

⁵Household of Lorenzo White, Census of 1881, Canada, Ontario, Ontario County, Pickering Township, division 3, page 41.

⁶Voters' List of the Township of Pickering for 1878; Voters' List of the Township of Pickering for 1880; Voters' List of the Township of Pickering for the year 1883; List of Voters of the Municipality of the Township of Pickering for the year 1888, Pickering Public Library.

⁷Abstract index to deeds, Lot 13, Concession 6, Pickering Township, Ontario County Land Registry Office Records.

⁸Lorenzo White estate file, #9778, Ontario County Surrogate Court.

⁹Death certificate of Lorenzo White, 11 April 1933, Registration #025569-1933, Registrar General of Ontario.

¹⁰Mary Corbiere Dower Rights Release, Memorial #33830, Deeds and Memorials, Volume 16, Tiny Township, Simcoe County Land Registry Office Records.

¹¹Patent for Lot 99, 1st Concession West of the Penetanguishene Road, Volume 1, Page 24.

¹²Will of Ezekiel Cudney, Memorial #5750, Volume H, Lincoln and Haldimand County Land Registry Office Records.

From Cornwall to Canada in 1841 including the 1903 narrative account of Samuel Pedlar

W. Wesley Johnston

W. Wesley Johnston was born in Illinois, is now retired in California. He holds degrees in mathematics and history. Fifty years ago he started studying his Johnston ancestors who arrived in Pickering Township, Ontario by 1845. Over the years he supported the Illinois State and the Sangamon County (Illinois) Genealogical Societies by volunteering and authoring several articles. He also published a genealogy on the Butson Family. His genealogical travels span North America, England, Holland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. His web site publications include "Dad's War: Finding and Telling Your Father's World War II Story". He may be reached via e-mail at <wwjohnston@aol.com>, but health issues and the volume of email from his various interests should temper your expectations of a speedy reply.

In 1841, some 600 Cornish folk from St. Blazey, and nearby towns, embarked on four ships and made a long journey to settle in and near Oshawa. They intermarried on both sides of the Atlantic, so that searching any of the early Cornish settlers in Oshawa and nearby areas is very likely to involve the other families at some point. In the 1890s, Samuel Pedlar began gathering notes on the history of this migration, and those notes led to a 1903 document by Charles Henry Welbey. That document is reproduced, as it was written, with an added introduction and annotations.

The Documents

In 1841, some 600 Cornish people sailed to Canada on four ships. They settled in the area in and around Oshawa, Ontario (then Canada East), in what would become Ontario County¹ and Durham County² and other nearby areas. One of those making the voyage was the eight-year-old Samuel Pedlar. The "Pedlar Papers" are now held at the Ontario Archives and include correspondence, newspaper clippings,

notes and notebooks, and the manuscript of a book on the history of Oshawa.

Among the papers in the collection is the account "From Cornwall³ to Canada in 1841." It exists as a typed version of eight pages and as a manuscript version of 16 pages. Though the two versions are nearly identical, there are some differences, as noted below; thus the manuscript version, as the original, can be taken as the more accurate one. The text in this article is that of the manuscript version, with notations of non-grammatical differences from the typed version.

The manuscript version appears to date from 1903, based on the ages given for Samuel Pedlar in a scratched-out portion of the text: 8 at the time of the 1841 voyage and 70 ("three score and ten") at the time the account was written. The typed version gives no author, but the manuscript is signed by Charles Henry Welbey (though the reading of the written surname is uncertain), of Toronto. He makes it clear that he is preparing the text from the notes (which do not appear in the Pedlar Papers collection) that Samuel Pedlar gave to him. It does not appear that Mr. Welbey himself was of Cornish ancestry, since he refers to "our Cornish friends" in the text. I have not found any information on him, so that it is uncertain what his role was, other than as the author.

There are three errors (other than grammatical ones) in the typed document, all three of which are misreadings of the original manuscript:

1. The given name of Mr. Hoar, shown as Jacob in the manuscript, is typed as James.
2. A sentence about the Pedlar family being adopted as citizens in June 1841 is omitted from the typed version.
3. The word "Mr" is misread as "The" in the description of Mr. Pedlar's on-board cooking.

There are also several scratched out sections of the manu-

script, which were not transcribed. These are footnoted in the following transcription. The most significant of these is the reference to the age of Samuel Pedlar. There is one scratched-out reference to Henry Pedlar that may be of significance, but the last words are unclear.

