

February 17, 2005 – York North Law Association

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to reminisce with several of my colleagues all of whom were very instrumental in the formation of the York North Law Association.

- I had been looking forward, with great anticipation, since receiving this invitation to join you this evening along with other Past-Presidents, until a week or so ago when Tom McPherson asked if I would say a few words about the origins of the York North Law Association.
- In response to “Why me?”, Tom responded, “Because you are oldest living President.” I suppose there is some satisfaction in being the oldest living President, and still be deemed sufficiently competent by one’s peers to “Sing for one’s supper!”
- I asked how long I should speak, Tom replied, 5 – 10 minutes and to wing it, while others, including Ann Reed, your very efficient and charming Librarian, suggested as much as a half-an-hour.
- Meeting Ann Reed was certainly an unexpected bonus in accepting this task, and I would like to thank her for opening the archives to obtain back-up material for these remarks, and for showing me other interesting artifacts such as Colonel Hollinrake’s bible, presented to your Association by your current President, Terry Hawtin.
- In order to understand the formation of the York North Law Association, one must consider both the geographic boundaries of the administration of justice system and the political boundaries of the times.
- Insofar as the judicial system was concerned, the County of York contained all of what we now know as Metropolitan Toronto and all municipalities as far north as the south

limits of Bradford, bounded on the west by the County of Peel and on the east by the County of Durham.

- The political boundaries, on the other hand, included all those municipalities lying north of Steeles Avenue, Markham Village, Markham Township, Village of Stouffville, Township of Whitchurch, Richmond Hill, Aurora, Township of Vaughan, Town of Newmarket, Georgina and what we now know as East Gwillimbury. Bradford was partly in Simcoe County and partly in York County.
- Insofar as the judicial system was concerned, Markham Village, Markham Township, Richmond Hill and perhaps portions of the other southern municipalities in the political boundary of York County, had their Registry Office located in a building in the City of Toronto just south Queen Street and east of Yonge Street. The remainder of the northern municipalities had their Registry Office in Newmarket.
- There was a Division Court (or Small Claims Court) in Markham whose jurisdiction was limited to \$200.00, which was held in the Village Council Chambers above the Firehall, next to the Police Office and the Clerk's Office. Later, a Division Court was established in Richmond Hill, and I believe at the same time in Newmarket. This Division Court in Markham, and later the three Division Courts in Markham, Richmond Hill and Newmarket, looked after all Civil Actions below \$200.00 north of Steeles Avenue, but were manned by Judges from the City of Toronto, all County Court Judges, and it was not until several years later that specific Small Claims Court Judges were appointed.
- In the old Village of Markham the Division Court was the first Tuesday in each month, and sometimes the Judges arrived from Toronto, and sometimes they got side-tracked, especially when there was inclement weather during the Wintertime. Other Judges simply got lost, or took time off to sketch the country landscape.

- The City of Toronto had about one-half dozen Division Courts spread throughout what we now know as Metropolitan Toronto.

- On the criminal side, there was a Magistrates Court in Newmarket, later to be extended to Richmond Hill and except for those two Courts, justice was handled by the Magistrates Courts located in the City of Toronto. All Civil matters above \$200.00 and up to \$5,000.00 were handled by County Court Judges in Courts situate in Metropolitan Toronto. The Supreme Court was held in Toronto, as was the Court of Appeal and of course the Supreme Court of Canada was in Ottawa, and by the time I started to practice, Appeals to the Privy Council in England had fortunately been abolished.

- Notwithstanding that Appeals to the Privy Council had been abolished, there were still several practitioners of the leading litigation firms in Toronto, who had attended before the Privy Council to argue their Appeals, and this fact was always mentioned to we lesser mortals when opposing them on very odd occasion.

- Mr. Darcy McKeough's Regional Government had not yet been implemented (late 1971) and while there was a loose form of county government which attempted to look after roads which were common to the municipalities lying north of Steeles Avenue, it was not a strong organization, nor did it have any funds to spend on the administration of justice. It depended on municipal grants from the municipalities lying north of Steeles Avenue, most of which had very small populations and a very limited taxation base.

- Markham was still a village, Markham Township had a Reeve, as did the Townships of Vaughan and Whitchurch.

