgh”. Urquhart, then a clerk in Gloucester Township, had married Alison (Inglis) McKay at Bytown on November 13, 1835 (St Andrew’s, 121; Bathurst District marriage register, p. 20). Alison was the widow of the Hon. Thomas McKay’s brother William, a stonemason and builder who had died in Montreal the year before. (St Paul Presbyterian reg.: Drouin) Urquhart’s remains must have been moved to Sandy Hill, though not to the Thomas McKay vault. In June 1875, nine members of this wider McKay connection (including Urquhart) were moved from the “Old Cemetery” (meaning Sandy Hill) to Sec. 21, Lot 26, three months before the McKay vault was relocated to what is now Sec. 62. The Beechwood interment register records just the names, but four family monuments currently on the lot record details of their deaths. (Fig. 1)

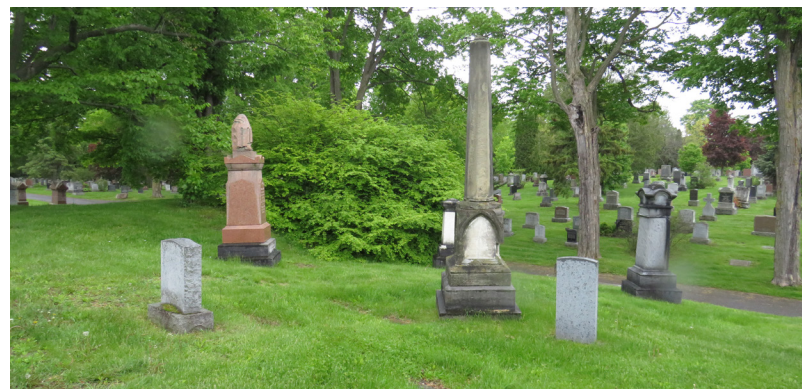


Fig. 1 - Part of Sec. 21 showing the monuments to the relations of William McKay moved to Beechwood in 1875: red granite McKay monument at left, Scott obelisk centre with Masson monument behind, and four-square Hutchinson monument at right.

The numbers in the right column are those assigned to the monuments by the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society in its recording of the inscriptions in Lot 26:

BEECHWOOD REGISTER:

OGS RECORDING OF MONUMENTS:

486 John L. McKay	7 John Everard McKay died Nov 1866 age 13m
487 M. McFarlane	7 Margaret MacFarland wife of Thos McKay died May 13 1854 age 26y 7 Thomas James McKay died May 22 1854 age 9d
488 Mrs Urquhart*	7 Alison McKay Urquhart died May 20 1869 age 74y
489 Hugh Urquhart*	7 Farquhar Urquhart died Oct 23 1838 age 43y
490 Mrs Masson	2 Jeanie Watson wife of Thos Masson died July 7 1868 age 77y
491 Alexr Scott	5 Alexr Scott born Perth Scot died July 12 1866 age 50y
492 Thos Scott	5 Thos M'Kay Scott died Mar 23 1866 age 12y 5 Henry Scott died Aug 6 1864 age 1mo children of Alex & Alison
493 Christina Scott	5 Christiana Scott died Feb 1 1873 age 11y
494 Mary Hutchison	1 Mary McKay wife of Robt Hutchison died Jan 9 1858 age 35y 7m and infant daughter Jesse

* Urquhart was mistranscribed as Myuhat

Bytown confectioner Alexander Scott had married Alison McKay, the daughter of William McKay and Alison Inglis (the later Mrs Urquhart). Robert Hutchinson, a miller at New Edinburgh, had married her older sister Mary McKay in 1842. And Mary's brother Thomas McKay (of Elm Bank near Billing's Bridge, and of the McKay Milling Company), who died in 1887, the widower of Margaret Macfarlane, in 1859 married Isabel daughter of Thomas and Jeanie Masson, which is what tied the Massons to the family of William and Alison (Inglis) McKay.

The purchase of the lots at Beechwood was precipitated by two deaths in the spring of 1875.

