

12. ROCKSIDE

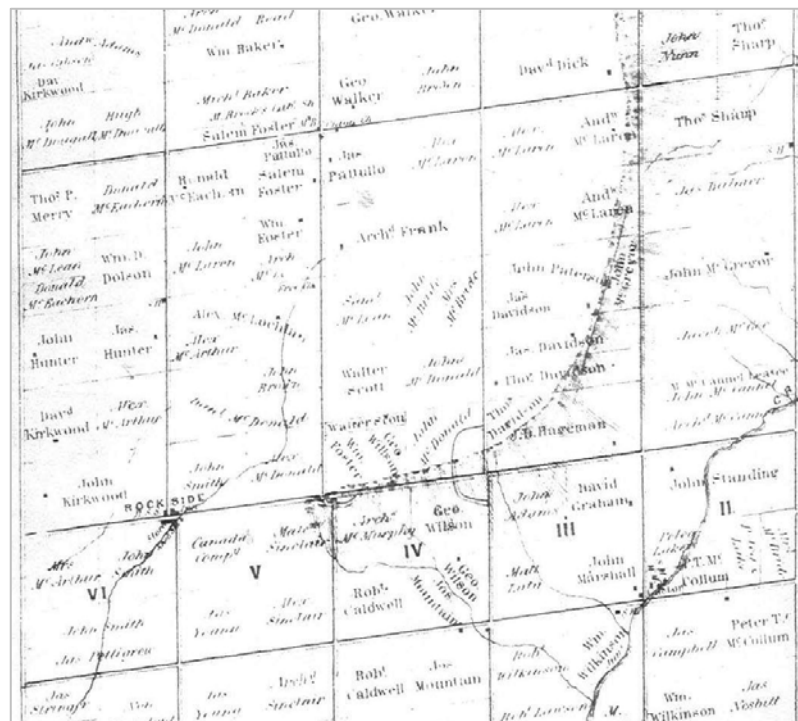
The Town of Caledon Rockside Cultural Heritage Landscape Study (Scheinman et al, 2006, rev. March 2009) provides a more in-depth evaluation and listing of heritage buildings and landscape features identified within the Rockside CHL, and should be referred to for additional information.

12.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The earliest settlers in Caledon Township were a group of Scots originating from the counties of Renfrewshire and Argyllshire in Scotland, an area west of Glasgow and including a number of the Islands, the westernmost being Islay. John MacDonald and his extended family reached the southwest corner of the Township in June 1820, just after the completion of the original survey. They were followed over the next few years by other family members and countrymen.

It is this group of families, largely in place on the land by 1825, opening up a particularly rugged wilderness for settlement, which has come to be known in local lore as the *Rockside Pioneers* (the area being named Rockside, after a village on the Island of Islay). Though on historical maps Caledon's Rockside once identified a tiny crossroads hamlet formed at the corner of Base Line Road (Olde Base Line Road) and Shaw's Creek Road (Fifth Line West), in fact locally, and to the pioneers themselves, it was always understood to refer to the broader area settled by this group of pioneers. This continues to be true though the hamlet itself has long since disappeared.

This area, comprising the southwestern corner of the original Caledon Township consisting mainly of Lots 1-6 in Concessions 3 – 6 WHS and the uppermost lots (Lots 33-34) in the original Chinguacousy Township, is thus considered an excellent candidate *organically evolved* CHL for its direct association with the major Caledon themes of *Survey and Pioneer Settlement* and *Early Subsistence Farming*.



Rockside and area, Tremaine Map 1859

12.2 INVENTORY

1. Physiographic Description

The Rockside study area is located in the southwest quadrant of the Town, its boundaries generally comprised of Olde Base Line Road on the south, Winston Churchill Road on the west, The Grange Sideroad on the north and the Niagara Escarpment on the east.

Lands within the study area lie to the southwest of the Oak Ridges Moraine, and north and west of the Niagara Escarpment, on the rolling uplands of the Paris Moraine. This moraine, which extends westward into Erin Township, is comprised of sandy till and kame deposits deposited by a glacial retreat approximately 14,000 to 5,000 years ago. These glacial deposits have created a hummocky terrain characterized by stony soils, and numerous wet depressions, which are underlain by the limestone bedrock.



View to drumlin east side Winston Churchill Road

Within the study area, a drumlin is visible north of Olde Base Line Road and east of Winston Churchill Boulevard, just north of the Rockfort farm complex.

The study area also includes several minor tributaries of the Credit River, which, combined with the mineral soils and irregular terrain, give rise to the cedar swamps that are characteristic of the area. Located just to the south of the study area, below Olde Base Line Road is the Caledon Mountain Slope Forest, a designated Area of Natural and Scientific Interest comprised of a diverse bedrock plain forest, with wetlands, a peatland swamp and associated fen.



View to Badlands and Olde Base Line Road

In the southeast corner of the study area (just west of Chinguacousy Road and north of Olde Base Line Road) on the edge of the Escarpment is an interesting physiographic feature known as the Cheltenham (or Caledon) Badlands. This phenomena dates to the early part of the 20th century when extensive land clearing caused the loss of topsoil and erosion of the underlying red shale, leaving the

hummocky terrain and exposed trenched gullies seen today. It is considered one of the best examples of “Badlands topography” in Ontario, and is designated a provincial Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI).

2. Processes

Land Uses and Activities

Farming

The Rockside area was settled as farmland despite the rocky nature of the terrain. Heavily forested, stones and boulders at grade, rock outcrops and lack of soil cover all characterized most of the properties on which the *Rockside Pioneers* came to settle. For many this was not so different from the rough terrain of western Scotland. However, the combination of the rough nature of the landscape and, initially, the lack of frontier skills on the part of the immigrants, made the beginnings of settlement very difficult. As documented by Robert Crichton, son of RP John Crichton, in his memoir, many of the Scottish settlers were completely unfamiliar with the use of the axe, the basic tool of pioneer survival¹. Land clearing, firewood chopping and house building were dependent on its skilled use. Still, necessity and the early arrival in the area of several families skilled in backwoods living, including: Michael Baker, Frederick Frank, Aaron Teeter, James Hunter and James McLaren, led to quick learning and adjustment to the requirements of frontier life².

In general terms then the area followed the agricultural evolution of most of central Upper Canada in the first half of the 19th century but typically more slowly due to the poor quality of the farmland and distance from markets. Thus the period of land clearing and subsistence farming was long compared to that of the farms on the Peel Plain to the south. However, with few exceptions, the farms were never as prosperous as those even a few miles to the south and east. However, as elsewhere wheat was the main crop until c.1860, as is reflected in the proliferation in the area of the three-bay 'English Barn', a barn type developed specifically for the winnowing and storage of grain.

The Reciprocity Treaty with the U.S.A. (1854-65) and the arrival of the railway in the mid 19th century encouraged farmers to diversify, including an increase in livestock for both dairy and beef production. This often led to the raising of the original timber frame barn to allow for a stone storey below for the housing of livestock. Most of the area's surviving barns show this modification. On the larger farms, such as those of Alex McLaren, John Kirkwood and David Kirkwood, second and sometimes third barns were added for specialized functions (e.g. stable). The 1871 Census Return noted that John Kirkwood (Lot 1 Concession 6 WHS) owned 200 acres of land, one house and four barns or stables as well as various carriages, and farm vehicles and equipment that included two fanning mills and a horse rake. The principal livestock were sheep and swine³. His was, for the area, a particularly prosperous farm.

Other crops of some importance in the area through the mid 19th century were peas, oats, potatoes and turnips⁴. The area was blessed with a large number of sugar maple stands and the production of maple sugar at a number of locations continued well into the 20th century

¹ Robert Crichton, The Rockside Pioneers. (Cheltenham: Boston Mills Press, 1977) Chapter 3 (no page numbers).

² Ibid. Chapter 7.

³ Unterman McPhail and Cuming Associates (UMCA). Rockfort Quarry Site Documentation Report prepared for James Dick Construction, August 1998, p.6.

⁴ 1860 Agricultural Census for Caledon.

(e.g. Rockfort farmstead, Lot 1, Concession 6 WHS)⁵. The 1877 Atlas of Peel County map shows that many of the properties had small orchards.

Other than agriculture some small scale 'industrial' activities were undertaken, such as lime-burning as depicted on the 1877 map along Olde Base Line Road (traces of which can still be seen) and stone quarrying, which was largely confined to personal use for house and/or barn construction e.g. the Frank property (Lot 5 Concession 4 WHS) and Rockfort farmstead (Lot 1, Concession 6 WHS).