- Thornhill and Stouffville were villages, while Richmond Hill and Aurora were small towns, and Newmarket was certainly the largest in terms of population and geographic area.
- Most of these political divisions had their own police force and I know that Markham Village's police force grew to as many as 4 prior to Regional Government in 1971, while Markham Township had a police force of about 10. Stouffville had a single police chief, one Frank Edwards, and the Township of Whitchurch had a police force of about 5. I am not sure about Richmond Hill, Aurora or Newmarket, but it seems to me that most of the other Township municipalities had the Ontario Provincial Police as their police forces. Corporal Swinghammer of the Ontario Provincial Police worked out of Bond Head, reigned supreme, and undertook many of the prosecutions.
- The Court facilities were abysmal. The Courthouse in Newmarket, where Colonel Hollinrake was the presiding Magistrate and Arnie Armstrong was the Crown Attorney, was on the second floor of a community building now known as the Old Town Hotel on Botsford Street. For the first 5 years or so that I practiced, there was no parking because of the narrowness of the streets and the only available parking was on Main Street. The prisoners were kept behind the curtains on the stage, or at least those who were in custody. Colonel Hollinrake presided at the far end of the hall, on a raised dais which was portable. Arnie Armstrong, as Prosecuting Attorney sat on the left and Defence Counsel sat on the right. There were one or two washrooms in the whole building, and their cleanliness and maintenance deteriorated rapidly as the day wore on. Colonel Hollinrake had an office downstairs in the building, as did Arnie Armstrong. Defence Counsel met with their clients in the halls and stairwells, lined up to meet Arnie Armstrong at about 8:30 a.m. to arrange Adjournments, Pleas, and so forth.
- I mentioned that there was limited parking on Main Street and a lack of parking became more acute as the years rolled by. You can appreciate that all witnesses, Defence Counsel, Court Officials, Court Staff and others all had to arrive by car.

- There was no Legal Aid, and while I have no idea what fees were charged, I know that my criminal practice was centered around referrals by the Canadian Automobile Association, who paid \$25.00 for minor traffic violations, \$50.00 for careless driving, \$75.00 for impaired driving, and \$250.00 for more serious offences such as criminal negligence causing death. I recall I had one trial for criminal negligence causing death, went through a 3-day preliminary hearing in Newmarket and a full week's trial in the City of Toronto, for which I received the magnificent sum of \$250.00. The client, who was acquitted, placed an ad. in the local Stouffville Tribune thanking me for my efforts, and promptly left Town.
- There were no Law Libraries – the closest one being in Whitby, in the County of Durham, or the Osgoode Hall or the York County Libraries in Toronto.
- While the Courtrooms were rough, justice was conducted in a fair and gentlemanly fashion by Colonel Hollinrake, and later Magistrate Russell Pearce. A second Magistrates Court was opened in Richmond Hill in the early 1970's where conditions, by comparison, were much better.
- It was in this environment and with this background that Magistrate Hollinrake, usually referred to as Colonel Hollinrake, one day in early 1963, called Joe Vale, Clare Green and myself to his office and suggested that we set up a system of what we now know as "Legal Aid", for that portion of York County lying north of Steeles Avenue. Colonel Hollinrake suggested that we might, at the very least, set up a regular list of Counsel who would be available daily to advise the accused on the ramifications of pleading guilty and providing them with proper advice as to when to plead not guilty, familiarize the accused with procedures, and generally advise them of their rights
- When the only presiding Magistrate asks you to undertake this task, and you are appearing regularly before him, we naturally immediately undertook to set up such a

system. Joseph Vale of the firm of Stiver, Vale, Peppiatt and Errington, was the senior practitioner, and Clare Green and I promptly nominated Joe as our Chairman to initiate this request of Colonel Hollinrake.