The document repeatedly refers to Ontario as being Upper Canada at the time of the events. However, the Act of Union, passed in 1840, took effect in February 1841 and redesignated Upper Canada as Canada West and Lower Canada as Canada East. So when the immigrants arrived, they were actually arriving at Quebec in Canada East and eventually at Oshawa⁴ in Canada West, no longer Lower and Upper Canada.

Names of Participants

The text has these names of immigrants of 1841:

- Henry and Nancey Pedlar, of St. Blazey, Cornwall, and their family, including sons Samuel and George, who in 1903 operated the Oshawa Sheet Metal Works
- Jacob Hoar and family, who traveled on the voyage of the “Clio” and the subsequent journey, including on land from Port Hope to Oshawa and to the Richard Luke Farm on Lot 9 of Concession V of Whitby Township.⁵
- Richard Luke, who was a relative of Jacob Hoar. He already had a home and barn on Lot 9 of Concession V of Whitby Township, where the Hoar and Pedlar families stayed upon their arrival in June 1841
- Stephen Grose, a stonemason, who was another passenger aboard the “Clio” and then settled at English Corners (later known as Columbus⁶), which is just north of Oshawa, and who, like the Pedlars, did well in the years following

The text mentions these names of others of significance in the journey:

- Captain Brown - Captain of the “Clio” on the April 1841 voyage from Padstow⁷ to Quebec
- J. B. Warren - The flour produced by his mill in Whitby Township was seen by Mr. and Mrs. Pedlar in Montreal. The author seems to have thought that Mr. Warren may have been from Devonshire.
- Lord Sydenham - Governor of Canada West (called Upper Canada in the document), who (either in person or through a representative) compensated the immigrants for the delay in their journey at Kingston⁸
- Charles Arkland - Owner of tavern at Oshawa

Chronology of the Journey

The text gives the following dates of events and places along the journey:

- Spring 1841 - Departure of 600 Cornish emigrants to Canada, aboard the “Clio,” “Dewdrop,” “Springflower,” and “John and Mary”
- 5 April 1841 - Approximate date of sailing of the “Clio” from Padstow. In fact, the “Clio” sailed on 16 April 1841.⁹

- No date - Sighting of St. John’s, Newfoundland; passage of the Newfoundland Capes, the island of Anticosti, and into the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the St. Lawrence River
- 21 May 1841 (35th day since sailing) - Landing at Quebec; seeing the city as belongings are transferred to river steamer
- No date - The river steamer stopped at Three Rivers (Tis-Rivières) and passed through Lake St. Peter and passed Sorel.
- 24 May 1841 (38th day since sailing) - Arrival at Montreal, on Queen Victoria’s birthday
- No date - They walked around in Montreal, and Mr. and Mrs. Pedlar were at the locks of the Lachine Canal at the foot of McGill Street.
- No date - Durham boats took them through the Lachine Canal to the village of Lachine, past Vaudreuil, up the Ottawa River to Bytown (now Ottawa), where the travellers spent some time in the town while the locks lifted the boats to the Rideau Canal.¹⁰ They had thus passed from Canada East (now Quebec, formerly Lower Canada) to Canada West (now Ontario, formerly Upper Canada).
- 31 May 1841 (45th day since sailing) - Arrival in Kingston; delay awaiting lake steamer
- 1 June 1841 (46th day since sailing) - Departure from Kingston on a Lake Ontario steamer of the Royal Mail Line
- 2 June 1841¹¹ (47th day since sailing) - Arrival in Cobourg and then, at 4 a.m., in Port Hope, where many of the voyagers debark for the final time and begin the journey on land
- No date - Pedlars and Hoars travel along the old Kingston Road from Port Hope to Oshawa (then known as “Skae’s Corners”) and on to Lot 9 of Concession V of Whitby Township, with three wagons
- June 1841 - The Pedlar family become citizens of Skae’s Corners (now Oshawa).

Forms of Transportation

The travellers took several forms of water-borne transportation:

- “Clio” - The “Clio” took them across the Atlantic from Padstow to Quebec City. The “Clio” was a timber ship, apparently carrying Canadian timber to Padstow and carrying emigrants on the return journeys (16 April to 21 May)
- River steamer - Took them from Quebec (21 May) to Montreal (24 May)
- Durham boats - These low-draft barges, attached together like a train and pulled by a steam tug, took them slowly from Montreal via the Ottawa River to Ottawa and then via the Rideau Canal to Kingston (on or after 24 May to 31 May).
- Lake steamer - A Royal Mail Steamer took them from Kingston to Port Hope (1 June to 2 June).

