

The Restoration of the 1857 Map of Brampton

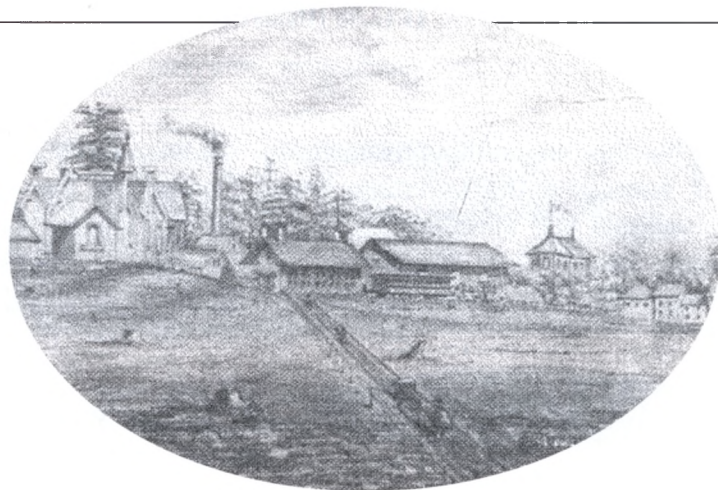
The History of the Town

In the 1820's, Samuel Kenny, who was the first landowner in Brampton, sold his property to John Elliot and John Scott, who were both from England. These gentlemen opened a potashery, a store, a copper shop and a distillery. In 1834, John Elliot, sensing the area's potential, cleared his land and laid out his property into village lots, which he then sold. He chose the name Brampton for the new settlement in honour of his former hometown back in England. The area during that time was also known as "Buffy's Corners". It was named for William Buffy, who had built a tavern at the intersection of two dirt roads, which are now Queen and Main Streets in the center of modern day Brampton.

An influx of Irish immigrants to Canada in 1845 brought many new settlers to the area. In 1852, Brampton was incorporated into a village and then in 1873 was incorporated into a town. In 1858, the Grand Trunk Railway built a line through the village creating further growth. Brampton was referred to as "Flower City" because nurseries were one of the main industries and largest employers in the community at that time. Dale Estate Nurseries became famous for its hybrid propagation of roses and orchids.

The Surveyors

Arthur Bristow and James. W. Fitzgerald, Senior were the principles of Bristow and Fitzgerald, Provincial Land Surveyors. Arthur was educated at Oxford, England and qualified to practise Civil Engineering in India. He came to Canada in 1850. He studied surveying with Col. John Stoughton Dennis and was admitted as a P.L.S. on April 28th, 1851. James W. Fitzgerald was born in Ireland and at an early age joined the staff of the Ordnance Survey of



Ireland. He immigrated to Canada in 1853. James also articulated to Col. J.S. Dennis and became a P.L.S. on July 13th, 1857. J.W. Fitzgerald's signature appears under the two sketches drawn on the map (shown above and on pg. 32). The sketches depict life in the 1850's.

The Recovery of the Map

Chris Sexton, O.L.S., President of Sexton McKay Ltd. in Thornhill, donated the map to the Brampton Historical Society. A friend of his, who was in the construction business, found the map while he was working with a crew removing debris during the renovation of Osgoode Hall many years ago. He gave it to Chris because of its historical significance. The map hung in his office for many years, but then he rolled it up and put it away. Two years ago, Chris, who is a member of Heritage Markham, met Michael Seaman, who is a member of the Brampton Historical Society. They discussed the map and decided that it should be brought back to Brampton. The map, however, had water damage and needed repair.

Brampton Historical Society & MMM Partners in Heritage

Lost for 143 years, Fitzgerald & Bristow's survey map of the Town of Brampton was recently restored and conserved through a grant from the Province of Ontario's Trillium Fund. This oldest map of Brampton now hangs on display at the Region of Peel's Heritage Complex.

As impressive as the 5' by 8' original is in its climate controlled case

the Brampton Historical Society (BHS) realized that a map this significant should be more accessible.

With the generous support of Marshall Macklin Monaghan the BHS initiated a poster size reproduction map for distribution to the schools and as a fundraiser for community heritage projects. MMM are proud supporters of the preservation of Ontario's heritage.