- Joseph Vale, in his inimitable style, soon passed the task over to Joseph Dale, who was then the County Warden or Deputy County Warden practicing in Newmarket. Joseph Dale, in his fashion, turned it over to his Secretary, Velma Christian, who did an admirable job of setting up a Duty Roster Panel. This system was working very well by the end of 1963.
- It is also important to note the nature of practice and the competitive hunt for clients that existed among all Solicitors north of Steele Avenue in the early 1960's. Most of us were single practitioners, with the exception of the Stiver, Vale Peppiatt and Errington firm in Newmarket and perhaps Cattanach Hindson in Markham, which was made up of 3 individuals – John A. Cattanach, Lachlan Cattanach and myself. Not all of the practitioners practiced Law fulltime, and I believe Floyd Corner of Aurora, carried on an insurance practice until he gave up both the practice of Law and the sale of insurance. At the time I joined Cattanach Hindson in 1958, after a year as a single practitioner, I maintained an office in Stouffville 2 evenings and 2 afternoons a week, and John A. Cattanach traveled to Toronto twice weekly, to maintain an office in Toronto. Other practitioners had multiple offices or pursued other interests, either to supplement their income or to obtain clients.
- Being involved in a semi-criminal practice one had an opportunity to visit the surrounding counties, and in my instance, particularly, Peterborough, Durham, Victoria and Peel. We soon realized what pleasant surroundings the Solicitors in those counties enjoyed while carrying on their day-to-day practice. They had Registry Offices associated and adjacent to the Courthouse where the Sheriffs offices were located, they had Law Libraries, they had old and what seemed comfortable Courthouses and they had regular dinners to meet the presiding Justices at the Spring and Fall Assizes.

- Towards the end of 1963, when the Legal Aid Panel was working effectively, Joe Vale suggested, that perhaps the Members of the Legal Aid Committee, should broaden their horizons and work towards a formal Law Association for those lawyers practicing north of Steeles Avenue, with a view to establishing a separate Judicial District, our own Courthouse, proper Registry Offices that would serve all of the municipalities lying north of Steeles Avenue, and generally to establish more pleasant and efficient surroundings in which to carry on our practice, be it Civil or Criminal.
- The firm of Cattnach Hindson was ideally situate in Markham in that we were equal distance from Newmarket, Whitby which housed the County of Durham Courthouse and Registry Office, and the City of Toronto, and on many Fridays closed deals in all three Registry Offices.
- In late 1963, as a result of Joe Vale's suggestion, we had established a pro tem committee consisting of Joseph Vale from Newmarket as President, Reg Button from Stouffville as Treasurer, Norm Todd from Richmond Hill, Clare Green from Keswick, Tom Evans from Bradford, and myself as Secretary from Markham.
- It is interesting to note that Norman Todd often substituted for the County Court Judges in Division Court, when they were unable to get to Markham, and it was a position he thoroughly enjoyed.
- I have indicated the geographic location of the first Committee, and you can see that Joseph Vale had selected us, not so much for our abilities, but as representing the different geographic regions in the County, in anticipation that we would encourage other practitioners to join our fledgling organization.
- The first formal Minutes I could find of this Executive Group were dated January 7, 1964, when we decided to hold an inaugural dinner, preceded with and followed by

cocktails at which we determined we would have an outstanding guest speaker in anticipation that this would generate enthusiasm for a new York North Law Association.

- John Robinette was the selection as guest speaker at that January 7, 1964 meeting, and the meeting date was set for January 29, 1964 – only 3 weeks later.
- We were fortunate enough to get John Robinette as the guest speaker, and the meeting was held at The Canadiana Motor Hotel.
- If memory serves me correctly, The Canadiana Motor Hotel was situate somewhere in the vicinity of Kennedy and what is now Highway 401.
- The Minutes are short, and I think interesting more from the point of view of who attended.
- I believe we had approximately 75% of the lawyers practicing in the county lying north of Steeles Avenue. Some 35 Members attended, and I will read their names and the municipalities in which they practiced.

Joseph O. Dales - Newmarket

John M. Peppiatt - Newmarket

Clare W. Morrison – Newmarket

Marian J. Lamey, Q.C. – Newmarket

H. Reginald Button, Q.C. – Stouffville

Kenneth V. Young - ?