As with many marginal agricultural areas employment for the *Rockside Pioneers* often had to be found elsewhere to supplement farm income. In the early years this meant having to go quite far afield to the quarries near Kingston⁶ or providing labour for the construction of the Erie Canal.⁷ With the development of the quarries along the Niagara Escarpment in the Credit River valley c.1865, including those at nearby Inglewood, supplemental work could readily be found within the area. As well, provisioning of the substantial workforce for these local quarries provided a ready market for local farmers.

In recent times the farms of the area have not been able to compete with larger holdings elsewhere and agricultural production, with a few exceptions (e.g. the Westerveld hog farm on Winston Churchill Boulevard (Lot 2 W¹/₂, Concession 6 WHS), has virtually ceased. Today many of the properties are hobby farms, and, along Creditview Road, horse farms dominate. Hart House affiliated with the University of Toronto since the early 20th century (originally the Patterson farm), is located deep into the interior of Lot 3 Concession 3 WHS. Directly south of Hart House Farm along Creditview Road is the Caledon Riding and Hunt Club.

Fox hunting began in the area with Major Kindersley at Rockfort farmstead at the corner of Olde Base Line Road and Winston Churchill Boulevard, where the fox pens are still in evidence.



Major Kindersley and hounds, Rockfort farmstead, 1963

Early Industry and Commerce

A tiny hamlet, which came to be known as Rockside, developed around the intersection of Olde Base Line Road (the original Township Baseline) with Shaw's Creek Road (Fifth Line West) to the north and the slightly offset Rockside Road to the south (a commemorative name for Fifth Line West in Chinguacousy Township).

⁵ Interview with Rod and Lorraine Symmes.

⁶ Robert Crichton, *The Rockside Pioneers*. (Cheltenham: Boston Mills Press, 1977) Chapter 8 (no page numbers).

⁷ *Ibid.*, Chapter 4.

A small creek crosses Olde Base Line Road at this point, but there is no evidence of a mill, often the catalyst of settlement, ever having occupied this site. By the mid-19th century a small commercial node had developed, catering to some of the basic needs of the farming community.

In 1859 this included a blacksmith's shop, inn, store and a shoe store operated by John McLeod, described on the Tremaine Map as 'a general merchant and boot and shoe maker.'

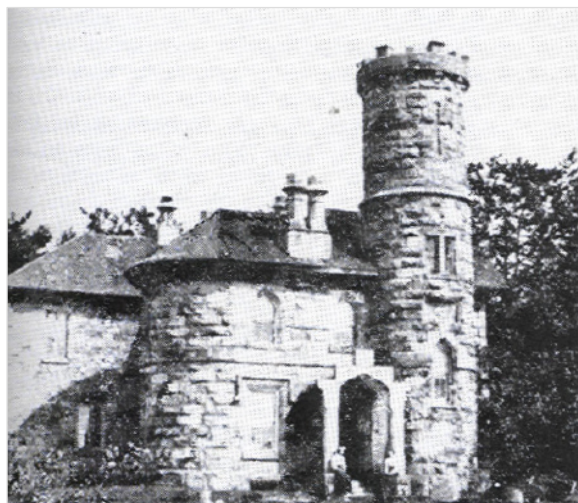
In 1877 this same array of commercial establishments remained intact⁸ but a Temperance Hall had replaced the inn, indicative of the influence of the temperance movement across the Province at that time⁹. However, as the larger villages and towns of the region became more accessible to the Rockside folk (particularly with the advent of the automobile), this commercial core gradually disappeared, until virtually no trace ('above ground') remains. Despite this, the name continues to be shown on maps to the present day, confirming that the identity of the area rests on much more than the transient hamlet.

Historic Events

The Rockside area was not generally the site of dramatic historic events on the grand scale, though certainly affected and influenced by them. However, the exception was, as for a number of small, disaffected farming communities in the orbit of York (Toronto), the Rebellion of 1837. When William Lyon Mackenzie was in flight after the battle of Montgomery's Tavern, he and fourteen followers are said to have been hidden for two weeks in a cave on the John MacDonald Jr. farm (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS), kept alive by MacDonald's wife who smuggled food to them despite the nearby presence of government troops¹⁰.

The other site associated with the broader issues of the time was the Grange (McLaren's Castle), the baronial Scottish castle built by Alex McLaren (Lot 5 E½ Concession 4 WHS) and completed in 1864.

The building itself with its grand scale, meticulous stone detailing, and prominent view, became a landmark, known well beyond the area. McLaren himself was involved in local politics both formally as Reeve of the Township but also as the catalyst behind the forming of 'the Grangers', the first united farmers' group which met in the attic of the Castle¹¹.



McLaren's Castle (W.I. Collection, photo courtesy of the McLaren family)

⁸ Peel County Atlas, 1877.

⁹ Robert Crichton, *The Rockside Pioneers*. (Cheltenham: Boston Mills Press, 1977) Chapter 9 (no page numbers).

¹⁰ Berniece Trimble, *Belfountain" Caves, Castles and Quarries*. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975) p.28

¹¹ *Ibid.* p.23-27.

Patterns of Spatial Organization

Survey

The survey of Caledon Township was completed in 1819 by Samuel Rykman and was one of the first to be undertaken using the double-front system. In this system the common unit of concession is the half-lot of 100 acres with each half of the 200 acre lot fronting on a different concession line road. These half lots are almost square. Concessions run essentially north-south in this region (actually northwest). At every five lots there is an allowance for a Sideroad.

In Caledon Township, concessions were numbered east and west from Hurontario Street (now Highway 10) with a number of the west concession roads unable to be run across the edge of the Niagara Escarpment. The earliest of the *Rockside Pioneers* were granted 50 acres of land with the other 50 acres of the half-lot potentially held in reserve for the settler until such time as all settlement duties had been performed and a small fee paid¹². The nature of the double front survey described above and the original granting of land as 50 acre (1/4 lot) parcels have had a lasting effect on the pattern of settlement in Rockside. While many early settlers did go on to obtain their 'reserve lot' (the other 50 acres), in a number of cases the second 50 acres ended up in different hands such as with John Crichton and Hugh McLaren¹³. This established relatively dense settlement in some parts of Rockside, as can be seen on both the Tremaine and the County Atlas maps, and constrained the growth of certain holdings. (Dense here refers to the potential for two completely separate farmsteads on the same 100 acres fronting the concession roads).

In association with the influences on settlement patterns described above, natural features played a key role in the siting of houses and barns and indeed in the definition of the community itself, being effectively bounded on the east by the spine of the Escarpment. The curving of this 'spine' also created the unique configuration of Creditview Road which could not go through to meet Olde Base Line Road in its surveyed alignment, but rather had to extend west into Lot 1 Concession 4 WHS before turning south. The location of the MacDonald cemetery at the inside corner of this realignment is one of the distinctive features of the area.

Other key natural determinants of settlement form were the system of springs (desired by the settlers) and creeks (running southwest through the western half of the area), the presence of cedar swamps, particularly through Lot 5 Concession 5 WHS, and the characteristic 'rockiness' of the land, which inspired the Rockside name.

¹² Robert Crichton, *The Rockside Pioneers*. (Cheltenham: Boston Mills Press, 1977) Chapter 2 (no page numbers).

¹³ Ibid.

Most farmsteads were situated within sight of the concession road, though typically down a lane well back from the road itself. The front part of the lot generally was cleared for domestic and/or agricultural activity while the rear of the lot was often left in bush for timber, firewood and maple sugaring. With the double-front system, this meant that the heart of the 200 acre lot could remain quite wild. Properties and fields within properties were demarcated with a variety of fence types, including snake rail and cedar rail, and, most distinctively, the stone and shingle type discussed in more detail in following sections.



Traditional cedar rail fence on Winston Churchill Blvd.

The original pattern of settlement established by the land survey and local topographic imperatives is still dominant, but over the last fifty years has begun to be eroded. Initially, lot severances led to the building of suburban type housing (e.g. bungalows infilling between the original homes and often much closer to the road than the original buildings) and to increased building along the sideroads. More recently estate development has transformed certain areas (e.g. west side of Shaw's Creek Road) where the lots, though large by urban standards, still create a density of development, which was not part of the original settlement pattern.

More promising for the retention of heritage character is the recent tendency to build 'hideaways' down long lanes, hidden from the road. Several recent period home reconstructions appear to have taken into account the traditional setback from the road and orientation of dwellings as well as period vernacular architecture.

In other areas derelict farms and old fields have begun to regenerate, substantially increasing the 'bush' component of parts of the area.



