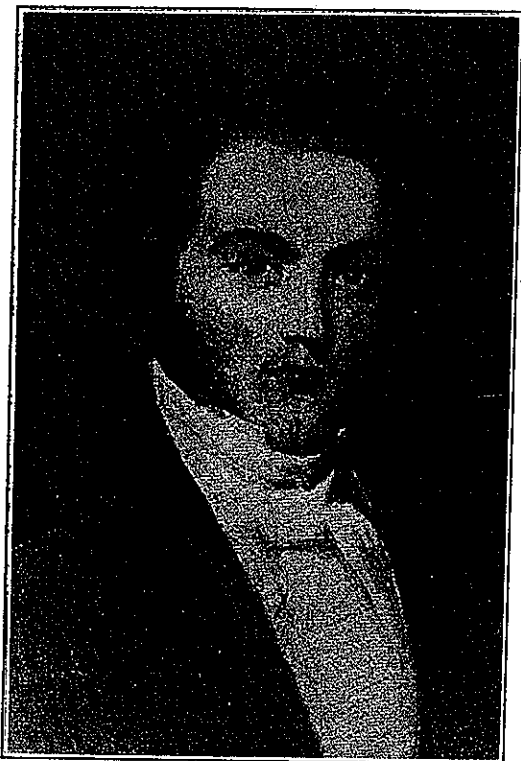


JOHN STEGMANN.

Immediately after the revolt of the American Colonies in 1775, Great Britain was offered mercenary troops by several of the European States, and offers were accepted from Hanover, the Hesses and other German principalities. As late as the end of the eighteenth century soldiering was considered as an honorable trade, that could be carried on by an individual in any foreign country as well as his own. Great Britain accepted 30,000 German troops from 1776 to 1780, and as fifty per cent. of them came from the two Hesses, all these mercenaries were called "Hessians" by the Americans. These troops fought bravely, and, notwithstanding inducements made to

desert to the enemy, they remained loyal to the British. Of those who came to America, 10,000 remained as settlers in British America, and their descendants are now to be found throughout the country.

John Stegmann was born in 1754, near Hesse, Cassel, Germany. He was Lieutenant in the Hessian Regiment at Lossberg, under Major-General de Loss, and served during the entire war in America. When peace was declared he came to Canada. He was appointed a Deputy Surveyor on October 18th, 1790, and was in active practice under the directions of John Collins or Samuel Holland.

On December 20th, 1786, he married Marie Hamelin, a French-Canadian lady, who was born in Quebec in 1770.

He was granted Lot 19 in the Third Concession in the Township of Osnabrook in the Lunenburg District.

There is a tradition in the family that he, with his wife and three children, first removed to Newark, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, living in a house that was constructed in 1760 and destroyed by the Americans by fire in 1813.

Mr. Stegmann then removed to York, where he was employed by the Surveyor-General on many surveys.

The following surveys were made under instructions of the Provincial Government by Mr. Stegmann:—
Part of Townships of Wolford and Montague, 1796.
Townships of Beverly and Flamborough, 1797.

In 1798 he was associated with Augustus Jones in surveys of Glanford, Burford, Oxford and Blenheim. In the same year he made a survey of the shore of Niagara River from Table Rock to Chippewa, also plotted survey of Vaughan Township. In 1799 he was engaged on the Lake Shore Road, Dundas Street, eastward from York, and also surveyed the Township of King. In 1800 he was instructed to lay out the second, third and fourth concessions on the east side of Yonge Street, also to report upon the state of the road from Smith Street to the River Trent and on a number of unclaimed lots in the Township of York.

In 1800 he was instructed by the Surveyor-General to report upon the condition of lots purchased in the Town Plot of York, and in 1801 he reported on the condition of Yonge Street from Lot 1 to Lot 95. His report is a voluminous document, in which he describes the condition of the new roadway. In many places the logs and underbrush had not been burned.

A plan of part of the plot of York, which was made by Mr. Stegmann, has been reproduced in Robertson's Landmarks. This is a plan of that portion of Toronto bounded by Queen Street, Toronto Street, Front Street and Peter Street, dated April 23rd, 1801, prepared by Mr. Stegmann. At this time Yonge Street was not extended from Queen Street (then Lot Street) southward to Front, nor was Toronto Street in its present location. There were eight square blocks in the area bounded by Bay, King, York and Newgate (now Adelaide).

In 1801 he surveyed Coot's Paradise and examined Markham Township.

In 1802 he completed the survey of Whitechurch, and in 1803 surveyed the Townships of Finch and Elmsley.

When surveying in the vicinity of Castle Frank and the River Don he wrote the Surveyor-General, D. W. Smith, as follows:—

“Sir:—

“I beg you will have the goodness to send me by the bearer a bush sextant.

“I am, sir,

“Your most obedient and very humble servant,
“John Stegmann, D.S.”