J. Lachlan Cattanach – Markham

William G. Parsons – Stouffville

Thomas D. Manning – Aurora

Thomas MacPherson – Aurora

James D. Otton, Q.C. – Newmarket

William Errington - Newmarket

Ross B. Linton – Newmarket

Clare Green – Keswick

David A. Coon – Stouffville

John A. Cattanach, Q.C. – Markham

Donald C. Hindson – Markham

Paul W. J. Mingay – Markham

Bernard R. Forgang – Aurora

John L. Lawlor – Richmond Hill

John LeClaire – Richmond Hill	Donald G. Plaxton – Richmond Hill
Joseph Rabinowitch – Richmond Hill	Norman A. Todd – Richmond Hill
James Pearson – Richmond Hill	Kenneth Kidd – Woodbridge
Charles T. S. Evans, Q.C. – Bradford	Brock M. Evans, Q.C. – Bradford
Thomas E. Evans – Bradford	William Thomas – Unionville
Donald M. Finlay, Q.C. – King City	Robert Parker – Richmond Hill
Colonel O.S. Hollinrake, Q.C.	Magistrate Russell Pearse
John J. Robinette, Q.C.	

- The Minutes were short, and I will read the same.
 - The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Joseph Vale, at 7:30 o'clock in the evening.
 - Grace was said by Mr. H. Reginald Button, Q.C. and a toast to the Queen was proposed by Mr. Joseph Vale, Q.C.
 - Following the meal, the head-table guests, Magistrate Russell Pearse, Donald Clarence Hindson, Colonel O.S. Hollinrake, Norman Todd, H. Reginald Button, Q.C., and Mr. John J. Robinette, Q.C. were introduced by the Chairman, Mr. Joseph Vale, Q.C.
 - Mr. Joseph Vale, Q.C. directed opening remarks to the assembled dinner guests and then introduced Mr. John J. Robinette, Q.C.
 - Mr. John J. Robinette, Q.C. delivered an informative and well-authenticated address on the duty of Counsel to defend all persons, whether guilty or innocent, charged of any offence and also related several humorous anecdotes.

- The guest speaker was thanked by Mr. Charles T.S. Evans, Q.C. who also thanked the Chairman, Mr. Joseph Vale, for his untiring efforts in the formation of this association.
- A motion was entertained for the adjournment of the meeting at 9:00 o'clock in the evening and an informal social evening carried on until 10:30 o'clock in the evening.
- I would point out that the Evans family, Charles Evans, Brock Evans, Tom Evans and later Bob Evans were very supportive in the formation of the York North Law Association. This firm already belonged to the County of Peel Law Association, but contributed many valuable suggestions to the Executive during the formative years, as well as supporting the same.
- To give you some idea of the activities that were carried on in 1964 and 1965, the years in which Joseph Vale was President, I would refer to the Minutes of February 3, 1965, which were held at the York County Building in Newmarket.
- These Minutes are appended to these remarks in their entirety, and I point out only the highlights.
- It is interesting to note that from the 35 who attended the original meeting with a guest speaker, there were only 19 present, two of whom were new Members, Allan Mills from Newmarket, and Neil Mann from Richmond Hill.
 - The meeting was called to order by Mr. Norman Todd, the Vice-President, at 8:30 p.m., in the absence of the President, Mr. Joseph Vale.

- Mr. H. Reginald Button, Q.C. delivered the Treasurer's Report indicating there were total receipt of \$1,362.90 and total disbursements of \$1,253.47 leaving a balance on hand of \$109.43.

- I note that two Members from the Stiver Vale firm, in the absence of Mr. Joseph Vale, then nominated Mr. Joseph Vale as President for the forthcoming year, 1965. Joseph Vale was unanimously acclaimed. Joseph Vale had certainly set up the meeting well, because Mr. William Errington and another member of his firm then moved that the entire slate of Officers for the 1964 be re-elected for the 1965 year, which was carried. Once again, the Officers had their geographic locations set out, so you can see that Mr. Joseph Vale did his homework well:

President – Joseph Vale, Q.C. – Newmarket
Vice-President – Norman Todd – Richmond Hill
Secretary – Donald Hindson – Markham
Treasurer – Reginald Button, Q.C. – Stouffville

Directors:

Clare Green – Keswick
J. Kenneth Kidd, Q.C. – Woodbridge
Thomas E. Evans – Bradford