Farm pond and regenerating woodland

Cultural Traditions

Settlement

A number of the early settlers, who have come to be known as the *Rockside Pioneer,s* arrived in Canada together after sailing out of Greenock, Scotland on the *Young Norval*. Others, also mostly Scots from the area to the west of Glasgow, arrived separately. The earliest group was led by John MacDonald¹⁴, who had served in North America during the War of 1812, and was 56 years of age when he emigrated. He became known as the 'Patriarch', as his band included many of his ten children, two of whom were already married and had children of their own¹⁵. In his memoirs Robert Crichton notes that the group, being large, requested land together and, while plenty of land was still available in the near townships of Toronto, Chinguacousy and Esquesing, were duped by the Commissioner of Crown lands, and "forced to penetrate upwards of thirty miles into the almost unbroken wilderness" arriving in June, 1820¹⁶. The MacDonald clan and their traveling companions were truly the first settlers into the area of what was then, the frontier.

John MacDonald took his property on Lot 1 E½ Concession 6 WHS, son James the north-west quarter of Lot 1, and son-in-law William Kirkwood the lot directly to the north (Lot 2 W½ Concession 6). This group hailed from Renfrewshire (MacDonald from the village of Lockwinnoch, Kirkwood from Carisemple Estate near Horwood)¹⁷.

Also traveling aboard the *Young Norval* was John Crichton, a teacher from Paisley, Argyllshire, who after a time in eastern Ontario, made his way to west Caledon Township following the MacDonald clan whom he had met on the boat. At the land agency he selected the 50 acres constituting the north half of Lot 4 W ½ Concession 5 WHS while a fellow Scotsman, behind him in line at the agency, Hugh McLaren, selected the 50 acres directly to the south. At the time both no doubt thought of 50 acres as a great deal of land and took comfort in relative proximity but later, with growing families, would wish that they had been able to obtain their reserve land option.

Among the earliest settlers to the area was James McLaren who had originally emigrated to Canada in 1802. He moved to Caledon in 1820 with his wife Mary McNabb (also originally from Argyllshire), apparently lured by the hilly, scenic qualities of the landscape, unusual criteria for the time. He seems to have received and/or purchased substantial holdings, which included Lot 5 E½ Concession 4 WHS; Lot 5 Concession 3 WHS; and Lot 4 Concession 3 WHS¹⁸.

Alex Patullo of Glasgow arrived in the fall of 1820 and was followed by his son, James, in 1823. Alex settled on Lot 2 E½ Concession 6 WHS, beside William Kirkwood, and James on Lot 5 W½ Concession 4 WHS¹⁹.

¹⁴ MacDonald was also spelled McDonald, as indicated in such sources as the 1877 Atlas of Peel County, and the historic plaque at the family cemetery. This is not uncommon for the time period, however, on the MacDonald family gravestones, the name is generally spelled this way.

¹⁵ Berniece Trimble, *Belfountain Caves, Castles and Quarries*. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), p.13.

¹⁶ Robert Crichton, *The Rockside Pioneers*. (Cheltenham: Boston Mills Press, 1977) Chapter 2 (no page numbers).

¹⁷ Berniece Trimble, *Belfountain" Caves, Castles and Quarries*. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), p.16.

¹⁸ Belfountain-Rockside Women's Institute, *Tweedsmuir History*.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Among other early settlers of Scottish origin was Daniel McLaughlin, who provided a portion of his property Lot 3 E½ Concession 5 WHS for the church and original log school. He also owned the north quarter of the same lot²⁰.

Others who arrived in these first years of settlement included James Hunter, who was raised in Nova Scotia (Lot 3 Concession 6 WHS); Michael Baker from Pennsylvania (just north of The Grange Sideroad) and Frederick Frank, also from Pennsylvania (Lot 4, Concession 4 WHS). These settlers brought already well-honed pioneering skills and thus could act as tutors to the community of recent immigrants.

James Davidson, originally of Ireland, had settled on Lot 3 Concession 3 WHS by 1827²¹.

Thus the nature of the Rockside community was rooted in Scotland, in the region to the west of Glasgow, particularly Renfrewshire and Argyllshire, including the islands. The descendants of these first families intermarried and spread out over the remaining lots in this corner of Caledon, spilling over the Base Line into Chinguacousy to the south and over the Township line into Erin in the west, and forming the essential character of the community to well into the 20th century. Gaelic continued to be spoken here until World War 1²². This area, which came to be known as Rockside (also a hamlet on the Island of Islay), has always been identified with those first settlers who locally achieved notoriety as the *Rockside Pioneers*.

3. Elements

Circulation Networks

Circulation through the area continues to be along the historic concession roads and sideroads, which, with the exception of Mississauga Road, essentially retain much of their original character. While Mississauga Road and Olde Base Line Road are paved, the other roads in the study area remain as gravel roads. Chinguacousy Road at the eastern edge of the study area still dead-ends at the Escarpment and Creditview Road retains its historic re-orientation westward at Lot 1, forming a picturesque corner for the MacDonald cemetery. The curve of the Escarpment, and the rolling terrain that lent itself to the formation of the Badlands, also creates the roller coaster effect of Olde Base Line Road, eastward from this point. The Grange Sideroad, while narrow and winding between Winston Churchill Boulevard and Chinguacousy Road, becomes tortuous where it breaches the Escarpment and has always been impassable under certain conditions (it is closed during the winter months). Olde Base Line Road thus is the key road for east/west movement through the area.

Boundary Demarcations

The clearest area boundary is at the east, formed by the eastern edge of the Escarpment. Rockside nestles up to this natural feature, which curls around it to the southeast and serves as a physical barrier between this area and other parts of the former Caledon and

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Interview with Lorraine and Rod Symmes.

Chinguacousy townships. This isolation has imbued Rockside with its own unique sense of being a distinct community.

Less clear are the political boundaries. The Townline or Winston Churchill Boulevard separates Caledon from Erin as Olde Base Line Road divides the former Caledon Township from Chinguacousy Township. As well, there is little question that the north side of The Grange Sideroad was very much a part of the Rockside world as is indicated by the headstones at the Greenlaw Corners cemetery. The actual boundary of Rockside is soft in these areas, certainly continuing west a concession into Erin Township, several lots south to Ballinafad Road and at least one lot north of The Grange Sideroad. Beyond that point, to the north, Belfountain would have exerted greater influence.



Patullo-McDiarmid-Simmond stone fence,
Lot 5 Concession 4 WHS

The typical farmstead is bounded by dry stone and/or wood fences, the most distinctive of which is the carefully laid dry stone wall set to a slight 'batter' from base to top, shimmed with cedar shingles at regular intervals at the coursing to maintain consistent level, and capped.

The stone fence at Lot 5 W¹/₂ Concession 4 WHS on Mississauga Road is an example of a restored and well preserved section of this type of fence. Referred to as the Patullo-McDiarmid-Simmonds Stone Fence, it was designated in 1993 under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

This fence type, which thus far appears to be unique to this area of Caledon, can be found at the following locations:

- on the Rockfort farmstead at Winston Churchill Boulevard and Olde Base Line Road
- on the east side of Mississauga Road just south of Grange Road (Lot 5 W¹/₂ Concession 4 WHS, shown as Jas. Kirkwood in 1877, and a later Patullo property)
- on the west side of Shaw's Creek Road, at the corner of Olde Base Line Road (Lot 1 E¹/₂ Concession 6 WHS, part of the original John MacDonald land holding, according to Crichton's memoirs)
- on the east side of Shaw's Creek Road (Lot 2 W¹/₂ Concession 5 WHS, which is shown as Jas. MacDonald on the 1877 Atlas map)
- around the MacDonald cemetery (which is shown as owned by Daniel MacDonald on the 1877 Atlas map)

Other early typical fence types in the area include stone pile fences (essentially out of stone rubble and not really laid) associated with land clearing, cedar rail fences (mostly rebuilt) and a combination where the stone ‘piles’ are surmounted with a cedar rail fence. Along Creditview Road the most prevalent fencing is the board fence associated with the horse farms. Each fence type imparts a particular visual rhythm to the landscape.



Rockside stone fence with cedar shims at the MacDonald family cemetery

Vegetation Related to Land Use

Since the clearing of land was a necessity of life in the settlement of the townships, there is little original vegetation remaining from the historic period of Rockside. Due to the necessary scale and competitiveness of modern farming, agriculture, always marginal in this rocky landscape, has all but disappeared, and many fields are returning to a vegetated state through natural succession. Much of these regenerating areas comprise wet-loving species, which would have naturally occurred along the streambanks and in the low-lying depressions, accompanied by balsam poplar, cottonwood, basswood, birch and other early successional species.

Air photo interpretation shows some remaining areas of mature woodlot, likely associated with the woodlots and sugar bushes of the 19th century farms, as well as extensive conifer plantations. More extensive forested areas can be seen in association with the Escarpment edge, although previously disturbed through the various quarrying operations that took place during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Regrettably, as in the rest of Caledon and Southern Ontario in general, there are few heritage trees remaining in the Rockside study area. Generally the remaining heritage trees along the roads are sugar maple, although a few oak were noted along Creditview Road.