On the 15th of August, 1804 he was instructed to determine the position of the Moody, Farwell House, probably where Mr. Sharpe was murdered.

We now come to the tragic death of Mr. Stegmann.

Two brothers, Ackeus Moody Farewell and William Farewell, with their widowed mother, came from Connecticut and settled at first in the Niagara Peninsula near the Servos family. The sons removed to York when the Capital was removed from Newark. About 1803 they established a trading post on what is now known as Oshawa Creek, and in prosecuting their business with the Indians they later on established a subsidiary post at Washburn Island, Lake Scugog, about twenty-five miles north of Oshawa.

During the absence of one of the Farewell's from the outpost John Sharpe, the man in charge, was murdered by a Mississauga Indian, whose brother, Whistling Duck, had been killed by a white man. The Governor had, so it was alleged, promised that the slayer of Whistling Duck would be punished, but twelve months had elapsed and nothing done. It is reported that the entire tribe shortly afterwards came to York to trade and encamped at Gibraltar Point on the Island. Under the influence of liquor, the murderer boasted of his exploits and was handed over to the authorities by the Chief, Wabbekisheco, and lodged in jail.

The lawyer who was appointed to defend the Indian claimed that the crime had been committed in the Newcastle District, and that the trial could not therefore be held in York. The survey of the line between the districts had been made by Wm. Hambly in 1793, and Mr. Stegmann was employed to determine the location of Washburn Island in relation to this line. The Court sustained the contention of the prisoner's lawyer. The Court for the Newcastle District was then held at Sellicks, at the "carrying place," near Presque Isle. This hostelry was on the old stage route, York to Kingston, about half way between Brighton and Trenton, now the hamlet of Smithfield.

The "Speedy," a Government schooner, left York on Sunday evening, October 7th, 1804, for Presque Isle (Brighton), having on board Justice Cochrane; Robert J. D. Gray, Solicitor-General; Angus McDonell, Advocate; John Fisk, High Constable; George Cowan, Indian Interpreter; the prisoner and some of the witnesses. Farewell and Livingstone missed the schooner and proceeded by land. The wind was from the northwest at first, but veered to the northeast, increasing to a gale that prevented the vessel entering the harbor. She was seen off shore on Monday evening, but foundered with all on board during the night. The total loss of life is given in one account as twenty, in another statement as thirty-nine. Among those lost was John Stegmann.

His family resided in York. The children and dates of birth were as follows:—Mary, 1788; Lisette, 1789, unmarried; Lucy, 1791; John, 1794; David, 1797; Marie Eugenie, 1800, and George,

1803. His widow was buried at Richmond Hill. The eldest son, John, was burned to death when on a survey party. David died from smallpox, unmarried, and was buried in St. James' Churchyard, where his tombstone may now be seen on the east side of the Cathedral.

The youngest and only surviving son, George, married Mary Ann Bright, the children comprising four sons and four daughters. He was one of the prominent men in the city in his day. He was granted a Captaincy in the Militia by Sir George Arthur in 1838. His death occurred in 1848, and he was buried in St. James' Cemetery. One son, John Frederick, born 1837, died in 1916. He was an official of the County Court, and his widow, now living, furnished some of the data in this sketch. His elder brothers, David and George, removed to the United States.

Thomas Stegmann, son of George Stegmann, resided in Toronto, and died there during recent years. His only son, Captain Thomas Hammond Stegmann, M.C., has recently returned from overseas service, and is now the only known man named Stegmann in Toronto or vicinity.

Harriet Stegmann, born 1834, died 1916, second daughter of George Stegmann, and granddaughter of John Stegmann, married Alfred Gooderham, who owned and operated a grist mill on the Humber at Pine Grove, about three miles from Woodbridge. Mr. Edward G. Gooderham, of Toronto, is a son of Alfred Gooderham.

The eldest daughter of George Stegmann, who is now living, married M. J. Balmer, of Pine Grove; the third daughter became the wife of Peter McKellar, of Chatham, and the fourth daughter married Alfred Roe.

The eldest daughter of John Stegmann married Samuel S. Wilmot, a prominent deputy surveyor of the Newcastle district.

Marie Eugenie Stegmann, daughter of John Stegmann, married William Pollock, whose daughter, Eugenie Marie Pollock, married Stephen S. Searle, whose only son, Frederick Herrington Searle, is now living in Toronto.

The portrait which accompanies this sketch was taken from the portrait in the John Ross Robertson collection in the Reference Library, the card beneath the portrait stating that it is a portrait of John Stegmann, Hessian Officer, etc. Mrs. John Frederick Stegmann, 175 Sherbourne Street, has in her possession the original painting from which the portrait at the Library was made and states that this is a portrait of George Stegmann, son of John Stegmann, and that there can be no doubt about the matter.