



## The Billings Family virtual exhibit

### Summary

This virtual exhibit, presented by the City of Ottawa Archives gives a view of the Billings Family and their interactions with the growing city center of Ottawa and Billings Bridge Village. The histories are written from the perspective of one family's experiences and activities, within the context of Ottawa's development as a city.

As the first settlers of Gloucester Township, Braddish Billings and Lamira Dow Billings began a legacy of community involvement and service.

They contributed to their community in varying degrees over the generations, participating in such areas as medicine and healthcare and promoting development in business, real estate and politics. The Billings Family prospered in the wilderness through hard work and ingenuity. They rose up into the middle / upper class, persevering for generations in the same geographical area while many other families did not.

The Billings Collection, held by the City of Ottawa Archives and the Billings Estate National Historic Site, reveals a dynamic and interesting family. The Collection includes not only written documentation, but also a significant number of photographs, scrapbooks, and artifacts that allow us to see glimpses of the Billings' personal experience of Ottawa.

### The broad historical periods are:

1. Early Settlement (1783-1825)
2. The Bytown Era (1826-1854)
3. Emerging City & National Capital Settlement (1855-1900)
4. Focus on Growth (1901-1945)
5. Growth and Transformation (1946-2005)

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## Billings Family biographies

The Billings Family was important to Ottawa's development and that of its surrounding area because they started a legacy of community involvement and service. As Gloucester Township's first settlers, Braddish Billings and Lamira Dow Billings used both private and public means to participate in medicine and health care, business and land development as well as with civic development and interests. Through hard work and ingenuity, the Billings were able to persevere and prosper for generations, in the same geographical area, while many other families did not.

Braddish Billings (1783-1864) and Lamira Dow Billings (1796-1879) Married October 18, 1813.

### Second generation

1. Sabra Billings, 1815-1912
2. Lamira Billings Kilborn, 1817-1910
3. Braddish Billings II, 1819-1871
4. Elkanah Billings, 1820-1876
5. Samuel Billings, 1821-1910
6. Sarah 'Sally' Billings, 1822-1915
7. Charles Billings, 1825-1906

### Third generation

1. Charles Kilborn, b.1840
2. Samuel Kilborn, 1852-1903
3. Sarah Jane Kilborn Smart, 1849-?

### Children of Braddish Billings

1. Braddish Billings III, 1846-1893
2. Walter Ross Billings, 1848-1919
3. Frances C. Billings, 1851-1928
4. Lamira E. Billings, 1856-

### Children of Samuel Billings

1. Amelia Celeste Billings, 1874-1930
2. Mira Dow Billings, 1877-1969

#### Children of Charles Billings

1. Charles Murray Billings, 1859-1936
2. Hugh Braddish Billings I, 1861-1934
3. Lamira Jane 'Minnie' Billings Greene, 1863-1944

#### Fourth generation

##### Children of Hugh Braddish

1. Amelia M. Billings, 1889-1987
2. Maria Harriett 'Mae' Billings, 1892-1983
3. Charles Alexander Billings, 1895-1975
4. Hugh Braddish Billings II, 1897-1917
5. John Roger Billings, 1899-1962

##### Child of Lamira Jane

1. Lillas Greene, 1899-1993

#### Fifth generation

##### Children of Charles Alexander

1. Jane Alexandra "Sandra" Billings Hamilton, 1937-2012
2. Hugh Braddish Billings III, 1939-1989



## Billings Family first generation

### Braddish Billings, 1783-1864

The history of the Billings Family in Ottawa begins with the patriarch, Braddish Billings I, who was the first settler in Gloucester Township.



TITLE Braddish Billings I

DATE 1864

ITEM NUMBER MG002-22-101

DESCRIPTION "Mourning portrait" taken of Braddish Billings I after his death.

Braddish Billings I was born in Ware, Massachusetts on September 23, 1783 around the end of the American Revolutionary War. His father, Dr. Elkanah Billings, had served in the American army. In 1792, Dr. Billings moved to Canada with his wife, Joanna, and their seven children, eventually settling in Elizabethtown (Brockville).

In 1801 eighteen-year-old Braddish took the Oath of Allegiance. American by birth, he had to pledge loyalty to the British Crown if he wanted land in Upper Canada, to join the militia, and to "enjoy the privileges of British subjects."

In 1808 Braddish left Elizabethtown to take part in the timber trade along the St. Lawrence River. The following year, he set up a lumber operation with William Marr near Merrickville, but their partnership ended in 1810 after a storm caused a massive loss of timber. The storm prevented them from fulfilling a contract and left them in debt.

Braddish began his associations in Gloucester in 1812, working as a lumberman for Philemon Wright of Hull. Unfortunately for Braddish, war broke out that year between Britain and the United States, and his bateau (small, flat-bottomed rowboat used on rivers) was seized on the St. Lawrence. These early misfortunes left Braddish in debt and in need of a permanent base to build his fortune on. In the late fall of 1812, he built a shanty \*a simplified cabin made of round logs with no windows, an opening without a door, a hole in the roof in place of the chimney and plenty of daylight between the logs\* on Lot 17 (416 acres) in the Junction Gore of Gloucester, although this land officially belonged to the clergy reserve. Braddish was probably drawn to the site because of its close proximity to the Rideau River, its abundant timber, its creek, and its fertile soil. He began clearing the land and planted potatoes, hay, Indian corn, and turnips. He also continued lumbering for Philemon Wright.

Braddish married 17-year-old Lamira Dow—a teacher in Merrickville—on October 18, 1813. He had just built a new log home and the couple moved in on October 28. After transporting all of their worldly possessions on a harrowing four-day journey from Merrickville via canoe, Lamira describes their situation:

1813 October 18 – I was married to B. Billings at Merrickville. On the 19th, I rode 40 miles to see my sister; the 21st I rode back to Merrickville. On the 24th started the move to Gloucester, came 9 miles and was detained by the rain. 26th we started in a bark canoe, our loading consisted of Mr. Billings and a Frenchman and myself, 6 chairs, one trunk and a bed and a bundle of bedclothes. We went 18 miles and camped in an old shanty – it had a door, no window, no chimney but a large hole for each. The next morning it rained till 4 in the afternoon then we started and went 4 miles and came to another shanty of the very same kind. Remained that night, the 28th we started again and we found the water so shallow that the canoe would not swim; the men had to unload and carry the things on their backs some distance and then carry the canoe and load again three different times they had to load and unload again before we reached home 9 miles, and when we arrived, it was of a good round log house and a good chimney and 4 windows, a floor made of split logs for there was no plank there in them days. We had about 6 acres chopped and planted to corn and potatoes and zturnips and then we began the world, 40 miles from any house on one side and 7 on the other, no road either way, not one house in the town but our own. L. Billings.

Braddish continued to farm and work in the timber trade. He employed many hired men and some relatives to help him handle both occupations. Like his career in lumbering, Braddish's initial forays into farming proved challenging: In 1815 the first wheat crop

planted on Lot 17 failed miserably. Nevertheless, Braddish's participation in two industries made his situation more secure because his income was not tied up in a single market.

In fact, one of the keys to Braddish's success was his ability to merge the two enterprises. He geared his farm towards the needs of the lumbermen, selling them salt pork, wheat, potatoes, corn, hay, oats, potash, dairy products, and wool products. Meanwhile, the lumber companies reduced spending and increased profitability by getting provisions locally. Braddish's connections also gave him easy access to lumber for his homestead.

In 1814, Braddish floated lumber down the Rideau River from Merrickville to Gloucester so that he could build a frame barn. He also built a new frame house that year, which he, Lamira, and Sabra moved into in the summer of 1815. In 1817, Braddish made his first payment towards Lot 17, which he technically had been squatting on. The following year, he began the lengthy process of petitioning the government for the rest of his property.

More people were beginning to homestead in Gloucester, but they could only get sawn lumber from the mills at Merrickville and Hull. Braddish tapped this local market by building his own sawmill in 1823. Again he stood to make a profit, because he received a portion of any lumber that his neighbours milled.

Braddish tried a few other ventures. In 1821 he opened a tavern that supplied travellers with lodgings and liquor. He also operated a ferry across the Rideau River.

Hard work and ingenuity took Braddish far, but he also had the luck of being in the right place at the right time. In 1826 Colonel By came to Ottawa to build the Rideau Canal and Braddish became an overseer of the construction. He also received contracts to supply materials and to build barracks, a wharf, and workshops. The canal project opened the area up to more settlers, which created a building boom, attracted more businesses, and made goods more readily available.

In 1827, Braddish quit the lumber business to focus on agriculture. He built a larger, more genteel house on 'the hill,' which the family moved into in October 1829. By then, the rest of the Billings children had been born: Cynthia (1816-1818), Lamira (1817-1910), Braddish II (1819-1871), Elkanah (1820-1876), Samuel (1821-1910), Sally (1822-1915), Charles (1825-1906), and Hiram (1826-1827). Forty-eight years later, Charles Billings recalled moving into the new Estate House:

I remember distinctly however of seeing the new house stand in a frame after it was erected and also the day that we moved up into it—my father drove a yoke of oxen and a wagon or cart...my mother set the table in the kitchen and it was there we took our first meal in that house [sic].



TITLE Billings Estate

DATE n.d.

ITEM NUMBER CA-002104

Braddish realized the need for more land and purchased more lots directly from settlers and owners. At one point, he owned as much as 1,200 acres (in various parts of the Ottawa Valley), but he only cultivated around 700 acres. He continued to add to his farm property, building employee houses, barns, stables, sheds, a dairy, a milk house, a smokehouse, a woodhouse, an icehouse, and a storehouse.



TITLE Billings Estate, gatehouse and dairy house

DATE 1975

ITEM NUMBER CA-012034

DESCRIPTION South end of the gatehouse (left) and the stone dairy house (right) on the Billings Estate, built ca. 1830.

Because of his social visibility and economic prosperity, Braddish was able to turn his attention to civic interests. He was one of the twelve household heads listed in the 1825 Gloucester Township assessment roll and he became involved in local politics around that time, receiving all official documentation from Osgoode and Gloucester. His various appointments in the community included: clerk, assessor, path-master, collector, pound-keeper, and warden.

In 1830, Braddish became the Surveyor of Highways for Russell County. In the following year, he built a bridge across the Rideau River that enabled farmers to take their products to the market in Bytown. Later, in 1848, he helped bring about the Bytown Prescott Railway by taking up subscriptions for funds and selling part of his land for the track.

Braddish also served as a magistrate in both Gloucester Township (1834) and the Bathurst District (1835). He was part of the movement that started in 1828 to make Bytown the judicial seat of its own district. Besides signing petitions and attending



meetings, Braddish also helped construct Bytown's first jailhouse and courthouse, which qualified the town for the change and allowed the Dalhousie District to form in 1842.

Braddish was one of the first six Justices of the Peace for the new district. In 1846 he was elected as a District Councillor and he worked with the finance and education committees—a fitting role considering Braddish built Gloucester's first schoolhouse approximately fifteen years earlier.

In 1848, Braddish campaigned to become the MLA for Russell, but he had to drop out due to his poor health and failing vision. Despite his health problems, Braddish remained active.

Braddish Billings was eighty years old when he passed away on April 8, 1864. No photographs of him exist except for one 'mourning portrait' taken on his deathbed, but his son Charles provides a description in his memoirs:

Braddish Billings in appearance was a well-proportioned man rather above the medium size. He had bluish eyes and a very high forehead and black silky hair.

Charles also wrote his father's obituary for the *Ottawa Citizen*. After recounting Braddish's accomplishments Charles added a personal note:

His integrity and veracity could not be impeached; his honourable, straightforward, decisive way of dealing was proverbial; and he goes down to the grave leaving a respectable family to mourn his loss and amid the regrets of all who knew him.

His name lives on in history alongside the Ottawa Valley's other Founding Fathers.

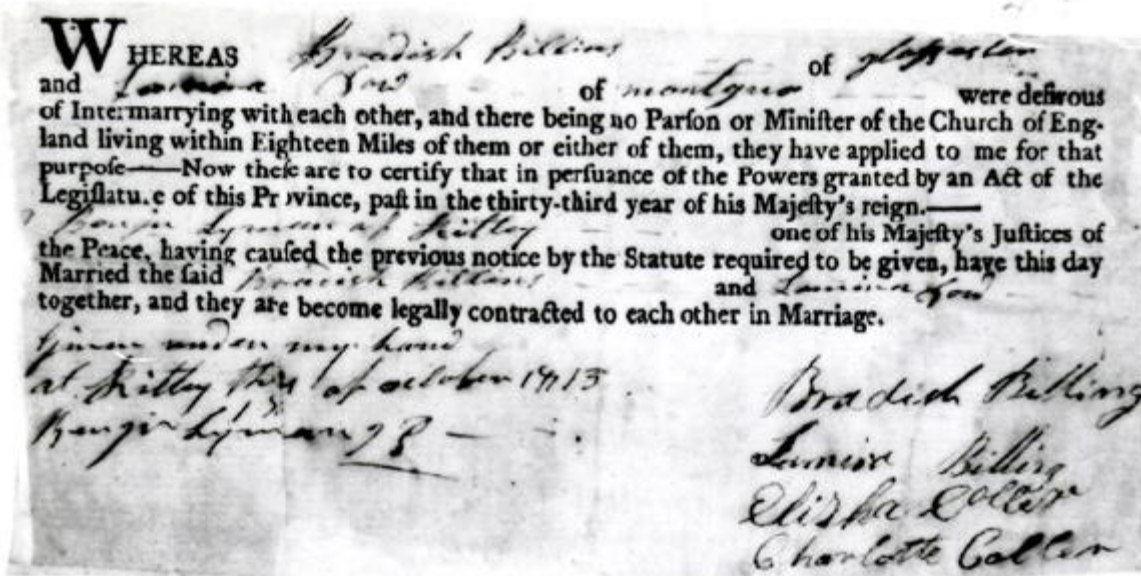
## **Lamira Dow Billings, 1796-1879**

Lamira Dow Billings was born in Cambridge, New York on March 1, 1796. She was one of six children born to Samuel Dow and Cynthia Harkness Dow, who were married in a Quaker ceremony at Smithfield, Rhode Island, in 1789.

A blacksmith by trade, Samuel moved his family to Upper Canada and settled near Merrickville in 1805. He passed away later that year. Cynthia re-married, but she passed away soon after in 1807, leaving eleven-year-old Lamira orphaned and in the care of her stepfather, John Scott.

In 1813 Methodist Minister Reverend William Brown hired Lamira to teach at Merrickville's first school. She was one of the first schoolteachers, male or female, in Upper Canada.

That same year, Lamira met and married Braddish Billings. A minister was not available, so a Justice of the Peace presided over the wedding ceremony in Kitley on October 18.



TITLE Marriage License

DATE 1813

ITEM NUMBER CA-001194

DESCRIPTION Braddish Billings and Lamira Dow married in October, 1813. They were married by a Justice of the Peace, as there was no parson or minister of the Church of England living within 18 miles of either Braddish or Lamira.

On October 24 they set out for Braddish's homestead in Gloucester. The couple, along with a companion, walked and canoed for four days carrying "six chairs, one trunk, and a bed and a bundle of bedclothes. Although Braddish had recently built a new log house, Lamira found her new settings quite rustic:

[I]t was quite different from what I was used to for when he found me ...I must say I was some disappointed but was not sorry for he was not to blame, and I was in hope to be better off by industry and prudence...and I was willing to share with him in his poverty.

So she began her life as Braddish's wife and partner. Lamira was a hard worker, a devoted wife and mother, and a devout Christian who remained active well into her old age.

During the first twenty years of her marriage to Braddish, Lamira concentrated on raising their children, building a home, co-managing the farm, and cooking for the Billings' many hired workers.

She was also known for her charity work, guided by the religious principals her parents instilled in her. Lamira was a Quaker as her parents had been, but she attended

Presbyterian services because there were no Quaker Societies in the area. Nevertheless, people of various denominations held her in high esteem. As her son Charles remembered:

The Roman Catholics...are among the strongest in their declarations of her goodness. On one occasion I knew of an Irish Roman Catholic woman who, feeling her end approaching, sent for the nuns and also for Mrs. Billings.

In fact, the sick and dying may also have asked for Lamira because she was a well-known healer in the area. She read about botany and medicine and she had a vast repertoire of home remedies, which she used to cure people in the community, but which were not always able to save her own family. For instance, the Billings' second child, Cynthia, died from an illness (likely Spanish Flu) in 1818; Elkanah died from Bright's disease four years before Lamira passed; and Braddish suffered from a lingering illness during the last 20 years of his life. Lamira's cure for Cholera may have been helpful in the frequent epidemics that plagued the area.

In the 1830s, Braddish and Lamira's hard labour had earned them a degree of comfort, giving Lamira some leisure time to pursue her interests. She produced prize-winning pieces of sewing and embroidery; read books on history, science, and theology; and took trips to visit friends and family.

Domestic duties occupied Lamira's time once again as Braddish's health began to fail. She cared for him until he passed away in 1864. Afterwards, Lamira remained at the estate with her spinster daughters Sally and Sabra, but she did not resign herself to old age. In 1867, she built a new schoolhouse and revived her teaching career. She was seventy-one years old.

In his 1877 memoirs, Charles Billings remembered his mother as a short, heavy-set woman who had dark eyes and hair "partly between black and auburn" along with "a coolness, a courage, and a nerve which would cast the bravery of many [men] in the shade." After she passed away on March 5, 1879 at the age of 83, her daughter Lamira called her "a wonderful woman far ahead of the age in which she lived."

## **Second generation**

### **Children of Braddish Billings and Lamira Dow Billings**

#### **Sabra Billings, 1815-1912**

Sabra Billings was born on March 20, 1815 - she was Braddish and Lamira Billings' first child, and the first child born to settlers in Gloucester Township. Sabra was an educated woman who attended boarding schools, in addition to learning the usual female roles in domestic and farm life.



Sabra lived in a time when people considered marriage an essential social institution. She chose not to marry and instead contributed to the farm by selling produce in Bytown, supervising and eventually running the dairy with her sister Sally, and making cloth. As a single woman, Sabra was free to travel frequently. She visited Quebec and traveled throughout Ontario and the United States - Sabra happened to be in Brooklyn when the American Civil War broke out in 1861. She had been spending her winters in Brooklyn since the late 1850's. Nevertheless, she always considered Billings Bridge her home. When her father passed away Sabra inherited over two hundred acres of land.



TITLE Sabra Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-001106

DESCRIPTION Daguerreotype portrait of Sabra Billings, middle-aged.

Sabra spent less time at Billings Bridge as she aged, but she was always able to manage her farm from wherever she resided. She also gave her time, energy, and

money to causes she considered worthy. For example, in 1865 she organized funds and provided land to build the Knox Church.

Although she suffered many years of ill health in her later years, Sabra continued to oversee her holdings with the help of family. She was 97 years old when she passed away in 1912.

### **Lamira Billings Kilborn, 1817-1910**

Lamira Billings Kilborn was the second child born to Braddish and Lamira Billings. When she was 22, she married her first cousin Braddish Kilborn and moved to Brockville. They had four children:

Charles, Horace, Sarah Jane, and Samuel

Braddish Kilborn passed away in 1856, leaving Lamira to raise her children with limited finances. She chose to remain in Brockville and leased the one hundred acres she inherited from her father in 1864 to her brother Samuel.



TITLE Lamira Billings Kilborn

DATE ca.1890

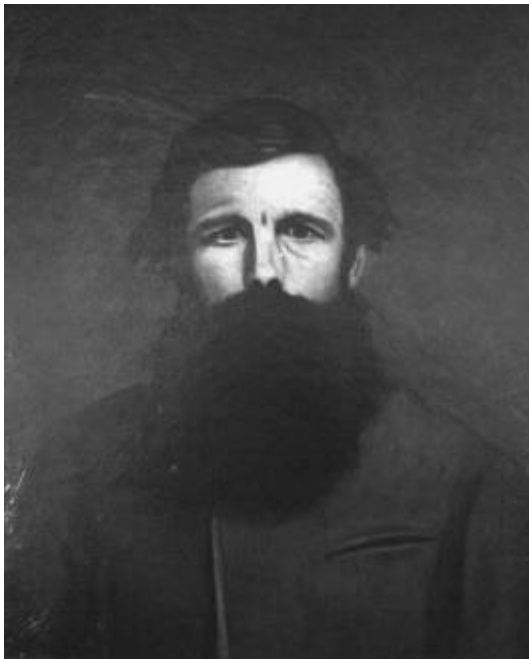
ITEM NUMBER CA-000456b MG002-22-068 CA-002277 copy

DESCRIPTION Formal portrait attributed to Lamira Billings Kilborn taken by C.W. Parker of The York Studio, 140 Sparks Street, Ottawa.

Lamira was apparently a very devout woman who attended the same Methodist church for over 50 years. She passed away in 1910. Beyond these bare facts, little else is known about her life.

### **Braddish Billings II, 1819-1871**

The eldest son of Braddish and Lamira Billings, Braddish Billings II received an excellent education that served him well in his life as a public servant. After training as a land surveyor, he eventually settled in Bytown to work as a professional clerk.



TITLE Braddish Billings II

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-000314 MG001-17-004

DESCRIPTION Oil painting (photographed) of Braddish Billings II by M. Billings.

From the early 1840s to the early 1850s, Braddish Junior had many occupations:

- Bookkeeper for a lumbering firm
- Registrar for the Dalhousie District
- Deputy Clerk of the Crown
- Registrar of the Surrogate Court

- Master in Chancery for the County of Carleton
- Clerk of the Bankrupt Court.

In 1845, Braddish II married Elizabeth Gray Ross. Together they had four children:

Braddish III, Walter Ross, Frances C., and Lamira E.

His career settled down in 1854 when he became the general agent for the Bytown and Prescott Railway—a position he held for the rest of his life. With this new job, he moved his family to Prescott. He began to study the plant life of the local forests, and he eventually became a respected amateur botanist who identified almost two thousand plant species in the Ottawa-Prescott area.

In 1863, Braddish II helped establish the Ottawa Natural History Society. This group later became the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club when it merged with the Bytown Mechanics Institute, founded by his brother Elkanah. In 1866, Braddish II became Vice President of the Entomological Society of Canada. He was also one of the original fellows of the Royal Botanical Society.

Family correspondence suggests that Braddish II died estranged from his wife and children, though the reasons for their separation remain unclear. He passed away on September 28, 1871.

### **Elkanah Billings, 1820-1876**

Elkanah Billings was born on May 5, 1820, the second son of Braddish and Lamira Billings. After Elkanah made an unsuccessful attempt at farming when he was fourteen, his father decided he should further his education and sent him to the St. Lawrence Academy in Potsdam, New York. His brother Braddish II also attended this boarding school.



TITLE Elkanah Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-000423 MG002-22-037

DESCRIPTION Formal bust portrait of Elkanah Billings by W. Notman. MG002-22-137 is another copy of the same pose.

Elkanah returned to Bytown, where he articulated as a student-at-law of the Law Society of Upper Canada. After also articling in Toronto, he was called to the bar in 1844, which allowed him to start a legal partnership in Bytown. In 1845, he started his own practice and married Helen Walker Wilson. The couple did not have any children.

Elkanah had a run-in with the law when he attempted to smuggle 42 books into Canada from New York. His brother, Braddish II, caught him and tried to blackmail him, but Elkanah decided to turn himself in to the customs authorities instead. This indiscretion was an isolated incident—a black mark on Elkanah's otherwise respectable record.

To his extracurricular credit, Elkanah belonged to the Gloucester Township Agricultural Society. He also helped establish the Bytown Mechanics Institute, which started a library for working class citizens—the first public library in the community.

From 1849 to 1852, Elkanah and Helen lived in Renfrew. There he practiced law , but decided to return to Bytown and try his hand at journalism. He became Editor of the Ottawa Citizen in 1856.

Around this time, Elkanah's love of geology began to flourish. He shifted his focus from law to palaeontology and began publishing his own magazine—The Canadian Naturalist and Geologist. Sir William E. Logan, Director of the Geological Survey of the United Provinces of Canada, recognized Elkanah's work and made him the first palaeontologist of the Survey.

In the course of his work Elkanah

- Identified 526 new species of Palaeozoic invertebrates
- Arranged fossils
- Recorded his findings
- Edited academic journals
- Prepared the Geological Survey's Museum
- Learned Norwegian, Spanish, and Danish

His distinguished scientific career lasted for 20 years. Illness cut his work and his life short when he died on June 14, 1876, at the age of 56.

### **Samuel Billings, 1821-1910**

Samuel Billings was the third son born to Braddish and Lamira Billings. He was well educated like his brothers, yet he chose a private life, in which he lumbered on the Ottawa River, farmed on the family estate, and ran the family sawmill.

He met Caroline LaCompte, a French Catholic divorcee employed by the Billings Family, and the two were married in 1841. They adopted a boy, but the child passed away at a young age. Samuel suffered greater losses when both his wife and his father died in 1864; Samuel was excluded from his father's will. It is unclear why Samuel did not inherit; nevertheless, the day after Braddish died, Sabra and Sally wrote a life estate agreement with Samuel, which ensured he would be provided for.

Four years later, Samuel married his cousin Amelia Traveller. They had two daughters together: Amelia Celeste and Mira Dow.





TITLE Samuel Billings and Amelia Traveller Billings Family

DATE ca.1876

ITEM NUMBER CA-002094

DESCRIPTION Formal portrait of Samuel Billings, Amelia Traveller Billings, and daughter, possibly Amelia Celeste.

Samuel's life was not well documented, but records show that he became

- A successful farmer
- A Major in the militia
- Treasurer of Gloucester Township

He was diagnosed with cancer in 1902 and spent the remaining eight years of his life in constant pain. Samuel Billings passed away on June 26, 1910 at the age of 89.

### **Sarah - Sally - Billings, 1822-1915**

Sally Billings was born on October 28, 1822, the youngest daughter of Braddish and Lamira Billings. She was a quiet woman who chose not to marry. She remained on the Billings estate and worked at directing the dairy business, making cloth, and selling

goods at the market, just like her sister Sabra. In 1864, the two women jointly inherited the family home.



TITLE Sally Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-000413 MG002-22-028

DESCRIPTION Formal full length portrait of Sally Billings by A.C. McIntyre, Brockville.

While Sabra traveled frequently, Sally elected to stay home, maintaining the care and upkeep of the dairy and family farm. It was Sally who cared for their mother, Lamira, in her old age. After Lamira died in 1879, Sally fully focused her time and money on charities.

In 1890, Sally erected the Methodist Church directly across the street from the Knox Church, which Sabra had built in 1865. Sally was also the Trustee of Billings Bridge congregation Methodist Church.

She continued to live on her own until her nephew Charles Murray Billings moved to the estate to take care of her and Sabra. Sally passed away on September 8, 1915 at the age of 93. She had been an accomplished artist and embroiderer, and much of her handiwork remains in good condition today.



## Charles Billings I, 1825-1906

Charles Billings was Braddish and Lamira Billings' youngest child. Out of all his brothers and sisters, he was the most educated, well travelled, and civic minded.



TITLE Charles Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-000418a MG002-22-033a

DESCRIPTION Formal bust portrait of Charles Billings by Pittaway Jarvis, 117 Sparks Street, Ottawa.

Charles studied to become a lawyer and spent four years articling in the law office of Robert Hervey. The two men stood together on the platform that collapsed during the 'Stoney Monday' riot of September 17, 1849. In that same year, Charles also helped establish the General Protestant Hospital in Bytown

Charles had a strong interest in public and political affairs, which led to various appointments. After a brief foray into politics, Charles continued his law studies. In 1852, he was elected Reeve of Gloucester and became a member of the education committee for the Carleton County Council

Charles continued his education and clerked at a law office in Buffalo. He never started his own practice, and he decided to change his career path when he returned to the

family estate in 1854. Charles became the Township Clerk—a position he held until his death in 1906. In addition, Charles taught school at Billing Bridge between 1856 and 1863, and maintained the family farm.