Typical tree-lined farm lane

Heritage trees are typically found along the road frontages of the heritage farms and lining the farm lanes. Due to the overall age and condition of these heritage trees, intervention will be required to ensure preservation, and their future is made uncertain by the continued threat of Regional road widening. Many mature trees are now contained within regenerating fencerows and forested areas, making the formal tree lines less distinct. More limited in this area, but still present, are windbreaks of Norway spruce or cedar adjacent to the building clusters.

Although numerous and frequently large orchards are shown on the 1877 County Atlas map, there was no evidence of maintained orchards observed during the windshield survey undertaken for this study. Some remnant orchard areas and ‘escaped’ apple trees can be seen in the regenerating areas and in hedgerows. Closer observation of individual heritage properties would likely reveal the remains of former orchards (as seen at the Rockfort farmstead).



Remnant orchard at property on Shaw's Creek Road

Buildings, Structures and Objects

Churches, Schools and Cemeteries

The Scots who settled Rockside were almost all of Presbyterian background and many, notably the former teacher, John Crichton, carried with them as well a belief in the importance of education. By the early 1830s a log building had been erected to act as a school and church following the organization of the Presbyterian congregation of West Caledon in 1831. It appears to have been located on the east side of Mississauga Road in close proximity to the extant c. 1890 stone schoolhouse. Prior to that time services had been held at the home of John Macdonald. With the formal establishment of a Presbyterian congregation Duncan Macmillan, a minister, who like many of his new flock, also was from Argyllshire and could preach in Gaelic as well as English, was inducted.

In 1835 a plot was procured from Daniel McLachlan for the construction of a church and for use as a burying ground. In 1837 the timber framed ‘White Church’ (later the Melville Church, Rockside) was built by Daniel McMillan of Erin and served the community until 1964²³. The church has undergone restoration in recent years, and is being used for special events such as weddings.

The cemetery contains the monuments of many of the *Rockside Pioneers* dating back to the earliest burials in the community, and including much of the Kirkwood family. It is still being used for interments. The site has become the focus for reunions of former Rocksiders.



Melville Church and Cemetery

²³ Berniece Trimble, Belfountain Caves, Castles and Quarries. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), pp.103-107.

The other church within the community stood at Greenlaw Corners (now Mississauga Road and The Grange Sideroad) and was known as the Union or Congregational Church. While it originally also had a burying ground and parsonage, by 1900 it had fallen into disuse with many of the members joining the Melville Church. Greenlaw also appears to have included a smithy and Temperance Hall c. 1875. Nothing above ground remains of these buildings. However, the Greenlaw Corners Congregational church site remains as a pioneer cemetery with a number of the headstones having been reclaimed and set in two rows at the rear of the lot.



Greenlaw Corners Pioneer Cemetery

An extremely important and prominent burying ground is the MacDonald family cemetery at Lot 2 E $\frac{1}{2}$ Concession 4 WHS, Creditview Road on the property originally settled by John MacDonald Jr. (son of the 'Patriarch'). John Jr. had initially settled in Kingston with his wife, Jean Smith, to work as a foreman in the quarries, but moved into the Rockside area around 1825²⁴. It is here that John MacDonald 'the Patriarch' (d. 1840) and his wife Margaret McDonald (d. 1845) are laid to rest. Surrounded by the characteristic dry-laid stone wall of the Rockside area, with an iron gate, and shaded by mature trees, the MacDonald Cemetery continues to be a well maintained, almost prototypical 19th century burying ground.



MacDonald family cemetery, Creditview Road

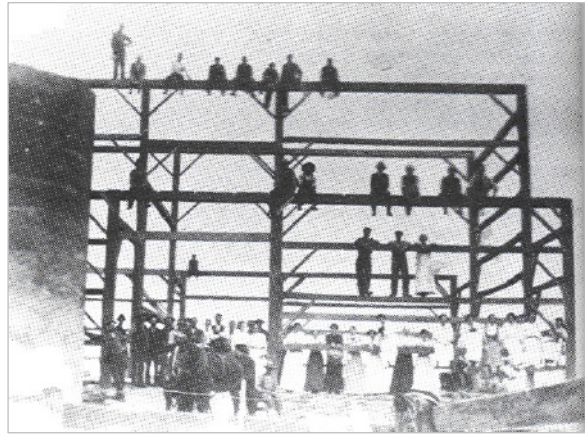
The installation of a post office within a rural area conferred recognition of that area as an identifiable entity. The Rockside post office was established at the property of David Kirkwood (Lot 2 W $\frac{1}{2}$ Concession 6 WHS) the Kirkwood homestead, by 1861. It remained until 1876 when it was transferred to the Rockfort farmstead, home of his older brother John, on the property directly to the south. The post office remained at the Rockfort farmstead until 1913²⁵. By 1877 the Grange, castle-like home of Alexander McLaren, provided a second post office in the area. However, it was the post office at the southwest corner of the Township that was always known as Rockside.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 37.

²⁵ Unterman McPhail and Cuming Associates (UMCA). Rockfort Quarry Site Documentation Report prepared for James Dick Construction, August 1998.

The location of the original school on Mississauga Road has already been noted. Prior to 1860 a second, frame schoolhouse was built at the northeast corner of James Hunter's 50 acre lot (Lot 3 E½ Concession 6 WHS). This building, with a raised teacher's dias, seems to have served the community for a long period.²⁶ Shown at this location on the 1859 Tremaine Map and the 1877 County Atlas map, it was finally superseded by the fine stone schoolhouse on Mississauga Road in 1890. The stone school, built apparently in close proximity to the original log school, operated until 1963. It now makes a very impressive private home.

As in many closely knit rural communities, neighbours assisted each other in the larger tasks which confronted them, often imbuing the activity with the air of celebration. Local barn raisings, quilting bees and maple sugaring are all documented as having continued well into the 20th century.



Barn raising at Maple Hill Farm

Dwellings

The time consuming rigours of land clearing and the necessity of establishing some subsistence crops meant that settlers had to initially construct very rudimentary wood shanties in which to live. Crichton notes that this group of Scots had no background as woodsmen, increasing the difficulty of initial settlement and suggesting that their original structures would have been particularly basic. However, quite early on, the Scots were augmented by other settlers, transplanted from Pennsylvania and Nova Scotia, who transmitted their well-honed pioneer skills to the general community.

While the most obviously notable heritage homes in the area are of stone or brick, by far the greatest number of farm houses were originally modest one or 1 ½ storey log or frame dwellings. Of the 14 structures documented in the area in the 1851 census, six were log, six were frame and two were of stone. Of interest is that the stone structures belong to John Kirkwood and James McLaren respectively. Both Kirkwood and James' son, Alex McLaren, eventually built the most substantial stone dwellings in the Rockside area. Because of all the timber available and the relative ease of erection, wood structures were the overwhelming choice as the settler's first permanent house. Given the marginal nature of farming for many in the area, these houses remained the family domicile until at least the late 19th century. Brick was not commonly used in Rockside until c.1880.

There are several reasons for the lack of obvious surviving examples of these early frame and log homes including: the inherent transience of the material, i.e., subject to decay and fire; their finally being superseded by masonry dwellings; their being renovated and covered in later siding obscuring their early origins and, there being a greater tendency for 'new owners' to demolish rather than gentrify/restore these modest buildings. This is one of the reasons

²⁶ Berniece Trimble, Belfountain Caves, Castles and Quarries. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), pp.118-119.

why the Westerveld farmhouse (Lot W¹/₂ Concession 6), clearly at its root a very early frame building and likely the original William Kirkwood home (see below), is so significant. It may well be the last and/or best preserved of that first generation of *Rockside Pioneer* homes, and is associated with one of the key families. Other important remaining early timber homes include: the reasonably well preserved 1 ½ storey center-gabled, shiplap sided dwelling on Lot 3 Concession 5 WHS facing Shaw's Creek Road and associated originally with the McArthur family; the Teeter house on the north side of The Grange Sideroad; and the Thomas Foster House, across from the Melville Schoolhouse. The Thomas Foster House, although much changed with new siding, window treatment and additions, is still the residence of a Foster descendant. There are several other frame structures, which may be quite early, but if so have been significantly changed and/or are in very poor condition.

Typically most of the early dwellings, including those of stone, were three bays (door flanked by a window on each side), originally one or 1 ½ storey with a medium pitched gabled roof, relying on the end gable windows to light the second floor, and a chimney(s) at the end wall. The dimensions were not much beyond that of the classic pioneer log home (18' x 24'). Usually this comprised four or five rooms on the ground floor (depending on whether a hall was included). Earliest additions would include a kitchen 'tail', a center gable with window to light the upstairs hall and a porch or verandah. The stair at the Westerveld House was found to have been built around a floor to ceiling newel at the enclosed chimney corner. The full height newel is a medieval form (precursor to the modern spiral stair) and its location in the Westerveld House is as was often found in early log dwellings. It is often difficult to distinguish between the early frame and log houses as typically both were covered with some form of siding.