Further Research

The passenger lists for the voyages of the four vessels (“Clio,” “Dewdrop,” “Springflower,” and “John and Mary”) have not yet been located. I have established a web page (<<http://members.aol.com/wwjohnston/pedlar1841.htm>>) to focus information about these voyages, as new information is accumulated.

My motivation for the research arises from my own Butson ancestors, Solomon and Jane (Keam), who made the journey from St. Blazey, Cornwall to eventually settle in English Corners (Columbus), Ontario at or before this time. They are buried in the St. Paul’s Anglican Church Cemetery, west of Columbus. The first record in Canada yet found for them is the marriage in the records of St. James Cathedral in Toronto of their eldest child, Mary Keam Butson, to Joseph Hambley on 19 July 1841. Their eldest son, Thomas Butson, died 11 December 1846 and is one of those in the cairn at the Oshawa Pioneer Memorial Garden, at 185 Bond Street in Oshawa.

FROM CORNWALL TO CANADA IN 1841

by Charles Henry Welbey¹² - Toronto, Canada

The visit of Mr. Basil Tozer¹³ to Canada, for the purpose of writing a series of articles on the settlement in this Dominion, of West-countrymen from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, cannot fail to be of great interest to many of your Readers in the Old Land. Mr. Tozer’s Articles are so excellent, so eminently readable, they have induced me to endeavour, in a small way, to humbly follow his example, and to take for my theme that great Cornish exodus, which left for settlement in Canada in the year 1841. In the Spring of that year, about six hundred Cornish people, men, women and children, emigrated to Canada, taking passage in sailing vessels from¹⁴ Padstow, the old Cornish Sea-port. The Henry Pedlar family of St. Blazey, took passage at Padstow, in the Barque “Clio,” Captain Brown, sailing about April 5, and Mr. Henry Pedlar’s son, Samuel,¹⁵ a bright lad with clear brain and first-class memory, took such interest in the event, that he stored each day’s doings in his mind, (never to be effaced while his life lasts) and in due time committed them to writing – and from the notes which he has handed to me, this article is now compiled. Mr. Samuel Pedlar distinctly remembers a visit to his father¹⁶ made by a gentleman from Canada, and his glowing accounts of the Colony. He said, that in Canada, “Bread was as white as a hound’s tooth, and butter as yellow as a Sovereign.” The evening was quite late when he departed. Before leaving the neighborhood, he visited other families. His eulogies of Canada sank deep into the ears of his listeners, and no doubt had much influence in determining the ultimate departure from “Home and native land,” which subsequently followed. When the decision had been formed, to emigrate, the seriousness of so bold an undertaking became a disturbing feature. The Home, with¹⁷

its endearing ties, the friendships formed, the native land and kindred, all to be parted with! Never, never before, had the bitterness of “Farewell” come to each heart so closely, so deeply! Then to the Pedlar, and many another family, came the details of offering property and business for sale. In the mean time, kindred and friends thronged the home from morning till night, making all manner of enquiries, and all appearing to regret the step to be taken. Throughout this worry, there was considerable anxiety as to the ability to provide the means necessary to traverse thousands of miles of sea, lake, river and land, before the end of the journey could be reached. The Pedlar family consisted of father, mother, and five children, and their belongings represented a huge pile of baggage. Providence kindly shaped the spirit of the buying at the “Sale” of the Pedlar Estate. All the people present appeared to be friends. The “sale” was richer in cash results than expected. At the close of the day, all anxiety about sufficiency of funds, had vanished and all felt as happy as such circumstances would permit.