Charles was an innovative and successful farmer. He practiced market gardening, and grew a variety of fruits and vegetables for local sale, including asparagus, rhubarb, potatoes, melons, and strawberries. He even kept bees and gathered their honey.

Poetry was one of Charles' passions and he used this skill to support himself as a student.

## Poetry

MG002-11-032 Charles Billings I, 1856 Carrier Poem

She would rise to her place, and with arm stretched on high,  
Would point to those hills 'round our City which lie –  
To those steep frowning heights, bound with rock to their core,  
Like bulwarks of steel, which encircle her shore-  
To the Ottawa River, which rolls by her side,  
Where the crafts of all Nations might peacefully ride –  
To the Chaudiere, whose thundering Waterfall-sound  
Echoes far o'er her hills and her mountains around –  
To the Rideau which leaps, like an ocean of snow,  
Down deep from her rocks to her caverns below –  
To the Rideau Canal, with its Harbour and Docks;  
Its swift-running Steamboats – its Bridge and its Locks –  
To her Railway, whose chariots of iron and fire  
In their course, every vein with new impulse inspire –  
To her Mills and her Factories, peering on high,  
Ever rolling vast volumes of smoke to the sky –  
To her Telegraph Wires, which link in their chain  
Every City and Town to the far rolling main –  
To her Gas, pouring forth its pure streamlets of light,  
To enliven the dark dreary chambers of night –  
To her Churches, her Colleges spacious and grand –

To her schools, spreading out o'er the length of the land –  
To her Institutes, haling with heaven-born ray  
Fair Science along the bright portals of day, -  
And then, in a voice at whose echoing sound  
The Nations would shake to their uttermost bound,  
Proclaim, that our Parliament, thenceforth no more,  
Like a rudderless ship 'mid o'cean's wild roar,  
Should be toss'd; but forever should rest  
From toil and from danger, on Ottawa's breast.  
My Message is over; - down, down, to the urn  
Of my fathers I go – ne'er again to return.

Another romantic aspect of his life was his marriage to Maria Murray in 1858. Family letters imply that the couple eloped during a picnic, but they didn't tell their families of their marriage for several months. The couple had four children together:

Charles Murray,

Hugh Braddish,

Lamira Jane and Sarah Maria. Sarah Maria died in infancy.



TITLE Charles Billings and Maria Murray Billings Family

DATE ca.1870

ITEM NUMBER MG002-22-003 CA-000422

DESCRIPTION Formal portrait of Charles Billings, Maria Murray Billings, and Lamira Jane Billings (seated left to right); Charles Murray Billings and Hugh Braddish Billings (standing left to right).

Family was important to Charles, who spent a lot of time on the Billings' genealogy. While mapping out the family tree, he travelled to Boston 21 times and visited England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Wales. He passed away in November, 1906.

## **Third generation**

### **Children of Lamira Billings Kilborn**

**Charles Kilborn, b.1840**

**Samuel Kilborn, 1852-1903**

**Sarah Jane Kilborn Smart, 1849**

Sarah Jane Kilborn Smart was the only daughter of Lamira Billings Kilborn and her husband Braddish. Her brothers, Charles and Samuel, passed away before their mother died, so Sarah Jane was the only child to inherit a portion of her mother's property. The rest of the estate was split between Samuel's widow and Charles' daughter.

Sarah Jane married Ellswood Smart, and they had five children together. They moved frequently before finally settling in Toronto.

### **Children of Braddish Billings II**

**Braddish Billings III, 1846-1893**

The son of Braddish Billings II and Elizabeth Gray Ross, Braddish Billings III was a clerk for the Ottawa and Prescott Railway and draughtsman / architect for the federal government in Ottawa. He designed the building now known as Friday's Roast Beef House, The Grant House at 150 Elgin Street.



TITLE Braddish Billings III

DATE ca.1876

ITEM NUMBER CA-002102

DESCRIPTION Formal portrait of Braddish Billings III and Charlotte Humphreys Billings.

Braddish III was active in the militia, serving in the Montreal Brigade of Garrison Artillery No. 6 Battery during the 1885 North West Rebellion. In 1889, he graduated from the Royal School of Infantry, Toronto. He also enjoyed collecting fossils and was a member of the Field Naturalists Club.

Braddish III passed away in 1893 after a struggle with cancer. He left a wife, Charlotte Elizabeth Humphrys, but the couple did not have any children. Charlotte died in 1940. She had been a former President of the Ottawa Historical Society.

### **Walter Ross Billings, 1848-1919**

### **Frances C. Billings, 1851-1928**

### **Lamira E. Billings, 1856-**

Walter Ross, Frances C., and Lamira E. Billings were the youngest children of Braddish Billings II and Elizabeth Gray Ross. All three siblings remained unmarried and they lived together in Nepean Township on property that Walter inherited from his grandfather, Braddish I.

Walter enjoyed collecting fossils and was a member of the Field Naturalists Club.

Frances C. and Lamira E. were more reclusive. When Walter died in 1919, he left his land and possessions to his sisters.

### **Children of Samuel Billings**

### **Amelia Celeste Billings, 1874-1930**

### **Mira Dow Billings, 1877-1969**

Little documentation exists regarding the lives of Amelia Celeste and Mira Dow Billings. The daughters of Samuel and Amelia Traveller were left with little inheritance, due to their father's lack of inheritance himself. What little there was, Mira Dow had put towards caring for her sickly mother and infirmed sister. Amelia Celeste passed away in 1930.



TITLE Mira Dow Billings and Mrs. J. Christensen

DATE 1950

ITEM NUMBER CA-000821

DESCRIPTION Mira Dow Billings and Mrs. J. Christensen sitting on the porch of Samuel Billings' home with dog Goldie.

Mira Dow managed to make an income from the 20 acres of land her father had left to her, with some support from her cousin Charles Murray Billings. In her later years, Mira Dow rented her home to tenants and remained as a border. She eventually sold her property and moved. Mira Dow Billings passed away at the age of 92 in 1969.

## **Children of Charles Billings**

### **Charles Murray Billings, 1859-1936**

Born on September 17, 1859, Charles Murray (C.M.) Billings distinguished himself among the third generation of the Billings family. He inherited the family home, the most land, and the bulk of the financial assets following the deaths of his parents, Charles and Maria, and his aunts Sabra and Sally.

This generous legacy was bestowed on C.M. because he willingly devoted a decade of his life to caring for his elderly relations: Charles (d.1906), Maria (d.1909), Sabra (d.1912), and Sally (d.1915). He also acted a general agent, managing business affairs on behalf of his aunts and his sister Minnie (Lamira Jane).

C.M. farmed the family estate and was a market gardener like his father. Until 1914, he had his own greenhouse and grew fruits, vegetables, and flowers to sell at the Byward Market. He had to hire labour to help with the farm because he had no children of his own, and eventually he began renting houses and land to his workers.

C.M. was very active in the Billings Bridge Presbyterian Church. He was a well-read and introspective man who kept extensive diaries and collected books. He was also a member of the Field Naturalists and the Canadian Club.





TITLE Charles Murray Billings

DATE ca.1880

ITEM NUMBER CA-016137 MG162-08-807

DESCRIPTION Tintype photograph of Charles Murray Billings “asleep” in a chair.

C.M. had been a confirmed bachelor until 1918 when, at the age of 59, he married Gertrude Guertin, a much younger woman. Around this time he made extensive renovations on the Billings house, but he did not modernize it with electricity or indoor plumbing.

He prospered in the 1920s, but in the Great Depression C.M. was hit hard. By the time C.M. died in 1936, the total value of his estate had dwindled to a mere \$15,000. He left the family house to his nephew Charles Alexander Billings.

### **Hugh Braddish Billings I, 1861-1934**

Hugh Braddish or “Brad” Billings was Charles and Maria Billings’ second son. He studied law like his father did, and he was made a Justice of the Peace in 1902. He also served as a school board trustee for many years.

From 1907 to 1927 he served as Township Clerk, but resigned under allegations of embezzlement, for which he was later convicted and briefly sentenced.

Hugh Braddish lived in an addition on the front of the Billings house, and oversaw his Aunt Sally and Aunt Sabra's farms. He started "The Old Billings Farm" on Lot 16 in the late 1880s. Instead of running a market garden like his father and his brother did, Hugh Braddish used the latest technology to raise cattle and run a dairy operation.

In 1888, he married Eliza Mutchmor and the couple had five children: Amelia and Maria, Charles Alexander, Hugh Braddish II, and John Roger.

When the First World War broke out in Europe, Hugh Braddish Billings donated land and offered vehicles to the cause, and he encouraged his children to serve their country. Charles Alexander and Hugh Braddish II enlisted, while Amelia and Maria trained as nurses' aides. Unfortunately, Hugh Braddish II died in action—a loss his father never really got over.

After a long battle with cancer, Hugh Braddish Billings passed away in 1934.

#### **Lamira Jane - Minnie - Billings, 1863-1944**

The youngest child and only surviving daughter of Charles and Maria Billings, Minnie worked hard on the farm until she was 35 years old, a job she loved. She was a religious woman who served as the Corresponding Secretary for the Anglican Diocese, although Minnie later became a Methodist. She maintained an active social life in Billings Bridge and Ottawa, and she cultivated skills in oil painting and music.

Minnie had many suitors and broke off several engagements. In February 1898, she started corresponding with Judge George Wellington Greene—widower of her cousin Ina Billings—who was practicing law and banking in Red Deer, Alberta. He proposed to her via letters: the couple married in November that same year.

Minnie and George had two children: Douglas, who died in infancy, and Liliias.

George also had three children from his previous marriage.



TITLE Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Green, and Lillas Greene

DATE 1901 July

ITEM NUMBER CA-000560 MG001-17-028

DESCRIPTION Photograph of Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene with her 20 month old daughter, Lillas.

The Greene family moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta, after George became a District Court Judge. The job brought them wealth and status and Minnie became a busy socialite who traveled often and kept in touch with her family back east. She was involved in many women's organizations:

- President of the Church Aid
- Regent of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire
- Treasurer of the Lord's Day Alliance
- Member / Director of the Natural History Society

- Member of the Women's Institute

Minnie Billings Greene passed away in 1944.



TITLE Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene

DATE ca.1885

ITEM NUMBER CA-000570 MG001-17-036

DESCRIPTION Photograph of Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene on horseback in front of the Billings Estate House.

## Fourth Generation

### Children of Hugh Braddish

**Amelia M. Billings, 1889-1987**

**Maria Harriett 'Mae' Billings, 1892-1983**



TITLE Maria Harriett "Mae" Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-000565 MG001-17-033

DESCRIPTION Photograph of Maria Harriett "Mae" Billings in horse-drawn carriage at the exhibition grounds of a horse show.

Amelia and Maria Billings were the eldest daughters of Hugh Braddish Billings and Eliza Mutchmor. Though there isn't much available information about their own lives, the sisters were able to pass on valuable family history to the museum before their deaths in the 1980s.

### **Charles Alexander Billings, 1895-1975**

Charles Alexander Billings was the eldest son of Hugh Braddish and Eliza Billings.





TITLE Hugh Braddish Billings I and Charles Alexander Billings

DATE ca. 1920

ITEM NUMBER CA-000499 MG002-22-102

DESCRIPTION Formal full length portrait of Hugh Braddish Billings I (left) and Charles Alexander Billings (right) taken by Topley, Ottawa.

He enlisted in the army on September 25, 1914, and became a Captain. Charles carried out administrative duties, but he didn't see any action on the European Front during the First World War because he contracted cerebrospinal meningitis while stationed in London. The doctors told him would never walk again but Charles recovered after much rehabilitation.

EVENTS - The Great War

MG002-1-277 Charles Alexander to Uncle Charles Murray, May 13, 1915.

My Dear Uncle Charlie:

I received your letter enclosing draft, and I sure want to thank you it is certainly pretty white of you to send it especially where things are so tight back home. I cashed the draft and deposited it in "Lloyd's Bank" where it now is. Money has been pretty scarce with me. At least I have not been able to save any as I have had so many expenses. I have not really been well since "Christmas" and have had to spend a deuce of a lot on doctors and other necessary things. Their board is not cheap over here. However, I am now in a fine place just a nice walk from the office where I pay 26 shillings a week for board and lodging. There are six of the boys from the Office with me, and so we all get a fairly cheap rate. But I tell you, you sure do have to pay for all you get. Now Uncle Charlie if you want me to get anything why you just let me know. I will get you a catalogue of Revolvers. There is quite a number of second hand shops in London. Well things are getting very exciting here. There are a great bunch of German shop keepers in London and since the sinking of the Lusitania, the English people have been making raids on the German shops and creating a big noise generally. It is not a picnic for a German now in London. They are not allowed in the stock exchange. The big meat markets will not sell meat to the German shop keeper and there are always rows when they come into contact with any of the English dealers. A lot of the German Firms have gone to the trouble of changing their names. It is awful the way the war goes on. One does not really imagine how serious it is when you see the way people take it over here. The people of England need to be wakened up – they do not take it seriously enough and while they look at this war the way they do why they will never do anything but stay where they are. This war is going to last a very long time and I do not believe that very many of either the 1st or second Canadian Contingent will ever see Canada again. We have had a very great number of Casualties and do not seem to be any nearer to beating them. It was too bad about Lieut. Helmer[?] of Ottawa was it not. He was with the 1st Brigade C.F.A. I knew him quite well and he was such a splendid chap. This war is certainly taking off the best of the land alright. Well I am afraid I will have to close for now. Thanks again very much for the money. I hope Aunt Sally is quite well and that you are enjoying the best of Ottawa[?]. Write again soon as you can, and tell me the news. Best of luck to you Uncle.

Your loving nephew,

Charlie.

In 1916, the army transferred Charles A. to Kingston, Ontario, where he worked as part of the Audit Staff and helped form a branch of the Great War Veterans Association. When the war ended, he moved back to the family home.

Charles A. got another office job and worked as a commercial traveller during the 1920s. At the same time, he and his brother John Roger took over the Old Billings

Farm, which their father had started, and renamed it the "Billings Brothers Farm." They were the last descendants to run a farming operation on the family estate.

In 1933, Charles A. married his fiancée of 17 years, Beatrice Lindsay. They had two children together: Jane Alexandra, born in 1936 and Hugh Braddish III, 1939.



TITLE Charles Alexander Billings and Beatrice Lindsay Billings

DATE 1930s

ITEM NUMBER CA-016411

DESCRIPTION Candid photograph of Charles Alexander Billings and his wife, Beatrice, in formal attire.

During the 1930s, Charles A. divided his time between personal interests and a new career. In 1930 and 1931, he established Ottawa's International Dog Derbies during the winter carnival. Around the same time, he channelled his interest in geology and became a mining engineer.

In 1936, after his uncle C.M. Billings left the Billings manor house, Charles A. renovated the building, installed indoor plumbing, a new furnace, and electricity. He also



remodelled the kitchen. Charles A. sold the house and 17.4 acres of land to the City of Ottawa in 1975 for \$500,000. He passed away shortly after, at the age of 80.

### **Children of Hugh Braddish and Eliza Billings**

#### **Hugh Braddish Billings II, 1897-1917**

Hugh Braddish Billings II was the second son of Hugh Braddish and Eliza Billings.

He joined the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War and was stationed overseas in October 1916.



TITLE Hugh Braddish Billings II

DATE ca. 1917

ITEM NUMBER CA-016382 MG162-12-038

DESCRIPTION Candid photograph of Hugh Braddish Billings II, in Royal Air Force uniform. The reverse is inscribed "Lost over Germany, 1918 or 1919, Son of HBB."

On August 9, 1917 Hugh Braddish II's plane was shot down behind enemy lines. By June of 1918, he was presumed dead. The family published his obituary in the Ottawa Citizen on June 17 of that year. His grave is marked in Arras, France.

### **John Roger Billings, 1899-1961**

John Roger Billings was the youngest son of Hugh Braddish and Eliza Billings. He was a successful businessman in Ottawa who, along with his sisters, sold large portions of the old estate lands. He was married briefly to Isobel Eastcott in 1920. The union was annulled and there were no children. John Roger passed away in 1961.

### **Child of Lamira Jane**

### **Lilias Greene, 1899-1993**

Lilias Greene was the eldest child and only daughter of Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene and her husband George Greene.

## **Fifth generation**

### **Children of Charles Alexander**

### **Jane Alexandra "Sandra" Billings Hamilton, 1937-2012**

Jane Alexandra "Sandra" Billings Hamilton, 1937-2012. Sandra Billings is the eldest child and only daughter of Charles A. and Beatrice Billings.

### **Hugh Braddish Billings III, 1939-1989.**

Hugh Braddish III was the youngest child and only son of Charles A. and Beatrice Billings.



TITLE Jane Alexandra (Sandra) Billings and Hugh Braddish Billings III

DATE ca.1942

ITEM NUMBER CA-016167 MG162-08-633

DESCRIPTION Candid photograph of young Jane Alexandra (Sandra) Billings and Hugh Braddish Billings III sitting on a sofa.

## Farming

As the first settler in the area, Braddish faced the inevitable hardships involved in transforming the wilderness into cultivated land, but he also had the advantage of harnessing some of the Ottawa Valley's natural resources before other people could.

## 1783-1825 Logging and Lumber



TITLE Timber slide on the Ottawa River

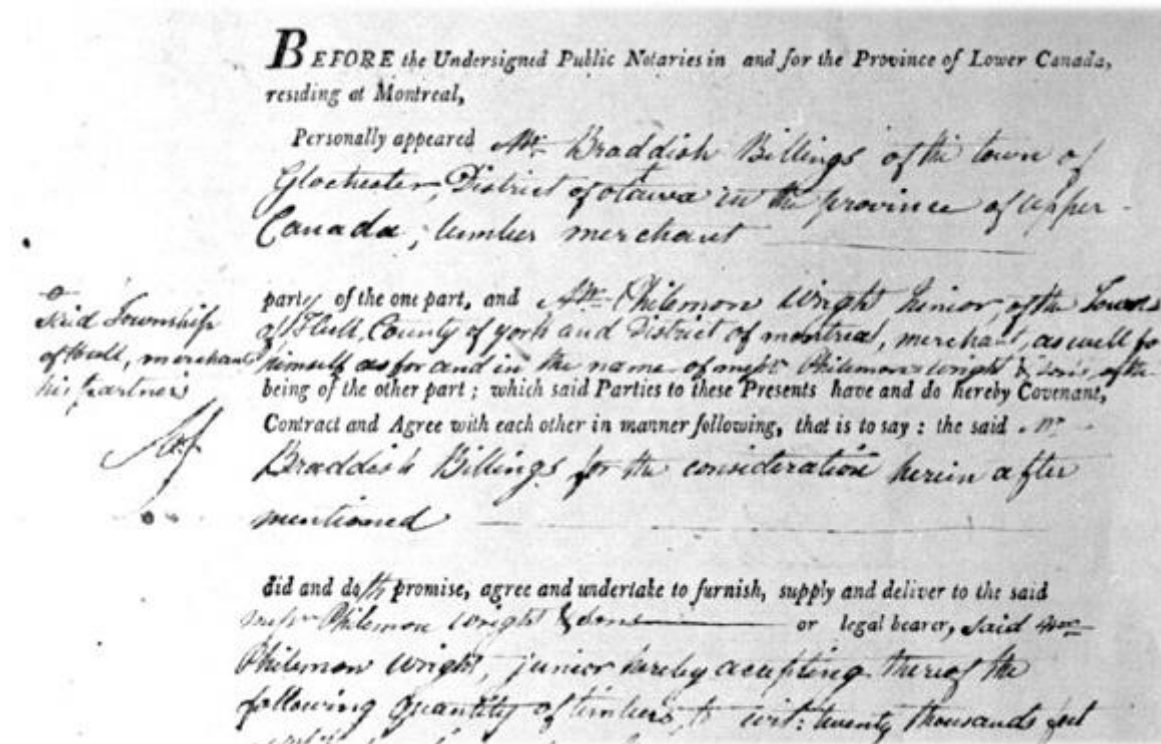
DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-011906

DESCRIPTION Etching of a timber slide. The Ottawa River was used a route to transport timber from upper Quebec to the St. Lawrence.

The birth of the lumber industry in Canada can be linked directly to the Napoleonic Wars and the resulting Continental Blockade: Britain needed ships and timber to build with, and relied on her colonies for supplies. While men such as Philemon Wright of Hull were able to make a living off of timber sales and log driving, pioneers in general were lumbermen, through the simple need to clear their land. Actually converting raw trees

into lumber was a more complex task—a major undertaking that farmers did not typically carry out. Braddish Billings succeeded as both a farmer and a lumberman, until he left the timber trade around 1827.



TITLE Agreement and contract between Braddish Billings and Philemon Wright

DATE 1809

ITEM NUMBER CA-001146

DESCRIPTION Braddish Billings agreed and undertook to furnish, supply, and deliver timber (pine and oak) to Philemon Wright.

For Braddish Billings, combining farming with lumbering proved successful. He built a sawmill in 1823 to sell and produce lumber for his own use. Selling lumber was profitable, which allowed him to increase farm production, hire labourers, and buy necessary equipment. He could also use the lumber directly to add buildings on his land. As the farm grew, so did its crops and livestock. After providing enough food for his family, Braddish was able to sell the surplus produce and some of his livestock to the lumber camps. This system was reciprocal: Logging camps saved on their budget by purchasing local supplies, and men like Braddish profited from the sales. Such interactions marked the beginning of Ottawa's local markets, which the Billings family became heavily involved in.

1. 1783-1825 Pioneering
2. 1783-1825 Farming for sustenance



3. 1826-1855 Farming for income
4. 1826-1855 Land acquisitions
5. 1855-1899 Changing markets
6. 1855-1899 Market farming for specific needs
7. 1855-1899 Agreements and real estate
8. 1900-1945 Suburban encroachment
9. 1900-1945 Farming and the First World War
10. 1900-1945 The Byward Market
11. 20th-century markets

## 1783-1825 Pioneering

Pioneers had to work hard. They cleared land, planted crops, hunted meat, tended animals, and prepared food from scratch in order to survive in the wilderness. They had few conveniences. Instead they had to plan and prepare for all their needs, including clothing, food, seeds, and supplies. Perseverance was key and a partner in marriage was indispensable.

Lamira wrote, upon arrival to the house:

When I arrived to my new home, I looked around to find the cooking utensils. I found a two pail pot, a long handle frying pan, a tea kettle with a large iron whoop round it to keep it from falling to pieces, for it was broke, and a bake kettle with no cover, only a sheet of iron and cracked almost in two, and a homemade pail [Braddish] made himself and a table not 4 feet long and 2 1/2 feet wide. I was not used to see such furniture in my father's house. Then he went a hired 12 men to lumber and clear on the land I had to cook for them and a boy 14 years old, and ourselves made 15. I had to cook and wash for all it was quite different from what I was used to for when he found me, I was teaching school and had only to eat my meals, mind my school. I must say I was some disappointed but was in hope to be better off by industry and prudence sometime, and I was willing to share with him in his poverty – he was not to blame for being poor. He had his misfortune to loose his raft two years before, which was 1600L logs, and I knew it before.

Pioneers in the Ottawa Valley could get goods and supplies from Philemon Wright across the Ottawa River and the Hamilton Brother's store in Hawkesbury, or they could travel 70 miles round trip to Merrickville. After 1816, Perth had a thriving government store, but there wasn't an adequate road between Perth and the Billings Farm until after 1824.

Although the Billings Family were isolated in terms of supplies, they did not endure the agonizing social isolation faced by many pioneers. In addition to the men the Billings

employed, a steady influx of relatives and friends joined the family. They were welcome companions who also provided manpower to build the settlement.

### 1783-1825 Farming for sustenance

When settlers first arrived in a new area, they immediately began clearing land so that they could pasture their livestock and plant crops for food. Early crops included potatoes, Indian corn, turnips, and hay. As farms became more productive, settlers began to organize their operations around the basic diet of the local lumbermen: salt pork, wheat, potatoes, and corn. The Billings family saw the potential value of their farm and used it to accommodate this market. They grew hay and oats, and they raised cows, oxen, sheep, lambs, horses, and pigs. They also ran a dairy and made potash.



TITLE Original stone chimney and outdoor oven of Braddish Billings' pioneer home, Riverside Drive near the Rideau River.

DATE 1960s

ITEM NUMBER CA-000577

DESCRIPTION [O]n the occasion, my mother had her bread baking in the old oven, and his honour [an awful cross ram on the farm] kept such a watch and ward over that oven that the bread got burned up before it could be got out." Charles Billings, reminiscences MG002-11-008.



It is noteworthy that Braddish Billings' experience resembles that of Ontario's Iroquois Indians. The Iroquois were farmers who produced beans, squash, and corn to feed themselves and to trade for meat and skins. They also hunted, gathered, and fished, which provided extra insurance against starvation. For if the crops failed, they could at least eat game, berries, and fish, and conversely, if game was scarce the crops would sustain them.

Braddish billings had the same type of security. His lumber money provided income if his farm had a bad year, and if the lumber business suffered, he could at least grow food for his family. The Billings family seemed to follow this concept, as did other farmers in the Ottawa Valley. Over time, the Billings farm became more diverse and specialized, providing food for the family and produce for trade in the Byward Market.

### 1826-1855 Farming for income

The Bytown Era was a period of growth. From 1826 to 1832 Colonel By and his work crew of around 2000 men settled at the mouths of the Rideau and Gatineau Rivers to build the Rideau Canal. By 1827, a small community of tradesmen, professionals, and merchants formed around the Ontario settlement, which became known as Bytown.



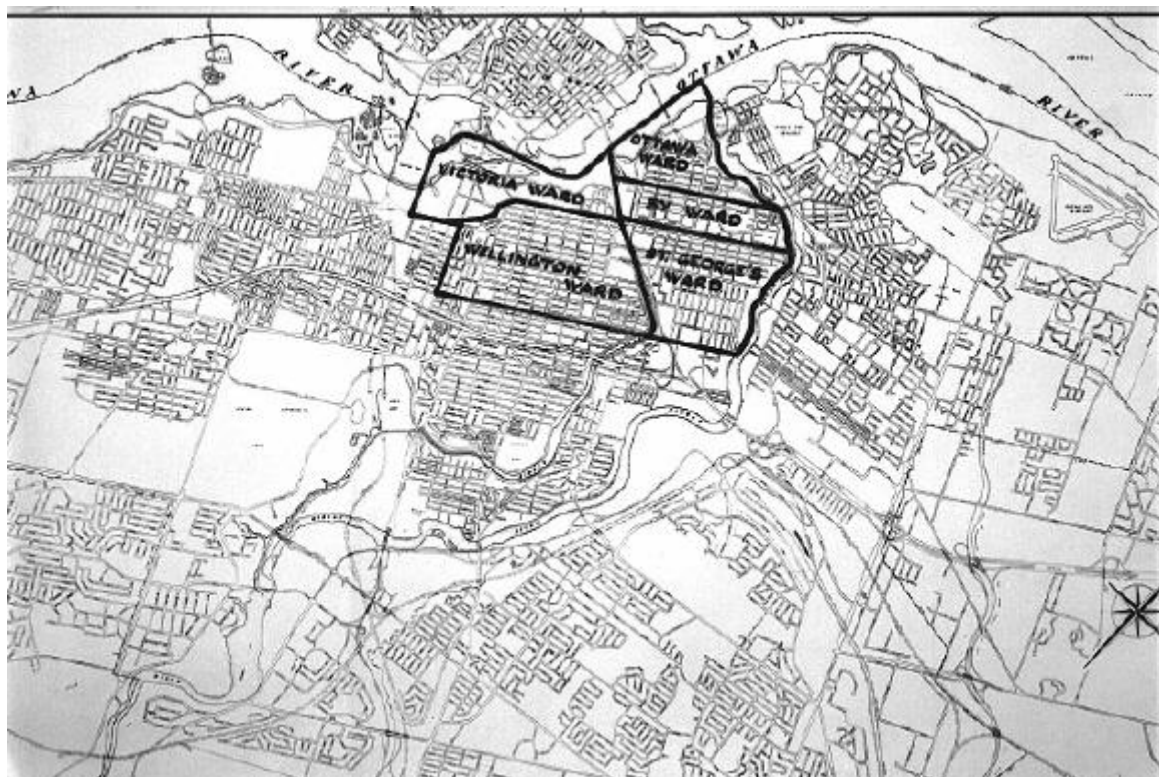
TITLE The Rideau Canal, Bytown, From an engraving of 1840.