The Westerveld House exhibits other features that were probably typical of the earliest permanent homes, such as the exposed second storey floor beams with tongue and groove floor boards above as the ceiling of the main storey. The beam edges were beaded as a decorative touch.

While log and frame were the predominant house types for the first half of the 19th century, it is clear that a stone house was considered more desirable and, if a Rockside family could, they did eventually build in this material. Indeed, the material, largely sandstone and dolostone, was abundant. It harked back to the traditional construction of their homeland, and a number in the community had experience working with it. John MacDonald Jr., son of the 'Patriarch', is documented as having worked as a foreman in the quarries of Kingston upon the family's arrival in Upper Canada, and many of the Rockside men were known to have worked there and in the construction of the Erie Canal to supplement their farm income. Later in the century of course, many would work from time to time at the growing number of quarries located along the Escarpment edge near the Credit River.



Log house at Lot 5 W1/2 Concession 4 WHS

Based on the 1851 Census, the only two stone homes in the area in 1851 were those of John Kirkwood (Lot 1W½ Concession 6 WHS) and James McLaren respectively. At present, of the 30 houses surveyed and considered to date to pre World War II, eleven are stone and most were constructed between 1870 and 1900. The Alex McArthur House (Lot 2 E½ Concession 6 WHS)) would appear to be typical of those constructed prior to 1870 in being the standard three bays with a Gothic center gable laid up in roughly squared dolostone, probably found on the property itself, with slab type lintels. Less typical are the paired casement windows at each front opening.

Alex McLaren's building of his 'Castle', the Grange, planned and built over approximately 10 years and finally completed in 1864, was a watershed for stone construction in the area. The quantity and quality of stone he required acted as a catalyst to the development of the Inglewood area quarries. Furthermore, to realize his dream he brought in particularly accomplished masons and fine stone carvers. His 'Norman' castle, apparently based on an actual Perthshire castle, had little connection to the local vernacular tradition but the high quality of cut stone detailing introduced by McLaren appears to have influenced the major renovations undertaken by John Kirkwood c.1876 and the home of Archibald Frank (Lot 4 W½ Concession 4 WHS), 1886. The Frank family case is instructive as they lived in their original log home (presumably dating to c.1830) until they finally built a large stone residence surmounted by a belvedere. The log structure survives on the Frank property adjacent to the stone house.

Indeed, several other log buildings survive adjacent to their successor buildings, including on the lot directly to the north of the historic Frank property, which has Patullo and Kirkwood associations, and Lot 2 W½ Concession 3 WHS noted as Thomas Davidson's property on both the 1859 and 1877 maps.

Despite its popularity throughout Peel, brick came late as a building material to the Rockside area and never was as prevalent as elsewhere in the region. Most examples follow the typical vernacular three bay treatment discussed above, e.g. Hart House Farm, and are of the red brick with buff detailing so characteristic of the broader area. The most articulated example would be 'Maple Hill Farms' (Lot 2 W½ Concession 5 WHS) constructed in 1890 for Daniel Robert Macdonald, great grandson of the 'Patriarch', on property which had been in the family since 1834 and remained in Macdonald possession until c.1960. The two-storey home at Maple Hill Farms combines stone (window hoods) and buff brick (decorative string course) detailing with the red brick. An 'L' plan with bay windows and dormers, it comprised fifteen rooms when built. It superseded a more typical five room brick house which had replaced the original log dwelling²⁷.



Typical barn of the Rockside area

²⁷ Berniece Trimble, Belfountain Caves, Castles and Quarries. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), p. 37-39.

Barns/Outbuildings

Once again the earliest barns were undoubtedly rough log structures, none of which are known to have survived. As elsewhere they would have been quickly superseded by heavy timber frame structures. The earliest frame barn in the area is associated with Aaron Teeter, who settled on 'The Grange Sideroad c.1822'²⁸ and is shown on the 1877 map as occupying the southwest corner of Lot 6 W½ Concession 5 WHS. An early timber frame barn remains on this lot today. Indeed the associated house, now covered with insulbrick and somewhat deteriorated with one window opening altered, still gives many indications that it is a very early frame dwelling. The barn is typical of most that survive today, essentially a modified 'English Barn'.

The English Barn, as the name suggests, has its origins in 17th century Britain. This barn type is also known as a three bay barn due to its internal division into three functional areas, essentially two mows and a threshing floor under a medium pitched gable roof. The classic version of this type of barn never had a livestock function but was solely designed for the storage and processing of wheat. Hand threshing was undertaken in the central space. Unthreshed grain was stored in one side bay, and during the fall and winter threshed by hand using a flail on the central threshing floor. The threshed grain and straw were separately stored on the other side in the opposite bay, the grain in built-in bins. The back doors could have been opened along with the front to winnow grain by the creation of natural drafts.

Wheat was the first 'cash' crop of Upper Canada and the 'three bay barn', well known to the settlers, was a natural choice for the typical early farmstead. However, as agriculture became more diversified and more focused on livestock, many of these timber structures were raised and an extended stone foundation built below to house the animals. As part of the Rockfort barn complex there is a three bay timber frame barn with stone storey below, which has a datestone of 1865 in the stonework, presumably the date of the new foundation (the timber frame is clearly much earlier). Of course, barns built after the mid 19th century were built with this two-storey treatment.

While the great majority of the barns in the Rockside area are timber with a stone lower storey, there are also several full stone barns constructed of the dolostone and sandstone found and/or quarried right on the farm sites. These include the small barn at Hart House farm; the Rockfort stone barn with its flared ventilation slits (ventilation was key to the storage of grain due to the possibility of spontaneous combustion), and datestone of 1864; and, the stone barn at the Westerveld farm complex.

Barns built in the last quarter of the 19th century and early 20th century were often built with gambrel roofs, and a number of earlier barns were renovated to that roof form. The gambrel roof had the advantage of increased loft capacity for hay storage (e.g. the large barn on the Frank property and the barn associated with 'Stonehouse').

²⁸ Ibid. p.37.

It has been suggested that the northeast stone barn at the former Westerveld Farm was originally a drive shed ²⁹. This is also probably the original function of the long stone building which forms a part of the Frank barn complex, though given the length of the building it probably was the stables as well. Other surviving outbuildings of note are the stone sheds on the Rockfort and Westerveld properties, the former of apparently early origin while the latter dated with a datestone to 1891. However, it is likely that others would be revealed in a detailed study of other surviving farm complexes. Milk houses, springhouses, forge barns, and smokehouses were likely common and several may yet be identified.

It is known that maple sugaring was a favourite seasonal activity and sugar shacks are still to be found at the key area sugar bushes, such as the current Symmes property (just south of Olde Base Line Road in former Chinguacousy Township). Many of the properties had springs which became a main source of drinking water, cooling and for watering livestock. The springs were an important feature of the Rockfort farmstead.

Farmsteads

The farm complexes that typify the Rockside area may be characterized as follows:

Buildings are set well back from the road with the house located on a rise reached by a tree-lined lane. The drive continues to the rear of the house dividing the rear of the domestic yard from the farm buildings and then continues to the modified three-bay barn.



Typical farmstead (Winston Churchill Boulevard)

Although a single barn was common, many of the properties exhibit barn complexes that have evolved to deal with expanded capacity and diversified usage, such as at the Westerveld and Rockfort properties.

The following are key historic properties in the area. For a complete list of the built heritage structures contained within the Rockside Cultural heritage Landscape Study, refer to the Character Defining Elements in section 12.4. Additional information is contained in the Rockside Cultural Heritage Landscape Study Appendix: Built Heritage Inventory.

²⁹ Unterman McPhail and Cuming Associates (UMCA). 'Rockfort Quarry Site Documentation Report' prepared for James Dick Construction, August 1998.

The Rockfort Farmstead (Lot 1 W½ Concession 6 WHS)

John Kirkwood, grandson of John MacDonald (the Patriarch), built one of the first stone houses in the area on the property originally granted to James MacDonald, and developed much of the extensive barn complex still present today, including an early timber frame barn raised on a stone foundation in 1865 and a c.1864 stone barn with ventilation slits. The c.1850s house, virtually rebuilt in 1876, is one of



The Rockfort Farmstead

the finest stone houses in the area. With the house, barn complex, stone fences (including sections of the area's unique stone fence type incorporating cedar shims), woodlot (including vestigial sugar bush), vestigial quarry and lime kiln, orchard and spring, this is one of the most intact, and certainly the most historically significant, farmsteads in the area.