Elizabeth, a daughter of Thomas and Jeanie Masson, aged 59, born in Loumas, Aberdeenshire, had died of dropsy at the residence of her brother-in-law Thomas McKay (son of William), of Elm Bank near Billing's Bridge. (Ont. death regn 1875/001458) She was buried May 17, 1875 in Sec. 21, Lot 26. The same day, the body of George Hugh McKay of Nepean (son of this Thomas), who had died on April 7 or 8 of whooping cough, aged 8 months, was removed from Beechwood's own vault and interred in the southern part of Lot 26. (Bwd inter. reg. 434-5)

According to Beechwood's Land Journal, Mrs Scott purchased nw¼ 26 (15 x 18 ft) @ \$30 for \$81 on May 17, 1875, and William Hutchison the sw¼ on the same day for the same amount. That was the day of these first two burials. Apart from Farquhar Urquhart, all of those reinterred in Lot 26 died in 1854 or later and it is reasonable to assume that they were buried in the first instance in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Sandy Hill, which opened in 1844. (Fig. 2)



Fig. 2 - The red granite monument to the William McKay relations, including Farquhar Urquhart who was originally buried at Pine Hill.

THE THOMAS MCKAY FAMILY & THE MCKAY VAULT

It has not been known when the McKay vault was first erected. A 1951 press report called it an “1831 vault” but it is unclear where this date originated. (*Ottawa Journal* May 21, 1951, 16) Martha Edmond has since discovered that, in his will, Thomas McKay made provision for “a vault or monument, which I hereby direct to be built or erected over my grave”. As we have reference to the vault being in the Presbyterian Cemetery at Sandy Hill in 1867, and that cemetery opened in 1844, it is probable that it was first erected there in the late 1850s, rather than at Pine Hill. The remains of Thomas McKay, and the family vault, according to the press report, were removed from Sandy Hill to a “lot adjoining Beechwood Cemetery” in September 1875. The location was deliberately chosen to facilitate the transfer to Beechwood of the land on which the vault was re-erected (rather than just transfer the bodies), but the sale of the parcel to Beechwood did not take place for some years.

The McKays’ trustee Thomas Coltrin Keefer (who had married McKay’s daughter Elizabeth in 1848) sold ten acres including the McKay vault to Beechwood Cemetery in 1893 for \$1,500, it having been previously reserved from the partition of the McKay estate amongst the heirs (following the death of Ann Crichton, Thomas McKay’s widow, in 1879) with this intent. (A map of the lands sold is in *The Beechwood Way*, Vol. 10, Issue 36 (Winter 2015), page 3). T.M. Clark (husband of another of the McKay daughters), on behalf of Annie and Jessie Clark and Mrs Gales, heirs to a quarter of the estate, sued Keefer for having failed to secure the best possible price, but the case was dismissed, the judge ruling that under Hon. Thomas McKay’s will Keefer had absolute discretion as to the price. (OJ April 5, 1897, 5; January 17, 1898, 7)

Hon Thomas McKay 62.

He died Oct 9 1855 aged 63 at 1:49am according to the family Bible; he was buried from St Andrew’s two days later.

Christina Crichton McKay 88 (his mother).

Widow of John McKay who died in Perth, Scotland in 1811 aged 50. According to the family Bible, she died at Rideau Hall at 5pm on August 10, 1851 aged 88. The St Andrew’s registers record her interment two days later, and the date of death and age are confirmed by one of the three tablets now lying flat near the location of the former vault. Martha Edmond believes the lot card is in error about Thomas’s mother being a Crichton; that was the surname of Thomas’s wife.

John McKay 18.

The age is incorrect. John was born in Montreal in 1834 according to the family Bible. It does not record his death (the entries end with Thos McKay in 1855), but the St Andrew’s register records John McKay died 21 Oct. and buried 23 Oct. 1862 at the age of 28. The *Ottawa Citizen* of Oct. 25, 1862 (p. 3) says he died of consumption and that his cortege travelled from McKay’s Rideau Hall along Sussex Drive and Rideau Street, which suggests he was buried at Sandy Hill.

Alexander McKay 9.

According to the family Bible, he drowned in the Ottawa River in 1827, and appears on one of the tablets as dying July 31 of that year. If his body was recovered, and the drowning was anywhere near Bytown, he was most likely first interred in the Barrack Hill/Queen Street burial ground in Bytown, as the Sandy Hill cemeteries did not open till the early 1840s, and 1827 antedates McKay’s acquisition of land at New Edinburgh, which began in 1829. (Edmond p. 11; the first burial at Queen Street was in June 1827 according to an 1831 legal case.)

Thomas McKay Jr 27.

Died November 11, 1865, and was buried by the minister of St Andrew’s Church three days later, aged 27y 6m.