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER MG162-08-198

DESCRIPTION Front cover of a luncheon menu for the R.M.S. Sylvania.

Like the men at the lumber camps, the Rideau Canal labourers and the people of Bytown did not have the time, energy, or resources to grow their own food and raise their own livestock. The combined needs of all of these people created a large and concentrated consumer population that was unique in Ontario. To meet this demand, local farmers brought their produce and animals to Bytown. Markets sprang up around the Ottawa Valley, but by 1836 the Byward Market was considered to be one of the best in Upper Canada.



TITLE Ward map of the City of Ottawa

DATE 1855

ITEM NUMBER CA-001786

DESCRIPTION Map detailing the wards of the City of Ottawa and their boundaries.

Between 1800 and 1860, wheat was one of the main crops in Ontario. This was not the case in Ottawa, where market demands called for a greater variety of produce. Following this trend, the Billings family grew wheat in 1820s, but from 1839 to 1860 the women produced and sold large amounts of cheese and butter. The year 1851 marked a high point in the Billings' dairy production, when "four or five women produced fifteen thousand pounds of cheese and an equal amount of butter from fifty-six cows."



## 1826-1855 Land acquisitions

The Bytown Prescott Railway, along with the Rideau Canal and the Byward Market, added to Bytown's infrastructure and laid the tracks for greater urban growth. These developments also affected Braddish Billings' farm. For example, by participating in the canal construction and by bringing his produce and livestock to market, Braddish made enough money to build a new house in 1827.



TITLE Billings Estate House

DATE ca. 1831

ITEM NUMBER CA-002228 MG001-17-012

DESCRIPTION Photographed painting of the Billings Estate House attributed to L.J. Billings.

The house was completed in 1829, and cost \$4,000, a home that Braddish considered to be a statement of his rising wealth in the community.

Braddish improved his property over time by adding employee houses, barns, stables, sheds, a dairy, a milk house, a smoke house, an ice house, a wood house, and a store house. He also bought more land. In fact, it's estimated that over the course of his lifetime he owned a total of around 1,572 acres, although during most of his life he owned approximately 772 acres.



TITLE Billings Estate, dairy house

DATE 1975

ITEM NUMBER CA-012040

DESCRIPTION West side of the stone dairy house on the Billings Estate, built ca.1830.

TITLE Billings Estate, icehouse

## **1855-1899 Changing markets**

“As Canada's rural economy, based on self-sufficiency, changed to an industrial economy characterized by an increasingly more sophisticated and complex system of production and exchange, production enterprises themselves were transformed, the number of occupations increased, work conditions and organization changed, and work took on a new meaning in relationship to the other activities of life.” See [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com). Work and the Industrial Revolution.

In the late 1800s, changes in scientific thought and advances in technology had a profound impact on farming. In 1880 the Ontario Agricultural Commission (OAC) presented a report that reflected the changing rural climate, profiled the province's agricultural conditions, and offered advice on how to improve farming and the industry as a whole. The report did not change the face of farming overnight, but it “significantly influenced the direction of agriculture in Ontario over the next decades”.

The OAC Report may have informed some of the decisions Charles Murray (C.M.) Billings made about his farming operation. For instance, the Report described how the Ottawa Valley had the proper conditions and a significant market for growing large amounts of strawberries, and it discussed how farmers could adapt their land to start orchards. Between 1899 and 1928, C.M. gradually switched from producing vegetables and flowers to growing strawberries and orchard fruits. His father, Charles, had grown strawberries as well, but on a smaller scale than C.M.'s grand enterprise.

The OAC Report also recommended fencing-in livestock to be more economical, as opposed to fencing-in crops – farmers were focusing more on agriculture than on raising

cattle. By 1917, Gloucester Township enacted a fencing by-law, and as farmers like C.M. Billings adopted the strategy, the local landscape began to change.

As farming improvements took hold in the later half of the nineteenth century, farms became more productive, efficient, and specialized. Farmers focused their efforts on specific areas such as cattle breeding, milk production, and market produce. Large farms growing one product often held sway in the market and competed heavily with smaller, less specialized farmers. A larger portion of the selling market fell to fewer farms, creating monopolies.

One important aspect of market farming was the availability of good roads to transport produce. Farms like those owned by the Billings family were established on or near main roads, and they sat in close proximity to important junctures such as Billings Bridge and Bank Street. This road was partially macadamised as early as 1854, and macadamized as far as the Billings Bridge area by 1867, increasing the value of land nearby.

### **1855-1899 Market farming for specific needs**

As the science and technology behind farming became more specialized, so did the type of farming carried out by the Billings Family. Instead of farming wheat and raising livestock like his father Braddish I had done, Charles Billings focused on market gardening and specialty produce, growing asparagus, rhubarb, potatoes, melons, and strawberries. He also kept bees for honey.

Charles' son, Charles Murray Billings, continued in market gardening but took it a step further. He built a greenhouse on Lot 16 that allowed him to grow produce year round, including flowers, lettuce, radishes, watercress, celery, and parsley. His journal shows that he grew these items in 1899, selling some at the market and using others as seedlings.

1122

WM. GRAHAM 312 Sparks Street. JOHN GRAHAM  
PHONE 500

Sunshine Greenhouses, Ottawa, July 17 1918  
Rideau Terrace. PHONE 806

Mc C. M. Billings  
Billings Bridge Ont.

Bought of  
**GRAHAM BROS.**  
Seedsman and Florists Limited

High Grade SEEDS PLANTS BULBS CUT FLOWERS  
GRAHAM BROS. OTTAWA

Fig. 1916 Tons

CONDITIONS OF SALE.—Graham Bros. use the greatest care to supply reliable Seeds, but give no warranty as to description or quality of any Seeds or Plants they send out, and they will not be responsible in any way liable for any loss arising from any failure thereof. All Seeds or Plants bought from Graham Bros. must be accepted on these conditions or returned.

1	Account rendered		600
7	1/4 lb Best Crosby	1.00	40
	1/2 Cauliflower Erfurt		2.50
	2 lbs Corn Bantam	35	70
	1/4 Carrot Chautauque		50
	1/4 Onion Red Worthington 2 <sup>nd</sup>		63
	1/4 Parsnip M. Boning		25
	1/4 Pumpkin Wonder		20
	1/4 Grapes Ruby		20
	2 Tea M. G. Coy		36
	1/2 Baglet Marrow		10
	1/4 Bush Hubbard		30
	1/2 Bag		20
	1/4 Asparagus Calmette		15
	1/2 Onion Barletta		30
			12 99

Received Payment  
Graham Bros. Ltd.

The above is a statement of your account to date. Our business necessitates a great number of small accounts which in the aggregate amount to quite a sum. By settling at once, it will enable us to continue our work and service in the most efficient manner. Your favor will be appreciated.

Wm. F. Mc C. M. Billings (cash)  
9<sup>th</sup> Oct 1918

TITLE Invoice, Graham Bros. Seedsman and Florists

DATE 1918

ITEM NUMBER CA 001166

DESCRIPTION Invoice showing the types of plants and seeds that Charles Murray Billings bought from Graham Bros. Seedsman and Florists. Items on the list include beets, cauliflower, corn, carrots, onions, parsnips, pumpkins, and asparagus.

Industrialization gave farmers the means to change their farming strategies, and it expanded the market for their products. New jobs opened up in the cities, which drew people away from rural areas and living off the land.

The mid-1800s saw Ottawa grow in importance, becoming Capital of the Province of Canada in 1857 and Capital of the Dominion of Canada in 1867. As the seat of Government, politicians, dignitaries, and even royalty visited the City. At special events,



## 1855-1899 Agreements and real estate

[illegible]

The practice of selling smaller parcels of land to gardeners, rather than farming it directly, was more lucrative. Many families sold their property to developers, and farmers maintained their families on fewer acres.



Yielding to the expanding real-estate market, the second generation of Billings' began selling parts of the estate outside of the family. In 1873, siblings Samuel and Lamira sold thirty acres of Lot 19 to form a subdivision known as Gateville. In 1893, Braddish II sold 100-acres of his inheritance to form the Rideau Park Subdivision. This transaction was particularly significant because of its size, and the fact that the "development of this land marked the beginning of urbanization of the Billings land."

It is difficult to know why Braddish II parted with so much land. The 1870s were a difficult time for farmers who were plagued with poor crops while living in a global recession. Perhaps Braddish II needed extra money during these times. On the other hand, Ottawa was a growing center and a demand for housing may have raised land values. Braddish II may have found that he could make more money selling the land than he could by renting or farming it.

### **1900-1945 Suburban encroachment**

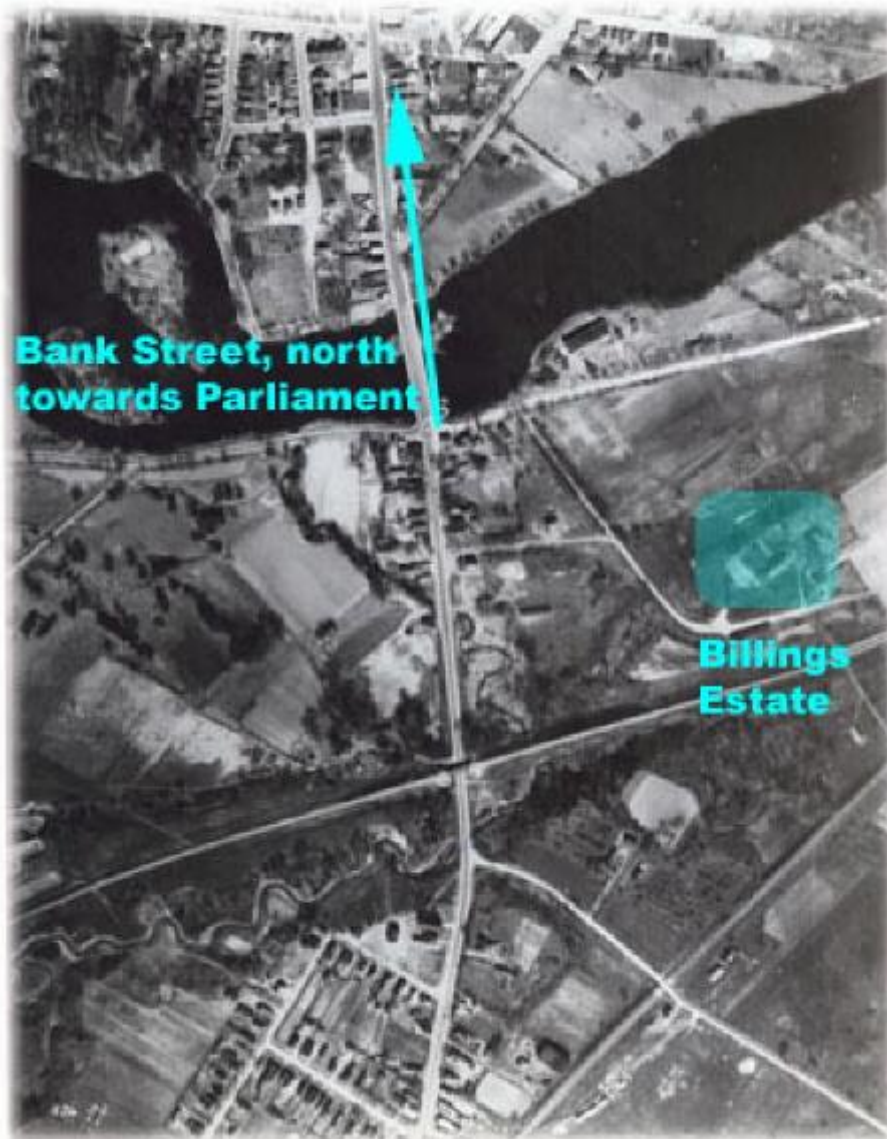
The early part of the 20th century saw an economic boom, based on real estate, railroad and mine speculations. The concept of mixed farming had moved aside in favour of specialized growing and production operations. Wheat production was abandoned in favour of whole milk production, raising specialised livestock, and market gardening. The Billings family also followed these trends, as the Billings Brothers Farm raised Ayrshire cattle in the 1920s, and Charles Murray specialized in specific market produce until his death in 1936.

To cope with the new agricultural reality, co-operatives and agricultural boards were created and new institutions established to give a voice to farmers and their needs, in a growing suburbia-controlled municipality.

The early 1900s surged with waves of prosperity, decline, and recovery in a sea of major events: the First World War, the Roaring 20's, the Great Depression, and the Second World War. During these turbulent times, land owners focused on "[maintaining] the status quo."

Starting in the 1860s, people began selling land for profit, rather than using it for agriculture. But by the 1900s, this small-scale shift expanded into suburban development, as subdivided land was converted into lucrative market garden plots. Prime agricultural land that used to sustain the city's needs became a commodity in itself.

As cities grew, so did the number and variety of available jobs. People could support their families by working in urban areas and their wages allowed them to buy food, rather than grow it themselves. Since people farmed less, housing lots did not have to be large enough to support huge gardens and crops. Development profit outweighed agricultural profit, and land was sold and subdivided.



TITLE Aerial photograph of the Billings Bridge area

DATE ca.1928

ITEM NUMBER MG162-02-010

DESCRIPTION Aerial photograph of land surrounding the Billings Estate and the Billings Bridge. Number 1926-99 is written on the lower left corner of the photo, which suggests the photo was taken in 1926; however, "May 14, 1928" is handwritten on the back.

Urban market gardens declined and prime agricultural land was developed—farms returned geographically to a rural setting as farmers were forced to buy land farther from the urban centers. By 1915, Ottawa's population "reached approximately 110,000 and urban development extended continuously to the Billings Bridge area."

## **1900-1945 Farming and the First World War**

The First World War, 1914-1918 and the ensuing 'war effort' caused a temporary agricultural boom, but it also reduced manpower as men went off to fight in Europe. The invention and improvement of farm machinery helped farmers cope with fewer available hands.

In 1914, Ontario farmers formed United Farmers of Ontario (UFO) and the United Farmers Co-operative. The UFO was "a farmers' social, educational, and political organization," while the Co-op handled buying and selling. As the war dragged on, people became dissatisfied with the social and political climate. The UFO ran for government and won the provincial elections in 1919, but its popularity as a political party lost momentum in the 1920s.

The third generation of the Billings family continued farming during the war years, even though the family land had been subdivided and approximately 200 acres had been sold. By 1915 Hugh Braddish and Charles Murray Billings held the bulk of the remaining estate, splitting 460 acres between them.

## **1900-1945 The Byward Market**

Although the Byward Market existed since Bytown's early days, it underwent various structural and locational changes. Disaster had a profound impact on the Market's evolution. For instance, a major fire in 1862 and another one in 1874 ravaged the Lowertown Market area and led to extensive rebuilding

Before 1854, the Byward Market stretched from Clarence Street to York Street. In 1864, it expanded to George Street when a new Market Building went up. Photographs from the early to mid 1900s show the twentieth century Byward Market and the physical changes that took place as it grew and expanded.



TITLE Byward Market

DATE ca.1903

ITEM NUMBER CA-000222

DESCRIPTION Looking north from George Street down Market Square.



TITLE Byward Market

DATE ca.1925

ITEM NUMBER CA-000206

DESCRIPTION Looking north from George Street down Market Square. The Byward Market Extension (Annex) appears on the right with its two towers and its mansard roof with iron cresting. This building burned down in 1926.





TITLE Byward Market

DATE 1954 May 15

ITEM NUMBER CA-004266

DESCRIPTION Looking north from George Street down Market Square. The Byward Market building appears on the right.

## 20th-century markets

The Billings family had conducted business in the market system from the beginning, when Braddish I sold his produce and livestock to lumber camps in the early 'shanty markets.' The second generation continued producing for the market, with Sabra and Sally selling dairy products and Charles selling specialty produce at the Byward Market

In the twentieth century, Charles Murray Billings centered his farm on market gardening. He started out by selling vegetables and flowers, but between 1899 and 1928 he expanded his operation to include more specialized products such as strawberries, plums, apples, raspberries, currants, gooseberries, and blackberries. With higher end produce, Charles Murray could make a greater profit.

Charles Murray's farm journals show us how diverse and extensive his farm and orchards became:

1. 1916: He purchased 8,000 strawberry plants
2. 1925: He planted 8 Melba apple trees and 4 Koheta plum trees
3. 1926: He planted 656 apple trees (McIntosh, Famense, Melba)
4. 1928: He planted 200 plum trees

Receipts from the collection show that Charles Murray purchased 8,000 strawberry plants in 1916, a specialty crop that the 1880 Ontario Agricultural Commission (OAC) report highlights as a lucrative for Ontario. By 1917, Charles Murray also tried planting plum trees on the lower swamp area, although he did not have a full orchard operation until the 1920s. He had by that time decided to plant trees on the upper hill area of the farm, an area more conducive to growing fruit trees, and having the soil features that the OAC report suggested.

By the early 1920s, Hugh Braddish Billings transferred his land on lot 16 to his sons Charles Alexander and John Roger. The brothers used this property along with additional land rented from their uncle, Charles Murray, and a neighbour to start the Billings Brothers Farm. The farm only ran from around 1923 to 1929. It was a mixed farm that "specialized...in raising purebred Ayshire dairy cattle and in the production of milk" in addition to keeping other livestock and growing grains, corn, and hay.



## CANADIAN NATIONAL LIVE STOCK RECORDS

CANADIAN Ayrshire BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION.

48021

Incorporated under the Act respecting Live Stock Record Associations at the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Canada.

Certified Copy of Pedigree Recorded in the Canadian Ayrshire Herd Book.

If a change of ownership occurs, this certificate with application for transfer and transfer fee should immediately be forwarded to Record Office.

ROSAEKL -77489- Female

White and dark brown, born February 20th, 1920, bred by Archie Thompson, Kingsmill, Ont.; 2nd owner, April 20th, 1921, Thomas Dennis, Straffordville, Ont.

TRANSFER OR OTHER USE.

SIRE Jock Armour -58523-

C. R. of P.  
qualified progeny

SIRE Advance of Walnut Lodge-45280-

C. R. of P.  
qualified progeny

DAM Arvilla -30486-

C. R. of P. Test 672 12819 lbs. Milk.  
Class Mature 506 lbs. B. Fat.  
Vol. 26

DAM Buttercup of Fernbrook 5th

C. R. of P. Test  
Classlbs. Milk.  
lbs. B. Fat.

SIRE Garclaugh Prince Fortune 2nd

C. R. of P. 39 -28182-  
13 qualified progeny

DAM Buttercup of Fernbrook 2nd-35467-

C. R. of P. Test lbs. Milk.  
Class lbs. B. Fat.

This is to Certify that the above pedigree is on record in the Canadian Ayrshire Herd Book.

Approved

J. H. Mason

Per Minister of Agriculture.

Typed by

K. MCD 313357-7

A. R. Lawrence

Register.

OTTAWA, CANADA.

September 29th, 1921





TITLE Billings Estate, farmland

DATE ca.1940

ITEM NUMBER CA-016249, MG162-08-665

DESCRIPTION Photograph from the Billings Collection of a Massey Harris tractor, Junior 101 model, produced from 1940-1946.

The nature of the produce dictated the style of farming. For instance, picking delicate fruit required more hands-on dexterity than raising cattle and growing crops. However, by 1928 Charles Murray also started renting out his stable to local Blacksmith J.J. Rowe, which indicates that he may have started using automobiles and tractors instead of horses, and was following the rapid mechanization of specialized agriculture.





TITLE Billings Estate, barns

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-012070

DESCRIPTION Photograph from the J. Rowe collection. By 1928, Blacksmith J. Rowe began renting a stable from Charles Murray Billings.

Charles Alexander and John Roger Billings belong to the family's fourth generation. They were the last family members to use the estate lands for farming, and their farm's heavy use of technology foreshadowed the rapid urbanization that would extend to Billings Bridge and the family land during their lifetime.

Charles Alexander was in semi-retirement in 1936, when he inherited the family manor home from Charles Murray. Charles Alexander was able to sell portions of the land, and became a full time land lord, while devoting himself to his new career as a mining engineer. He sold a large portion of the estate to the north of the manor house in the 1950s, which was developed into a subdivision.



TITLE Billings Estate House

DATE 1975

ITEM NUMBER CA-000355

DESCRIPTION Photograph of the Billings Estate House after additions and renovations had been made.

Charles Alexander began negotiations to sell the Billings Estate to the City of Ottawa in 1974. The City agreed to take over the property and use it for historical interpretation, the sale becoming final after Charles Alexander's death in 1975. The Billings Estate was declared a National Historic Site in 1983.

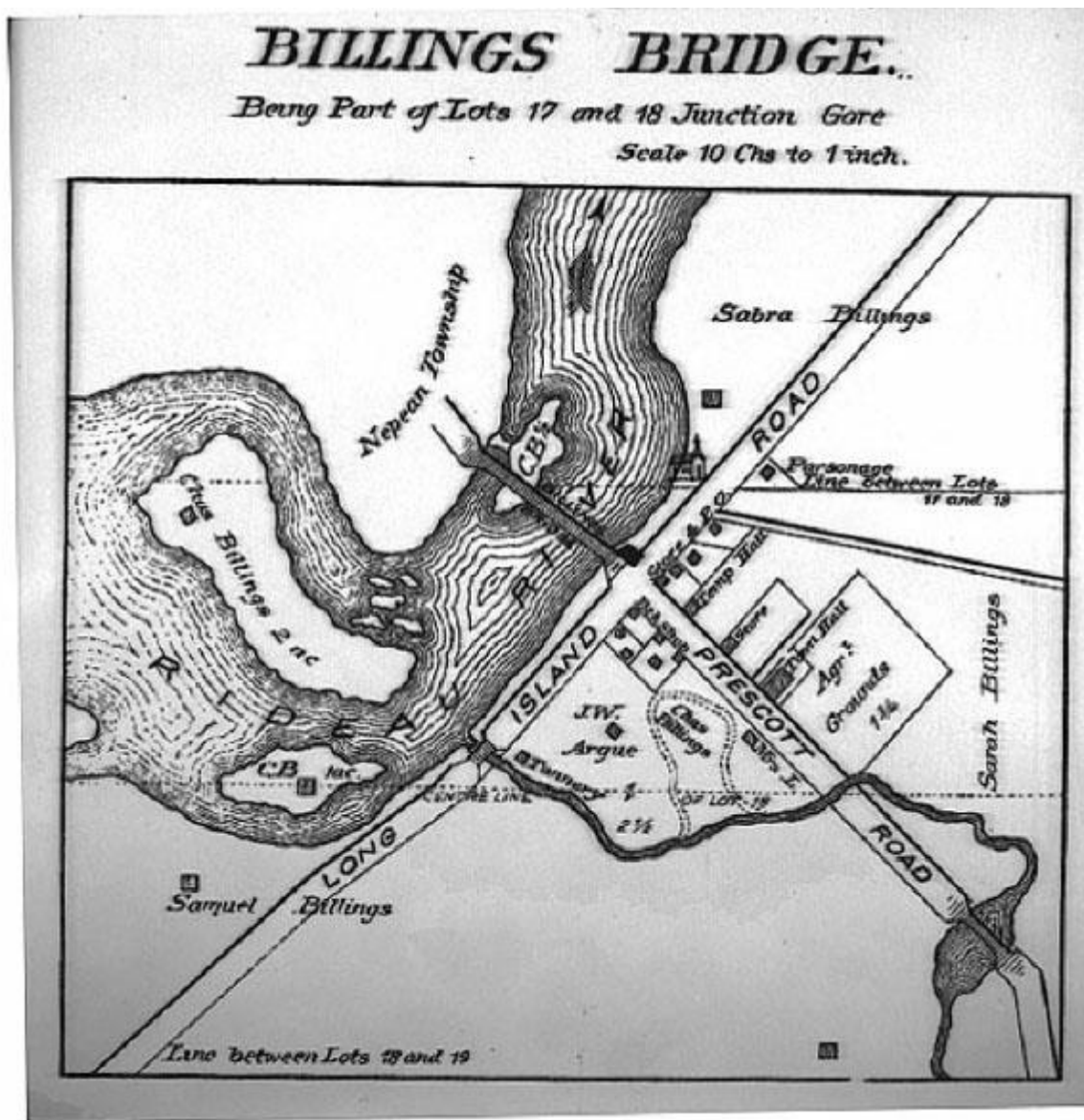
## Billings Bridge History

- 1812-1865
- 1866-1900
- 1901-1940
- After 1940

### 1812-1865

The Billings Bridge community formed in the fertile and forested land around the Rideau River. Its location made it an idyllic place to settle, yet there was one major drawback: the settlers needed a bridge so that they could cross the river and sell their products at the Bytown Market. Braddish Billings operated a ferry across the Rideau, prior to building a bridge in 1831.

Local settlers pulled together to raise money for this vital structure, which would span the Rideau River from Bank Street. People originally called it the Farmers Bridge, but by 1859 both the structure and the community that grew around it became commonly known as Billings Bridge.



TITLE Map of the Billings Bridge Area

DATE ca. 1864

ITEM NUMBER CA-001357

DESCRIPTION Map showing property lines and landmarks in Billings Bridge, as well as second generation Billings family ownership

The Village of Billings Bridge did not spring up because of a single family. Shortly after Braddish Billings first settled in 1812, other families began to homestead in the area. According to the Belden Atlas of 1879, the Dow and Williams families settled along the north bank of the Rideau River in Nepean shortly after the Billings, and by 1819, the Doxeys, Ottersons, and Wilsons had settled nearby. William Smyth arrived in 1821. He



became a pillar of the community who served as District Councillor, Reeve, and Township Treasurer.

## **Building the Bridge**

Building the bridge was a community effort. People pledged money through subscriptions, initiated by Braddish Billings and William Smyth, who gave £25 each. The subscriptions were issued several times because the bridge continuously washed out. One example from 1862 reads:

Subscriptions to assist in building a bridge [...] the River Rideau from Gloucester to the [island?] in the place where the bridge known as Billings Bridge was and also for repairing a certain pier and building another pier in said River above said [bridge].

We the undersigned do hereby promise and agree to pay into the hands of Braddish Billings, James Brown, Archibald McKellar or William Smith [sic] (merchant) the amounts which we have signed opposite our respective names said amounts as to be paid at the time hereinafter mentioned The one half thereof to be paid when said bridge is built and the other half to be paid on the 15th day of January next for the purposes aforesaid.

Braddish Billings held a prominent place in the community, and people trusted him to take funds for the bridge. He also contributed generously, making the highest pledge at sixteen pounds.

### **Bridge Timeline**

1. 1831 - The first bridge across the Rideau River was built after subscriptions raised the £130 needed to build it.
2. 1843 - Braddish Billings repaired the bridge for a £12 contract.
3. 1847 - Bridge washed out! A subscription was taken up to build the new bridge.
4. 1849 - Braddish unsuccessfully petitioned the legislature for the power to erect a toll bridge over the Rideau River, between Nepean and Gloucester.
5. 1862 - Bridge washed out again! Possible reason: Early builders constructed the wooden bridges with only three feet of clearance above the water level, leaving little room for rising waters.
6. 1914 - The community constructed a new bridge, which still exists today.



TITLE Billings Bridge

DATE pre-1916

ITEM NUMBER CA-006141

DESCRIPTION Photograph of the Billings Bridge and the Rideau River.