- Mr. Joseph Dales, who was then either County Warden or Deputy County Warden, was appointed the Liaison Officer between the York North Law Association and the County Government, with a view to advancing better working conditions and better facilities in the Registry Offices and Courthouses. I note that Mr. Joseph Dales also provided a report on the efficient functioning of the Legal Aid system, and indicated that cases were being referred and accepted by various Members on a pro bono basis from

the County both from the Family Court as well as by the Magistrate and Security Officers from the Courthouse. Mr. Joseph Dales advised that Donald Plaxton of Richmond Hill had been appointed as Chairman of the Administration of Justice Committee. Mr. Joseph Dales was congratulated on his work and his excellent report on Legal Aid. Magistrate Pearse also expressed his thanks, on behalf of himself and Colonel Hollinrake, for the York North Law Association in their effort regarding Legal Aid. I note that Committees were then set up to look after Legal Aid, Tariff, Library and a separate Judicial District.

- Under the question of a separate Judicial District, it was the general feeling at the meeting that this would be impossible, and that efforts might be better spent to obtain a Court Reporter for purposes of Judgment Debtor Examinations, Cross-Examination on Affidavit, and a local Court Reporter be appointed as a Special Examiner for the above purposes.

- I note there was a Motion of the York North Law Association that was directed to support and work with the Administration of Justice Committee for the County of York, towards their common end. There was a further Motion that this Association go on record and notify the Administration of Justice of York County (the County of York Law Association) that it is in favour of establishing one or more Registry Offices to serve the geographic and political jurisdiction of York County.

- The Legal Aid Committee was set up as follows:
 - Joseph Dales, Q.C. – Chairman

 - Members:
Clare Morrison, Ross Linton, Donald Plaxton, John Lawlor,
and Joseph Vale, Q.C.

The Tariff Committee was made up of:

Thomas E. Manning – Chairman

Members:

John Lachlan Cattanach, William Errington, Q.C.,

H. Reginald Button, Q.C., and Charles Evans, Q.C.

The Library Committee was Chaired by Mr. Clare Morrison, and Mr. Thomas MacPherson, His Worship, Magistrate Hollinrake, His Worship, Magistrate Pearse, John LeClaire and Clare Green were Members.

Donald Plaxton addressed the meeting and encouraged every Member to go out and get every Member practicing in his Town to join the York North Law Association. It was suggested that there be four dinner meetings a year with speakers, as well as a golf day and a ladies night.

- Mr. Charles Evans, Q.C. requested that the Chairman direct the Secretary to send a letter to Mr. Joseph Vale expressing the Association's regret over his recent illness and sending him sincere best wishes for a speedy recovery and the congratulations of the Association on the work he had performed for the organization during the years 1963 and 1964.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.
- The meeting in February, 1965 was followed by a meeting of the Executive on May 19, 1965 and the Minutes illustrate the extent of the activities of the Association planned for 1965. The meeting was held at Joseph Vale's office, and in attendance were Joseph Vale, Thomas Evans, myself, H. Reginald Button, Q.C. and Clare Green. The meeting was

held at 8:15 in the evening, and it was determined that a golf meeting at Summit Golf Course would be held on June 23, an Executive Meeting on September 15, Dinner Meeting with a prominent guest speaker, on September 29 at the Canadiana Motor Hotel , and a Ladies Night on November 19. The following were listed as possible speakers for the next meeting:

Mr. Justice Gale

Mr. Justice Haines

Mr. John Arnott, Q.C.

Mr. Justice Porter

I note that David Coon was congratulated on his recent appointment as a Magistrate. I also note that Executive was to give some thought as to the Officers for the 1966 year.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

- I was fortunate enough to follow Joseph Vale as President, for the years 1966 and 1967 and by that time, the York North Law Association had not only established itself, but had set up a formal organization with goals to which we aspired and a precedent for a balance of Executive, General and Social Meetings.
- The Minutes of the first Executive Meeting, even though I was President, were still held at the offices of Stiver, Vale in Newmarket in deference to our Founder, Mr. Joseph Vale. Once again, I have appended a full copy of these Minutes to these remarks, but it is to be noted that those present were Joseph Vale, Q.C. from Newmarket, myself from Markham, Thomas MacPherson from Aurora, Ross Linton as Treasurer from Newmarket, Clare Green from Keswick, Thomas E. Evans from Bradford and James Pearson from Richmond Hill. James Pearson was Secretary and Ross Linton was Treasurer. The program set up for the 1966 year was as follows:
 - a curling meeting on Wednesday, March 23, to be followed by a business meeting
 - a dinner meeting on May 18, 1966

