

King's Colourful History

Early Settlements of King Township



She wrote as a hobby, but her account of the township's origins has become a kind of "Bible," guiding us in researching who, what and where are landmarks of the past.

Elizabeth McClure Gillham, a life-long King resident, didn't want history to disappear in wisps of hazy memories and gathered solid information for her book, *Early Settlements of King Township Ontario*, (1984), still available at the King Township Museum. Elizabeth also collected photographs for her next volume, *Album of Oldies*, which this historical society recently reprinted.

She wrote that our township was named for Major John King, "an English Under-Secretary of State," and was part of York County on lands that were included in the Toronto Purchase Act, 1787. It was re-negotiated with the Mississaugas to be known as Crown Treaty No. 13. She included information about the original survey of King Township with details about the subsequent alterations to its boundaries.

Each settlement or village was described, some only known by early map references, little or nothing to be seen today. For example, "Hammertown was once a hamlet on the twelfth concession of King Township ..." recalled in a poem by W.E. McKinley: "They lived and loved and toiled in Hammertown/ Till automatic gimmicks mowed them down ..."

Mrs. Gillham, born in 1908, was a charter member of the KTHS and taught in King public schools until retirement. She died in 1999 at age 90, leaving a legacy of respect, warm friendships and unique contribution to the historical record of this township.

Submitted by the King Township Historical Society
www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com