TITLE Billings Bridge

DATE 1916

ITEM NUMBER CA-006261

DESCRIPTION Photograph of a man in a buggy watering his horse in the Rideau River. The reconstructed Billings Bridge, which replaced the old wooden structure, is visible in the background.

### **Early Services**

As more settlers moved into the area, demand for services increased.

In 1823, Braddish Billings built the first sawmill in the area. This service allowed settlers to get milled lumber conveniently on site, rather than order it downriver from Merrickville or Hull.

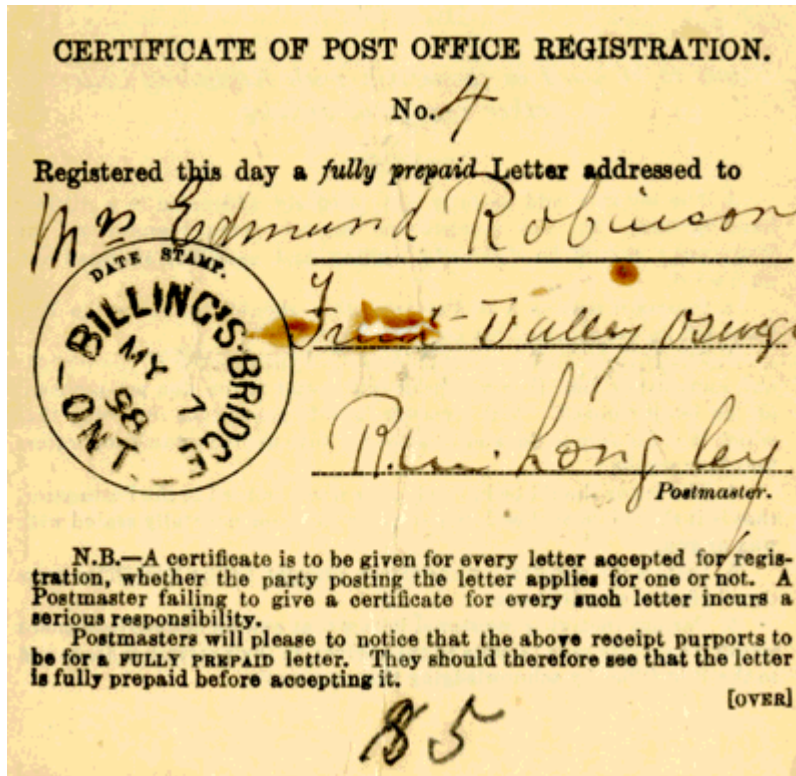
Hugh Mason served the area as the first blacksmith. He created a stir among local farmers by constructing an iron plough that “won third prize at the provincial exhibition in Toronto.” He and wagon maker Andrew Waterson both found their services in high demand in this primarily agricultural community.

In 1859, William Smyth opened a general store that supplied the residents with everyday items. An insurance policy described this business as

a frame building clapboarded outside and painted, lathed and plastered inside, just finished 25x 30 one storey and a half high, occupied by Mr. Smyth as dwelling and country store situated on Lot No.18 Junction Gore in the Township of Gloucester.

A receipt from 1867 shows that the store sold bread, salt, sugar, rice, flour, oatmeal, tea, cheese, nails, paper, envelopes, and medicine, among other things.

The development of better roads and the introduction of the railway truly opened up Billings Bridge to settlement. Because it was easier to transport and therefore sell agricultural products, the community's population surged. This in turn created a demand for a post office. The receipt of postal recognition was symbolic of an established community. Billings Bridge Village received postal recognition in 1859, but it was not until April 1, 1865 that the Village opened its first postal office.



TITLE Certificate of Post Office Registration, Billings Bridge

DATE 1898 May 7

ITEM NUMBER MG001-03-1385

DESCRIPTION Slip for a “fully prepaid” registered letter that was sent from the Billings Bridge Post Office.

## 1866-1900

### Local Government

The Municipal Act of 1849 introduced complete self-government to municipalities, with an elected township council headed by a reeve, or mayor. The Town rented a building from Braddish Billings in 1859 to house the Council and its activities until a frame hall

could be built. As the government's needs expanded, the town built a new brick hall on land purchased from Sally Billings in 1874.

The Municipal Loan Fund Act of 1852 allowed municipalities to receive funds for local improvements, roads, bridges and railways, and gave even more financial freedom to municipalities. The council also supervised financial matters, such as levying taxes, revising the assessment rolls and granting licenses.

## **Events, Organizations and Societies**

The Village of Billings Bridge had a lively community spirit. Religious societies such as the Orange Lodge, the sons of Temperance and the Independent Order of Foresters developed, reflecting an increased feeling of social awareness and a greater sense of social need.

The Orange Order championed Protestant causes, and held meetings or parades to voice their concerns. The order was able to build a hall in Billings Bridge after the Billings family granted the trustees a parcel of land.

The Sons of Temperance was an organization of men who pledged complete abstinence from all alcoholic drinks - liquor, wine or beer.

The Independent Order of Foresters was an order of men who advocated the Catholic religion, and acted as an insurance company for its members - Health insurance, death benefits and pensions were provided to members.

The Gloucester Agricultural Society was formed in 1854 as a result of the close connection of religion and agriculture in the region. The Billings Bridge Village, as a farming community had a large following in this Society, which served as a forum to discuss matters pertaining to agriculture. The Society also held annual agricultural fairs, from as early as 1860. During such events as the Gloucester Agricultural Fair, neighbours came together for fun and activities, and entered their handy-crafts, livestock or machinery into contests to increase their social prestige and visibility.

## **Religion**

Census reports for 1871, 1881, and 1891 show that the Billings Bridge populace represented several religious denominations. French Catholics and Irish Catholics comprised the largest group, (and were differentiated in the census), followed by significant numbers of Anglicans, Methodists, and Presbyterians, and smaller numbers of Quakers, Unitarians, Apostolics, and Baptists.

The later half of the 19th C. saw increased church construction, beginning with Sabra's Knox 'Free Church' in 1865, which could hold 250 people. Sally built a Methodist Church when the need arose in 1890 - Billings Bridge had become a separate Methodist circuit in 1889.



TITLE Early Billings House and Methodist Church

DATE 18--.

ITEM NUMBER CA-002847 see also CA-012061

DESCRIPTION Photograph of one of Braddish and Lamira Billings' early homes showing the outdoor oven. The Methodist Church, built in 1889, appears on the right. See CA-012061 for a photo taken years later from the same viewpoint, in which the house has been demolished but the chimney and oven still stand.

Trinity Church Mission was formed in Billings Bridge in 1876, when a special vestry meeting was held with the intent of forming a new Church of England Mission. Sabra Billings sold the Mission its first Rectory, in the form of a small wooden two-storey home across the street – it cost \$400 cash.

In 1879, Father Magnan began the first Catholic Services, held monthly in the schoolhouse. The Archbishop of Ottawa established a parish at Billings Bridge in 1886 and a church was built that same year. In 1887 a cyclone damaged the church and a new wood and brick version replaced it in 1889.



In 1900, a Jewish community began to form in Billings Bridge Village, as part of a larger geographical immigration and migration trend. Immigration added to the social fabric of a community and made a significant contribution to the demographics in Billings Bridge.

## 1901-1940

### Immigration demographics

The trend of Jewish migrations into the Billings Bridge village area at the beginning of the 20th C. marked a larger immigration trend across Canada, as Jewish Immigrants arrived from Europe.

In 1900 Isaac and Rebecca Greenberg left their home in the Ukraine and finally settled in Billings Bridge. They rented land from Sabra Billings, making them the first Jewish settlers in the village.

Sabra's correspondence to her nephew Charles M. Billings, mentions the Greenberg's on several occasions, referring to rent and various tenancy matters. For example, Sabra wrote in one letter that she gave Mr. Greenberg permission to "take out all the fallen timber he [wants] out of the bush before the snow comes."

The Greenbergs were not the sole Jewish settlers for long. Other families followed—namely the Spivaks, Dubinskys, Pollacks, Glusteins, Helds and Liffschitzs --and they mainly took to farming.

Eventually a small Jewish community formed in Billings Bridge. Its members could attend religious services, "shul" at the Held farm, and their children could have religious schooling, "cheder" at the Greenberg and Kronick homes. Lazar Greenberg's general store and grocery also hosted shul and cheder. Both Jewish and non-Jewish residents patronized this store, making it an important community hub in Billings Bridge.

By 1920, there were almost forty Jewish families in Billings Bridge. Many of the families were renting land, but they couldn't afford to buy it, so they moved to the city and beyond. By the 1960s the original Billings Bridge Jewish community had practically vanished. One former resident described moving to the city as a sign of success; other people saw it as the end of an era.

### Market Agriculture

The use of land in Billings Bridge changed during the early 20th century. Rather than farming solely to survive, inhabitants began to grow crops for the market alone. Many of these farmers sold their produce, eggs, and poultry to local residents, shops, or in the Byward market. A 1926 receipt addressed to "Mr. Billings" illustrates this process. It states that he owed the Hope Poultry farm \$17.37 for fresh eggs and chickens.

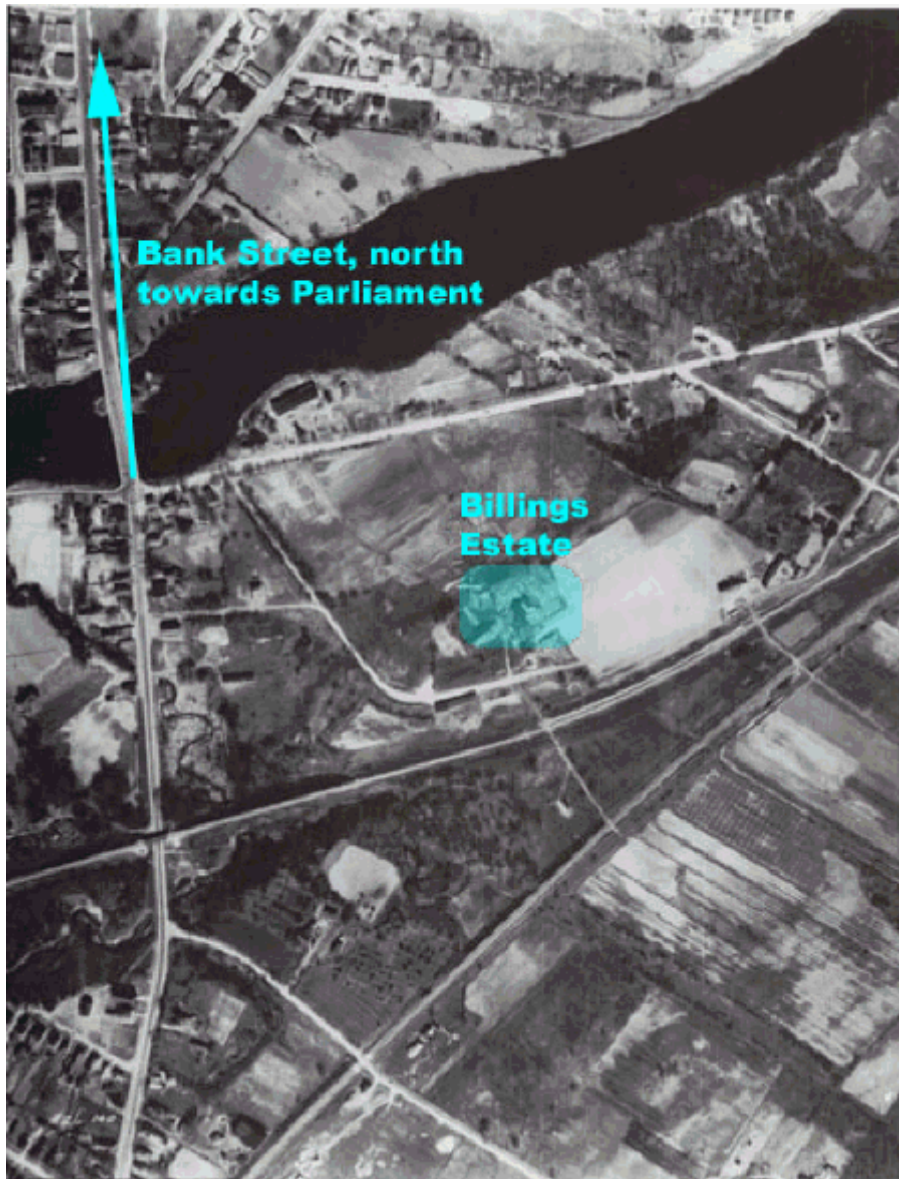
## After 1940

### Becoming Part of Ottawa – Urban Development

Declining agricultural land use and shrinking populations in rural areas led the City of Ottawa to annex Billings Bridge in 1950. The City gained 14,665 acres of land. It also became responsible for the new ward's healthcare, roads, and waste management. In contrast, Gloucester Township felt the loss of over 8000 residents and close to \$5,000 in taxes.

After annexation, the once fertile land of Billings Bridge progressively turned into subdivisions. Campeau Corporation, whose president was from the area, created one of the first subdivisions of the 20th Century that still survives, located around Kilborn Avenue. The post office was closed, and the building removed once the construction of Riverside Drive began.

The Billings Bridge Plaza, constructed in the 1950s, marked a definite shift from rural life to a more commercial one. The building not only moved people from the village streets to a single indoor venue, it also foreshadowed the decline of family-owned and locally operated businesses in the face of corporations.

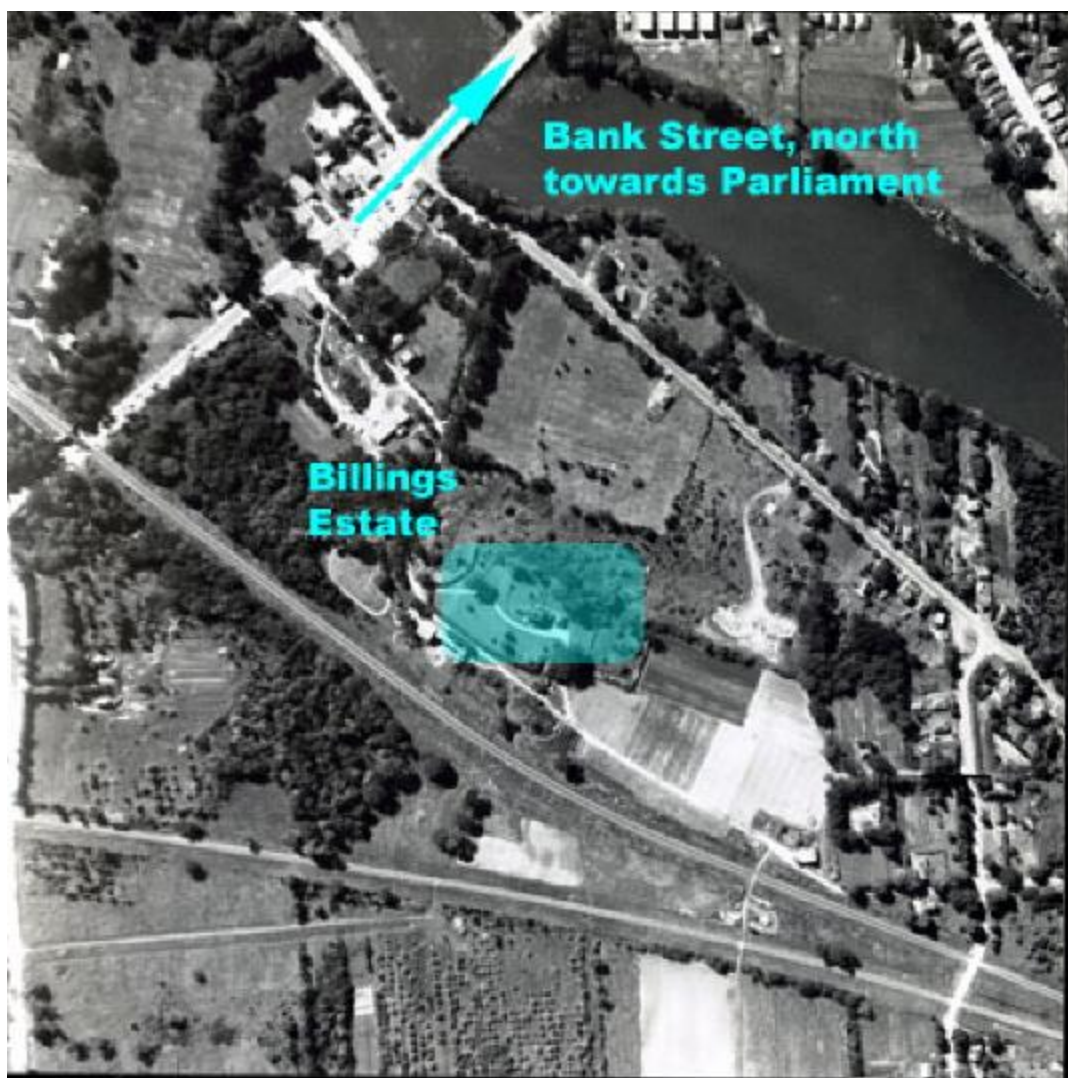


TITLE Aerial Photograph of the Billings Bridge Area

DATE ca.1928

ITEM NUMBER MG162-02-011

DESCRIPTION Aerial photograph, facing north, of land surrounding the Billings Estate and the Billings Bridge, east of bridge. Number 1926-100 is written on the lower left corner of the photo, which suggests the photo was taken in 1926; however, "May 14, 1928" is handwritten on the back.



TITLE Aerial Photograph of the Billings Bridge and Surrounding Land

DATE 1952

ITEM NUMBER MG162-02-009

DESCRIPTION Aerial photograph of land surrounding the Billings Bridge and the Billings Estate taken by Energy, Mines & Resources. "1952" is handwritten on the back.





TITLE Aerial Photograph of the Billings Bridge and Surrounding Land

DATE 1973

ITEM NUMBER MG162-02-007

DESCRIPTION Aerial photograph of land surrounding the Billings Bridge and the Billings Estate taken by Energy, Mines & Resources. "May '73" is handwritten on the back.

# Education

## The Nineteenth Century

In the early nineteenth century, finding good facilities proved difficult and there were many challenges, including: cost of operation, availability of teachers, proximity of schools, and availability of books. Pioneer life meant hardship, and the children were needed on the farm or in the home – time away from home for education was not easy to set aside.

As early as 1797, the Upper Canadian Legislature had made provisions to set aside crown land for the establishment of a grammar school in each district, and a teacher to be nominated, subject to the approval of the Governor. The limited funds available from the Government meant that teachers had to collect tuition themselves – education was not yet free!

Schools in Bytown existed as early as 1827 – they were expensive to run, and had little furniture and no standards for the subjects taught or books used, fees charged, or the hours a school was in session. It is no wonder that schools' existences were short lived. The Dalhousie District was created in 1842 and with it, the newly elected council of Local Government passed the Education Act of 1843. The first Superintendent of Schools as elected by the Council was Hamnett Pinhey, who had the charge of eighty teachers in the District, within the rough geographical space of County Carleton.

1. Public school board
2. Family involvement
3. Sabra Billings
4. Elkanah Billings
5. Military education
6. The 20th Century

### Public school board

By 1848, a Common School of Trustees was created, which allowed policies of regulated pay for teachers and government funding. To operate one school board in Bytown was to try to bring together Protestants and Roman Catholics, English and French, a political and religious undertaking that was potentially contentious.

The Billings family valued formal education. Lamira Billings was a schoolteacher at two stages of her life. After her marriage to Braddish, Lamira continued her teaching, and according to Charles A. Billings, Lamira organized a school in her own home and taught the children of the nearby families until organized schools became more common. It wasn't until 1847 that Bytown listed even 73 pupils.



*Table 1 - Public School Attendance in Bytown/Ottawa*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
1847	73
1850	203
1854	625
1865	1,428
1875	2,998
1930	17,591

The number of pupils increased steadily throughout the years, after the formation of a regulated school board and the annexations of land and residents to Bytown/Ottawa to increase population enrolled in public schools.

### **Family involvement**

Education mattered to Braddish Billings as well. He realized the district's need for a school and paid for the construction of the first schoolhouse in the Farmer's Bridge area sometime between 1827 and 1831. At the age of 71, after the death of Braddish, Lamira again took up teaching – and not simply to take up an existing position but opted to build an entirely new building.

Braddish and Lamira's dedication to education applied to their children as well. The second generation Billings all received a basic education, and most of them went on to boarding schools and other academic institutions that only upper and middle class families could afford.

School workbooks in the Billings collection illustrate the importance schools placed on the art of penmanship. Students diligently practiced line after line of letters from the alphabet. As the quality of the lettering improved, the students moved onto writing full sentences.

Sabra's books from her studies at a Montreal boarding school offer a glimpse of the Victorian society the second generation. The sentences she was instructed to write are like rules of female behaviour, rote learning to impart a message, set up in a style that made them easy to memorize and internalize:

Attain useful arts; blame not rashly;

A virtuous education is a valuable acquisition;

Beware of temptation lest your virtue suffer;  
Extremes never last;  
Fear shields virtue;  
Communicate knowledge to ignorant persons;  
Demonstrate your appreciation by improvements;  
Generosity is more commended than practised;  
Humility is the greatest ornament to beauty;  
Harbour no malice; Incite no jealousy;  
Innumerable inconveniences await mankind;  
Knowledge promotes and improves happiness;  
Kind action please; Limit your desires; Nature oft prevails;  
Learning merits patronage and encouragement.

Conversely, Braddish Billings II's workbooks use the same method but have a different message. The sentences young Braddish had to write dealt with business and agriculture, rather than 'proper' behaviour, and they appear like entries in a farm ledger:

Kenneth's cheque on Union Bank; Net proceeds venture on cotton; Imported 1st June of Boxes Oranges.

The different themes illustrate the perceived roles of men and women in society.

The education of the Billings children also included lessons in arithmetic, languages, music and art. And Sabra Billings received a better education than many of her female contemporaries.

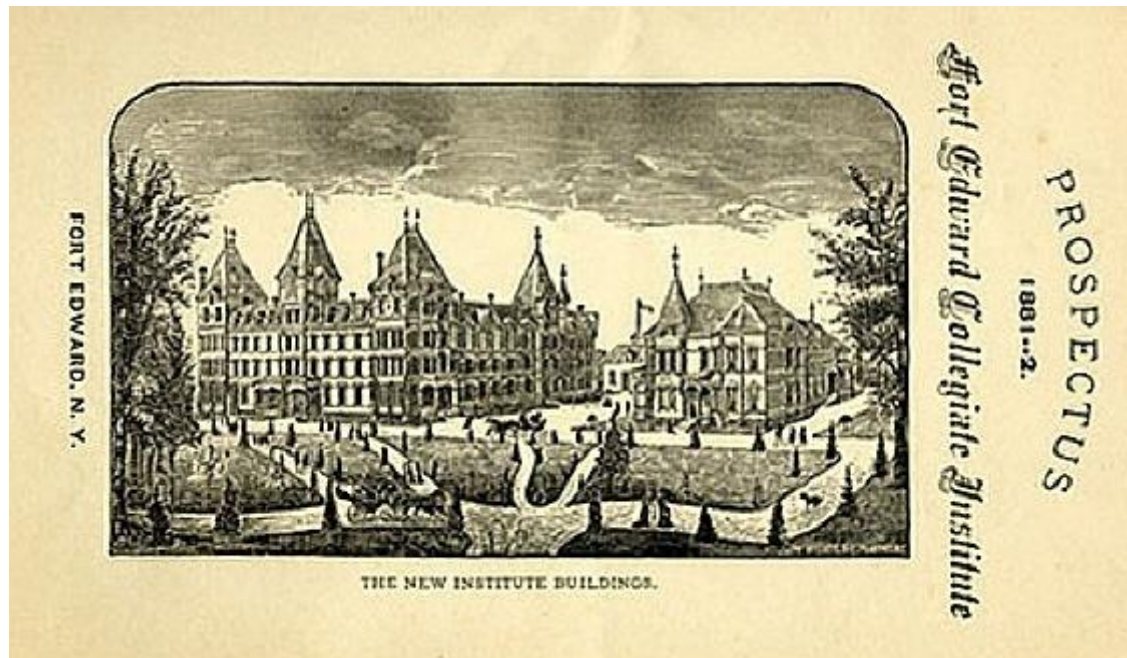
## **Sabra Billings**

Sabra Billings lived a life that was unconventional for the period. She chose not to marry, and instead ran the family business with her sister, travelled extensively, improved her education, and owned her own property. Some of Sabra's uniqueness can be attributed to her parents' emphasis on education.

When she was only eight, Braddish and Lamira sent Sabra to a boarding school in Brockville. This was a progressive move considering most pioneer girls had to cut their educations short to help with chores at home. Sabra continued studying through her early teens while she attended schools in Montreal.

In general, Sabra would have been instructed in a number of areas. Ladies and gentlemen studied under separate curricula, even when they attended the same school.

The brochure advertises the opening of the Fort Plain Seminary and Female Collegiate Institute in New York Country, America. Here, courses deemed appropriate for women are catalogued. For example, a young girl going into school could expect to receive instruction in languages such as French or German, lessons on the piano, as well as lessons in English, or ornamental needlework. Men on the other hand received instruction on ancient languages, natural sciences, and mathematics.



TITLE Prospectus for 1880-1881 Fort Edward Collegiate Institute

DATE 1854

ITEM NUMBER MG001-09-029 a

DESCRIPTION Brochure advertising the opening of the Fort Plain Seminary and Female Collegiate Institute in New York County, America. Sabra attended this school in the 1850s. Block print showing campus buildings.

While the brochure is dated to 1854, the list of instruction represents the type of education Sabra would have received. Sabra's education did not end with her teenage years. Much later in her life, during her forties, she again attended a ladies college in New York. Nevertheless, while her education may have been atypical of her female contemporaries, she still did not receive the same instruction as that of her brothers, or other male contemporaries.

## Elkanah Billings

Elkanah Billings' appears to have had the most extensive education of the second generation children. In the 1830s, Elkanah studied at the St. Lawrence Academy in Potsdam, New York. He returned to Bytown and then moved to Toronto as a student –

at –law of the law Society of Upper Canada. He became a lawyer in 1844 and returned to begin work in Bytown.

Elkanah also had a short-lived practice in Renfrew. Writing to his mother in 1852, he complained that the other lawyers in the surrounding areas were unjustly black balling him, and argued that he was “as well qualified to enter as any lawyer in Bytown.”