The four vessels selected for the transportation of these six hundred Cornish emigrants, were the “Clio,” “Dew Drop,” “Spring Flower,” and “John and Mary.” The “Clio” was considered one of the largest vessels engaged in the timber trade between Quebec (Canada) and Padstow. Her space between decks, afforded better accommodation than other ships calling at Padstow, which were much smaller. Of the six hundred emigrants, two hundred fell to the share of the “Clio.” The long wished for tide, and favourable breeze, came at last. I am unable to give the date of sailing. On this point the notes be silent. After hasty goodbyes, relatives and friends went ashore, and sails were promptly set. Hearts that were sorely wrenched in bidding farewell to those who, in most cases would never again be met on Earth, were providentially made to feel less grief, in consequence of the bustle and excitement of the moment. In a short time, the “Clio” got out to sea, and quietness came to the sorrowing people. The cessation of orders thundered forth by Captain Brown, enabled those not otherwise employed (and they were few in number,) to watch the distant fast receding shore, and to indulge in sentimental thoughts of the old houses now left behind. The Writer of the notes – Mr. Samuel Pedlar – well remembers the scenes described. One hour after the “Clio” got to sea, the two hundred or more souls on board, were in sorry plight. Those who were fortunate enough to be able to keep the deck for the weather was fair, watched the scene with more or less pleasure. The ship was in full sail, the gulls chasing her, apparently in high glee. The suffering below deck was great; the majority of the people had never been to sea before. The Pedlar family went to quarters pretty early, and staid there for days, father being the last to yield to sickness, having a heavy charge on his hands – a wife and five children – he was required to bestow continuous attention, though himself, no doubt, suffering keenly. It may well be imagined that a journey across the Atlantic in 1841, in a “timber” ship,

with accommodation and conveniences of the scantiest, and the consequent suffering entailed, was altogether unlike the pleasant trip on board of one of the "Ocean Greyhounds" of the present day. The world moves, and in no direction more swiftly, than in the improved methods provided for the comforts of those, whose business or pleasure causes them to traverse the great Waters. The "Clio's" passengers had a long, tedious voyage. The defective accommodation rendered the more distressing by reason of the length and monotony of this part of the journey, was increased by "calms" for days at a time, preventing any progress Westward, while the "Swells" made the ship roll incessantly. After being at sea a week or two, everyone be in ordinary health, had passed through the ordeal of sea sickness, and sharp appetites entailed quite a task upon those having large families to provide for. These old sailing ships did not adequately provide sufficient cooking apparatus, hence the "wait in turn" times very frequently were anything but peaceable and brotherly. At other places and on other occasions, women attended to the preparation and cooking of food, but on board the rough and ready emigrant craft of 1841, men were compelled to attend to these duties, to the loss, and probably disgust, of the little ones of each family. Mr. Samuel Pedlar distinctly remembers his father's first attempt to fry pan-cakes, a favourite dish on board ship. First he poured the "batter" into the pan but failed to grease the pan sufficiently. Observing the brown colour of the cake, he supposed it was time to "turn" it. He attempted the trick (easily done by those who have had a little experience in such matters) of tossing the pancake two or three feet into the air, and catching it on the turn over as it dropped into the pan. Mr. 18 Pedlar's attempt was not a success; the cake stuck to the pan too long, and when it did go up in the air, it became a shapeless mass, and on coming down, struck the edge of the pan – a part of the cake went into the fire; the remainder was mixed with some fried potatoes, and formed a decidedly novel and curious combination. To please the Cook, all partook of his "new dish" with great apparent relish, which acted as a kind of encouragement to him. Mr. Pedlar "did" most of the cooking – such as it was – and all his "dishes" were remarkable for great originality. Acting on the advice of friends who had made similar voyages in the "Clio," the Pedlars took large supplies of delicacies on board, and these were frequently supplied to the children, adding materially to their comfort and health.

Captain Brown, of the "Clio," was a short thick-set man, with a voice that could be clearly heard above the stormy winds, as he gave his orders to the sailors. Many a time his voice, during heavy weather, when some faint hearted passengers were in fear, inspired the timid with confidence. He seems to have been well fitted for his position. There were no mishaps of a serious nature, except on one occasion. In one of the series of prolonged calms, Captain Brown's judgment yielded to impatience. For several days, a vessel about six miles to the left of the "Clio," kept her company. Suddenly

this vessel clapped on all sail, evidently catching wind at last. Captain Brown observed this and, his voice, full of temper, commanded his men to run aloft, and in a few minutes the largest sails were ready for the coming breeze. They got it. Like the sudden crash of thunder, the wind caught the old "Clio's" rigging with such force, that it snapped the main-mast; rigging, mast and arms, crashing upon the deck. After so many days of "Calms" and monotonous stillness, this sudden incident, appalling at the time, but fortunately without injury to anyone, created a great stir among the passengers, for it was nothing less than a wreck upon a small scale. Of course all soon realized that there was no danger of the vessel sinking; the chief loss was the crippled sailing ability, the journey to Quebec being prolonged several days in consequence. The Captain at once had all wreckage cut away and made the most of the masts left intact. The deck, for a week or more, was turned into a ship-yard, large timber on board being shaped to take the place of the broken mast.