The Westerveld Farmstead (Lot 2 W½ Concession 6 WHS)

The current Westerveld hog farm was originally the pioneer property of John MacDonald's son-in-law, William Kirkwood. William Kirkwood's younger son, David, came into ownership of the property in 1857 and was Rockside's first postmaster. The house on the property, though now covered in vinyl siding and with an addition at the front, appears to be the original family homestead. It still retains the exposed beamed ceiling and boxed winder stair around the fireplace, characteristic of the area's earliest homes (c.1830). As one of the earliest surviving homes with features that have been lost elsewhere, and likely built by William Kirkwood, it is a very significant structure.

The barn complex is extensive, including a stone barn built into grade, a timber frame barn on stone foundation, stone carriage house and a small stone building set closer to the house than the barns, which may have been a smokehouse or dairy. The stonework on this ancillary building exhibits the same rough slab lintels as seen on the Alex McArthur House (Lot 2 E½ Concession 6 WHS).



Stone 'dairyhouse' at Westerveld

‘Stonehouse’
(Lot 2 E½ Concession 6 WHS)

This house, associated with Alex McArthur, is the best example of the area’s typical three bay, one and half storey, gabled cottage with center gable executed in stone. It has the irregular stone slab lintels of the vernacular stonework in the area of the 1860s, and was certainly built after 1851 when McArthur was assessed for a log house.

The house with its kitchen ‘tail’, the mature trees, stone fence at the road and large barn and pond to the north together present a particularly picturesque ensemble. The beginnings of the pond can be seen on the 1877 Atlas map as a spring which was also the source for the creek that still runs across Olde Base Line Road.



‘Stonehouse’

Maple Hill Farms
(Lot 2 W½ Concession 5 WHS)

This property remained in the MacDonald family until 1955 when it was sold to the Graveleys (the current owner.) Daniel MacDonald, son of the ‘Patriarch’, came from Scotland in 1834 and settled on this lot. It was his son, James MacDonald, who developed the property and his grandson who replaced the modest brick house in 1891 with a fifteen room, highly detailed brick ‘L’ plan dwelling with bays and dormers that incorporated stone quoins and window arches and patterned stringcourses ‘picked out’ in buff brick.

The longevity and evolution of the MacDonald family on the land in Rockside is reflected in this property.



Maple Hill Farm

The Melville Church and Cemetery (Lot 3 E½ Concession 6 WHS)

Known originally as the 'White Church', this heavy timber frame building was the focus of Rockside life from 1837 until 1964, when its congregation disbanded. It is perhaps the most tangible symbol of that community. The cemetery is the largest in the immediate area and contains the headstones of many of the *Rockside Pioneer* families. The restoration of the building using fund-raising is indicative of its important place in local memory.



Melville Church and Cemetery

The MacDonald Cemetery (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

Located on Creditview Road, on what was originally John MacDonald Jr.'s property, this family burying ground is the equivalent of a *Rockside Pioneer* shrine. Maintained by the MacDonald family descendants, it includes the graves of other *Rockside Pioneers* who were members of the extended family, and is enclosed by the characteristic Rockside stone fence.



'Rockside' stone fence with cedar shims at MacDonald cemetery

Stone Schoolhouse, Frank Property, Patullo-Kirkwood Property Lots 4, 5 Concession 4 W¹/₂ WHS

The grouping of the 1890 stone schoolhouse with the Frank property to the north and the Patullo/Kirkwood property at the sideroad corner represents a particularly rich concentration of features and historic associations. Both farmsteads still retain original log dwellings as well as the current stone homes built later in the 19th century, with the Frank house distinguished by a belvedere. They both retain outbuilding complexes including large main barns and, at the Frank property, a stone stable.



Patullo/Kirkwood farmstead

The characteristic stone fence with wood shims runs along the roadside property line of the Frank and Patullo/Kirkwood properties, with the latter section considered the best extant example of this unique fencing type (though partially rebuilt).



1890 Stone Schoolhouse, Mississauga Road

Not only is the former stone school one of the finest buildings of Rockside, but it appears that the property was also the site of the community's original log school/church. This cluster can also be considered to include the Melville Church c.1837, discussed above.

The 'Grange' (Lot 5 E¹/₂ Concession 4 WHS)

Built for Alex McLaren, son of *Rockside Pioneer* James McLaren, 'the Grange' at its completion in 1864 was one of the wonders of the region. Designed to closely imitate a Perthshire castle and constructed of local stone, it was a key factor in the opening up of the important quarries at Inglewood and the increase in stone structures in the area. Within it, McLaren entertained some of the important men of the era and it was at



The 'Grange'

‘the castle’ that he helped form the first united farmers group, the ‘Grangers’. For a time a post office was maintained on the premises. Though much denigrated by fires in the 1960s and altered through several renovations, it still remains an impressive structure, its historic reputation such that it still is noted on maps.

Settlement Clusters

Nothing remains of the one node of settlement within the study area, that being the hamlet of Rockside itself. Shown on historic maps as including a smithy, store and Inn by 1859, and a smithy, store and Temperance Hotel by 1877, it had clearly developed to serve this rather isolated area. However, with the advent of better roads and later the common use of the automobile, residents could readily travel to larger centers where a greater variety of products and services were available.

Archaeological Sites

There has been no systematic archaeological survey of the study area. Archaeological investigation at the Rockfort and Westerveld properties, undertaken as part of the James Dick quarry application, found five prehistoric archaeological find spots (yielding isolated artifacts) but no larger site and/or encampment related archaeological activities³⁰. Local lore has it that there was an Indian encampment on the Frank property when they took possession in 1827 and that many prehistoric artifacts (including some related to maple sugaring) have been found on the Frank property during ploughing³¹. Apparently many artifacts were also found during the Sharp ownership of *Tweed Airigh* (Winston Churchill Boulevard at The Grange Sideroad). Where springs and creeks are present and along the rim and base of the Escarpment, the potential for prehistoric campsites must be considered relatively high.

There is clearly a high potential for historic archaeological resources throughout the study area, with the highest potential related to the earliest settled lots which have remained relatively undisturbed (including the Rockfort and Westerveld properties). Archaeology could still possibly reveal much about the location of the structures at the hamlet of Rockside and of the original church/school across from Melville Church.

4. Site Context

Cultural landscapes draw their character from human interaction with the natural features of an area, which are interdependent on one another and which may extend well beyond the boundaries of the historic area. The rolling moraine on which Rockside is situated lies nestled against the curve of the forested Escarpment and defines this area’s perimeter on the east and the south. Beyond the Escarpment, the land descends sharply to the valley of the Credit River. The confluence of these features influenced an industrialized form of development in the former mill/quarry towns of Terra Cotta, Inglewood and Cheltenham, which is distinctively different from that of the Rockside area.

³⁰ York North Archaeological Services, ‘A Stage I-II Archaeological/Heritage Assessment of the Proposed Rockfort Quarry Site, August 1977, pp.37-39.

³¹ Berniece Trimble, Belfountain Caves, Castles and Quarries. (Erin: Herrington Printing, 1975), p. 35.

Immediately to the north and west of Rockside, the physical differences are less distinct. The lobe of the moraine extends north to the Belfountain area where it again meets the Escarpment and Credit River, and to the west, well into Wellington County. Through this area, the moraine uplands give rise to similar topography and vegetation, making the physical aspects of the Rockside boundaries less distinct in this direction.

The edge of the Escarpment offers dramatic views over the farmlands of the Peel Plain. Views internal to the Rockside area are generally local rather than long range, and terminate with the crest of a hill or a woodland edge. The rolling land affords scenic vantage points along many of the unimproved north-south roads, although with the increase in successional vegetation many of these views will have changed from the latter half of the 19th century when much of the land was in agriculture.

12.3 EVALUATION

To be identified as a CHL an area must clearly embody both heritage significance and integrity.

Significance

Significance Criteria

While any landscape upon which humankind has left its imprint is a cultural landscape, only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the jurisdiction can be identified as cultural heritage landscapes. To be considered significant from a heritage perspective it must be demonstrated through the Inventory Report that the Candidate CHL meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Is associated with events that made significant contributions to the broad patterns of area history, i.e., strong association with central themes.*
- B. Is closely associated with the lives of individuals and/or families who are considered significant to the history of the area.*
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular settlement pattern or lifeway whether derived from ethnic background, imposed by the landscape, was the practice of a specific historic period or a combination of the above.*
- D. Manifests a particularly close and harmonious long-standing relationship between the natural and domestic landscape.*
- E. Has yielded or is likely to yield information important to prehistory or history.*
- F. Is strongly associated with the cultural and/or spiritual traditions of First Nations or any other ethnic and/or religious group.*

Integrity

A CHL must be able to be justified as a distinct area of contiguous heritage integrity. Its key individual elements, which constitute the cultural heritage landscape and the way in which their interweaving makes a unique 'place,' must still clearly reflect the historic period and/or organic evolution from which the heritage significance derives.