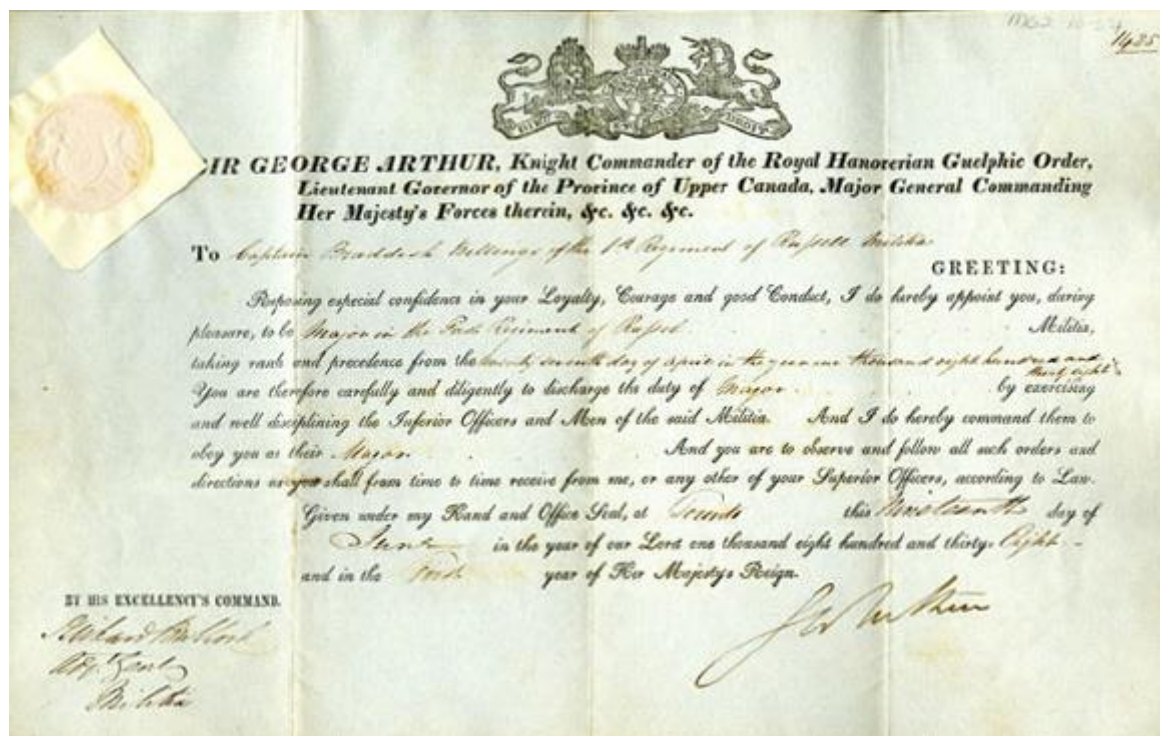
It was during his time in Renfrew that Elkanah discovered a passion for geology and palaeontology. He began to publish magazines dedicated to natural history, which caught the attention of William E. Logan, director of the Geological Survey of Canada. Elkanah was offered a position in Montreal as “the first Palaeontologist” of the survey. Elkanah pursued his new passion and educational interest with vigour. In letters home, he wrote of how much he enjoyed his work, and told his father it “is exactly what I like and if I can live by it to the last I shall always think myself fortunate.”

In fact, Elkanah did manage to live by his work until his untimely death in 1876. During his career, he was elected a member of the Royal Geological society in England and also Vice President of the Natural History Society of Montreal. Because of the education he received, Elkanah was able to rise to a position of prominence, documenting Canada’s geological history.

### **Military education**

The military sometimes played a role in men’s education. A young man could often further his career by enhancing his traditional education with military training.

Braddish Billings III (1846-1893) attended a military school in 1889. He followed in the footsteps of his father, Braddish II, and his uncle Charles, both of whom had careers in the militia.



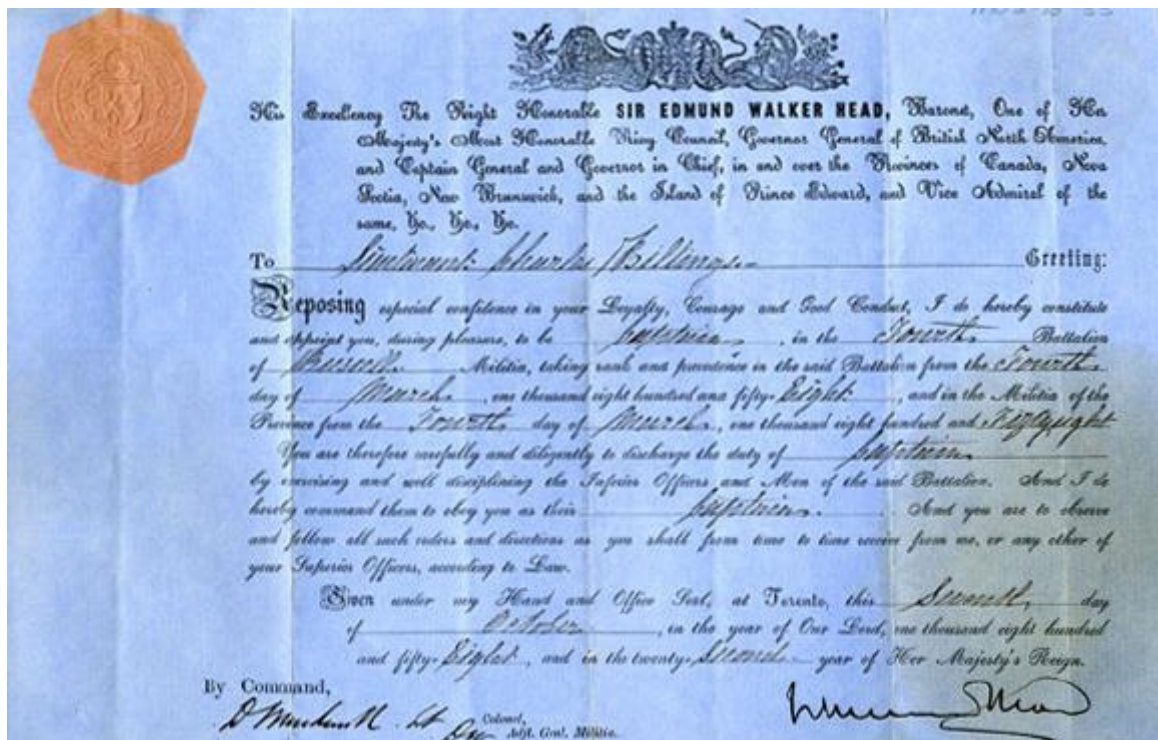
TITLE Militia Certificate, Braddish Billings I

DATE 1838 June 19

ITEM NUMBER MG002-10-054

DESCRIPTION Certificate indicating the promotion of Braddish Billings I from Captain to Major, 14th Regiment of Russell Militia.





TITLE Militia Certificate, Charles Billings

DATE 1858 October 5

ITEM NUMBER MG002-10-055

DESCRIPTION Certificate issued to Lieutenant Charles Billings indicating promotion to Captain in the Fourth Battalion of Russell militia.

During his time at the Royal School of Infantry, Toronto, Braddish was schooled in drill and exercises, discipline and military law, interior economy and regimental duties. He was also graded for his behaviour in squad, company and battalion situations, as well as his skill with sword and rifle and his capacity for imparting instructions.





Amelia went on to attend the Ottawa Ladies' College in 1905. In the same year she received a place on the Honour Roll for her spelling. Amelia lived at the college while she studied and also had to pay for her tuition and supplies. For her first year, the total amount for her tuition, board, books, and supplies was \$29.

Her courses included:

- Reading
- Spelling
- Physical Geography
- Writing
- Bookkeeping
- Algebra
- Scripture
- British History
- Latin

The college also offered courses in science, geometry, psychology, typewriting, and stenography—an excellent example of the changing trend in female education. Even though it was strictly a ladies' college, it offered courses that had predominately been the domain of men in preceding centuries.

Amelia's brothers John Roger and Hugh Braddish II wrote junior entrance exams in 1914 to continue their education. While Hugh attended the Ottawa Collegiate Institute, he studied many of the same topics as his sister:

- English Literature
- Composition
- Reading
- Spelling
- Geography
- Arithmetic
- Algebra
- Biology
- Art
- Latin Authors

With the beginning of the First World War, Amelia and her sister “Mayme” Maria both took the St. John’s Ambulance nursing course, which qualified them to render first aid to the wounded. Amelia and Mayme contributed to the war effort by furthering their education and preparing for emergencies during an uncertain time.

# Church Development

## Nineteenth and Early Twentieth

Religion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries factored heavily in most settlers' lives. Local churches were few and far between, but people still taught the tenets and practiced their faith.

At this time, the church not only created a place of worship for the congregation, it also fostered the growth of community – children instilled with religious tenants and values from an early age continued to be observant throughout a lifetime.

Involvement with religious groups showed more than faith - it was a social vehicle, and allowed for neighbourly interaction and friendships. An invitation from the Billings Bridge Methodist Church to a Parlour Social in 1896 points to this idea of social commitment within the church; invitations to church parades and to a lecture given by the Young Men's Christian Association show the wide ranging types of activities that were found through a local church membership.

Members known socially as committed to the religious community often received invitations to important events - in 1903, Hugh Braddish Billings was invited by the Methodist Church in Manotick to lay the inaugural corner stone of Bicentenary Church." It was the local church that was the catalyst for social interaction and for the practice of faith.

The connection between the family and religious groups ran deep, although the denominations between family members differed.

### Braddish and Lamira Billings

Lamira Billings followed the Quaker tenets her parents had instilled in her since childhood, however she chose to accept her first teaching position from the Methodist Minister Reverend Brown. She was known for her charity work and deep religious convictions. Rather than forego religious activities because Bytown had not established a Quaker church, she joined the Presbyterians in 1831. Her husband Braddish Billings made a change as well, but in congregation rather than denomination. He started out as a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, but switched to Knox Presbyterian in 1843.

As prominent members of society, the Billings Family had a hand in creating and supporting local churches.

- Sabra Billings
- Sally Billings
- Charles Billings

- Charles Murray Billings
- Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene

## **Sabra Billings**

Sabra Billings was a worldly, well-travelled and highly educated woman. She did nothing in half measures, for not only did she attend services devoutly, she also helped raise funds to build a larger 'Free' Protestant Church in Gloucester around 1865-1866. Land was acquired and a new church built on the former City Hall Square. Known as the Knox Presbyterian Church, it allowed Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans to worship freely and regularly.



TITLE Presbyterian Church, Billings Bridge

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-012054

DESCRIPTION Photograph of the flooded Rideau River running past the Presbyterian Church in Billings Bridge.



Sabra took great pride in her church and wanted to be kept informed of its progress. A letter she wrote to her nephew Charles M. Billings in 1904 reveals her interests as well as her concerns: "I hope the little church by the Bridge is prospering – I hope you make it a point to attend regularly." In her will, Sabra left "the land adjoining the church property West of the River Road" to the Presbyterians. They were allowed to rent the land and put the revenue towards the church, but they were not permitted to sell the land and they had to pay the taxes on it.

Besides serving as a place of worship, Sabra's Church also functioned as a venue for social events that brought the community together. For example, in 1913, the building hosted a concert that featured instrumental music, songs, and poetry recitations performed by local residents. In fact, churches and residents enjoyed a reciprocal relationship: the community used the church for worship and social events, while the church relied upon community support for its survival.

In 1880, the Knox Church sent a notice to residents asking for financial aid. The church owed a total of \$31,000, a considerable sum at the time—and the Trustees estimated that the church would run a deficit of \$1357.63 for that year. Only community effort could save the church from financial ruin. The trustees appealed to the congregation, suggesting that members,

[...] for the remainder of the year, counting from the beginning of the present month, increase their subscriptions by as much more as they had promised to give for that period. This is merely suggested as an indication of the extent of the effort necessary to be made, as your Committee must leave it with each individual to do whatever he may feel himself conscientiously able-in view of the urgency of the case- to give. Of this we are satisfied – that if each member will look upon it as a personal matter, make the effort honestly and faithfully to the extent that God has prospered and blessed them, there will be no real difficulty in raising enough to free us from all our troubles.

Sabra Billings was one of the top three female subscribers with a donation of \$52. The average donation for males and females was \$35.13, out of 132 contributors. The Knox Church was only able to raise a portion of the funds it needed, yet it still managed to stay open. Without the community's generosity, the church would not have been able to continue functioning at all. In the 1850s Sabra began spending her winters in Brooklyn, New York, for the sake of her health. While in New York, Sabra spent much time with the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher and his family. Beecher became a famous preacher, while his sister Harriet Beecher Stowe was the author of the classic abolitionist novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In Sabra's personal papers, there are many copies of sermons delivered and published by Beecher - Sabra spent much time contemplating his religious message.

## Sally Billings

Sally Billings was a very pious woman, who maintained a scrapbook to hold her religious opinions and political leanings, both published and written herself. In her scrapbook, dated ca.1850s-1870s, Sally pasted many articles that dealt with religion, including A Christian Viewing Death, Anecdote of Archbishop Leighton, The Martyrs, and The Sabbath.



TITLE Methodist Church, Billings Bridge

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-012061

DESCRIPTION Photograph of the Methodist Church founded by Sally Billings in 1890.

In 1890, Sally built a Methodist Church directly across the street from Sabra's Presbyterian Knox Church because Billings Bridge had become a separate Methodist circuit in 1889. Some of the original terms of the agreement state that the church could be used for Divine services by such Protestant Denominations as they may chose and no other. To allow no period longer than one month to elapse at any time during their tenure thereof without having Divine Services as aforesaid held in the Church, which for the time being may be on the lands hereby granted. To permit Sunday schools, prayer –

meetings, temperance meetings, church socials church festivals and meetings for business appertaining to church matters to be held therein, provided always that all of said schools, socials, festivals and meetings be in conformity with Protestant Evangelical religion and no other.

Although built directly across from each other, the two churches seemed to be on cordial terms. In the letter to Charles M. Billings in 1896, Sabra wrote, "I am also very glad to hear that the church is doing so well – I am glad that the Methodist Minister and Mr. Morrison are on such good terms."

The building functioned as a church until 1908. It later housed a primary school, and, eventually, the Billings Bridge Post Office.

### **Charles Billings**

Charles Billings was the youngest of the second-generation children and he practiced as a Presbyterian and as a Methodist in his early years. Devout and civic-minded, he applied his religious leanings to public endeavours. For instance, he played a role in establishing Bytown's General Protestant Hospital in 1849.

However, a legal document dealing with Sally's church shows that Charles became a Quaker later in life. While Charles was a witness to the signing of the document, he included this statement:

I, Charles Billings of the Township of Gloucester, in said [county?] – Yeoman do solemnly sincerely and truly declare and affirm that I am one of the Religious Society of Quakers and that the taking of an oath is according to my religious belief [unlawful] and I do also solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm and say that I was personally present – and did see the written instruments and duplicates [...]

Since part of the Quaker tenet prohibited the swearing of an oath, Charles could not swear to the terms of Indenture for Sally's Methodist church. Charles practiced his beliefs faithfully, and attempted to apply them to his personal and professional life.

### **Charles Murray Billings**

Sally and Sabra's nephew Charles Murray (C.M.) Billings continued the tradition of family church involvement in the 20th Century. C.M. made regular contributions to local churches of various denominations.

Sabra, Hugh B., and C.M. Billings made a combined contribution of \$72.50 to the Billings Bridge Presbyterian Church in 1908.

In 1915, C.M. promised to contribute eighty dollars the following year to the local Calvin Presbyterian Church, which he paid in instalments between 1916 and 1918. He also contributed fifty dollars to the church's building fund in 1916. In 1918, the Calvin Presbyterian Church sent C.M. a letter requesting that he pay the remainder of the

funds by December 31st of that year, to balance the church books. The letter also mentioned the influenza epidemic in Ottawa, which forced all church services to cease for the month of October and increased the need for funds.

C.M. Billings appears to have been a steadfast supporter of the Church—at least financially. He was also a very practical man. For example, after the Presbyterian Church relocated to Ottawa South to form the Calvin Presbyterian Church, C.M. converted the old church building into a duplex. After he married Gertrude Guertin in 1918, Gertrude's family moved into the duplex and worked the farm with C.M.



TITLE Southminster United Church, Ottawa

DATE 1935

ITEM NUMBER CA-012332

DESCRIPTION Located on 1040 Bank Street Ottawa, this church was formerly associated with the Billings Bridge Methodist and Presbyterian Churches

### **Lamira Jane "Minnie" Billings Greene**

If Charles M. Billings maintained the tradition of family church involvement, Lamira Jane (Minnie) Billings Greene continued the family tradition of religious conversion. Minnie

was the corresponding secretary for the Anglican Diocese in Ottawa, but later in life, while living in Alberta, became a Methodist.

In November 1898, Minnie married George Wellington Greene and moved to Red Deer Alberta. As her husband rose in social prominence, Minnie's social role also increased and with it she had certain duties to perform. In a letter to her brother Hugh Baddish in 1915, Minnie related her social responsibilities and commitment to religious life:

I am Pres. of the Church Aid here – Regent of the Daughters of the Empire, Treasurer of the Lord's day Alliance and a member of the natural History society (a director) and a member of the Women's institute – So I still keep busy.

Although Minnie lived in Alberta, she continued the precedent set by her family to maintain a position of prominence within the religious community.



## Hobbies

- Medicine
- The Billings Family and Medicine
- 1850-1870
- 1870s-1940s
- Dog derby
- Handicrafts
- Natural sciences: palaeontology and botany
- Geography

## Medicine

### Early Healthcare in Ottawa and Bytown: 1800-1850s

During the early 1800s, people couldn't get professional health care and treatment in Bytown. Canada was a land of pioneer homesteads. Large commercial centres were few and far between, and the government focused on developing industry and infrastructure, so people typically took care of their own medical needs.

In 1826, Colonel By had a 20 bed military hospital built on Barracks Hill, now Parliament Hill, for soldiers working on the canal. Civilians were admitted to the facility if bed space was available.

In 1827, Dr. A.J. Christie arrived in Bytown as a military doctor and opened one of the first civilian practices in the region. Although Dr. Christie's credentials to practice medicine cannot be substantiated, he did provide some care to area residents. Christie spent two years studying mathematics at Marischal College in Scotland, and often learned medical procedures through observation and newspaper articles. The government did not fund healthcare, so patients paid doctors directly, often exchanging goods and services—for instance produce, meat, or labour—for medical care.

At this time, infectious diseases were a major public health concern. Quarantine, sanitation, and vaccination could prevent illness from spreading, but when epidemics broke out, people could not fend for themselves. Organized public care emerged largely in response to emergencies.

Timeline of medical crises in Bytown:

- 1828 - Malaria outbreak. Few people died, and authorities did not provide much assistance.

- 1832 - International Cholera pandemic reached Canada. Bytown created a temporary Board of Health to deal with the disease for the duration of the outbreak. A temporary Cholera Hospital treated and quarantined infected people.
- 1834 - A second, less-severe wave of cholera struck. The village reopened the Cholera Hospital and then tore it down after the disease passed.
- 1847 - Typhus pandemic hit Canada and swept through Bytown. Typhus spread through immigration, particularly via Irish immigrants exposed to the disease during the Potato Famine in Ireland. Since the Ottawa River and Rideau Canal were gateways to the west, many people passed through the area, bringing Typhus with them.

The typhus epidemic was particularly important because it led Bytown to build the first Protestant General Hospital, and fostered the Governor to promote a city-funded permanent Board of Health. The concept was dropped, and it would be many years before the idea was put into action.

In 1845, the Grey Nuns led by Mother Elizabeth Bruyère settled in Bytown and built a seven-bed hospital for the public, the first general hospital.



TITLE Ottawa General Hospital

DATE 18--.

ITEM NUMBER CA-015182

DESCRIPTION General Hospital, Convent, and School of Mère Bruyère.

When typhus hit, many people were infected and the hospital could not keep up - the sick were quarantined in run-down shacks along the Rideau Canal.

The conditions were so bad that the Catholic Grey Nuns and Bytown's Protestant majority joined forces to care for the sick. They put aside their differences and erected several hospital buildings. Religious tensions re-emerged within the administration of the general hospital after the typhus epidemic passed, and the Protestants built their General Hospital in 1849.



TITLE County of Carleton General Protestant Hospital

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER CA-015183

DESCRIPTION First building used from ca.1850 to ca.1874.

The first stone hospital was erected in 1852, destined to become a small pox and isolation hospital; the usual construction method was to use wood.

While the idea of establishing a permanent board of health was initiated in 1851, nothing was done until 1886. At this time, a Medical Officer was appointed to the city and a permanent Board of Health was established with the Public Health Act of the Provincial Statutes.

## **The Billings Family and Medicine**

### **1818-1850s**

Pioneers in the isolated backwoods had to rely on themselves and manage their own health care. Life could be very fragile on the homestead.

[Dear Husband, these lines are to relate to you the melancholy news of the death of darling little Cynthia. She died in the 9th day of her illness, August 11th. Although it has pleased the Lord to make a vacancy in our family yet blessed be the name of god, he has relieved her of the most racking pains that [any] mortal could endure. And this world

of trouble wherein there is no happiness mourned for her, but yourself and the surviving part of your family. Our 2 [two] children are in a poor state of health but not dangerous. [Fain] would my trembling pen relate to you my feeling but my grief is inexpressible. I would wish you to [hasten].

Lamira, 1818]

Bytown's lack of organized health care made self-reliance a necessity. It is not surprising, then, that the Billings family had an interest in medicine, plants, and remedies. This interest stemmed directly from Lamira Dow Billings (1796-1879), whose medical cures were well known and sought after in the community.

Mrs. Graham's girl has just been telling what great benefit her sister Mrs. Johnson derived from some herb medicine you prepared for her she being in somewhat similar circumstances with Mrs. Graham and the Doctor's Medicines failing to give her any relief her family are very anxious she should if possible try the same remedy relying on your kindness to send some to her or if you please the receipt by which we could prepare some for her ourselves...November 4th, 1848

Many of Lamira's recipes for ailments still exist, including one for cholera. This disease of the small intestine caused severe vomiting and diarrhoea, and was often fatal. Lamira wrote a portion of the recipe as follows:

one ounce of cayene powder,

two [oz] of prickly ash

two [oz] of american valerian

two [oz] of bayberry...

Wet these up together with scalding water and secure them in a linen bag. Loosely put in three quarts of water and simmer for half hour then strain the tea add more water to make three quarts... [sic]

## **1850-1870**

Healthcare was becoming regulated, and, seen as a profession, was not to be left to the hands of backwoods herbalists with home remedies. The medical profession moved healthcare out of the home and into publicly regulated and standardised hospitals. Religious and charity groups funded the need for public healthcare, relying on public generosity, and the Catholics and Protestants ran the main hospitals

Epidemics continued as smallpox struck Ottawa in 1871 and 1874, and underlined the immediate need for organized large-scale medical response to crisis situations. The increase in public healthcare was sporadic, however, and home care was still relied on by a large portion of the population.



Lamira had passed on her interest in medicine and herbs to her children---particularly to her daughter Sally Billings, who continued to advise neighbours on home remedies and to create medicine.

Sally's scrapbook, dated ca.1850-1890, contains many articles about medicine and disease. One titled Cure for Cancer claims that a Mr. Benson of Franklin, Tennessee, had been able to cure his cancer:

He procured a peck of cleaned oak bark by first cutting off the rough outside and put it into a vessel containing about two gallons of water, which he boiled over slow fire until the ooze became quite strong, when he strained it through a cloth to remove all the particles of the bark, then he again [puts] it into a clean vessel and simmered it over a slow fire till it came to the consistency of molasses, when it is then spread upon a piece of silk or other soft rag and applied to the diseased part. He used about two plasters each week, until the cancer was removed and the wound healed. He says it is not painful, but believes it an infallible remedy

Another article, titled Typhus Fever: Rules to be Carefully Observed and Never Relaxed states:

"when typhus fever, small pox or scarlet fever is in your house, be sure to keep the rooms well aired and separate, as much as you can, the healthy part of the family from those who are ill.

Lamira's son Elkanah also had a strong interest in medicine. His wife Helen was often very sick and the family travelled in search of remedies. In 1865 Elkanah took Helen to a medicinal salt spring:

Mrs. Wilson was very kind to her and took her every day to an establishment where patients are treated to a compressed air-bottle. I saw the place. They have a small air-tight room into which the patients enter – usually 4 or 5 at a time. The door is closed and air is pumped in from the outside so that they breathe in an [atmosphere] many times more dense than the ordinary air. The impure air escapes by a [valve] I think it did Helen good.

## **1870s-1940s**

Organized healthcare in Ottawa increased during the later half of the 19th Century, in the form of hospitals erected to certain portions of the public, such as maternity wards, and children's hospitals. It wasn't until 1919 that the Ontario Legislature passed the Ottawa Civic Hospital Act, which transferred provincial responsibility of the area hospitals to the City of Ottawa as a municipal project. A catalyst for the transfer of responsibility to the City of Ottawa was the Influenza epidemic of 1917. This epidemic was the last Ottawa experienced and was responsible for many deaths when hospitals were unable to meet the demand for care.

Timeline of the progression of public hospital beds available:

1. 1894 - Ottawa Maternity Hospital opened with 23 beds
2. 1898 - St. Luke's General Hospital opened with 262 beds.
3. 1902 - Strathcona Hospital began services. Its goal was the cure and study of contagious diseases such as diphtheria.
4. 1912 - Hopewell Hospital established. The purpose of this hospital, erected on Porter Island, was to isolate small pox victims from the general population.
5. 1922 - Salvation Army Grace Hospital opened with approximately 100 beds.
6. 1924 - Completion of the Ottawa Civic Hospital was an amalgamation of three older institutions: Carleton General Protestant Hospital, St. Luke's General Hospital, and the Ottawa Maternity Hospital. The new building had over 500 beds to serve the community.
7. 1926 - The Ottawa Protestant Children's Hospital began services with 55 beds.



TITLE Ottawa Civic Hospital

DATE 1926

ITEM NUMBER CA-002750

DESCRIPTION Waiting room of the Ottawa Civic Hospital.



TITLE County of Carleton General Protestant Hospital

DATE ca.1900

ITEM NUMBER CA-019999

DESCRIPTION Operating room.

The general public took a personal interest in their own healthcare and often ordered remedies from mail order companies in an effort to procure the latest 'scientific' cures. The science behind these discoveries was not often clear or publicly documented, and relied instead on published recommendations from happy customers to sell their miracle cures.

Charles Billings may not have studied medicine as his sister did, but necessity might have piqued his interest. He corresponded with the Imperial Remedy Co., which sent him a letter in 1901 promoting their cure for constipation. Receipts were attached to the letter, which indicate that Charles Billings received the medicine.

Charles M. Billings' personal journals and his collection of advertisement clippings show that he too had an interest in medicine. An excerpt from one of his account books reads:

#### Antidotes for Poisons

First – send for a physician

Second – Induce vomiting by tickling throat with feather or finger, drinking hot water or strong mustard or whites of eggs. [...]

Arsenic – [Also known as] Rat Poison, Paris Green – Use milk, raw eggs, sweet oil, [cane] water, flour and water.

Opium – [Also known as] Morphine laudanum, paregoric soothing powders or syrups – use strong coffee, hot bath; keep awake and moving at any cost.

Charles M. Billings recorded many of the cures and remedies he came across in his research. In fact, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were an exciting time of medical discoveries and exploration. Then again, some of the practices employed by doctors and patients seem questionable today—it was not uncommon to quiet constipated young children or teething babies with opium-based drugs. An advertisement for Steedman's Powders advocated using opiates on teething children. In one of the ad's testimonials a woman stated:

I have used Steedman's Powders for my three boys, aged 4 ½ years (twins) and eight months, and find them a remedy for their little disorders. They are so easy to give I do not dread the ordeal of 'giving medicine' at all.

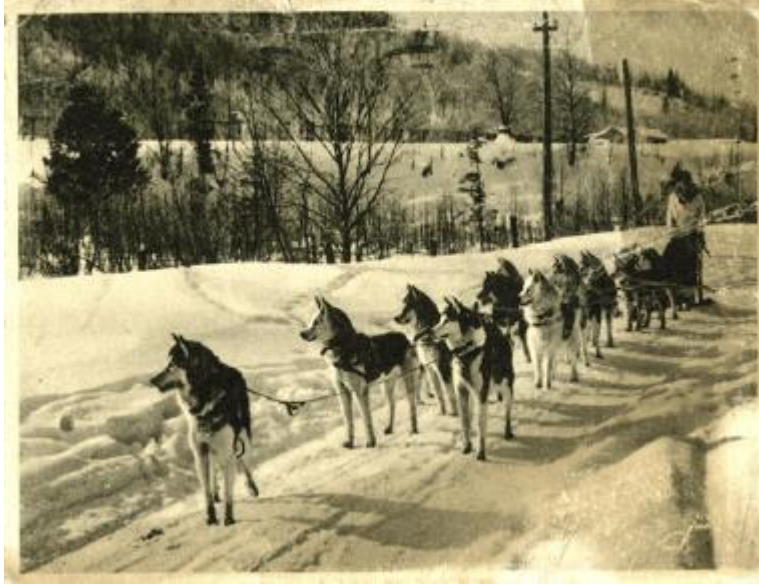
By the mid-1800s, opium-based drugs had become so widely accepted and commonly used that at least ten trademark brands emerged on the market, including top-sellers Steedman's Powder, Godfrey's Cordial, and Atkinson's Royal Infants Preservative. Unfortunately, opium was not a cure-all or a miracle drug. It was highly addictive and it suppressed the appetite. As a result, malnutrition killed more children and infants than overdose did.