In course of time the ship was off the banks of Newfoundland, and soon, favourable winds brought the weary people in sight of land. The Captain informed them that the coast in sight was near St. John,¹⁹ the Capital of the Island, and the principal port. Language fails to describe the feelings of the travellers. The old, the feeble, the young, all who could get there, found their way to the deck. Great rejoicing and mutual congratulations were the order of that and of several hours after. It dawned upon the wearied people, that the long wished for end of their journey was soon to be reached, and that their eyes were soon to behold the new land.

The "Clio" passed the Newfoundland Capes, and with fair winds had got well up near the Island of Anticosti, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, when she encountered the most dangerous storm of the whole passage: however, fair weather again prevailed shortly. As may be supposed, the "Clio" had more company in the St. Lawrence Waters, than when crossing the Atlantic. Numerous sail were near her. Scores of ships, in full sail, apparently crowding with all speed to the common destination of them all – Quebec! The scene improved as the ship ascended the great river. Peeps could now and then be obtained of farm houses and gardens, and the eye was delighted with the scene. As each day brought them nearer Quebec, the beauties of the new land were more clearly defined.

Soon the shining tin roofs and spires of the French Churches became conspicuous in the distant view shorewards, the beauties of which, the slow progress of the old time sailing-vessel afforded plenty of leisure for careful observation. This awakened impatience in the majority on board, who were anxious to leave the ship.

May 21, 1841. Hurrah! Quebec at last! All who could gain the deck, were there, eagerly scanning the outlines of the Citadel City. The Island of Orleans passed, the view of the City was very imposing. Hundreds of Vessels were in port, being laden with cargoes of timber, grain, and other Canadian

products, for shipment to Great Britain and other countries. When at last the “Clio” came to her anchorage, the passengers sent up a hearty wild cheer. It cannot be said, now, that they did for Captain Brown; but one thing is sure; they were thankful as could be for their safe sea voyage, and would always bear in their hearts a kindly regard for the old sailor.

It took a good part of a day for the passengers of the “Clio” to get their belongings transferred to the steamer which was to take them from Quebec to Montreal – nearly two hundred miles further up the river. They were thankful to realize that their ocean travelling, which had occupied about six weeks, was now a circumstance of the past, and that the Steamer for Montreal would convey them more rapidly, and with better accommodation in every way. Besides all this, fresh meats, fresh bread, excellent butter, milk and other comestibles, were now being used with much gusto and delight, after the long ocean voyage. Many of the people took advantage of the chance offered, to look the old City over. They doubtless saw many things entirely new to them. Though the place was under British rule, and the British flag, everywhere fluttered in the Canadian breeze, yet the tongue heard on all sides was foreign. Most of the inhabitants were foreign, in appearance and movement. If the new comers did not know they were in a country owning the sway of Great Britain, they would have been justified in saying that they had landed on the shores of old France.

In due time, the “Clio’s” passengers were on board the steamer, bound up the river for Montreal. Views of bright villages, on both sides, spread like a panorama. The period occupied in this trip cannot be given, but every thing was in striking contrast, as to comfort, with the cramped quarters so recently vacated. The sailors on board the “Clio” were a different class of men from those on the river steamer, the latter being mostly French-Canadians, possessed greater vivacity than the old “sea-dogs” of the Atlantic, and in a great measure, seemed to interest the travellers, and to drive away dull care. It was on this steamer, that the English people, for the first time heard the famous Canadian boat songs. Also the croaking of the Canadian “Nightingales”, as the bull-frogs are called. These frogs swarm Canadian Waters, and in the early summer evenings, make the air musical with their incessant croakings and trillings. The boat touched at “Three Rivers,” an important French Canadian town, but did not remain there long. Again on the move, the Steamer’s course lay through a thirty mile stretch of water called “Lake St. Peter”. At that time, it must have been comparatively shallow, for the Montreal Board of Harbour Commissioners have, since then, expended vast sums of money, dredging a channel for the passage of ocean shipping of deep draught, to reach Montreal. “Sorel” an enterprising little town, was next passed, as well as other points of more or less importance, and soon “The Mountain” was sighted, at whose base spreads the magnificent Commercial City of Montreal, whose harbour, in the year 1841, was crowded with shipping literally covered with every

description of “bunting,” mostly the “Union Jack,” in honour of our late Queen, the good Victoria, of blessed memory, whose birthday – the 24th May – was being celebrated as a holiday. This was the sight which greeted the travellers, as the steamer reached her landing in the City of Montreal.