Conclusions

In light of the findings of the Rockside Candidate Cultural Heritage Landscape Study, the Candidate CHL referred to as Rockside is considered to be of heritage significance under several categories, particularly 'A', 'B' and 'C', as outlined below.

Category 'A'

- Earliest settlement in Caledon Township hence the *Rockside Pioneers*;
- Sheltering of Mackenzie during his flight following the failed rebellion;
- Establishment of the Grangers' – first farmers' union.

Category 'B'

- John MacDonald – '*patriarch*' of the original settlers from the *Young Norval*.
- William Kirkwood – son-in-law of the *patriarch* and father of:
 - David Kirkwood, first postmaster of Rockside and,
 - John Kirkwood, postmaster, successful farmer, influential personage who built the Rockfort farmstead, one of the first stone homes in the area;
- James McLaren – arrived in the area around the time of John MacDonald but from elsewhere in Canada and father of:
- Alex McLaren for whom the Grange, an area landmark visited by many notable contemporaries, was built, and founder of the Grangers.

Category 'C'

- The Rockside area still manifests the original settlement of western Scots, largely Presbyterian, into lands which almost equaled the rocky ruggedness of their homeland, within the lot divisions of the double front survey system.

12.4 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The area still known as Rockside, the southwest corner of the former Caledon Township, was the first area of Caledon Township to be settled. The 'Patriarch', John MacDonald, brought his extended family, including son-in-law William Kirkwood, from Renfrewshire, Scotland to the heavily forested and rocky lands between the surveyed Township Line on the west and the dolostone spine of the Escarpment in June 1820, not long after the completion of the original Township survey. They were joined shortly thereafter mostly by countrymen (including the Crichtons who had made the Atlantic crossing with them on the *Young Norval*) from Renfrewshire and neighbouring Argyllshire, but also several families such as that of James McLaren, who had been in North America for one or more generations and thus were able to promulgate the necessary backwoods survival skills within this largely inexperienced pioneer community. It is this group of families, largely in place on the land by 1825, opening up a particularly rugged wilderness for settlement, who have come to be known in local lore as the *Rockside Pioneers*.

This community, largely made up of clans from the west of Scotland and initially topographically isolated from the eastern section of the Township by the spine of the Escarpment, developed into an internally coherent and distinct entity. Offspring of the original settlers married into each other's families and quickly filled the remaining lots within the area. John Kirkwood established the finest farm in the area, while James McLaren's son, Alex, constructed the locale's most distinctive residence and founded the Grange movement. Given the difficult living conditions it is little wonder that Rockside was very sympathetic to the Mackenzie cause and apparently Mackenzie was given extended shelter in a cave on the John MacDonald Jr. farm during his flight from Toronto. While Rockside evolved along with the rest of the region, cultural traditions were maintained in that Gaelic was still being spoken up until World War I. This coherence was manifested in the consistent forms and materials of buildings, walls and fences and the lay-out of farmsteads overlaid on the primary land pattern established by the original double front survey and the Escarpment.

This cultural heritage is still clearly manifest in a mosaic of features, the character defining elements of the area. Furthermore, the most significant of these elements, the 'touchstones' of the Rockside identity such as the Melville Church, the MacDonald Cemetery, Rockfort farmstead and the Westerveld farmhouse, remain in place and continue to evoke the *Rockside Pioneers*.

All landscapes change and evolve so it is really the extent and nature of such change that determines whether the heritage character of a cultural landscape remains identifiable and generally intact. In the Rockside area, always a marginal farming community and in close proximity to the GTA, it was almost inevitable that a number of the original lots would be subdivided for more residences and that former farms would become hobby and horse farms, and this is what has indeed occurred.

The process of modern (since 1960) residential development is evident in parts of Rockside, including the middle lots along Winston Churchill Boulevard; Lots 3 and 4, west side of Shaw's Creek Road and the south section of Mississauga Road. A number of horse farms are now located along Creditview Road, with their characteristic board fences establishing their own rhythm across that uneven terrain.

Still, many of the large recent 'estate' homes off The Grange Sideroad and along Creditview, for example, are set far down treed lanes and not visible from the road while others, such as several along Shaw's Creek Road, have opted to build in a manner intended to replicate the local vernacular, including traditional setback, treed lane and fencing. While this kind of development still has an impact on the integrity of local heritage character, it is relatively subtle compared to more obvious and broader kinds of approaches.

Most important though, is that despite the inroads of this modern residential development, as of this time the original settlement pattern is still readily discernible and the landscape still remains predominantly one of heritage farmsteads. The tapestry of farmhouses, outbuilding complexes, fences, windrows, hedgerows, woodlots etc. set along the original concession roads and sideroads and nestled into the bend of the Escarpment to the east remains generally visually intact, albeit slightly torn in a few places. It is true that many farm fields have become 'old fields' regenerating back to a bush condition, but this is a relatively benign form of change.

Furthermore the key places of the area, which are the 'touchstones' of the Rockside identity, such as: Melville Church; the MacDonald Cemetery; Rockfort farmstead; and the stone schoolhouse, remain in place and continue to evoke the *Rockside Pioneers*.

Lastly the ‘concept’ of Rockside and the *Rockside Pioneers* is not something developed by current historians or cultural tourism specialists, but rather has always been a part of local lore in understanding the beginnings of settlement in Caledon Township.

It is thus considered that the area exhibits overall integrity, particularly in the relationship of key elements, i.e. the themes of which the area is representative, and from which the areas derives its significance, can be understood and appreciated.

Character Defining Elements

*Note * denotes properties or structures designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.*

Buildings and Structures

Bolded are noted as ‘character defining elements’ in the Rockside Cultural Heritage Landscape Study.

RS-1 The ‘Grange’ (McLaren’s Castle), (Lot 5 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-2 15911 Creditview Road ‘Hart House Farm’, (Lot 3 E½ Concession 3 WHS)

RS-3 15747 Creditview Road, remains of stone house at Riding and Hunt Club, (Lot 2 W½ Concession 3 WHS)

RS-4 Abandoned cottage c.1940, (Lot 2 W½ Concession 3 WHS)

RS-5 15647 Creditview Road, ‘Thomas Davidson farm complex’, (Lot 2 W½ Concession 3 WHS)

RS-6 The MacDonald Cemetery, Creditview Road’ (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-7 former John MacDonald Jr. Property, Creditview Road (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-8 ‘Tower House’, unique structure on Creditview Road (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-9 15428 Creditview Road, ‘Alex MacDonald property’, (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-10 Tin shingled barn, on former MacDonald property (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-11 15663 Mississauga Road, ‘David MacDonald property’ 1877, (Lot 1 E½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-12 Derelict barn, former Alex McLaughlin property, Mississauga Road (Lot 3 E½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-13 15962 Mississauga Road, ‘Melville White Church/Cemetery’, (Lot 3 E½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-14 16015 Mississauga Road, stone schoolhouse (Lot 4 W½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-15 16065 Mississauga Road, ‘Frank property’ (Lot 4 W½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-16 16311 Mississauga Road, ‘Patullo/Kirkwood property, and the *Patullo-McDiarmid-Simmonds Stone Fence’, (Lot 5 W½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-17 Early 1½ storey frame house and barn on former Teeter farmstead, Shaw's Creek Road, (Lot 6 W½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-18 15668 Shaws Creek Road, 'Stonehouse', (Lot 2 E½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-19 15719 Shaws Creek Road, 'Maple Hill' Farms, (Lot 2 W½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-20 15859 Shaws Creek Road 'Duncan McArthur farmstead', (Lot 3 W½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-21 Frame structure (possibly with early structure at its core), Shaw's Creek Road, (Lot 3 E½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-22 16089 Shaws Creek Road, 'McLaren farmstead' (Lot 4 W½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-23 Old frame barn, Shaw's Creek Road likely associated with McLaren Farmstead

RS-24 16245 Winston Churchill Road 'Tweed Airgh', Sharp farm, (Lot 5 W½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-25 Erin Township property (W. side of Winston Churchill Road)

RS-26 Erin Township property (W. side of Winston Churchill Road)

RS-27 15349 Winston Churchill Road, former Alex MacArthur property, (Lot 34 W½ Concession 6 WHS, Chinguacousy Twp.)