- a golf tournament on Wednesday, June 22, 1966
 - a dinner meeting on Wednesday, September 28, 1966
 - a Ladies Evening on Wednesday, November 16, 1966
 - Annual Meeting on a date to be arranged in 1967
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- I noted in the review of the files that the entrance fee for the golf tournament was a total of \$7.45, \$3.00 for green fees and \$4.45 for a steak dinner. If you were not able to play golf, you could attend for the steak dinner alone for \$4.45. The Members provided the prizes. Tom MacPherson was the organizer, and I recall it as being a splendid affair.

 - Committees were set up, the first being a Constitution Committee, Chaired by Stuart Parker from Richmond Hill, to determine what sort of formal entity the York North Law Association should adopt, i.e. a non-share capital corporation, a corporation, or just carry on as an association of Lawyers practicing north of Steeles Avenue. There was a Tariff Committee set up, in which Paul Mingay was Chairman, and Members John LeClaire and Bill Errington. There was a Library Committee to which Tom McPherson was elected Chairman and Clare Morrison was to be a Member. There was a Legal Aid Committee in which John Lawlor was appointed Chairman with Tom Manning and Clare Morrison as Members. An Administration of Justice Committee was established to investigate better facilities in the Registry Office and in the Courthouses. Joe Vale was elected Chairman. All of the Members of the Executive Committee of the York North Law Association were to be Members.

 - I should point out that at that time Helen Reid was the Registrar in Newmarket and Irma Young was her Deputy. These two individuals were always most helpful in offering suggestions to Solicitors and in correcting documents to allow Registration to proceed expeditiously but accurately.

- There was a Membership Committee in which Clare Green was elected as Chairman and once again, with the Executive being the Members of that Committee. I note that Membership Fees were to remain at \$5.00 until such time as we were able to broaden our Membership and achieve some positive steps. It was suggested that we approach a Benchler to be an ex-officio member so as to advance our cause with the Law Society of Upper Canada. I note that there was discussion held whereby all municipalities lying north of Steeles Avenue would have their Registry Office moved to Newmarket. I note that Mr. Justice Evans , along with Mr. Elmore Houser, Q.C., were suggested as the guest speakers for our dinner meetings for 1966, and because Mr. Justice Evans grew up and practiced in Timmins, I was appointed the contact person. My recollection is, that Mr. Justice Evans knew Floyd Corner very well, and had in fact purchased Floyd Corner's gown for his initial Court appearance in the District of Cochrane, which was Mr. Justice Evans' inauguration to a long and successful career with some 22 murder cases in which all of the accused were acquitted.

- I believe the most memorable and satisfactory meeting during my term of office was the meeting held in September, 1966 in honour of Colonel Hollinrake and his work in initiating Legal Aid, out of which grew the York North Law Association, and his dispensation of justice in the County. The Minutes of that meeting are brief, and I quote them in their entirety:

“A night honouring Colonel O.S. Hollinrake, Q.C. was held at the Summit Golf Club on Wednesday, the 28th day of September, 1966 when some sixty lawyers of the York North Bar Association and from Metropolitan Toronto gathered to honour Colonel O.S. Hollinrake, Q.C., the Senior Magistrate in York North, for his many years of service as Magistrate.

Among the head table guests who paid tribute to Colonel Hollinrake were His Honour Robert Forsyth, Senior County Court Judge; Joseph Sedgwick, Q.C., who brought

greetings personally and on behalf of the Law Society of Upper Canada; and Joseph Dales, Q.C., Warden of York County.

Many written messages of honour and congratulations were received, among them being from The Honourable Dana H. Porter, Chief Justice of Ontario; The Honourable George Alexander Gale, Chief Justice of the High Court; Arthur O. Klein, Chief Magistrate of the Province of Ontario; Henry R. Bull, Q.C., Crown Attorney for County of York; and William Allen, Q.C., Chairman of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

Following dinner, Mr. Joseph Vale, Q.C., past President of the York North Law Association presented Colonel Hollinrake with a "Scales of Justice" on behalf of the York North Law Association.