During this time more people began to study women's illness. Pierce's Memorandum and Account Book for the year 1886 "lists uterine problems, menstruation, bearing down sensations, internal heat, nervous depression [..]" as common female afflictions. The book focuses more on female illness as it progresses year by year.

As the medical profession grew, it became widely accessible with more doctors and hospitals, and eventually a healthcare system.

## Dog derby

Charles A. was very interested in dog sled racing in the 1920s and 1930s. His interest in North American racing led him to develop the Ottawa International Dog Sled Race. Charles sent out the initial contact and requests for competitors, and researched the usual entrance fees and prizes from other international and national dog derby races.



DATE 1938 September 12

ITEM NUMBER MG001-01-100

DESCRIPTION Postcard from "Mayme" to "Mr. C.A. Billings" mailed from Quebec.

The first dog sled race in Ottawa was held February 3 to 5, 1930.

Charles obtained photographs of the famous Iditarod racing enthusiast, Dr. Beverly Sproul, and others, which capture the enthusiasm of this 'new' sport. Ottawa's Annual Carnival of Winter Sports grew in size and interest, and held attractions such the Dog Sled Derby, skiing, winter flying, curling, fishing and hunting, and other tourist attractions tourist draws.

The inspiration for International Dog Sled racing arose in part from a heroic event. In 1925, dog sled teams relayed serum to a diphtheria-ravaged Nome, Alaska, the "great race for mercy" that inspired the creation of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Dr. Beverly Sproul purchased one of the dogs from that relay, and toured the dog around Canada and New York after retiring it. Charles A. obtained photographs and postcards for his collection during this tour.





TITLE Dog Sled Equipment

DATE 1930

ITEM NUMBER MG002-22-158

DESCRIPTION Dr. Spoul's store display exhibit of Dog Derby equipment, trophies, and photos.



TITLE Dog Sled Team

DATE 1930

ITEM NUMBER MG002-22-157

DESCRIPTION Postcard labelled "Dr. Sproul and Earl Bridges with their team of Huskies that won the World's championship, advertising 1930 Santa Claus for Montgomery Ward and Co. at Albany N.Y."

## **HOBBIES – Dog Sled**

TIME Magazine, Winter. Monday, Feb. 17, 1930

"In Ottawa. They started at Confederation Park. Along the snow-packed smoothness, like porcelain, of the Driveway to Dow's Lake, then along Carling Avenue to Richmond Road, left at Bell's Corners to Fallowfield and from Fallowfield home, over a back road to the Prescott Highway, and so to Dow's Lake again, and the finish line. Seven teams jogged along, started by the pistol of His Excellency, Viscount Willingdon. Not long ago the Canadian Government encouraged dog-team races because dog teams were the only freight haulers of the northern wilderness after October, an important factor in territorial expansion. Now tractors are taking their place, so the government sanctions dog-team races for another reason— because it is great sport and attracts visitors. The course was 90 miles long, and the teams covered it in three days, 30 miles a day. Leonard Seppala, the man who took the serum to Nome (TIME, Feb. 9, 1925) was in it, but Emile St. Goddard of The Pas, Manitoba, finished in 1 hr. 2 min. winning the \$1,000 prize for Ottawa's first dog derby. All week there were parades by snowshoe clubs, dances on the ice in fancy dress, tobogganing, ski-jumping, skating, for Ottawa was celebrating its annual winter carnival."

## **Handicrafts**

Handicraft activities like needlepoint, woodworking, and sewing served both functional and recreational purposes, especially during the winter months when farm duties were less pressing.

In a time, long before malls and online shopping, ready-made goods and raw materials were scarce or available at distant city centres. To save money, cut down on transportation costs, and support the local economy, many people bought supplies close to home and made what they needed by hand. For example, clothing was cheaper to make than to buy. A nightgown said to have belonged to Lamira Billings, was handmade c.1840-1850 from high quality material.



TITLE Nightgown

DATE 1840-1850

ITEM NUMBER 1982.0002.0004

DESCRIPTION A ruffled collar accents this otherwise plain ankle-length cotton nightgown. It was handmade and of high quality. It is believed to have belonged to Lamira Billings.

People often bought basics such as fabric, lumber, tools, thread and needles from local merchants. Numerous receipts and other documents in the Billings Collection show that the Family patronized local suppliers from at least 1839 onwards. One receipt from 1848 lists typical items bought, including fabric, sewing supplies, and clothing accessories. [MG001-3-1278.] Lumber was supplied by the family sawmill, operated by Braddish since 1823, and run by his son Samuel when Samuel finished his schooling.

Tables, cupboards, and beds graced the homes of many pioneers, but such furnishings were either laboriously hand-made or laboriously imported. Either way, they were valuable pieces. When Lamira Billings travelled to the Billings homestead as a new bride, one of her more valuable possessions was a bed frame, which she transported from Merrickville by canoe.

Men and women often worked together to create decorative pieces of furniture. For example, men constructed chair frames and women embroidered needlepoint seats and cushions.



TITLE Wooden Chair with Embroidered Seat Cushion

DATE ca.1850

ITEM NUMBER1988.0001.0002b (2)

DESCRIPTION The design on this chair depicts two women. Other embroidered chairs in the collection feature flowers in a circular pattern and a scene with two men. It is possible that Sabra and Sally embroidered these pieces

This chair is one of a set of four. Each chair is decorated with a different Berlin Woolwork embroidery design. Berlin Woolwork is a style of embroidery that developed in Germany and became popular in Britain and North America. It involved stitching an elaborate pattern from printed instructions onto canvas using brightly coloured wool thread. Since the canvas was quite durable, many women used it for a variety of practical accessories and household objects.

Handicrafts allowed early settlers to showcase their skills and artistry. Challenging needlepoint pieces, impressive pieces of furniture, and complicated dress patterns all testified to the skill of the maker. When learning how to embroider, women often practiced by making 'samplers.' One sampler from the Billings Collection exhibit rows of letters and numbers.





TITLE Needlework Sampler

DATE 1835

ITEM NUMBER 1978.0008.0743

DESCRIPTION Sampler completed by S. Billings depicts letters, numbers, and family initials.

As skills became more familiar, patterns also became more advanced. One elaborate needlepoint piece created by Sally Billings in 1835 depicts a two-storey house and vines.



TITLE Needlework Sampler



DATE 1835

ITEM NUMBER 1978.0008.0741a

DESCRIPTION. An elaborate needlepoint piece created by Sally Billings in 1835 depicts a two-storey house and vines

Like other art forms, handicrafts can show shades of meaning. Women could use needlepoint to express opinions on political or social issues. Gatherings such as quilting bees and embroidery exchanges gave women the opportunity to gather and socialize, producing work for practical reasons amidst a setting of friendship. Women often exchanged their patterns from magazines or template books on order.

Handicrafts also reflect society's idea of gender roles: women sewed, painted, and embroidered, while men focused on woodworking and making furniture. The collection does not have a lot of written documentation on handicrafts made by the Billings men. It does, however, have handmade furniture pieces as well as a number of woodworking tools and lathes. Since ready-made furniture was difficult for early settlers to purchase and transport, it's possible that the Billings men used these tools to build and carve the furniture found on the estate.



TITLE Wooden Cupboard

DATE 18--.

ITEM NUMBER 1978.0002.0920

DESCRIPTION Pine corner cupboard. V-shaped so it fits properly into a corner. Two glazed upper doors with ten panels; two doors at base each with inset panel.

The interest in handicraft and sewing was not exclusive to the nineteenth century. A machine embroidered piece of ribbon, while impossible to know if it was a gift or made by one of the Billings Family, was treasured and preserved because of the number of hours required to make it, even with machine help.

Machines quickly outdated hand sewing—especially for major pieces--and they were available in Canada possibly as early as the 1860s, having gone into mass production in America in the 1850s.

A receipt from 1920 shows that the Billings Family had a Singer sewing machine and table for making clothes and other items, which allowed its members to remain in style and to keep up with changing fashion trends.

## Palaeontology

### Elkanah Billings, 1820-1876

Elkanah Billings studied the rock formations along the banks of the Rideau River, discovering fossils similar to those found along the Gulf of St. Lawrence. He discovered 526 fossilized species in his career as a Palaeontologist.



TITLE Fossil discovered by Elkanah Billings

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER MG162-07-002

DESCRIPTION Coloured photograph of a fossil in the National Collection of Type Invertebrate and Plant Fossils, Geological Survey of Canada, Ottawa. Fossil discovered

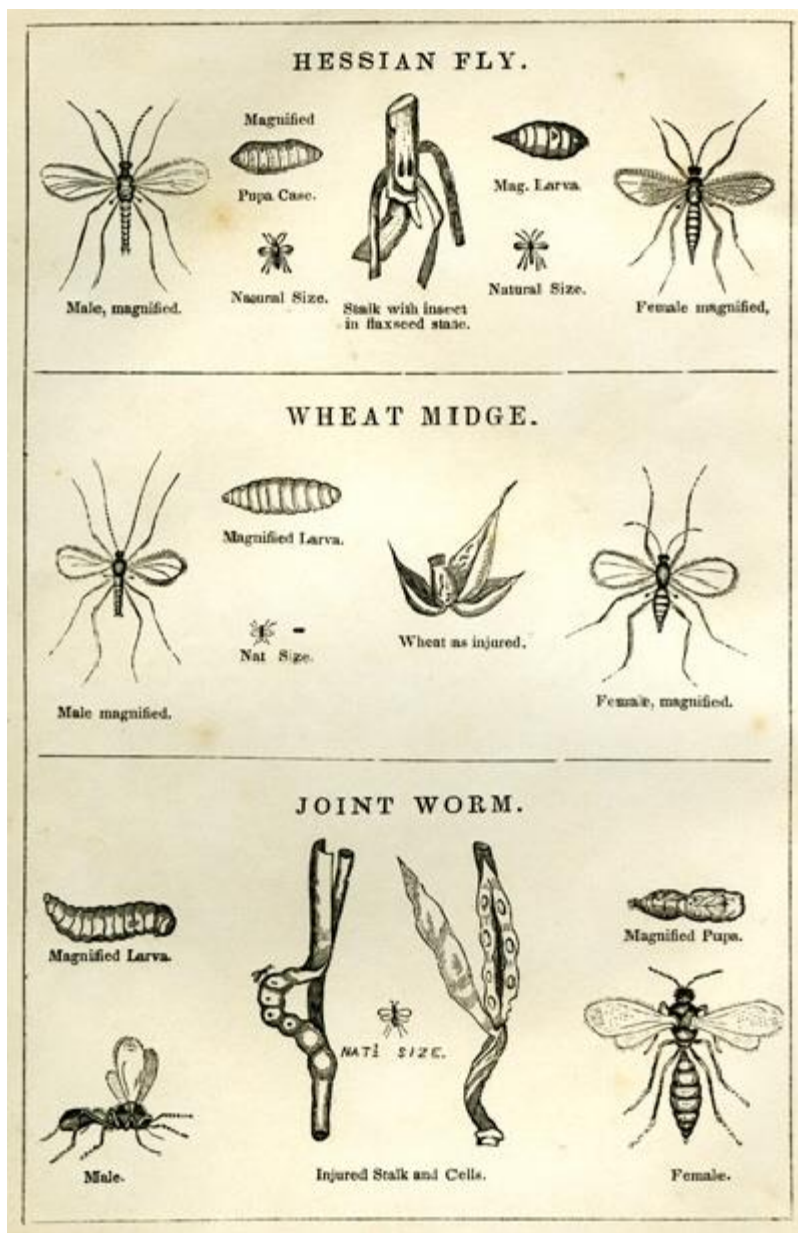
by Elkanah Billings, from the Billings Collection. Photo taken by Dan Mamska, G.S.P.S., Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Starting in 1856, he began editing and publishing the Canadian Naturalist and Geologist magazine, which put his work in the public eye and attracted the attention of Sir William E. Logan, director of the Geological Survey of the United Provinces of Canada. Elkanah was asked to become the first palaeontologist of the Survey, a prestigious position. In 1858 he became a member of the Royal Geological Society. He also served fourteen years as the Vice President of the Natural History Society of Montreal.

## Botany

### Braddish Billings II, 1819-1871

Braddish Billings II developed an interest in botany after he moved to Prescott in 1854 to work for the Bytown and Prescott Railway. He studied the area's forests and flora, identifying over 2,000 plant species, at a time when there was no formal training available in Botany. Braddish II moved back to Ottawa in 1863 and helped start the Ottawa Natural History Society, which later became part of the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club. The Society had merged with the Bytown Mechanics Institute, which Braddish II's brother Elkanah had founded. Braddish II also served as Vice President of the Entomological Society of Canada, elected in 1866, and he was an original member of the Royal Botanical Society.



TITLE Insects—plate from The Canadian Naturalist and Geologist journal Vol. 1 No.IV

DATE 1856 September

ITEM NUMBER MG001-13-159.1

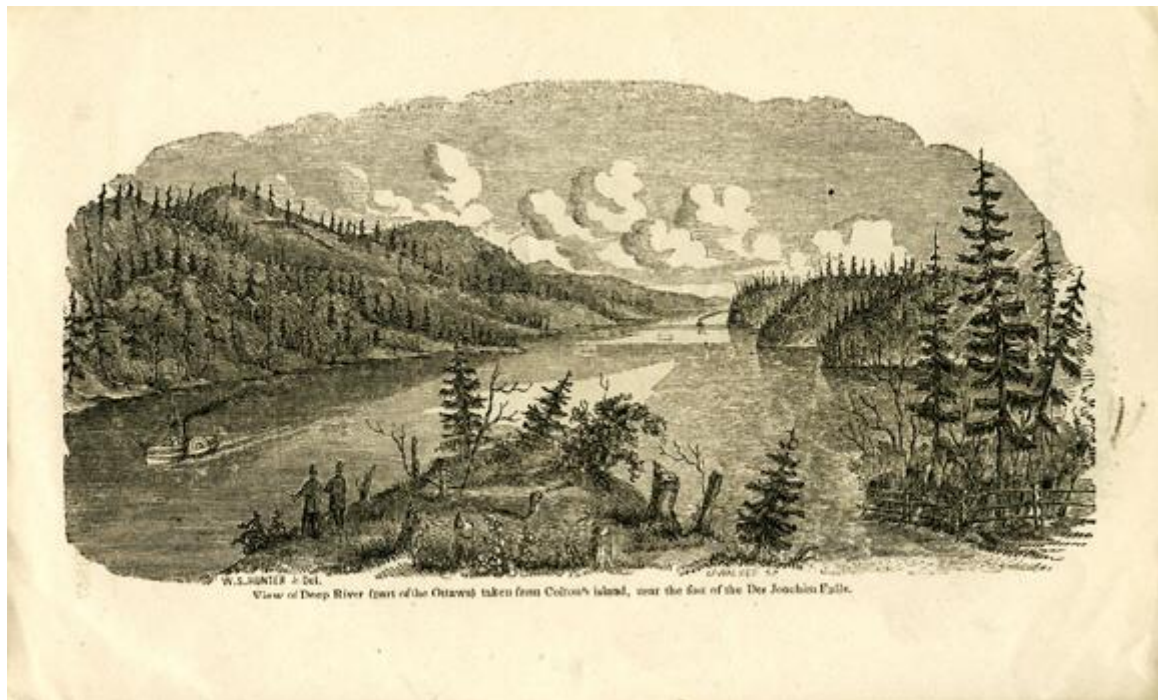
DESCRIPTION Plate showing the Hessian Fly, Wheat Midge, and Joint worm. This issue was printed in Montreal, and an editor's note from E. Billings on the back cover states that "The work will be hereafter published at Montreal."



## Geography

### Ottawa at the Time of Settlement

When settlers arrived in the Ottawa Valley, they found a rich wilderness characterized by lush forests, fertile soil, rolling hills, and abundant waterways. Timber was an important natural resource that influenced Ottawa's early history and development. The area became famous for the size and quality of its trees including pine, spruce, cedar, maple, ash, oak, and birch.



TITLE View of Deep River (part of Ottawa) taken from Colton's island, near foot of the Des Joachim Falls [sic]

DATE ca.1850

ITEM NUMBER MG002-11-033.13

DESCRIPTION Etching from Charles Billings The Annual Address of the Carrier of The Democrat, Ballston Spa. January 1, 1857. William E. Luff, Carrier. Printer, W.S. Hunter. Artist, J. Walker

Braddish Billings occupied Clergy Reserve Lot 17 when he moved to Gloucester Township in 1812. When Braddish chose the homestead, the site's original features and benefits attracted him:

four hundred and sixteen acres of fertile, remarkably well timbered [land] and on the bank of the [Rideau] river.

In 1890, Charles Billings reminisced about the Ottawa Valley during the early days of settlement. He noted that there were only eight families in the township of Nepean in 1825, and with the exception of a half-dozen houses in Bytown area limits,

the [present] City of Ottawa was in its primeval state; an entire wilderness: the hill upon which the Parliament Buildings (now are) was what is called ("ridge land") the timber on which consisted chiefly of hardwood interspersed with hemlock. South of Sparks Street was low...land, and the whole extent of Lower Town was a dense and almost impenetrable swamp." [sic]

As the area became more populated, the Ottawa Valley's topography changed dramatically. The Timber Trade cut into the forests, while farmers cleared the land to make way for crops and homesteads. Charles Billings remarked that by 1828, in Bytown there were:

15 general stores, 3 jewellery stores, 8 shoemakers, 3 blacksmith shops, 4 bakeries, 1 butcher shop, 2 taylor [sic] shops, 1 chandler shop, 1 tinsmith shop, 1 harness shop, 1 Church of England minister, 1 Roman Catholic priest, 1 Presbyterian minister and 2 Methodist ministers, 5 doctors, 3 school teachers and only 1 lawyer,

as the residents chose to settle their disputes themselves. Bytown grew along with the building of the canal, and forever altered the landscape from a quiet wilderness into a bustling social hub. Billings Bridge area also grew in amenities, but remained slower in growth than Bytown and Ottawa.

## **Geology of Ottawa**

The Ottawa Valley is a geological 'meeting point' of the Canadian Shield to the north and the St. Lawrence Lowland to the south. The City of Ottawa is situated in the Lowland. It lies on a base of consolidated rock covered with limestone and shale.

When the last ice age ended, the land was covered with debris left behind by a massive glacier. As the ice melted, water gathered in the depression made by the weight of the glacier. Eventually, salt water flowed into the fresh water lake, creating what Geologists call the Champlain Sea. They suggest that the ancient Ottawa Valley was completely covered by salty waters, higher than the top of the Parliament Buildings' Peace Tower. Fossils of molluscs, seals, whales, and other marine life found in the area support this claim.

## **Travel and transportation in Ottawa**

Travel in the Ottawa Valley was a cause of constant concern for residents until roads improved in the 20th Century. Trains and steamboats were expensive and advertisements geared them towards the middle and upper classes for leisure activities,

rather than promoting them as a means to get from one point to another. The Billings collection has numerous advertisements from the turn of the 20th Century that feature steamboat tours of the Ottawa and Rideau Lakes system. Other advertisements portray riding the rails as an impressive way to travel and explore Canada.

Travelling for pleasure was a middle-class ideal—a past time that required money and time.

## Early History of Roads

When settlers arrived in the area, the arduous task of clearing the land with an axe and logging chain was daunting, backbreaking labour. It was often easier to travel by foot or canoe than it was to risk the horse and wagon to mud and poor footing. The link between settlers and waterways was vital, considering how mud and bad roads made travel difficult during the Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Early roads were established and funded based on statute labour (a subscription of residents, and a legal requirement to fulfill up to 12 hours of work towards roads and bridges, introduced by the Government in 1783). According to the Ministry of Transport, Upper Canada had poor roads because there was

- no centralized authority to supervise road building
- few people available or willing to look after roads
- inconsistent funding
- a lack of skilled workers

In addition, large tracts of undeveloped land were tied up with the clergy reserves and the government.

Travel in unsettled areas was arduous. A first hand account of navigating the wilderness survives from Lamira, as she made the harrowing journey from Merrickville to the new homestead by canoe and on foot in 1813.

1813 October 18 – I was married to B. Billings at Merrickville. On the 19th, I rode 40 miles to see my sister; the 21st I rode back to Merrickville. On the 24th started the move to Gloucester, came 9 miles and was detained by the rain. 26th we started in a bark canoe, our loading consisted of Mr. Billings and a Frenchman and myself, 6 chairs, one trunk and a bed and a bundle of bedclothes. We went 18 miles and camped in an old shanty – it had a door, no window, no chimney but a large hole for each. The next morning it rained till 4 in the afternoon then we started and went 4 miles and came to another shanty of the very same kind. Remained that night, the 28th we started again and we found the water so shallow that the canoe would not swim; the men had to unload and carry the things on their backs some distance and then carry the canoe and load again three different times they had to load and unload again before we reached

home 9 miles, and when we arrived, it was of a good round log house and a good chimney and 4 windows, a floor made of split logs for there was no plank there in them days. We had about 6 acres chopped and planted to corn and potatoes and turnips and then we began the world, 40 miles from any house on one side and 7 on the other, no road either way, not one house in the town but our own. L. Billings”

A distinct lack of central supervision marked the early settlement period: roads were built, but they were seldom looked after. Toll roads went up frequently but rarely saw major repairs in spite of the fact that people paid to use them. Usually these ‘roads’ were little more than dirt trails that turned to impassable mud in the summer. In 1804, the Government of Upper Canada gave more funds to public roadways, but it was not until later in the century that roadways became a major consideration.

In the 1840s, the Government embarked on a transportation plan to encourage further settlement in Northern Ontario. As system of “Colonization Roads” running from North to South and East to West were built to link southern Ontario to the Canadian Shield. By 1853 the government had passed the Public Lands Act, which allowed the government “To appropriate as free grants any Public Lands in this Province to actual settlers, upon or in the vicinity of any Public Roads in any new settlements which shall or may be opened through Lands of the Crown, no grant to exceed 100 acres.”

After 1853, responsibility for the Colonization Roads fell to the Department of Agriculture. The project was mismanaged and control over the Roads went back to the Department of Crown Lands.

In 1916, the Government created the Department of Public Highways—the precursor to today’s Ministry of Transportation. This department took over duties that had previously fallen under county, municipal, or township jurisdiction.

Since Ottawa did not have paved roadways and streets until 1895, travel within the city difficult and weather dependent.

## SPARKS STREET.

My business is located behind a rut on what is known as Sparks Street -- not the small rut over by Elgin Street but the big one near the middle of the block.

If customers will come to the opposite shore and halloo, I will send a scow over to ferry them across.

**R. J. DEVLIN.**

TITLE Sparks Street

DATE ca.1880

ITEM NUMBER HF-0624

DESCRIPTION Newspaper advertisement from R.J. Devlin, furrier and merchant in Victorian-era Ottawa. The city's unpaved roadways and streets made mud a daily contention for Ottawans.

Bank Street, or Metcalf Rd., was macadamised (layers of uniform stones placed under pressure to create a smooth surface) when many main Ottawa Roads were still in a rough dirt format. A private company, Gloucester Road Company, undertook the task. The process began in 1854, and the company had completed macadamization as far as Billings Bridge by 1867. Sabra and Sally held shares in this private company, a venture that proved itself profitable.

Prior to 1895, there were a few techniques of construction which increased the longevity or smoothness of roads, such as:

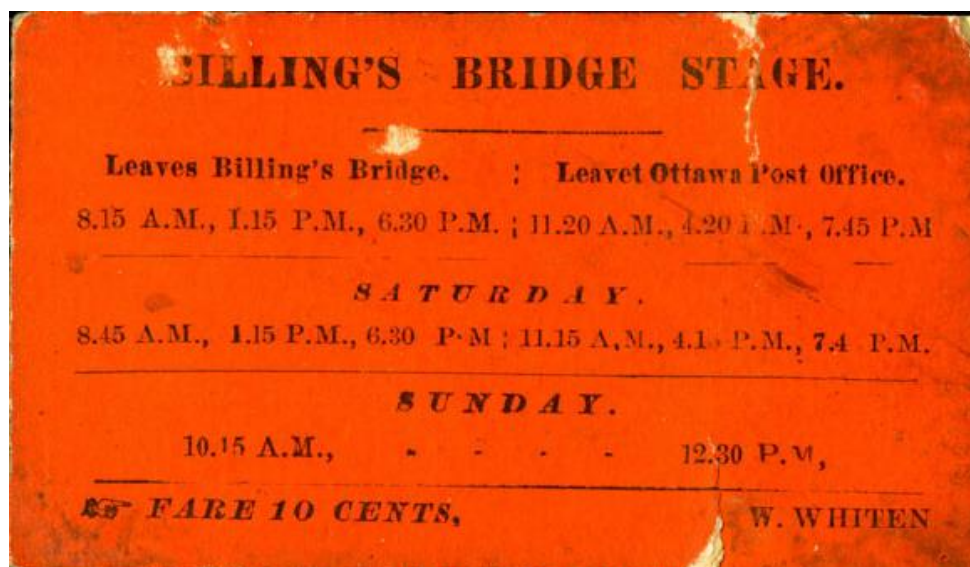
### **Corduroy roads**

This method involved placing huge logs along a predetermined path and covering them lightly with dirt. Corduroy roads could traverse swamps and bogs, but they were bumpy and uncomfortable to travel on.



## **Plank Roads**

Plank roads were fairly popular. They were relatively simple to build: Workers laid four-inch-thick planks of wood on top of a dirt road and nailed them down with stakes. Then they dug ditches on either side of the road for drainage. Plank roads were cheap and smooth. However, as the price of lumber went up, the number of plank roads diminished.



TITLE Billings Bridge Stage Timetable

DATE 18--

ITEM NUMBER MG001-09-150



TITLE Billings Bridge Road Improvements

DATE 1923

ITEM NUMBER CA-000852

DESCRIPTION Photograph of penetration surfacing taken during road improvement on the corner of Riverside and Bank.

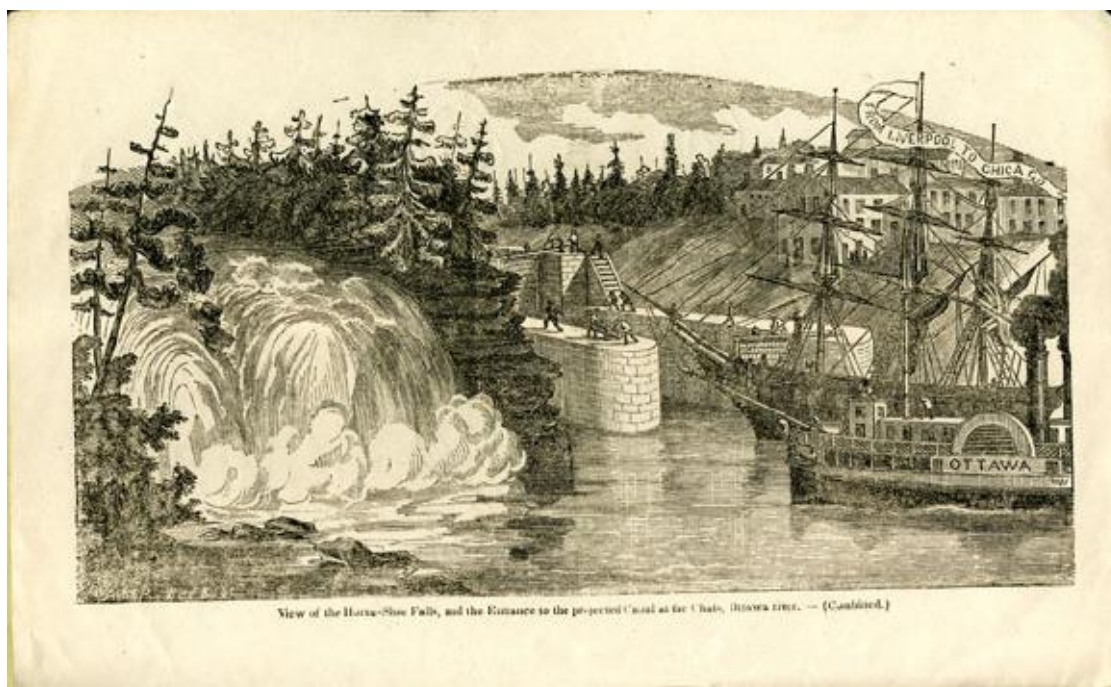
## Traversing the waterways

During the period of early settlement, the British military immediately recognized the strategic benefit of waterways in the Ottawa Valley as a defence against the interests of the United States. Construction began on the Rideau Canal in 1826. It was as part of a network of ordinance canals, which were chiefly built to transport military supplies.