We have several sources as to who was buried in the McKay Vault: the Beechwood lot card, and for those interred after the lot was transferred to Beechwood Cemetery, also the Beechwood interment registers. The inscriptions on three limestone tablets currently on the lot record some family members buried both there and elsewhere. The St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church burial registers record burials presided over by its clergy, likely in Sandy Hill and later at Beechwood though the place is usually not recorded. Montreal parish registers filmed by Drouin and online at ancestry.ca record burials that took place in Montreal rather than Ottawa, many of them at the old St Lawrence Protestant Cemetery there. Press obituaries sometimes say where a burial took place. And finally the McKay family Bible is now at MacKay United Church. It records place of death but has no entries after 1855 and most of the data was entered retrospectively in a Bible printed in 1848. (On the family Bible, see Brian Elgie, ‘Notes on the Thomas McKay Family Bible’, Historical Society of Ottawa newsletter, April 2018, 6-9; my thanks to George Neville for photographs of the entries.)

The Beechwood lot card for Sec. 62, Lot 65, records 13 interments in the McKay vault prior to its incorporation into Beechwood Cemetery, with ages for seven of them but no other information. Five were McKays, three Keefers, three Clarks, and two Faldings. These additions to the lot card were only made in the late 1940s, however, around the time the two final entombments, of the Clark sisters, were made. The source of that information remains unclear. Of these, the first local burial that we can confirm is that of Henry McKay, who drowned in 1849 and was buried from St Andrew’s Church. Here are the individuals recorded on the lot card as having been entombed in the vault prior to 1893, with additional details:

Mrs. Jessie Clark.

She was McKay’s youngest daughter and the wife of Thomas McLeod Clark who operated the white marl brickyard near Hemlock Lake. She died July 9, 1880 at Elmwood.

Henry Clark.

This was likely Thomas McLeod Clark’s son, but I have no dates for him.

Catherine Clark.

She was Catherine Jane, youngest daughter of T. McLeod Clark; she died at Crichton Lodge Jan. 3, 1894 aged 21y 1m and was buried from St Bartholomew’s Anglican Church.

Elizabeth Keefer 41.

She was a daughter of Thomas McKay, and the first wife of T.C. Keefer. She died in 1870 aged 40. Two of her children and two grandchildren who were also entombed in the vault died tragically.

Harold W. Keefer.

Elizabeth’s son Harold Waldruf Keefer was assistant engineer engaged in construction of the Ste Anne bridge at Vaudreuil, Quebec, when he died January 22, 1887 after falling from the bridge the evening before at the age of 26. He had recently graduated from RMC and was also a 1st Lieutenant in the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards. (*Kingston British Whig*, January 24, 1887, 5; OJ January 25, 1887, 1)

Jessie Keefer.

She was Elizabeth’s daughter; she drowned the following year in the Ottawa River, on June 9, 1888, attempting unsuccessfully to save her two young nephews, her sister Mary’s sons James and Henry Falding, from a similar fate. (OC June 11, 1888, 4)

James Falding 11.

Henry Falding 9.

Three limestone tablets set near the site of the vault record deaths in the McKay and Keefer families. The first (no. 4 in the OGS recording) includes Hon. Thomas McKay (1855), his mother Christina (1851), Alexander (1827), and the following not on the lot card: Alexander (buried from St Andrew's in 1857 after dying aged 24 of consumption), Henry (who drowned 1849: OC Aug. 25, 1849, 2), and Anne, a year old, who was buried from St Gabriel St. Church in Montreal in 1820 aged 8 months. She appears to have been added as an afterthought, unless her body was relocated from Montreal. (Fig. 3)



Fig. 3 - Limestone tablet to Thomas McKay family

Tablet 3, now broken in several pieces, names five McKay children who are likely not interred here as they appear only on the tablet and in the family Bible, and not on the lot card. All five are known to have died or been buried elsewhere: John who died aged 3 in 1817 according to the Bible at sea, James, a year old, who died earlier in 1817 in Scotland, Thomas who was buried from St Andrew's Church Montreal in 1837 aged 15, a second James who died in 1836 aged 9 according to the Bible in Burlington, U.S. (the *Kingston Chronicle* of Jan. 4, 1837 says he died of typhus fever without clarifying which Burlington was meant), and Jane who died in 1831 aged 3 weeks, according to the Bible in Montreal. The Bible says she was born in Bytown in 1831, however, and the St Andrew's register records her as having been born January 22, 1832 and baptized February 5. There is no burial entry, and it is conceivable she died in Montreal, though this is crossed out in the Bible and "Rideau" appears to have been added faintly in pencil.

