

Taken from the Fort Erie Times ::: June 29th., 1939 .

GENERAL CRUIKSHANK Bertie native dies::: Distinguished Historian and head of the Historic Sites Commission, had career in Politics and military.

A former Reeve and one time Warden of the County of Welland, one of Fort Erie's distinguished sons; Brigadier General Ernest Alexander Cruikshank died at his home in Ottawa on Friday night. A native of Bertie Township, General Cruikshank was 86 years old. Funeral services were held in Ottawa on Monday for the soldier, historical writer and chairman of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

General Cruikshank had been chairman of the board since its inception 20 years ago. Counted as Welland County's most illustrious son, he was the oldest surviving Warden of the County, having held office in 1886.

General Cruikshank's career in the Militia began in 1877 when he received a commission in the 44th. Welland Battalion. It culminated in 1911, when he was appointed officer Commanding Military District # 13 at Calgary. He was promoted to a Brigadier General in 1915. He remained officer in command of the Calgary Military District until 1917 when he was recalled to headquarters in Ottawa. He was assigned to special duty and went to France in 1917. Following the Great War he returned and was appointed director of the historic section of the General Staff.

General Cruikshank was appointed a member of the Historic Sites and Monuments board, when it was created in 1919, by the Dominion Government. Its purpose was to select and advise regarding monuments or works preservation in fortifications, battlefields and other spots of national importance, in Canadian History.

" Much Accomplished "

He was chosen the Board Chairman at its first meeting, and remained in that position until his death. More than 200 bronze tablets have been erected under the Board's guidance, to commemorate outstanding occurrences in Canadian History, and a score of Historical buildings and sites have been acquired and preserved.

General Cruikshank wrote numerous books and pamphlets, and contributed articles to Military and Historical publications in Great Britain, the United States and Canada. In 1935 the Royal Society of Canada awarded him the Tyrrel gold medal for outstanding work in connection with the History of Canada.

" Last visit here "

The General's last visit here to the Niagara Peninsula, about which he wrote numerous histories, was made last June (1938) when he attended a past Warden's dinner; tendered by the then Warden, Reeve C.E. Steele, Port Colborne.

He first entered the County Council in 1878, more than 60 years ago, and was associated with the County Council for 23 years. He was author of "Gentleman's Agreement" between the two major political parties, whereby the Wardens were elected alternately by the Liberals and the Conservatives, and various offices are divided by the two parties.

General Cruikshank was born just outside Fort Erie, on the farm now occupied by F. Alexander, Garrison Rd. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Cruikshank. General Cruikshank's first wife is buried in St. Paul's Cemetery, Niagara Blvd.

"EDUCATED HERE"

He received his early education at the Fort Erie public Schools, later attended St. Thomas and Upper Canada College in Toronto. For many years he devoted much study to modern languages, and literature; acquiring a translating knowledge in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Danish and Swedish. For a time he was active on the staff of various newspapers in the United States.

He had a brilliant Municipal career, holding the office of Treasurer in Fort Erie in 1878, was Reeve from 1878 to 1882, 1885 to 1887, 1889 to 1895. He entered the County Council in 1879, was Warden in 1886 and altogether was connected with the Council for 28 years. He was a Justice of the Peace in 1882, Clerk of the District Court in 1893, and Police Magistrate in Niagara Falls from 1904 to 1908, when he resigned to become Military Archivist at Ottawa. He was Reeve of Fort Erie when the Town Hall on Queen St. was built. He was chairman of the Niagara Falls Collegiate Institute board, from 1904 to 1908, and vice president and secretary of the hospital board at Niagara Falls, from 1904 to 1908. In 1908 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Society, and was President of section 2, in 1920 to 1921. In 1922 he was elected Fellow of the Royal Historical Society of London England. He was a member and past president of the Ontario Historical Society, and was Secretary President of the Lundy's Lane, Niagara and Lincoln and Welland County, Historical Association.

" Wrote Many Histories "

Included in his Histories are the following:::
Historical and descriptive Sketch of the County of Welland.
History of the County of Welland.
Battle of Lundy's Lane.
Fight in the Beechwoods.
Battle of Quenston Heights.
Battle Fields of Niagara Peninsula.
Battle of Fort George.
Documentary History of the Campaigns on the Niagara Frontier; 1812-14.
Life of Col. James Kerby.

The funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church, Ottawa, on the Monday afternoon. Internment took place at Beachwood Cemetery Ottawa.

Louis Blake Duff, one of the provinces leading Historians who knew General Cruikshank intimately, made the following statement;;;

" Not a few would name General Cruikshank as the most distinguished of the native sons, of Welland County. He had a noble career in the Militia, he had a noble career in public service, but it was as a Historian, that his name is best known; and will be longest remembered. In that field indeed, one cannot think of another with an achievement as great as his. He began in the early 80's with the Municipal History of Welland County, a work that will long remain a most valuable source book, of those that would know the social origins of this area. He next concentrated his attention on the War of 1812-14; and ransacked Ottawa, Toronto, and Washington and Albany, for his monumental documentary of the War of 1812-14; and that too, will be a source book for the student of the Military affairs. An extended series of papers was contributed by him, to the Selected Papers for the Canadian Military Institute. This ran for a number of years. He likewise contributed innumerable papers to the Royal Society; The Canadian Historical Society; and the Historical Societies of Welland, Lundy's Lane, and Niagara.

General Cruikshanks great service to the Ontario Historical Society was the editing of four volumes on the S-mcoe Papers, and three volumes of the Russel Papers. Here agian we have source volumes of the greatest value.

Spending recent winters in Jamaica, General Cruikshank displayed a deep interest in the amazing career of Henry Morgan; the fruits of which was "A life of Henry Morgan", issued by Mc. Millan's three years ago. This proved to be the best work from his pen. The London Times in an extended review accorded this work high place. His Historic sketch of John Henry; a gifted faker , who emen fooled President Monroe, is in a lighter vain and is engaging as a detective story.

Generak Cruikshank had an intence passion for accuracy, and I have yet to find anyone who has found an error in his facts. He wassa man of extremely simple character, and wholly wanting in pretence." I wish I could express a tribute that would be worthy of the man. He was one of the choicest of men I have ever known; stated Reeve C.E. Steele, of Port Colborne; who sat with General Cruikshank in the County Council before the turn of the Century, and often mentioned him at the County Council sessions during the pst few years.

" I knew him first intimately" said Reeve Steele," in 1897 when we were members of the County Council Commission. It was my good fortune to associate with him in that capacity, for six years; and I have always considered him one of the greatest men I have ever been associated with in the County Council, or any other organization. He was great as a citizen, as a Military man, and as a Historian. He will be greatly missed by his friends, and the thoughts of his splendid life; will be ever fragrant in our memories."

Only three relatives servive General Cruikshank: a niece Mrs. Margaret E. Attwood of Fort Erie, and a nephew Mr. Andrew A Miller of Knowlton Quebec, and formerly of St. Thomas; and a grand neice, Mrs. S.H. Raymond of Queen ST. Fort Erie.