By 1856, ownership and control of the canal transferred from the British Military to the Provincial Government. Two causes led to this shift:

- The cost of canal construction, which reached upwards of £800,000.00, far outweighed any revenue the British received.
- The Crimean War (1853-56) caused Britain to pull its troops out of Upper Canada.

Although the Provincial Government was less than enthusiastic about gaining ownership of the locks, the promise of receiving the ordnance land along the water sealed the deal. The river and the canal soon proved vital to commerce and travel, and for pleasure in general.



TITLE View of the Horse-Shoe Falls, and the Entrance to the projected Canal at the Chats, Ottawa river [sic].

DATE ca.1850

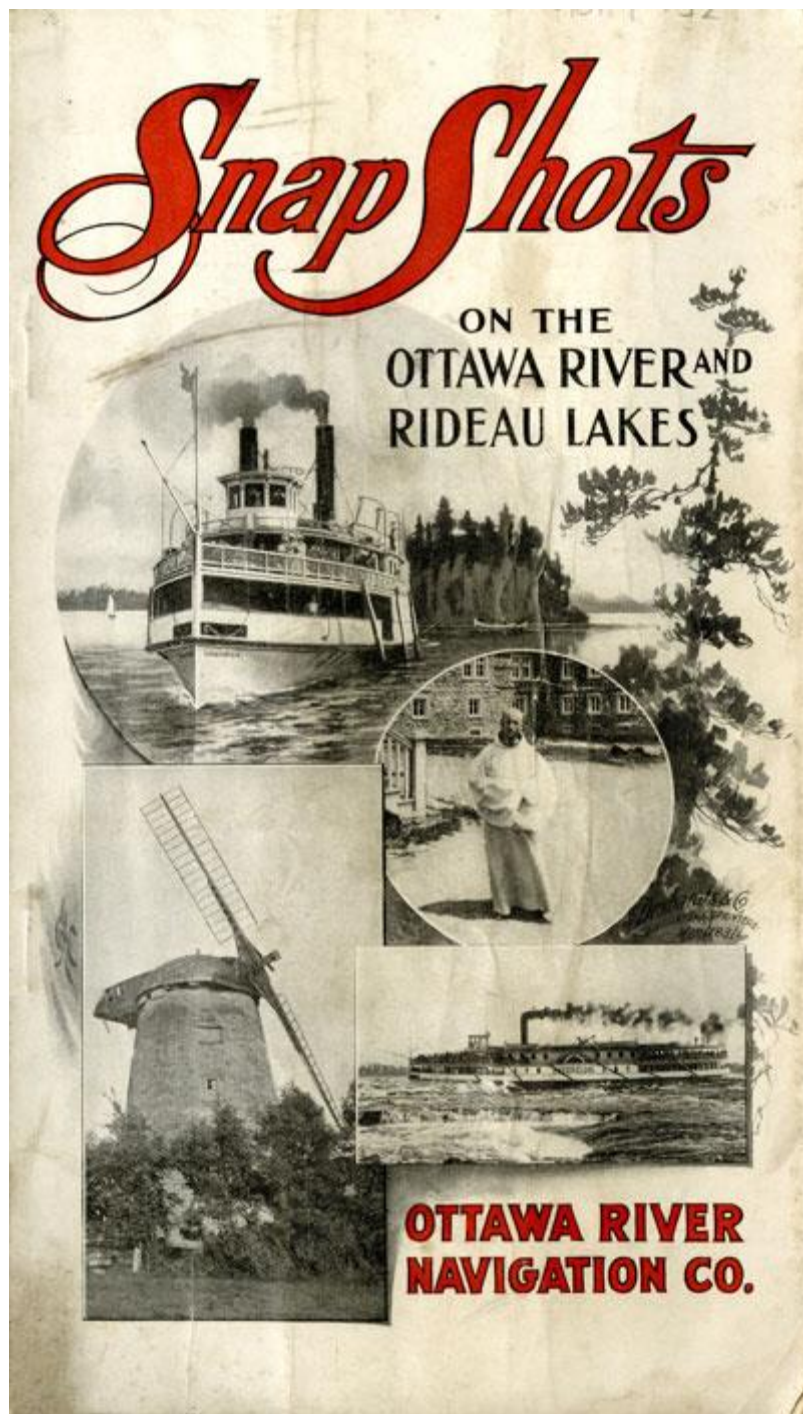
ITEM NUMBER MG002-11-033.02

DESCRIPTION Stylized etching from Charles Billings' The Annual Address of the Carrier of The Democrat, Ballston Spa. January 1, 1857. William E. Luff, Carrier. Artist, J. Walker.

Shipping lines were necessary for transporting lumber from Ottawa to Montreal and the United States, until the Ottawa Valley Timber trade slowed in the early 1900s. The boats also ensured a steady influx of essential supplies such as flour and salt pork. Ironically, it was cheaper to ship these items directly from Chicago to Ottawa via the St. Lawrence, then it was to ship them to Ottawa via the Canal, because the cargo had to change ships at Kingston on the canal route.

Steamships allowed people to travel distances great and small. In fact, there were ferries within Ottawa that carried passengers to various parts of town, and steamboats had been on the waters as early as 1819. Many people traveled from Bytown to Kingston or Montreal via ship. For the upper middle class and the rich, excursion steamers offered luxurious pleasure trips through the canal, complete with plush interiors and menus of rich foods.





TITLE Travel brochure, Snap Shots on the Ottawa River and Rideau Lakes

DATE 1901

ITEM NUMBER MG001-09-152

DESCRIPTION Travel brochure from the Ottawa River Navigation Co. featuring steamboat tours of the Ottawa River and Rideau Lakes.



## Riding the rails

In the early 1800s, Englishman George Stephenson's innovations in railroads and locomotive design ushered in a new phase of transportation. The Railway emerged as an alternative transportation link when winter waterway conditions and inaccessible roads made shipping very difficult.

The North-South trade between Montreal and New York was very important for commerce. Construction on a railway between New York, Vermont, and Canada towards Ogdensburgh on the St. Lawrence started in 1848. It marked the changing trend in transportation: railways became more important than canals for transporting heavy trade goods like lumber. Recognizing the potential of a local railway system, Bytown did not wait long to establish its own rail network.

Braddish Billings had the foresight to build a local sawmill that served local lumber needs. In addition, he profited from the canal project, which linked the economic routes between Kingston and Quebec. He acquired the timber contracts for large parts of Bytown, including the timber used for Parliament Hill. Braddish also contributed to the construction of the soldiers' barracks and numerous other buildings that sprang up in the growing fort town.

The link between sawmills and the railroad was an important development, as sawmill operators faced a number of business-related problems and the railroad was a cheaper transportation method.

- a mill required a hefty investment of funds, land, and machinery, and sending the lumber by barge meant handling charges, and levies to barge owners.
- By 1849, there were only fifteen sawmills in the Ottawa valley and only two within Bytown itself.

However, by 1849 those fifteen mills had cut 93.06 million board feet\* of deals\* much of which was shipped by barge to the American market.

Board Foot: \*volume of timber 1 foot long, 1 foot wide, 1 inch thick – 144 cubic inches

Deal: \*varying sizes.

During winter months, lumber shipped by water ceased, limiting people's opportunities to make a profit. Trains could turn the lumbermen's fortunes around by allowing them to transport their product year round.

Braddish might have seen the potential gains railways offered because he sold a portion of his land to build the new Ottawa-Prescott Railway.

Faced with loss of transshipment trade when the new St. Lawrence canals were opened, the burghers of Prescott and the businessmen of Bytown conceived of a public incorporated railway and agreed to split the costs equally between the two towns.

The Bytown and Prescott Railway, known as the Ottawa and Prescott Railway in 1855, was an important economic development for Ottawa and Prescott businessmen. It was also part of an overall economic trend to link markets across North America. Supporters hoped that the trains' ability to reach markets year round would boost the local economy. Parliament approved the charter on May 10, 1850; construction began on October 2, 1851; and workers laid the final rails on December 25, 1854. Service into Bytown began four days later.

## Archaeology at The Billings Estate Historical Property

Archaeological work on the Billings Estate has provided historians and researchers with a greater understanding of the changing landscape associated with urban and rural property.

Several groups conducted important excavations at the Billings Estate in 1981, 1986, and 1990.

In 1981, the Corporation of the City of Ottawa began archaeological investigations between June 5 and August 14. These first investigations were the most comprehensive - workers dug a series of 0.25m<sup>2</sup> trenches around the following locations:

- Main House
- Gate House
- Ice House
- Milkhouse / Dairy
- Well
- Woodhouse
- Privy
- East Field
- Horse Paddock
- Carriageway and Pathways
- Long Barn
- Family Cemetery
- Proposed parking lot site

These excavations yielded approximately 10,000 artefacts.

In 1986 a service main scheduled to run across the Billings property called for further investigations. Prior to construction, Archaeologists excavated the Long Barn site, Red

Stable site, and the Paddock and Cottage area. Their finds included several milk bottles embossed with “Ottawa Dairy,” and an entire small apothecary bottle.

In October 1990 the Cataraqui Archaeological Research Foundation (CARF) conducted two separate digs. The first took place at 1243 Kilborn Place—the intended site for an apartment complex. Workers dug over 20 test pits on the property in an area Braddish Billings supposedly built a sawmill on that location in 1823. They did not find any evidence of the sawmill.

The second site dig occurred during the Billings Manor House restoration in 1990. Workers had to install a water apron around the house’s foundation. The 1.2-meter-wide trench they needed to dig would disturb the original well site, so the CARF excavated the area beforehand. Archaeologists discovered approximately 370 artefacts, including a five-cent piece from 1870.

## Timelines - 1783 to 1983

- 1783 to 1825 Early settlement
- 1826 to 1855 The Bytown Era
- 1856 to 1900 Emerging city and national capital
- 1901 to 1945 Focus on growth
- 1945 to 1983 Growth and transformation

## Early settlement

Table 1 - 1783 to 1825 Early settlement

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
The Quebec Act.	1774	n/a	n/a
American Revolution. American Revolutionaries created their own Continental Congress, cut ties to Britain.	1775	n/a	n/a
War of Independence, 1776-1783. Thirteen Colonies revolted against British control. British Loyalist Migration.	1776	n/a	n/a

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Western Exploration. Captain James Cook on Canada's Pacific shores.	1778	n/a	n/a
North West Company. Scottish Highlanders and Loyalists established rival fur-trading Company to The Hudson's Bay Company.	1780s	n/a	n/a
Second Treaty of Paris. Britain recognized American Independence and accepted the new nation's boundaries. Loyalists move north.	1783	n/a	Braddish Billings born in Ware, Massachusetts
Colony of New Brunswick. New Brunswick broke from Nova Scotia to become its own colony after its inhabitants, mainly British Loyalists, pushed for separation.	1783	n/a	n/a
Constitutional Act. Divided Old Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada. Lord Simcoe's Proclamation	1791	1791	Dr. Elkanah Billings and family come to Canada
John Graves Simcoe. Served as the first Lieutenant Governor, and led the initiative that allowed Americans to settle in the area.	1792	n/a	n/a
Anti-Slavery Act. Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe established the Anti-Slavery Act of 1793. It did not abolish slavery, but it restricted people from bringing more slaves into Upper	1793	n/a	n/a

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Canada and it imposed limits on the length of slaves' contracts.			
Alexander Mackenzie. Sir Alexander Mackenzie established an inland route to the Pacific Ocean.	1793	1796	Lamira Dow born
Ontario Wheat, 1800-1860. Wheat production was the mainstay of agriculture in Ontario.	1800	1800	Philemon Wright began a settlement in Lower Canada now known as Hull.
n/a	n/a	1805	Samuel Dow and family come to Canada
n/a	n/a	1806	Braddish began lumbering Lamira orphaned
n/a	n/a	1807	The start of the lumber industry in the Ottawa Valley: Philemon Wright sent fist timber raft down the Ottawa River to Quebec.
Simon Fraser led an expedition in present-day British Columbia, to find a new route to the Pacific Ocean.	1808	n/a	n/a
Continental Blockade causes increased need for timber in Europe	1811	n/a	Ira Honeywell became the first settler in Nepean Township
War of 1812. The United States declared war against Britain. Fighting concentrated primarily on the southern borders of Upper and Lower Canada.	1812	1812	Braddish Billings became the first settler in Gloucester Township



<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Red River Colony. Colony was formed from of Hudson's Bay Company land. Conflict arose between Metis, original settlers and the new settlers.	1812	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1813	Braddish married Lamira Dow and built log house
n/a	n/a	1814	Billings built first frame barn and frame addition to house
n/a	n/a	1815	Frame storehouse erected. Sabra Billings Born
n/a	n/a	1816	Nicholas Sparks emigrated from Ireland to Ottawa
n/a	n/a	1817	Lamira Billings II born
n/a	n/a	1818	Settlement began in the Richmond area  The first road was cut from Richmond Landing, 3 miles from the village of Richmond
n/a	n/a	1819	Ottersons, Doxeys and other early settlers in Gloucester begin to arrive  Braddish Billing II born
n/a	n/a	1820	Birth of Elkanah Billings
North West Company & HBC merge. After bitter, and sometimes violent, competition, the North West Company became part of the Hudson's Bay Company	n/a	1821	Long barn constructed Samuel Billings born

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
n/a	n/a	1823	Building of the Billings Sawmill
Upper Canada's first official census – Carleton's population 2,116	1824	n/a	Sabra Billings attends boarding school in Brockville
n/a	n/a	1825	Charles Billings born

## The Bytown Era

Table 2 - 1826 to 1855 The Bytown Era

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
<p>Lieutenant-Colonel John By arrived in Ottawa in 1826 to build the Rideau Canal. He set up a camp near the mouths of the Rideau and Gatineau rivers and employed a crew of approximately 2000 men. The canal was completed in 1832.</p> <p>Earl of Dalhousie approves the entrance site on September 26<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Ottawa's oldest stone building, the Commissariat, was built for the army.</p>	1826	1826	<p>The first hospital in Bytown was erected on Barracks Hill, on the present site of West Block of Parliament.</p> <p>Billings began building wharf, lodgings and blacksmith shops for Rideau Canal project.</p> <p>Hiram Billings born</p>
<p>Earl of Dalhousie laid the first corner stone for the canal exactly one year later.</p> <p>Union Bridge, or the Chaudiere Bridge built</p>	1827	1827	<p>The Billings Estate house construction began, and was completed in 1829.</p> <p>A small railway—one of Canada's earliest—was built in Bytown to haul stone for the canal.</p> <p>The first school built in Billings Bridge.</p> <p>Construction of the dam at Hogsback Falls began, and was completed in 1829.</p>
<p>Governor appoints five magistrates for life terms, removing partial administration of Bytown</p>	1828	1828	<p>Billings house built.</p> <p>Elkanah began education in Billings Bridge.</p>

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
from the military, to civilian authorities			Malaria broke out in Bytown. Few deaths, many people were weakened and unable to perform their duties. Construction on the canal stalled.
n/a	n/a	1829	Sabra attended boarding school in Montreal  Samuel began education in Billings Bridge.
n/a	n/a	1830	First fair at Bytown.  Rev. Turner's Baptist Day School  opened in Bytown. Samuel, Elkanah, Braddish II, and Charles Billings all attend.
n/a	n/a	1831	Construction of Farmers' Bridge, later known as Billings Bridge, was completed  Bytown suffers many casualties due to Cholera, with a mortality rate of between 40-50% in the Isolation Hospital.  Temporary Board of Health formed to handle the situation, and it set up a cholera hospital in the same year. The hospital had a wharf where passenger ships docked for disease inspections.

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
			Municipal Reforms Act establishes town councils.
Cholera Pandemic. The global cholera epidemic, 1829-1851, reached Canada.	1832	n/a	n/a
Slave Emancipation Act. Abolished slavery in the British Empire, but it did not apply to America. Thousands of American slaves fled to the north.	1833	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1834	James Johnston established Bytown's first newspaper, the Independent. The Farmer's Advocate publication also established. A second cholera epidemic erupts through the Ottawa Valley.
First Railway. Canada's first train ran between La Prairie on the St. Lawrence River and St. John's on the Richelieu River on July 31, 1836.	1836	1836	Dr. Christie established the Bytown Gazette.
Canadian Rebellions, 1837-1838. The Upper Canada Rebellion, incited by William Lyon Mackenzie, uprising in	1837	1837	The Shiner's Wars were a series of conflicts that arose between French Canadian and Irish lumbermen living in the Ottawa Valley. The



<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Upper Canada against the Family Compact.  The Lower Canada Rebellion, led by Louis-Joseph Papineau, a more sustained conflict between French Canadian and English Canadian rebels against the British colonial government.			violence lasted until the late 1840's.  Elkanah attended St. Lawrence Academy in Potsdam
n/a	n/a	1838	Bytown organized its first volunteer fire brigade.  Rideau Hall built
Durham Report. Britain appointed John George Lambton, later Lord Durham, Governor General of Canada made two important recommendations: Upper Canada and Lower Canada should unite and they should have Responsible Government.	1839	1839	Billings began production of cheese,  butter and cloth, Sabra and Sally  involved until 1860s.  Lamira travelled and commenced  charitable works.  Lamira II married Braddish Kilborn.
Underground Railroad. A secret network of people aided slaves' escapes, operated ~1840-1861.	1840	1840	Elkanah began articling law  Charles Billings Kilborn born to Lamira II and Braddish Kilborn
Act of Union. In 1840, the British Government passed the Act of Union, based on Lord Durham's report. Receiving Royal assent on	1841	n/a	n/a

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
February 10, 1841, the Act unified Upper and Lower Canada to create a single colony: the Province of Canada. Upper Canada became Canada West; Lower Canada became Canada East. Together they formed a single government with each side holding an equal number of seats.			
n/a	n/a	1842	Braddish II involved in business and civil service, living in Bytown.  Samuel married Caroline Lecompte.  Nicholas St. jail built
n/a	n/a	1844	Elkanah began practising law
n/a	n/a	1845	The Grey Nuns, led by Eizabeth Bruyère, arrived in Ottawa from Montreal and opened a seven-bed hospital for civilians.  Braddish II married Eliza Gray Ross  Elkanah married Helen Wilson
n/a	n/a	1846	Braddish Billings III born to Braddish II and Eliza

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
n/a	n/a	1847	<p>Typhus broke out in Bytown. Quarantined typhus victims were housed in shacks along the river to prevent the disease from spreading further.</p> <p>Bytown's Protestant leaders joined forces with the Roman Catholic Grey Nuns. Although the Nuns looked after over six hundred sick individuals and even became infected themselves, the Protestant faction of society viewed the Catholics with suspicion.</p> <p>The Protestant majority in Bytown established first Protestant General Hospital in response to the perceived Catholic religious interference.</p> <p>Elkanah helped form the Bytown Mechanics Institute</p>
n/a	n/a	1848	<p>Bishop Guigues established St. Josephes College of Bytown. It was renamed the College of Ottawa in 1861, and it became the University of Ottawa in 1866.</p> <p>Sally joined the Bytown Total</p> <p>Abstinence Society.</p> <p>Walter Billings born to Braddish II and Eliza</p>

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
Responsible Government. Governor General Lord Elgin approved the Rebellion Losses Bill, which compensated French Canadians for damages caused during the 1837 Rebellions. In doing so, Elgin acknowledged the wishes of the Assembly's majority, overriding the Executive Council's opposition and his own objections. Responsible Government took root.	1849	n/a	n/a
Guarantee Act. Offered government assistance towards building railroads, which sparked a small railway boom across British North America.	1849	1849	<p>The Stony Monday Riot erupted in the Byward market on September 17<sup>th</sup> when bickering Tory and Reform supporters began throwing rocks and stones at each other. One man, David Borthwick, was killed in the fray.</p> <p>Municipal Act of 1849 – Baldwin's Act- Our present system of self-government established.</p> <p>Billings Bridge Village erects its first town hall</p> <p>Sara Jane Kilborn born to Lamira II and Braddish Kilborn</p>

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
n/a	n/a	1850	Bytown was incorporated as a town on January 1 <sup>st</sup>  Billings land sold to the Bytown and Prescott Railway.  Charles began practice as a lawyer.
n/a	n/a	1851	Frances Billings born to Braddish II and Eliza
Grand Trunk Railroad. Formed to build a train line from Toronto to Montreal, its main goal was to run tracks across the entire Province of Canada to Halifax.	1852	1852	The first stone hospital, located on the corner of Rideau Street and Wurtemberg was completed.  John Rudolphus Booth arrived in Ottawa, production output made Ottawa the leading producer of sawn lumber in Canada.  Samuel Dow Kilborn born to Lamira II and Braddish Kilborn
n/a	n/a	1853	The British Government allowed commercial use of the Rideau Canal
Reciprocity Treaty. Allowed British North America and the United States to exchange agricultural goods and other items without paying duty. Lord Elgin signed the treaty as the	1854	1854	On Christmas Day, the 'Oxford' train steamed into New Edinburgh from Billings Bridge over an improvised wooden track. The rail linked Bytown to Toronto and Montreal, and their



Canada	Year	Year	Billings
acting Governor General of Canada.			lumber to markets in the United States.
n/a	n/a	1855	Bytown was incorporated as a City and renamed Ottawa. The first mayor was John Bower Lewis, the population was close to 7,760.  Charles became Gloucester Township Clerk

## Emerging city and national capital

Table 3 - 1856 to 1900 Emerging city and national capital

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
n/a	n/a	1856	Elkanah began work for the Geological Survey as a Palaeontologist. Moved to Montreal.  Charles I became a school teacher  Lamira E. 'Mira' Billings born to Braddish II and Eliza.  Braddish Kilborn died leaving Lamira II widowed
New Capital. Ottawa became the capital of the Province of Canada by decree of Queen Victoria.	1857	1857	Ottawa's population 7,760
Colony of British Columbia created.	1858	1858	Samuel promoted to Major in Militia  Charles built his home, married Maria Murray.

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Parliament Buildings. Construction began on the original Parliament buildings	1859	1859	Charles Murray Billings born
n/a	n/a	1860	Braddish I sells portions of land.  Sabra attended school in New York.  Braddish III began career with Bytown and Prescott Railway.
n/a	n/a	1861	Hugh Braddish Billings born to Charles I and Maria.
n/a	n/a	1863	The first paid police force was established in Ottawa  Lamira Jane 'Minnie' Billings born to Charles I and Maria
The Daily News published Ottawa's first daily newspaper on May 10th	n/a	1864	Death of Braddish Billings.  Lamira II inherits Kilborn estate.  Sally takes on the full-time care of Lamira Billings until her death
n/a	n/a	1864	Sabra built Knox Presbyterian church
Parliament in Session. Construction not yet completed. First session for the Province of Canada on June 6, 1866.	1866	1866	Post Office opened in Billings Bridge
Fenian Raids. The Fenian Brotherhood of Irish Americans attempted to invade British North America in June.	1866	1866	Ottawa and Prescott militia sent to repel the Fenians

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
Confederation. The Dominion of Canada officially formed on July 1, 1867. The Queen's Privy Council was formed. The seat of government remained in Ottawa.  John A. Macdonald became the first Prime Minister.	1867	1867	Lamira I begins teaching again
Assassination of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. On April 7, 1868, the Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee was shot. He supported many Irish causes as a journalist and politician, but he opposed the Fenians. His stand against this group may have led to his assassination.	1868	1868	Death of Caroline LeCompte, Samuel Billings' first wife
Public Execution. Patrick James Whelan is charged with the murder of Thomas D'Arcy McGee and hanged in Ottawa.	1869	n/a	n/a
Red River Rebellion. Métis formed a provisional government lead by Louis Riel. The provisional government and the Canadian government negotiated the Manitoba Act; Canada's fifth province July 15, 1870.	1869	n/a	n/a
North-West Territories. Remainder of the Hudson's Bay land became the North-West Territories. It covered most of present-day Canada, including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Northern Ontario,	1870	1870	Great fire of Carleton County, August.  Charles shifted to Market Gardening  Braddish III became a Civil Servant

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Northern Quebec, and the rest of Manitoba.			
Province of British Columbia. British Columbia joined Confederation, but insisted a railway within ten years. The Canadian Pacific Railway formed out of this agreement.	1871	1871	Small Pox Epidemic Death of Braddish II Houses of Parliament completed.
n/a	n/a	1872	Samuel married Amelia Traveller, became treasurer for Gloucester Township
Province of P.E.I. Prince Edward Island became Canada's seventh province on July 1, 1873.	1873	1873	Onset of a severe economic depression
Alexander Mackenzie, Liberal Prime Minister, 1873-1878	1873	n/a	n/a
Pacific National Railway Scandal. The conservatives were accused of taking bribes, and lose 1873 election.	1873	n/a	n/a
The North-West Mounted Police was established to create order on the prairies and to protect the western borders between Canada and the United States.	1873	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1874	Onset of a severe economic depression
n/a	n/a	1875	The first paid permanent municipal fire department was created in Ottawa.

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
			City of Ottawa Waterworks was established
Parliament Completed. Construction of the Parliament buildings finished in this year, with the Library of Parliament opening last. (Haig p121)	1876	1876	Second outbreak of Small Pox First civic park – Majors Hill. Daily mail to Billings Bridge. Amelia Celeste Billings born to Samuel and Amelia Elkanah Elkanah made a fellow of the Royal Geological Society Death of Elkanah Billings. Braddish III married Charlotte Elizabeth Humphreys
n/a	n/a	1877	The first public demonstration of the telephone in Canada at the Ottawa Exhibition  Population in Billings Bridge at 300.  Mira Dow Billings born to Samuel and Amelia.
John Alexander MacDonald, Conservative, Prime Minister 1878-1891.	1878	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1879	Great Dominion Exhibition Death of Lamira Billings
Urban Signs. By 1880, many Canadians lived in cities or communities. During the previous year, Calixa Lavallee composed our National anthem, and Adolphe Basile Routhier wrote the lyrics to	1880	n/a	n/a



Canada	Year	Year	Billings
"O Canada!", first performed on June 24, 1880.			
Franchise for Women. First municipal franchise was granted to widows and spinsters in Ontario	1884	1884	Economic depression in Ottawa
North-West Rebellion. Louis Riel formed a second provisional government in Manitoba. Conflicts between the Métis and North-West Mounted Police resulted in deaths. Riel was convicted of murder and hanged in 1885.	1884	n/a	n/a
Canadian Pacific Railway. The CPR was completed in British Columbia on November 7, 1885.	1885	1885	The Ottawa Electric Light Co. began providing electricity to the city
Smallpox. A smallpox epidemic broke out in Montreal, killing over 3,000 people.	1885	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1886	The Central Experimental Farm started, outside of city bounds.  Public Health Act of the Provincial Statutes - Ottawa given jurisdiction to create a permanent Board of Health.
n/a	n/a	1887	Ottawa annexed New Edinburgh
n/a	n/a	1888	Central Canadian Exhibition  Hugh Braddish married Eliza Mutchmore
Women's Rights. In 1889, Dr. Emily Howard Stowe founded the Dominion Women's	1889	1889	Ottawa annexed part of Gloucester township and Nepean township to form Rideau Ward.