Both tablets spell the surname in full capitals as MACKAY. The "Mac" spelling was adopted by the family only after Thomas's death in 1855. (Edmond p. 11) They record deaths only up to 1857, and so it would appear that the stones were cut prior to the death of Thomas Jr in 1865 as he is not included, nor is the son John who died in 1862. The son Charles who died with the army in India in 1859 isn't included either. Martha Edmond notes that he has a monument at Kandahar. But given that infants not buried here are included on the tablets, one would think Charles would have been, too. So that argues for the tablets being cut between 1857 and 1860 when Mrs McKay received word of Charles's death. (Edmond p. 19) Given that Thomas McKay ordered construction of the vault in his will, it is likely that the two MacKay tablets are contemporary with the construction of the vault, which thus likely

dates similarly from the late 1850s.

The only photograph discovered that shows the McKay vault is a 1932 photo in the Beechwood files showing the location of the prospective Bryce lot in which the vault is silhouetted in the background, partly obscured by bushes. It was flat-roofed, with the roof slightly overhanging the walls, and not very tall, suggesting it was partially underground, possibly entered by steps. That the three tablets are not shown in the plan on the reverse of the lot card suggests that they may have been inside the vault prior to its demolition, or perhaps on an exterior wall.



Fig. 4 - Limestone tablet to Keefer family

Tablet 2 (Fig. 4) records 13 members of the Keefer family and states that all were interred in the vault:

- “**Thomas Coltrin Keefer** C.M.G. L.L.D. Aged 94 Years [1915]
- Elizabeth** [McKay] his 1st wife Aged 41 Years [1870]
- Anne** [McKay wid of John MacKinnon] his 2nd wife Died 1906
- Jessie** Aged 27 Years [1888 daughter of TCK]
- Christina Mackay Fleming** Aged 36 Years [1903 daughter of TCK]
- Mary B[radshaw] Falding** Died 1899 [daughter of TCK]
- James and Henry [Falding]** Aged 11 and 9 Years [1888 grandsons of TCK]
- Harold Waldruf Keefer** Aged 28 Years [1887 son of TCK]
- Charles Henry Keefer, C.E.** Aged 81 Years [1932 son of TCK]
- Lucy** Aged 71 Years [1925 nee Jones, wife of Charles Henry: OC Apr. 27, 1925, 13]
- Flora MacKinnon** Died 1897 [daughter of Anne McKay by her husband John MacKinnon; Flora was omitted in the OGS recording, but her name is on the tablet]
- Ralph Delamere Keefer** Aged 28 Years [1912 grandson of TCK]
- All of whom are buried here.”

With one exception, all the deaths on the Keefer tablet are from 1887 and later. The fonts and letter forms on the MacKay and Keefer tablets appear identical, apart notably from the K, which may demonstrate that the Keefer tablet was cut later to match the others.

The St Andrew's burial register includes the eldest daughter Annie Crichton Keefer who died 22 and was buried 23 Nov. 1875 aged 26, but she appears on neither the lot card nor the the tablet, which raises the question of whether she was buried in the vault soon after it was relocated that autumn to the McKay property. As her funeral was held locally, it seems likely. If she was buried in the relocated vault, she would not be in Beechwood's register as the land with the vault had not yet been transferred to Beechwood's ownership.

Thomas McKay's widow Ann Crichton died August 21, 1879 and was buried 3 days later by the minister from St Andrew's, aged 85y 3m, but she is not on the lot card, nor in the Beechwood interment register. Though a brief report of her funeral in the *Ottawa Citizen* said her funeral took place at Beechwood Cemetery (OC Aug. 24, 1879, 4), the lot had not yet been sold to Beechwood, hence her omission from the interment register. More oddly, she was not recorded on any of the three limestone tablets that mark the lot. The two McKay ones include deaths only up to 1857, and as I have suggested, were likely cut soon after that. The Keefer tablet references later burials, but does not include her. On the lot card and interred in the vault but not recorded on the tablets are Thomas McKay Jr d. 1865, his sister Jessie [McKay] Clark d. 1880,

her husband Thomas McLeod Clark d. 1901 and their children Henry, Catherine d. 1894, Jessie d. 1945 and Annie d. 1949 (the last person laid to rest in the vault), and Benjamin Berry Keefer d. 1911 (a nephew of T.C. Keefer, from Thorold).

