

1850's, 50's & 60's.:::

Bowen Rd. & Niagara Blvd. by George Tait.
1927.

About the year 1851 and 1852 the late James Haggart started a Ferry between Freebury's landing at the foot of Bowen Rd. to Hertel Ave. at Black Rock on the American side. His fine little side wheeler steamer the "Cygnet", under her captain Dick Taylor, was placed on the route, but only operated during the summer months.

After a trail of two possibly three seasons, the service was discontinued; possibly for want of sufficient patronage. Another gentleman by the name of James Haggart, who at the time was Capt. of the Fort Erie Ferry boat, and afterwards conductor of the Dummy over the International Bridge; said he ran the Ferry for one season.

Clustered around the foot of Bowen Rd. at the time was a grain warehouse, blacksmith shop, shoe shop, dance hall, and two hotels. One of the hotels was kept by a man named Freebury, and following him Joseph Stevens, and the last was Joseph Lanigan, who had a licence in 1875. A considerable business was done in ferrying people and goods over the river, in small boats and yawls. There was a custom's officer stationed there, and on the dock was a Customs house, and also the shingle mill of Messrs. Stockdale and Tait. It was at this dock that the Fenians landed on a fine morning of June 1866. The shingle mill was not burned, but was torn down after the raids. (O'Neil of course did not damage the hotels) All the buildings have disappeared, however remains of the old dock can still be seen.

It was at this point that the old Western Union Telegraph Comp. installed their first submarine telegraph cable. It was abandoned when the International Bridge was completed, and the cable ran over it."

Shortly after the Fenian raids Joseph Stevens left the Hotel, and purchased a farm on the Gilmore road lot 5 con. 5 the west half.