This City of the “Mount Royal,” with a population somewhat more English than that of Quebec, appeared, at that date, a smart enterprising Commercial City, giving much promise of the future greatness it has since attained. Montreal being the head of ocean navigation, and on the direct line of communication with the vast Lakes, “Ontario,” “Erie,” “Huron,” “Michigan,” and “Superior,” great inland fresh water seas, the St. Lawrence river being the outlet it required no very great foresight to predict the future of a city so situated. Its Railway, Banking, and great commercial interests generally, will keep it in the forefront which it has now long enjoyed.

It will not be out of place to now refer to an incident, which though apparently a trifle at the time, had much to do in deciding the Pedlar family’s Canadian home. Mr. & Mrs. Pedlar were strolling around the “locks” of the Lachine Canal at the foot of McGill Street²⁰ when they observed a large number of barrels of flour stored close by. With the agricultural instincts strong within them, they turned aside to examine these barrels more closely. They were from “Upper Canada,” as the now Province of Ontario was then called. The end of one of the barrels was broken, and the flour exposed to view. The Pedlars were both good judges of flour, they pronounced the quality to be of a high grade. The brand was known as the “Plow brand,” a plough being stencilled on the head of each barrel. This brand also set forth that the flour was the product of a Mill owned by J. B. Warren (Devonshire?) situated in the Township of Whitby, Upper Canada, and in the settlement they proposed visiting, before deciding to settle elsewhere. It has often been stated, that after examining the flour, Mr. Pedlar remarked to his wife, “Nancey, wherever that flour is produced, there’s the place for us to live!” A proposition his “better half” promptly approved, there and then.

The emigrants were again to experience another novelty in travelling. They had rolled and tossed as they crossed the Atlantic. They had steamed up that stretch of the St. Lawrence between Quebec and Montreal. Now they were transferred to the hold of a flat bottomed “Durham Boat,” drawing only a few feet of water. These Durham boats had no propulsion. No sails; No Engines. They were attached (quite a number of them) to each other, by strong hawsers, and drawn along by a steam-tug. This portion of their route was via the Lachine Canal to the village of Lachine – say about six miles. Thence, over the north edge of a Lake, up past “Vaudreuil”, and through the Ottawa River to the City of Ottawa, the Capital of the Dominion of Canada, but in those days known as “By-town”, taking its name after Colonel By, its founder. The time occupied in this part of the journey is not recorded. We may be sure the speed was not

“reckless.” The pace afforded ample opportunity for enjoying the beauties of these waters and the enchanting little islands frequently passed, by day while the evenings were rendered musical by the songs of the boatmen, their rivals the bullfrogs, and the shrill cry of an occasional night-hawk. When the extended line of “Durham boats” completed their journey up the Ottawa river, and came to a halt just outside the eight locks which had to lift them to the level of the Rideau Canal, the Emigrants were told that some time would elapse before this operation could be accomplished. Away scampered the people, most of them to refill their baskets with the necessary articles of diet; a process repeated several times every day. Others took in a view of the town, which at that date could not have contained more than five thousand inhabitants. At last the passengers were urged to return to the boats, by the shrill whistle of the little steam tug, and again the journey westward was resumed.

As the little fleet glided along the still waters of the Rideau Canal, they often approached quite close to Farms under good cultivation. At last, this mode of travelling came to a close, the City of Kingston, seen in the distance, was to be the end of it. On May 31st, 1841, Kingston was reached, an apparently prosperous place; the then seat of Canadian Government, Lord Sydenham being Governor General. The emigrants who had already encountered so many trials, were now dreadfully put out, by being told that the Lake Steamer which was to have taken them to “Port Hope,”²¹ had left Kingston for Toronto, with the Governor General and Staff, upon urgent business. The trouble occasioned by this enforced stoppage, had to be made the best of. The delay was made an opportunity for inspecting the town. Under French occupation, it was a mere military post, named “Frontenac,” after one of the early French Governors. Under British rule (1789) the place was called Kingston, and was the seat of Government until 1844, when the Seat of Government was removed to Montreal, to the great injury of Kingston.