McKay and Keefer burials were not recorded in Beechwood's interment registers till 1897, after the lot had been purchased from the McKay heirs by the cemetery management. Thirteen interments were recorded in the McKay vault between then and 1949. The first interment in the lot outside the vault was recorded in 1913, and these of course have continued since then.

The lot card shows the McKay-Keefer lot measuring 55 by 58 feet (of the ten acres conveyed in 1893), with the McKay vault consisting of three sections: the western section, with the entrance, 12 feet long and 17 feet wide, and open with the middle section, measuring another 12 feet long but 18 feet wide, projecting 6 inches beyond the front section on both sides. The rear or easterly portion measured 9 feet long by, again, 17 feet wide, and this appears not to have been accessible from the remainder of the vault. Overall, the vault measured 31 feet by 17 to 18 feet. On the lot card, only the locations within the vault of the last two occupants are shown, both directly inside the entrance, with Jessie Clark occupying the lower niche and Annie Christine McLeod Clark the upper (Fig. 5).

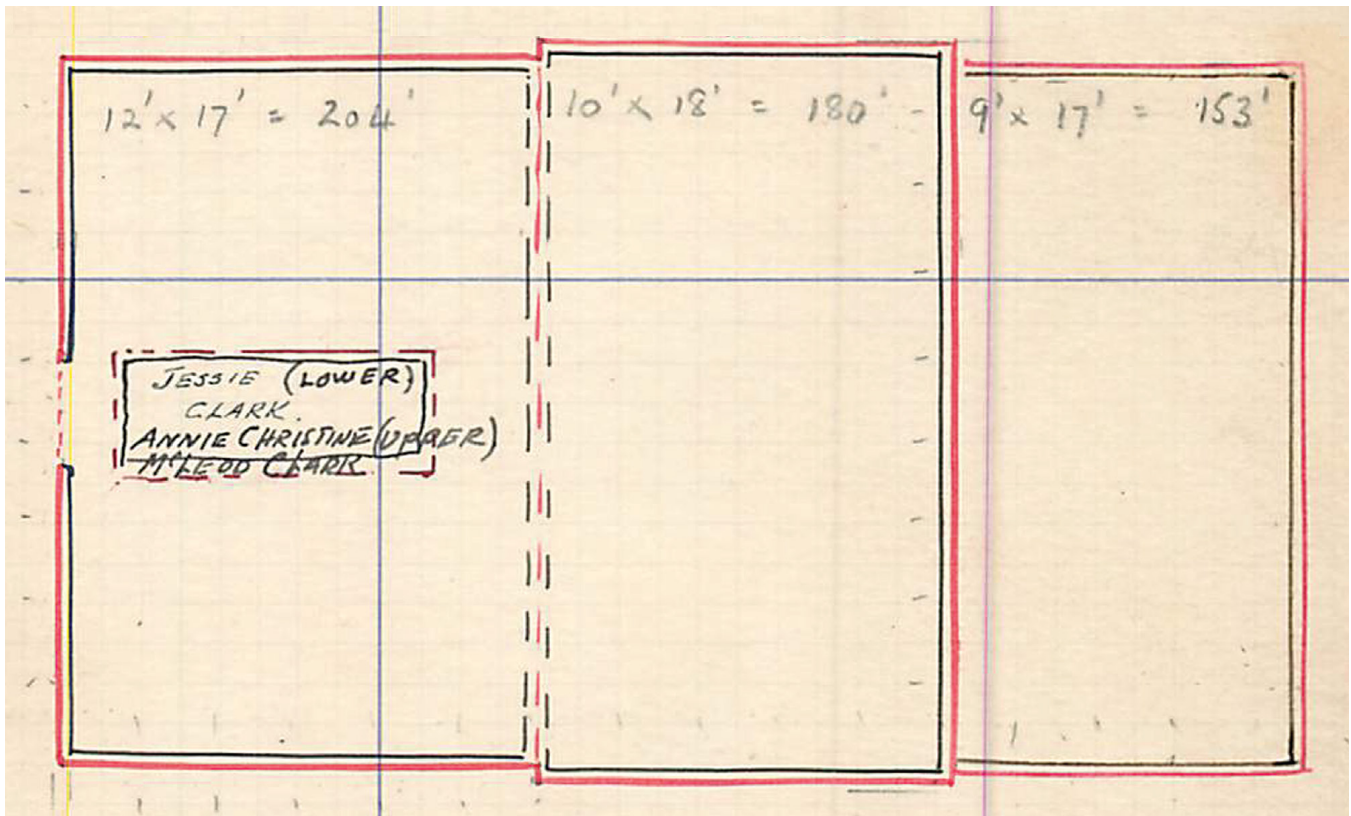


Fig. 5 - Detail from lot card for Sec. 62, Lot 65, our only clues to the interior configuration of the McKay vault.