RS-28 15547 Winston Churchill Road, 'Rockfort farmstead' (Lot 1 W½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-29 15669 Winston Churchill Road, 'Westerveld farmstead', (Lot 2 W ½ Concession 6)

RS-30 Erin Township property (W. side of Winston Churchill Road)

RS-31 Small frame dwelling, possibly with early structure at its core, former Hunter property, Mississauga Road, (Lot 2 W ½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-32 Abandoned barn, north of 15819 Winston Churchill Road, (Lot 3 E ½ Concession 6 WHS)

RS-33 15429 Shaws Creek Road, multi-gabled frame dwelling, (Lot 1 W ½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-34 'McEachern house', Shaw's Creek Road, (Lot 5 W ½ Concession 5 WHS)

RS-35 former Foster house, Mississauga Road, (Lot 3 W ½ Concession 4 WHS)

RS-36 former Andrew McLaren House, Lot 5 E ½ Concession 3 WHS

Other Features

Although too numerous to note on the accompanying map of the Rockside CHL, there are a number of other historic and natural features that are identified in the Rockside Cultural Heritage Landscape Study and which are important character defining elements of the area. These represent only a handful of features that are likely to be present, internal to the farm field and properties.

Historic Lime Kilns and Pits

In additions to the use of collected stones for fences and walls many Rockside settlers took advantage of the stony, escarpment location and extracted stone for personal building use. The remains of these pits can be found in several locations and include:

- Former historic lime kilns
- Small historic personal-use quarries used to extract stone for building (example on Rockfort Farm)

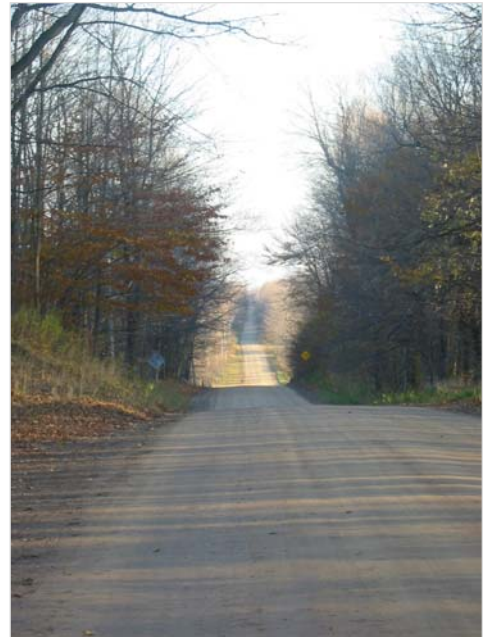
Natural Features:

Key natural features in the area are:

- Niagara Escarpment natural areas
- The Badlands. Although outside of the Rockside CHL, this is an important adjacent cultural heritage landscape feature, located on Olde Base Line Road.
- Drumlin located mid-concession between Winston Churchill Boulevard and Shaw's Creek Road
- Streams, wetlands & natural springs

Roads

Many of the roads in the Rockside area remain in a rural profile (i.e. two-lane, unpaved), with several that retain historic curves and alignments, and tree-lined sections.



The Grange Sideroad

- Olde Base Line Road, although paved, retains its rolling topography, tree lined edges, and views to the south as it ascends the Escarpment.
- The Grange Sideroad, unpaved through much of the study area, retains its original narrow profile, curves and rolling topography. There is a significant stretch of heritage trees east of Mississauga Road. The road is closed in winter from Creditview Road to the base of the Escarpment, due to unmaintained and hazardous conditions.
- Winston Churchill Boulevard remains unpaved and retains some mature tree rows. Long views to the south and to the drumlin on Lot 2 W½ Concession 6 WHS are prominent from the high point found mid-concession, north of Olde Base Line Road.
- Shaw's Creek Road is a narrow, hilly, with pastoral views to the east and long views extending southward.
- Creditview Road is narrow, hilly and wooded with long range views to the south at The Grange Sideroad. Just north of Olde Base Line Road, the road maintains its historic curve necessitated by the topography of the Escarpment.

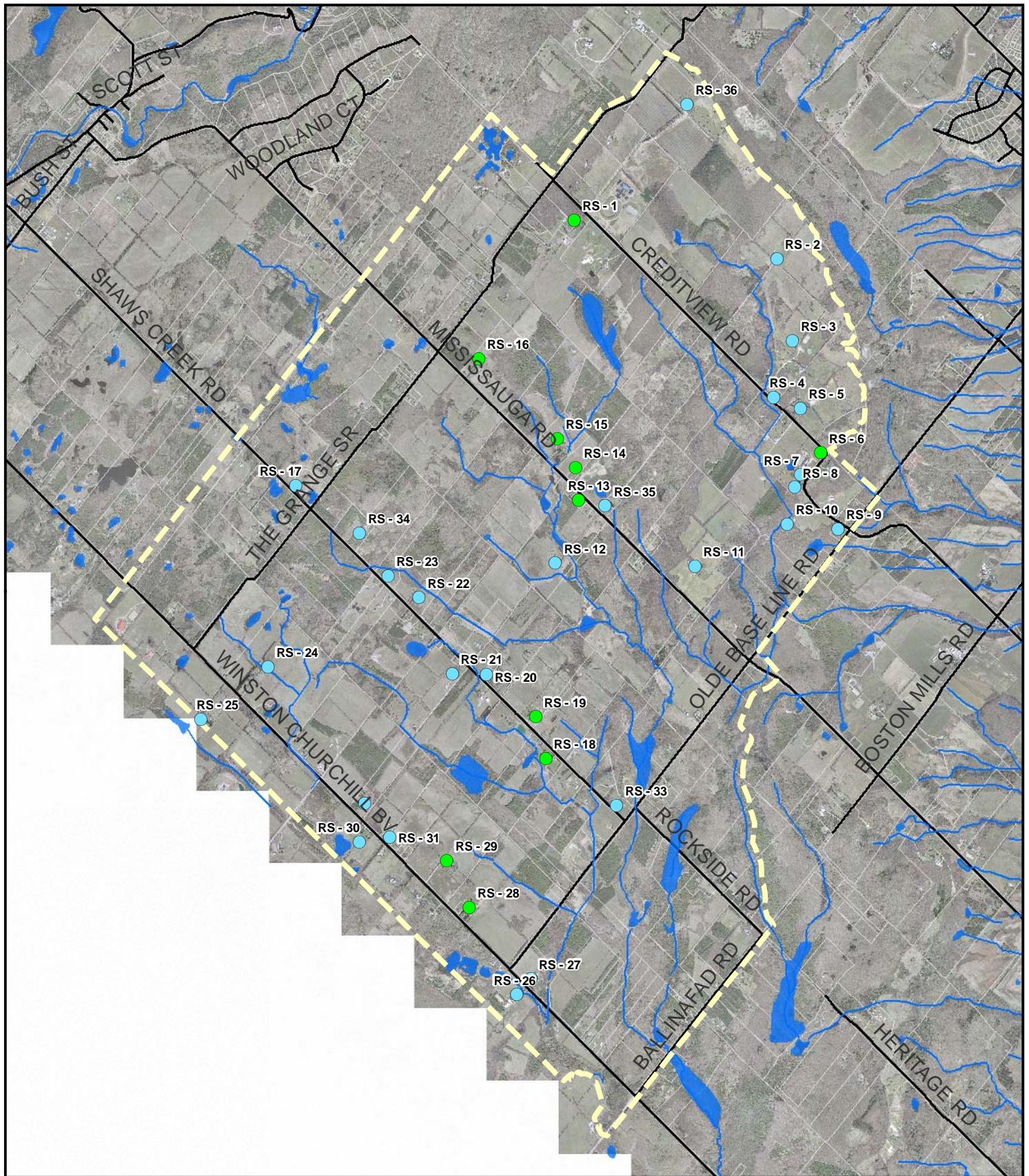
Based on the findings of the Rockside Cultural Heritage Landscape Study, it is recommended that this Candidate CHL, referred to as Rockside be identified as a CHL.

12.5 BOUNDARIES/BUFFERS

The study has shown that families of the *Rockside Pioneers* clearly spread across the Caledon Township boundaries into Erin and Chinguacousy townships and also had a notable influence on the development of the area around Belfountain. However, it is also clear that the community that was known as Rockside was indeed concentrated within the study area boundaries and continues to be particularly associated with that area, i.e., the area generally bounded by the Escarpment to the east; Winston Churchill Boulevard (and likely at least one lot further) to the west; one lot to the north of the Grange Sideroad; and Ballinafad Road and Rockside Road to the south.

Of course the lots directly across from these roads have always had a particularly close (virtually seamless) relationship with that of the study area, both historically and visually, and must be considered to be included, although the west side of Winston Churchill Boulevard is another municipal jurisdiction.

Refer to **Figure 14 Rockside** for detailed delineation of boundaries.



- Character Defining Elements
- Road
 - Built
 - Landscape
 - CHL Boundary
 - Rivers / Streams
 - Lakes / Ponds
 - Property Boundary (2006)