On hearing of the trouble he had caused, Lord Sydenham lost no time in ascertaining that the emigrants were deeply annoyed at the expense they had to suffer, as well as delay, by his having caused them failure in making close connection with the Lake Steamer. Either his Lordship addressed the emigrants in person, or was represented by a member of his Staff; ample reasons were given for appropriating the Lake Steamer, and each emigrant was recouped for the individual expense incurred by this regrettable incident. Mr. Pedlar’s share amounted to ten dollars, with which he purchased a Family Bible – a recognition of his gratitude to God, for the mercies of a safe journey, besides being the means of remembrance of the nobleman’s generosity.

June 1st – The trim looking Steamer of the “Royal Mail Line”, to which the travelers were now transferred, promised to be a great improvement upon the dingy ill shaped “Durham Boats” with their “snail like pace.” There was an air of business about this Royal Mail Steamer; the hissing steam, the

bustle and commotion which produced a pleasant excitement – and when the boat fairly got into the blue waters of Ontario, the wavelets danced merrily to the quicker movement. The speed was something new and cheering, and proved to be the most enjoyable part of the journey yet experienced.

After touching Cobourg harbour,²² the Steamer made for Port Hope, the next port of Call. Here quite a number of people left the Steamer, the Pedlar family and some of their friends among them. Port Hope was reached at four o’clock in the morning, and so the long, wearisome journey by Water was at last accomplished.

There still lay before the Pedlar family and some of their friends, Mr. Jacob²³ Hoar & family, a land journey of about forty miles to the home of a²⁴ relative of the Hoars’, named Richard Luke, who lived in the 5th concession, on Lot 9, of the township of Whitby.²⁵ Three²⁶ strong wagons, drawn by two horses, each, were contracted for, and without much delay, the travellers and their baggage, moved toward Whitby. The Hoar family, small in number, made one Wagon suffice for them and their belongings. The Pedlars being more numerous and hampered with much impedimenta, had two Wagons. These three Wagons, with quite a party of sunburned English faces, the owners of said faces perched on the top of sundry chests, casks, trunks and all the miscellaneous English people find it necessary to convey with them to their new homes, must have presented quite a sight to the few inhabitants of Port Hope, for at that time, the place was merely a village. Reaching the outskirts, the party were soon on the old Kingston Road, the stage-coach route between Kingston and Toronto. Quite often, the children of the expedition scrambled from the baggage to the ground, and ran off to farm houses, or to way-side pumps, to get their drinking cups filled, either with milk, or with cool water, and from the people, one and all, a hearty response greeted the youthful rompers.

When the party reached the village now called Oshawa, it was only a mere “four corners”, so to speak. The Institution of the place, like other small Canadian Villages, was a Tavern. “The Charles Arkland Tavern,” a long wooden white painted building, stood quite a distance south of “King Street,” on the “Lot” now the site of the “Central Hotel” – and directly in front of the tavern, near the road, stood the village pump, which in those days supplied the clearest, purest water, of which all the travellers drank heartily.

On reaching Mr. Luke’s farm, all pretty well tired, he received his welcome but unexpected visitors in the most cordial manner, and the baggage was soon removed from the wagons. After the drivers and their horse had been generally refreshed, the wagons were soon out of the “Settlement,” on their return journey to Port Hope, at a much quicker pace than when they entered “Whitby Township.”

Perhaps the reader will wonder how the Luke family could find room in their wilderness home – not a large one – for their visitors. They could not. Fortunately they had just completed a large new “Barn.” This was handed over for the use

of their guests, who by this time had “roughed it” sufficiently to appreciate the sweet smelling new wood of the barn, and the ample space of their new quarters, which by comparison with the “Clio” and other “experiences,” was a palace and a Paradise²⁷.

It took some days, before the party were fairly on the “land legs.” The appearance of the country from Port Hope, all the way to the Settlement, made a most favourable impression on the new comers. The roads were not as good as those in England – it was not expected they would be. They found the temperature much warmer: in short, they observed a difference in many ways; but these were mere minor matters. The general opinion was – that they had found a good country. All were pleased with it from the first – “Upper Canada,” in the early days of June, presents an inviting appearance to the new comer. In 1841, the country was but sparsely “cleared”; a very different condition from that seen at the present day. The “bush” land looked charming; the heavy foliage; the music of the birds; their gay plumage; the wild flowers – all was new to the Strangers.