Fig. 7 - McKay / Keefe lot in Sec. 62 showing historical plaque and footprint of former McKay vault, with the three limestone tablets to the McKay and Keefe families just beyond.

The earliest known full plan of the cemetery, dated January 1917, does not include the eastern part of the vault. An undated plan from the 1940s of Secs. 60, 60½ and 62 (Fig. 6) shows the easterly portion in dotted lines, suggesting that section was either proposed or entirely underground, so perhaps it was a late addition. It is shown on the lot card.

The vault was vandalized in 1951 when “granite slabs covering the windows” were smashed and sod and flowers uprooted. Later that year, after unsuccessfully arguing that the Cemetery was responsible for repair of monuments, the Keefe executors decided to have the vault taken down (Fig. 7). (OJ May 21, 1951, 16; Beechwood minutes, October & December 1951)

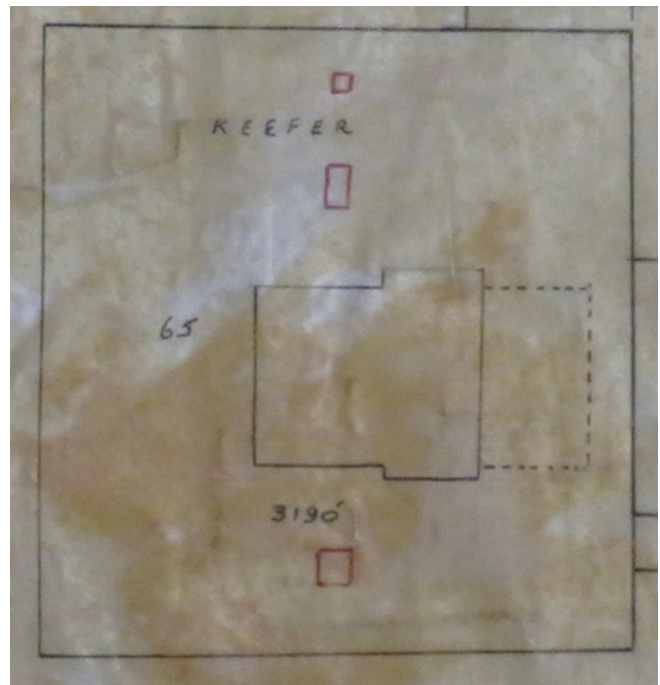


Fig. 6 - Detail from 1940s plan of Secs. 60, 60½, and 62 showing McKay Keefe vault, and exterior monuments (n to s) to Hubert L. Holland of Rockcliffe Aerodrome who died in an air crash in 1922 (he was a brother of Mrs T.C. Keefe Jr), Thomas Coltrin Keefe (d. 1941 and erected in 1942), and James F. Crowdy (d. 1934).

THE JOHN MACKINNON FAMILY

It is curious that John MacKinnon of Earncliffe who died in 1866, Thomas McKay's one-time business partner and husband of his daughter Annie, and their son Thomas, who died in 1872, share a red granite monument in the trees some distance to the west of the McKay vault, in a separate 43 x 39 foot (1,677 sq. ft) lot. The lot card for Sec. 62 Lot 12 shows lightly in pencil just the two burials west of the monument (Fig.8).

The lot at one time had a grass margin on four sides, with a perimeter path within that surrounding the central area with the monument and burials and a tree. The rear part of Sec. 62 grew up into woodland but was opened up by removal of some of the

trees in November 2021. The MacKinnons had likely been buried at Sandy Hill as well, but in a lot of their own rather than in the McKay vault. Thomas's burial in July 1872 is in the St Andrew's register. Their interment in a separate lot in what became Sec. 62 suggests that the MacKinnons were moved from Sandy Hill in 1875 or later to the parcel of land on the McKay estate, but prior to 1893 when the parcel was sold to the Beechwood Cemetery Company, as reinterment of neither of the MacKinnons appears in the Beechwood interment registers. As John MacKinnon's widow Annie McKay remarried to T.C. Keefer, she is in the McKay vault with the Keefers, as is Flora, her daughter by MacKinnon; both are listed on the Keefer tablet discussed above.