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Enfranchisement Association, aimed to give Canadian women the right to vote.			The city now had eight Wards: By, Central, Dalhousie, Ottawa, Rideau, St. George's, Victoria and Wellington.
Influenza. Pandemic from 1889-1890, affected 40 per cent of the world's population.	1889	1889	Amelia M. Billings born to Hugh Braddish and Eliza.
n/a	n/a	1890	Sally built Methodist Church in Billings Bridge
The Hon. Sir John A. MacDonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, died on June 6, 1891.	1891	1891	Electric streetcar service began in Ottawa
John Joseph Caldwell Abbott, Conservative, Prime Minister 1891-1892.	1891	n/a	n/a
John Sparrow David Thompson, Conservative, Prime Minister 1892-1894.	1892	1892	Thomas Ahearn, co-owner of the Ottawa Electric Street Railway Co., developed the world's first electric stove. Windsor Hotel, Ottawa, serves first meal cooked entirely by electricity.  Maria Harriet Billings born to Hugh Braddish and Eliza
n/a	n/a	1893	Death of Braddish Billings III
Mackenzie Bowell, Conservative, Prime Minister 1894-1896.	1894	1894	Ottawa Maternity Hospital opened with 23 beds
n/a	n/a	1895	Sparks Street was coated with asphalt between Elgin Street and Bank Street, becoming the first asphalt paved street in the city.

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
			Charles Alexander Billings born to Hugh Braddish and Eliza
Charles Tupper, Conservative, Prime Minister May to July, 1896.	1896	n/a	n/a
Wilfred Laurier, Liberal, Prime Minister, 1896-1911.	1896	n/a	n/a
Klondike Gold Rush. Gold discovered along the Klondike River in the Yukon. By 1898, an estimated 100,000 people had gone north with the hope of making a fortune.	1896	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1897	The Russell Theatre opened on Elgin Street, later where the National Arts Center built.  Hugh Braddish II born to Hugh Braddish and Eliza
Yukon Territory Gold Rush. Shanty-town known as Dawson became the largest community west of Winnipeg. In this year, the Yukon became a territory with Dawson as its capital.	1898	1898	St. Luke's General Hospital opened with 262 beds  Minnie Billings married George W. Greene and moved to Red Deer, Alberta
Boer War, 1899-1902. Britain at war in South Africa. Canada sent volunteers to serve overseas; however, French Canadians and some English Canadians opposed the war.	1899	1899	John Roger Billings born to Hugh Braddish and Eliza
n/a	n/a	1900	The Great Fire of 1900. Fire in Hull escalated into a blazing inferno that took three lives and

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
			destroyed the homes of 15,000 people.  Lilias Greene born to Minnie Billings and George W. Greene.

## Focus on growth

Table 4 - 1901 to 1945 Focus on growth

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
n/a	n/a	1902	Strathcona Hospital began services. Its goal was the cure and study of contagious diseases
n/a	n/a	1904	Last timber raft sent down the Ottawa River
Alberta and Saskatchewan join Canada.	1905	1905	Hugh Braddish became a justice of the peace
Radio Broadcast. Quebec-born Reginald Fessenden made the first public broadcast of words and music by radio waves. (Hacker p53)	1906	1906	The Carnegie Library officially opened on Metcalfe Street and Laurier Avenue, the later site of the Ottawa Public Library Main Branch
n/a	n/a	1906	Death of Charles  Hugh Braddish became Gloucester Township Clerk and Treasurer
Robert Laird Borden, Conservative, Prime Minister 1911-1917	1910	1910	Death of Lamira II.  Death of Samuel
n/a	n/a	1911	Typhoid hits Ottawa

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
Economic Depression. Crop failures and economic depression affected Canada and United States	1912	1912	The Chateau Laurier and Union Station opened.  Hopewell Hospital established. The purpose of this hospital, erected on Porter Island, was to isolate small pox victims from the general population  Death of Sabra Billings
The Great War, 1914-1918. Canada fought with Britain as part of the Empire. In 1915, John McCrea of Guelph, ON, wrote the poem In Flanders Fields. In 1917, the Canadian Corps under Canadian leadership won a critical battle at Vimy Ridge.  Machinery helped farmers cope with fewer available hands. Agricultural markets weakened.  United Farmers of Ontario (UFO) formed by banding together smaller co-ops. The UFO gained momentum as the war dragged on and people became dissatisfied with labour shortages, high costs, and the government.	1914	n/a	n/a
n/a	1915	n/a	Death of Sally Billings  Charles M. Billings inherited the Estate
Franchise for Women. Manitoba granted women the right to vote in provincial elections, the first province to do so.	1916	1916	Fire engulfed the Parliament Buildings. It took the lives of seven people and destroyed the entire Centre Block, but the Parliament Library was saved



Canada	Year	Year	Billings
			because librarian M.C. MacCormac closed the iron fire doors to the main buildings.
<p>Wartime Elections Act. This Act allowed women to vote in federal elections under certain conditions, but it denied this right to immigrants—even if they were citizens—who belonged to countries that were fighting against Canada.</p> <p>Robert Laird Borden, Unionist, Prime Minister 1917-1920</p> <p>Conscription. Robert Laird Borden enforced conscription after his re-election in 1917.</p>	1917	1917	<p>Influenza Epidemic – Last epidemic experienced by Ottawa. Hospitals were unable to cope, and became a catalyst for the construction of the Ottawa Civic Hospital</p> <p>Hugh Braddish II is killed in action during WWI</p>
Spanish Flu. Powerful global influenza virus killed approximately 21 million people, 50,000 Canadians, between 1918 and 1919.	1918	1918	Charles M. Billings married Gertrude Guertin
U.F.O. Government. In 1919, the United Farmers of Ontario formed the provincial government.	1919	1919	Ottawa Civic Hospital Act. The Ontario Legislature transferred provincial responsibility of the area hospitals to the City of Ottawa, as a municipal project
<p>Arthur Meighen, Unionist, Prime Minister 1920-1921.</p> <p>William Lyon Mackenzie King, Liberal, Prime Minister 1921-1926.</p> <p>Arthur Meighen, Conservative, Prime Minister June to September, 1926.</p>	1920	1920	<p>The Rockcliffe Air Station opened in Ottawa, the Capital's first airport.</p> <p>Ottawa became the first city in the world to hear long-distance radio voice communications when a concert in Montreal was</p>

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
William Lyon Mackenzie King, Liberal, Prime Minister 1926-1930.			<p>broadcast live to an audience at the Chateau Laurier Hotel.</p> <p>Death of Walter Billings</p> <p>Amelia M. began working for the Gloucester Township.</p> <p>John Rodger married Isabel Eastcott. and starts Billings Brothers Farm</p>
Agnes MacPhail – first woman elected to Parliament	1921	1921	Ottawa's population reached six figures at 107,843
n/a	n/a	1922	Salvation Army Grace Hospital opened with approximately 100 beds
n/a	n/a	1924	CKCO and CNRO opened as Ottawa's first radio stations
n/a	n/a	1924	Ottawa Civic Hospital completed, an amalgamation of Carleton General Protestant Hospital, St. Luke's General Hospital, and the Ottawa Maternity Hospital
Trans-Atlantic Phone Call. Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King placed the first trans-Atlantic phone call to British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin on October 3, 1927.	1927	1927	Hugh Braddish lost Gloucester township elections
The Great Depression. The Stock Market Crash of October 1929, occurred in the United States but had a global impact.	1928	1928	Death of Frances Billings

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
The Famous Five. Judge Emily Murphy, Mrs. Nellie McClung, Mrs. Louise C. McKinney, Henrietta Muir Edwards, and Irene Parlby appealed with success to the Privy Council on the question of the eligibility of women for the Senate. The Persons Case recognised women as persons under the law.	1929	n/a	n/a
Cairine Reay MacKay Wilson was appointed the first woman senator. Richard Bedford Bennett, Conservative, Prime Minister 1930-1935.	1930	1930	Death of Amelia Celeste Billings.  Charles Alexander became a Mining Engineer
Statute of Westminster. On December 11, 1931, British Law outlined Canada's right to manage its own international and domestic affairs and make its own laws.	1931	1931	Fire destroyed Ottawa City Hall, results in the loss of many important records.
n/a	n/a	1933	Charles Alexander married Beatrice Lindsay
n/a	n/a	1934	Death of Hugh Braddish Billings
William Lyon Mackenzie King, Liberal, Prime Minister 1935-1948.	1935	n/a	n/a
CBC. The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation was created by an Act of Parliament in 1932, becoming the CBC in 1936. A publicly owned broadcasting system, it served to link Canada by radio from coast to coast.	1936	1936	Sandra was born to Charles A. and Beatrice  Death of Charles M. Billings

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
n/a	n/a	1938	The Supreme Court building was erected in Ottawa
Second World War, 1939-1945. Canada joined the Second World War on September 10, 1939 and participated to the end in 1945.	1939	1939	King George VI and Queen Elizabeth I unveiled the National War Memorial in Confederation Square on May 21st  Hugh Braddish born to Charles A. and Beatrice
Conscription. The Canadian Government adopted conscription for home service in the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA). Through this Act the Government could register men and women and place them in jobs considered necessary for wartime production, but it could not conscript people for overseas service.	1940	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1941	National Census recorded Ottawa's population at 154,591
n/a	n/a	1943	Princess Margaret Franscisca of the Netherlands was born in the Civic Hospital on January 19. To ensure the Princess would be a Dutch citizen, the Canadian Government officially made the room she was born in part of the Netherlands.  Death of Minnie Billings
Tommy Douglas. Became Premier of Saskatchewan in 1944, the first Socialist Premier to be elected in	1944	n/a	n/a

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
Canadian History. He started "Medicare" health insurance in Saskatchewan and is considered the father of Canada's socialized health care system.			
<p>Tulips. Netherlands sent Canada 100,000 hand picked tulip bulbs to honour the Canadian troops who played a role in emancipating Holland from the Nazis, a tradition that became the Tulip Festival.</p> <p>Gouzenko Affair. Igor Gouzenko defected from the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, revealing the existence of a spy network.</p> <p>Louis Stephen St. Laurent, Liberal, Prime Minister 1948-1957.</p>	1945	n/a	Ottawa covered an area of 6100 acres and had a population of about 166,000 in this year

## Growth and transformation

Table 5 - 1945 to 1983 Growth and transformation

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
Louis Stephen St. Laurent, Liberal, Prime Minister 1948-1957	1948	n/a	n/a
Province of Newfoundland. Newfoundland and Labrador joined Confederation on March 31 to become Canada's tenth province (Hacker p57)	1949	1949	Fire at Billings estate
Korean Conflict, 1950-1953. Canadian troops fought as part of the United Nations forces.	1950	1950	Ottawa annexed large parts of Gloucester and Nepean, to make a new total of 14 Wards



Canada	Year	Year	Billings
			– grows from 6000 to 30,000 acres.
n/a	n/a	1951	<p>Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent formally opened Laurier House as a public Museum - Prime Ministers Sir Wilfred Laurier and William Lyon Mackenzie King lived there</p> <p>Ottawa Council delegated its first woman mayor, Charlotte Whitton, CBE, after the death of Mayor Grenville Goodwin.</p>
n/a	n/a	1954	Westgate, Ottawa's first shopping centre, opened on Carling Avenue
n/a	n/a	1955	Ottawa population 223,600.
John George Diefenbaker, Progressive Conservative, Prime Minister 1957-1963.	1957	1957	<p>Ottawa began expanding west after it made Carling Avenue a major road.</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth II dedicated the Queensway highway, also known as route 417</p>
n/a	n/a	1958	<p>City Hall at 111 Sussex opened</p> <p>Several buildings on Slater Street between Bank and Kent were destroyed in a gas explosion on October 25th. People could feel the impact twelve blocks away</p>
St. Laurent Seaway opened.	1959	n/a	n/a

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Quiet Revolution. Social reforms begun in Quebec.	1960	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1961	Death of John Roger
Medicare. Saskatchewan established provincial medical insurance.	1962	n/a	n/a
Lester Bowles Pearson, Liberal, Prime Minister 1963-1968.	1963	n/a	n/a
Canadian Flag. The new Canadian Flag replaced the Red Ensign on Parliament Hill on February 15, 1965.	1965	n/a	n/a
Centennial Flame. On January 1, the Centennial Flame was lit on Parliament Hill to mark anniversary of Confederation.	1967	n/a	n/a
Parti Québécois. The Parti Québécois formed, led by René Lévesque.  Pierre Elliot Trudeau, Liberal, Prime Minister 1968-1979.	1968	n/a	n/a
		1969	Death of Mira Dow Billings
The October Crisis. A small group of Quebec separatist extremists, called the FLQ, kidnapped two prominent men, killing one and releasing the other in exchange for a flight to Cuba. Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act and jailed 450 separatists.	1970	n/a	n/a

<b>Canada</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Billings</b>
Multiculturalism/Bilingualism Policy. Trudeau announced his policy of multiculturalism to encourage ethnic groups to share their culture with others.	1971	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	1975	Death of Charles A. Billings 1975 Billings Estate purchased by the City of Ottawa in an arrangement with the Government of Canada.
Parti Québécois elected under René Lévesque.	1976	n/a	n/a
Charles Joseph Clark, Progressive Conservative, Prime Minister 1979-1980	1979	1979	Death of Beatrice Lindsay Billings
Assembly of First Nations. Aboriginal Chiefs from across Canada formed the Assembly of First Nations.  Terry Fox, 1958-1981. Terry Fox departed from St. Johns on April 12, 1980, beginning his "Marathon of Hope.", but died before it could be completed.  Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Liberal, Prime Minister 1980-1984.	1980	1980	Terry Fox arrived in Ottawa on July 1st, during his "Tour of Hope"  Board of Control is abolished, five new wards created: Billings, Riverside, Richmond, Caterbury and Overbrook-Forbes.
Constitution Act. The Constitution Act, also called the Canada Act, amended parts of Canada's constitution and added the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.	1982	n/a	n/a

Canada	Year	Year	Billings
All provinces except for Quebec signed the Constitution.	1983	1983	Billings Estate declared a National Historic site. Death of Maria Harriett Billings

## About the collection

The Billings Family fonds (papers) contain over 7 metres of records that date from 1796 to 1988 and document the history of the family, the Billings Bridge Village, and Ottawa. The collection's assigned reference code is Manuscript Group (MG) 1.

Hugh Braddish Billings III, a fifth-generation member of the family, gathered part of the collection in 1975 and placed it on loan to the City of Ottawa Archives in 1977.

Surviving Billings Family members collected a second acquisition (formerly MG 2) that held items dating as early as 1818.

A third acquisition (formerly MG 162) was recovered in Mississauga, Ontario and later donated to the City of Ottawa Archives. It was formally transferred to the Archives between 1983 and 1990, and was certified as cultural property under the provisions of the Cultural Property Import and Export Act. The City of Ottawa is designated as a Category A cultural institution under the Act.

For further information about the Billings Collection, or to view, research, or obtain copies, please contact the Reference Desk or visit the City of Ottawa Archives.

## What are archives?

### City of Ottawa Archives

The City Archives collects, preserves, and makes available Ottawa's documentary heritage, making it accessible while maintaining it for future generations.

Our records fall into two main categories:

#### Corporate Records

This collection includes civic records created by the City of Ottawa and its antecedent municipalities. They also include records from the Ottawa Public Library, Police Services, and OC Transpo.

#### Community Records

Collections relating to the people in the community and their activities as individuals, families, and organized groups. This category includes the Billings Family Collection, as well as records from churches, hospitals, clubs, and sports teams.

Researchers come to the City Archives for many reasons, but the top four research areas are:

- Civic records documenting policies and decisions made by the City and its antecedent municipalities.
- Genealogy—to learn more about their ancestors and fill in their family trees.

- Building History—to find out about their homes and property, and who lived in them before.
- Photography—to research, copy, or make prints of photographs from our collections.

Archival records exist in a variety of media: paper, photographs, microform, film, magnetic tape or disk, optical disk, video, or audiotape. They can include computer records, drawings, architectural plans, and sometimes artefacts, like plaques. The City Archives has a wide range of records and resources such as:

- Old Newspapers (microfilm)—Bytown Gazette (1840-1845), Ottawa Citizen (1846-1886, 1980), Ottawa Journal (1885-1980), Le Droit (1913-1944).
- Photographs—Special collections include the Newton Collection (1940s-1980s) and Elvis Presley in Ottawa (April 1957). General categories include the Parliament Buildings, Streets, Houses, Churches, Schools, Hospitals, Businesses, Merchants, Hotels, Aerials, Bridges, Rivers, Sports, Ceremonies, Events, Disasters, Military, Lumbering, Transportation, and Portraits.
- Sports Memorabilia—photographs and artifacts relating to sports in Ottawa. Our collection includes Ottawa Senators and Ottawa Roughriders memorabilia.
- Mayor's Gifts Collection—gifts to the Mayor of Ottawa from people in the community, across the country, and around the world. Most of the collection comes from other countries.
- C. Robert Craig Memorial Library—books, magazines, photographs, slides, plans, and archival materials relating to railway and streetcar history in Canada with a focus on the Ottawa area.
- Personal Papers—diaries, journals, letters, scrapbooks, postcards, etc.
- Genealogy Research Materials—the Archives has its own resources and is affiliated with five partner libraries.
- Reference Library—a non-circulating collection of published and unpublished items relating to the history of Ottawa and Carleton County, and to the activities of the City of Ottawa and its former municipalities.
- Corporate Reports Library—accessible on request via a database at the Archives Reference Room, Main Branch, or at the Rideau Branch.
- Assessment rolls—tax ledgers that provide information about municipal properties and the people who owned and occupied them. Assessment rolls can list the names, occupations, salaries, and religions of people



in the community, and they indicate when construction occurred on a given lot of land.

- Minutes and Bylaws—for the City of Ottawa and the twelve former municipalities dating from their inception.
- Maps and Plans
- City Directories—annual listings of addresses and phone numbers for residents and businesses.

There are many types of archives, including business archives, government archives, religious archives, and school archives. The community group or club you belong to may even have an archivist and keep archives. Many archives are open to the public. To see a listing of the archives in your community, see the Directory of Archives on the Canadian Council of Archives web site.

To learn more about the work of archivists, see the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) or the Association des archivistes du Québec (AAQ).

Contact Reference Desk for questions related to this site.

## Tips for teachers

City of Ottawa Archives & Billings Estate National Historic Site Online Exhibition

Grade 7 History: British North America

Grade 7 Geography: Themes of Geographic Inquiry

Grade 8 History, Canada: A Changing Society

Grade 8 Geography, Patterns in Human Geography

Grade 9 Geography (Academic), Foundations: Systems and Space

Grade 9 Geography (Academic), Human-Environment Interactions

Grade 10 History (Academic), Communities: Local, National and Global

Grade 10 Civics, Purposeful Citizenship

## Grade 7 History: British North America

### Overall Expectations:

Use a variety of resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate information about the beginnings and development of the new British colonies;

- Identify some themes and personalities from the period, and explain their relevance to contemporary Canada.

**Specific Expectations, Application:**

Illustrate the historical development of their local community (e.g., its origins, key personalities, and the contributions of various cultural groups), using a variety of formats (e.g., a heritage display, posters, a drama skit or role play, a brochure, a Web page).

**Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- The members of the Billings family contributed to the growth of Ottawa in different ways. Research one member of the family and the contributions that they made to their community. Consider such contributions as buildings they helped to construct, opportunities they provided to newcomers, social changes that they helped to bring about, discoveries they made, etc. Present your research to your class using a heritage display, poster, drama skit, or another creative format.
- Five generations of Billings' family members lived at the Estate on the south shore of the Rideau River. They lived there for almost 150 years. Create a timeline showing some of the major events in Canadian history. On that same timeline, point out some of the major events that happened to the Billings. What impact did some of the major national events have on the Billings family?
- Using one of the themes from the online exhibit, explore how it is still relevant to your community today. What are some of the issues surrounding your topic? How does the community feel about the topic at hand? Is there a general consensus or do different sides have different opinions? Who are the main characters and how are they similar to or different from their historic counterparts?

**Grade 7 Geography: Themes of Geographic Inquiry****Overall Expectations:**

Use a variety of geographic resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate geographic information;

- Analyse current environmental issues or events from the perspective of one or more of the themes of geographic inquiry.

**Specific Expectations, Application:**

Choose an environmental issue that illustrates one of the themes of geographic inquiry and explain why various individuals and groups have different opinions on the issue (e.g., theme of interaction: wilderness conservationists versus loggers).

## **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- When the Billings first settled on the south shore of the Rideau River, the area was largely covered with forests. They eventually cleared those forests to make room for farmlands. Over time, that arable land was replaced with a residential setting. Which theme of geographic inquiry best describes these changes? Some people might think that these kinds of changes were a good thing, while others might say that the land should have been left as the Billings found it. Using maps from different points in history, explain the two arguments. Which side do you agree with? Why?
- Organize a class debate around the following statement of purpose: “The interaction that the Billings and their neighbours had with their environment over 150 years benefited both the community and its natural environment.” One side will argue in favour of the statement of purpose while the other side will argue that the human interaction was detrimental to the community’s relationship with nature.
- Look at how the different generations of the Billings family interacted with the land. How many different ways did they interact with it? If you were put in their situations, would you have done the same? Why or why not? What would you have done differently?

## **Grade 8 History, Canada: A Changing Society**

### **Overall Expectations:**

Compare living and working conditions, technological developments, and social roles near the beginning of the twentieth century with similar aspects of life in present-day Canada.

### **Specific Expectations, Application:**

Compare the challenges facing farmers and workers at the beginning of the 20th century to those facing farmers and workers today.

## **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- Research what life is like for farmers in the 21st century. Using the information that is found in the online exhibit, how are the lives of modern-day farmers different than the lives of the Billings who farmed at the beginning of the 20th century? What kinds of changes have taken place? Present your findings as two journal entries – one in the form of a day in the life of a farmer who worked for the Billings and one in the form of a day in the life of a modern farmer.

- Using a graphic organiser, compare and contrast the challenges facing farmers today with the challenges facing farmers from the time of the second and third generations of the Billings family. What were some of the issues facing farmers at the start of the 20th century and how do they compare to those facing farmers today? How has technology changed over time and what sort of effect has this had on the agricultural industry? How have markets changed?

## **Grade 8 Geography, Patterns in Human Geography**

### **Overall Expectations:**

Identify the main patterns of human settlement and identify the factors that influence population distribution and land use;

- Use a variety of geographic representations, resources, tools, and technologies to gather, process, and communicate geographic information about patterns in human geography.

### **Specific Expectations, Knowledge and Understanding**

Identify and explain the factors affecting population distribution (e.g. history, natural environment, technological development, immigration, trends/patterns).

### **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- Using aerial maps from different points in time, comment on how the population of the Billings Bridge area has changed. Has it increased or decreased? What geographic and human features appeared and/or disappeared? What else was happening in the Ottawa area at these different points in time that would have affected the population of the area? What do you know about the population of Ottawa now that can help you make predictions about how the population might change in the future?
- Considering some of the changes to population distribution that took place between the time of the Billings' settlement and today, draw a map of what the Billings Bridge area might look like 25 or 50 years from now. What major changes do you think will have taken place and why? How many people do you think will live in the area? What factors will cause these changes? Explain your conclusions.
- The Billings were the first family to live in the area. Why do you think that people had not wanted to live there earlier? What were the factors that made the Billings want to live there? How did the Billings make the area more livable for themselves and for others? Why do you think that they were interested in making the area more livable for others? Many

of the people who moved there only stayed for a few years at most – why do you think this was the case?

## **Grade 9 Geography (Academic), Foundations: Systems and Space**

### **Overall Expectations**

Analyze local and regional factors that affect Canada's natural and human systems.

### **Specific Expectations, Knowledge and Understanding**

Distinguish between the characteristics of urban and rural environments (e.g., differences in population density, land use, forms of settlement, development patterns, types of employment).

### **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- The community that the Billings settled was initially a rural environment. Using information that you find in the online exhibit, when would you say that the community became urban? What changing features led you to this conclusion? How has the land use changed? How has the population changed, and how do those people now live?
- Using a modern map of Ottawa, identify which communities in the amalgamated City of Ottawa are rural and which are urban. Can you imagine any of the rural communities becoming urban, or urban communities becoming rural in the future? What sorts of changes would have to take place for this to happen? What could cause these changes to take place and how would they effect the human and natural systems?
- What were the characteristics of Billings Bridge in 1850 that made it rural? What are the characteristics of Billings Bridge today that make it urban?

## **Grade 9 Geography (Academic), Human-Environment Interactions**

### **Overall Expectations**

Analyze the ways in which natural systems interact with human systems and make predictions about the outcomes of these interactions.

### **Specific Expectations: Knowledge and Understanding**

Explain how human activities (e.g. agricultural and urban development, waste management, parks development, forest harvesting, land reclamation) affect, or are affected by, the environment.

### **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

- When the Billings settled their estate, the area was largely forested. Now it is largely an urban area. What types of activities were the Billings involved in that led to changing the landscape? How did these activities affect the natural environment?
- When Braddish Billings arrived in Gloucester Township and settled on the shores of the Rideau River, he was located in a dense, marshy forest. How did the environment affect his choice to settle where he did? What opportunities did the setting offer him at the time, and what future opportunities did he recognize? How would the environment have affected further settlement and development decisions that were made over the period that the Billings lived in the area?
- Using the letter written by Charlotte Elizabeth Humphries, how would you say that nature affected the spread of the fire? How did human activity affect the spread of the fire? How did humans use nature to their advantage in fighting the fire?

## **Grade 10 History (Academic), Communities: Local, National and Global**

### **Overall Expectations**

Assess Canada's participation in war and contributions to peacekeeping and security.

### **Specific Expectations, Canada's Participation in War, Peace and Security**

Describe Canada's and Canadians' contributions to the war effort at home during World War I and World War II, as well as some of the effects the wars had on the home front (e.g., munitions industry, Halifax explosion, women war workers, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, Camp X, the war effort in local communities).

### **Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research**

Hugh Braddish Billings I was very supportive of the war effort during the Great War. What evidence can you find for the support that he offered to the troops and the government while war was being waged? Why do you think that he was so patriotic? Was this common amongst Canadians at the time?

Despite Hugh Braddish I's support for the war, by 1917 his attitude had changed substantially and he was anxiously awaiting the end of the war. What happened to change his attitude? How did he feel about other Canadians' participation in the war around this time? What do his records say about the toll that the war took on Canadians at home?



## Grade 10 Civics, Purposeful Citizenship

### Overall Expectations

- Demonstrate an understanding of the beliefs and values underlying democratic citizenship and explain how they guide citizen's actions

### Specific Expectations, Responses to Civic Issues

- Describe and assess the contributions that citizens and citizens' groups make to the civic purposes of their communities (e.g. neighbourhood associations, service clubs).

### Suggested Ideas and Activities for Discussion and Research

- Research one member of the Billings family. What were the contributions that they made to their community? Why do you think that those contributions were important to people who made them? What do you think were some of the outcomes of these contributions?
- Design a community service award in honour of one of the members of the Billings family. What are the criteria for receiving this award? Do you know any candidates who would qualify to receive this award today? Why?
- Braddish Billings came to Canada from America during the American Revolution. Upon turning 18 he was required to swear his loyalty to the Crown. After having studied the Billings family's history, would you say that Braddish Billings was a loyal citizen? Consider both his own contributions to his community and his country, as well as the attitudes that he fostered in his children and grandchildren.

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