“Strangers” in name only! They were frequently entertained, and on such occasions, experienced the truth of the Canadian gentleman’s assertion made in Cornwall – that “In Canada the Bread is as white as a hound’s tooth, and the butter as yellow as a Sovereign.” They also discovered that while everyone spoke well of the Country, they declared that hard labour was the lot of all who intended to make a success. No sluggard could achieve success.

During their stay at the Luke Farm, the Pedlars made up their minds that the Village of “Skae’s Corners,” now the town of “Oshawa,” would suit them. Steps were accordingly taken, to purchase a “Lot” of land, on which temporary quarters were erected for a dwelling and a work-shop. In June, 1841, they became adopted “Citizens” of this village.²⁸ This family still flourishes at Oshawa. Henry Pedlar’s son George carries on the “Oshawa Sheet Metal Works,” and is in prosperous circumstances, like his father before him. Nearly all the Cornish people who sailed for Canada, in 1841, settled in “Ontario” and “Durham” and neighbouring counties. Another “Clio” passenger, Stephen Grose, a stonemason, settled at “Columbus,” formerly known as “English Corners,” a name which clearly indicates the nationality of its first settlers. He also did well, and proved himself a success.

A few words in conclusion. The writer of necessity, has had to confine his remarks to a mere fraction of the six hundred and more emigrants who sailed for Canada in 1841. He would like to remind his readers (if he is so fortunate as to have any) that the experiences of those on board the “Dew Drop,” “Spring Flower,” and “John and Mary,” would be very similar to those of the “Clio,” but probably still more irksome, because those three ships were smaller than the “Clio,” and their space and “accommodation” would be proportionately less.

Without entering into elaborate explanation, the writer

has endeavoured to display the marked contrast between not only the modes of travelling, then and now, but also the rapid progress of Canada, in such a comparatively short period. Then, Canada was a mere struggling Colony: Now, she is a vast Dominion, able to take no mean place among the foremost nations. Contrast such craft as conveyed our Cornish friends of 1841, with the splendid steel ships busily crossing the Atlantic, on Canada’s business today! A business which grows with tremendous leaps and bounds: remember that Canada is rapidly becoming “The Granary of the British Empire,” and it will take but little reflection, to show that she is a Country embracing within her vast boundaries, every inducement for settlement, by those who are not afraid of work. Be it also remembered that Canada can supply herself with her own Professional and Commercial men, her Clerks and mechanics. The material of which she is “short,” is Agricultural. She wants Farmers and Farm Labourers. Any number of them. Such men, steady and industrious, with brains and brawn, and a knowledge how to use both, will receive from Canada a hearty welcome.

C. H. Welbey²⁹ §

¹Ontario County lies inland and NE of Durham Co. stretching up to Muskoka Co. in the north.

²Durham County lies on the north shore of Lake Ontario with Oshawa in the centre of its lake front.

³Cornwall is the English county at the extreme SW corner of England which terminates at Land’s End facing the Atlantic Ocean.

⁴Oshawa, Ontario is a town about 30 miles east of downtown Toronto on the north shore of Lake Ontario and a similar distance west of the town of Port Hope in Northumberland Co. where the travellers disembarked from the Lake Ontario steamer that brought them from Kingston, Ontario.

⁵Whitby Township is on the lake front, the second township from the SW corner of Durham Co.

⁶Columbus is a small town 6.5 miles north of downtown Oshawa on County Road 2.

⁷Padstow is a Cornwall town located about 43 miles NE of Land’s End on the south shore of the Bristol Channel.

⁸Kingston, a city located at the east end of Lake Ontario, north shore and southern terminus of the Rideau Canal. It was the capital of Canada West after February 1841.

⁹Captain George A. Hogg, RN Rtd, National Maritime Museum Cornwall, cited at <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clio_\(barque\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clio_(barque))> as being based on the “West Briton” newspaper’s list of sailings

¹⁰The Rideau Canal was completed in 1832 and permitted boat traffic to avoid the St. Lawrence River rapids, which restricted river traffic upstream from Montreal Island. It also permitted traffic to sail clear of the United States territories, which occupy about 100 miles of the south bank of the St. Lawrence River from Cornwall, Ontario on the east to Kingston, Ontario on the west.

¹¹Note that this date is not explicitly given. However, the time of 4 a.m. is presumably the morning following the departure from Kingston.

¹²Could be “Wetberg” or “Welberg” or something else.