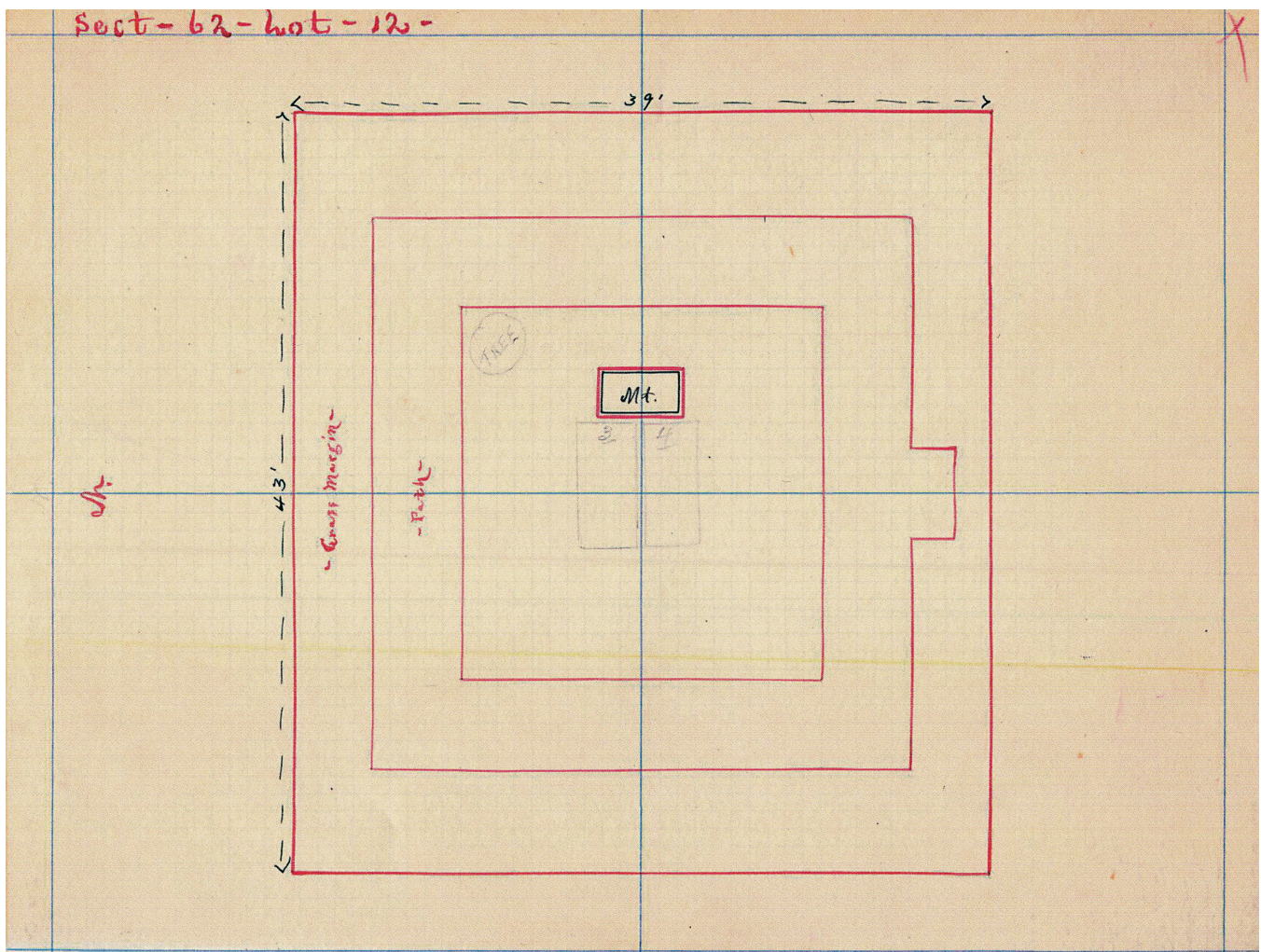


Fig. 8 - Plan of MacKinnon lot from lot card (Sec. 62, Lot 12), with the two graves oddly numbered 3 and 4.