The Restoration of the Map

The Brampton Historical Society, through donations from various private sources, hired Dorset Conservation Inc. to restore the map. Listed below is a summary of the treatments that were required for the conservation of the map. The list is copied from a "Cursory Report Prepared for Brampton Historical Society", which was submitted by Dorset Conservation Inc.

Summary of Treatment

1. Upon completion of testing and pre-treatment photography, treatment is commenced.

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2. Initial removal of varnish using cold suction table apparatus. Much of the varnish is removed by swabbing with organic solvent mixture. Suction apparatus holds materials in place.
3. Map is humidified at 80% r.h. to soften adhesive layer between paper and canvas.
4. Map is then laid out between 2 sheets of 1 mil Mylar.
5. Map is thoroughly wetted to further soften adhesive layer.
6. Canvas layer is slowly removed in two sections and retained for treatment. It is determined that the mechanical strength of the canvas is insufficient for it to continue as the primary support for the paper. It will be replaced with new canvas and the original cleaned and retained as artifact.
7. Adhesive material is swabbed away from verso (back) surface of map using deionized water and ammonium hydroxide mixture (pH: 8.5)
8. Verso of map is covered with thin Hollytex spun bonded polyester, to act as a temporary support during the washing and rinsing phase.
9. Map, while in sections, cannot be separated without inflicting damage to artifact. It will be washed as a large single unit in two sections, without separation.
10. Map is transferred to cold suction table, Mylar on recto (front) surface and Hollytex on verso surface. Lower half of map fits onto suction table. Mylar on lower half of map is rolled back.
11. Deionized water with ammonium hydroxide and isopropyl alcohol is misted onto the surface of the map and thence through the paper surface into the suction table apparatus. In this way offending materials such as soluble acids and dirt (along with some varnish residues), are taken out of the paper.
12. The map is turned occasionally so that the upper half of the map can be washed in this same manner.
13. Over a period of 8 days the map is continuously washed using more than 450 litres of deionized water mixture. Once the water runs clean in the collection basin, washing is ceased. Map retains some discolouration, which is desirable as an aesthetic feature, to show the age of the artifact.

14. After washing, but while map is still damp, additional measures are taken to remove more varnish, on the cold suction table. This is a delicate operation since the swabbing is done on the wet paper. This is continued until it is deemed to be too risky to continue.
15. New Mylar is laid over the recto surface of the map. It is then transferred to the main worktable and laid face down.
16. Hollytex is removed from verso surface.
17. Tears and loose pieces are aligned on the Mylar surface using low powered microscopy and a microspatula.
18. Three pieces of Japanese Mitsumata fibre paper are prepared on a separate table. The paper is pasted out with wheat starch paste.
19. Each piece of Japanese paper is transferred to the verso surface of the map and laid out using a traditional Japanese mounting technique. Paper sections overlap by about 1 cm.
20. New canvas is prepared in the same way as the Japanese paper. It is pasted out with wheat starch and collagen glue mixture. Canvas is rolled out onto the verso surface of the map and burnished down with a traditional Japanese pouncing brush.
21. Map is turned over, and Mylar is removed from the recto surface and replaced with Hollytex spun-bonded polyester.
22. Map is transferred to paper drying felt surface, covered with another felt and pressed under plate glass. For six days, the felts are changed on a regular basis, as they draw water out of the map/paper/canvas unit.
23. Once map is completely dry, it is removed from the drying apparatus. Residues of varnish remain as "cloudy areas" on the surface. These are easily removed with isopropyl alcohol and swabs.
24. Original canvas is washed on cold suction table with deionized water, ammonium hydroxide, isopropyl alcohol and surfactant to remove as much stain and dirt as possible. Canvas is dried and pressed under plate glass and drying felts, in a similar fashion as the map. Canvas is rolled onto tube for separate delivery.
25. Conservation of map is complete.

There is a further 19-step process for mounting the map for framing.



References:

- "Places in Ontario" by Nick and Helma Mika, Mika Publishing Company, Belleville, Ontario, 1977
- AOLS Annual Report biographies.

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 The restored map is on display at the Peel Heritage Complex 9 Wellington St. East, Brampton, phone: 905-791-4055. Poster copies of the map can be purchased for \$15 at the complex.  
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