Colonel Hollinrake, in a brief address, reminisced over the happenings during his years on the Bench and traced the function of the Magistrate's office down through the years to the present time. He also paid tribute to Mr. Arnie Armstrong, Q.C., the present Crown Attorney, and Magistrate Russell Pearse for their service over the years, as well as Mr. Joseph Dales, Q.C., the Warden of the County for his work in the Legal Aid program."

- In illustration of the quality gentleman that Colonel Hollinrake was, is found in his thank-you note, the original of which is in your archives and is certainly one of the mementos, along with a Bible I mentioned earlier, which should commemorate Colonel Hollinrake's reign during the early days of justice in York County. I have appended a copy of this letter to these remarks.
- My tenure as President, ended at the end of the year 1967 and I note from my President's remarks in February, 1968 that I was somewhat discouraged and disillusioned with the progress the York North Law Association had made. It was my feeling that not all Members of the practicing Bar in the County of York shared the

enthusiasm of Joseph Vale and other Members of the organization at that time. Let my quote from certain of those remarks.

“We have been only partially successful in that our two concerns at that time, increased attendance and collection of dues, still remain outstanding. We still have these problems, and the new executive will have the more onerous task of attempting to maintain the enthusiasm which initially inspired our organization, and which has gradually diminished these past two years.

The executive and the membership, if they wish their organization to flourish, will have to give certain precedence over services and community obligations and more importantly, their work. Furthermore, our ranks have been depleted by an ever growing number of the profession being promoted to the Bench, and to these recently elevated, His Worship Clare Morrison and His Worship Frederick Bannon, we pay honour.”

“Insofar as our Constitution is concerned, this has to your President, at the same time being a disappointing and yet enlightening experience. I have attended two meetings of the Executive Committee of the York County Law Association, and had hoped to be able to report at this meeting the acceptance by their organization of our own. Their meeting was to have been on February 20, 1968, but unfortunately their Committee was unable to get a speaker on time, and hence a postponement of their meeting. Their choice of speaker, if I may be presumptuous, was initiated by our organization when they heard that we had the Treasurer of the Law Society speak to us, and they realized that in their many years of existence, they had never had the Treasurer speak to their organization.

At the risk of digressing, the meetings with York County Law Association were enlightening, for they with their large, grand and exalted membership, do not have any less trouble operating efficiently and their percentage of active participation is far less than our own. Our executive then can take some encouragement from the experience of our neighbours to the south. Generally speaking, the York County executive is in favour of a dividing line of Steeles Avenue. There are, however, three members of their executive

against the formation of our society. They are, Jerome Goulding, Q.C., Charles McKeon, and Peter DeCory. Their objections stem basically from the idea that if we can form our organization so might Etobicoke and Scarborough, and eventually the powers of York County Law Association would be eroded away. I feel that while we will eventually get their concurrence, it may be to a dividing line lying north of Steeles Avenue. If anyone can speak to any of these dissident members, it would go a long way towards finalizing this matter. Mr. John Honsberger, Q.C., President of York County Law Association, has promised me a decision on the matter at their next meeting on February 28th, and once this approval is obtained, permission from the Benchers will follow as a matter of course."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Stuart Parker, Q.C. and Mr. Jim Pearson, for their efforts with respect to Incorporation, as well as Mr. Tom McPherson who attended with me at the meeting of the York County Law Association Executive. "

"Because we have not been as successful as we would have liked in the collection of our membership dues, we have been unable to distribute the minutes of the meetings. Similarly, the seminars in Criminal Law, Family Law, etc., have proven to be too ambitious a project with the many other matters we have underway."

"Mr. John Lawlor has had a number of meetings with the Magistrates concerning improved Court facilities, and has reported to you in this regard. It would appear that all matters in this regard are awaiting the final outcome as to the proper authority that will be taking over the administration of justice. This organization has passed a resolution deploring the existing conditions and has directed this resolution to the County and to the Magistrates, backing them in their endeavours in this regard. We thank the Magistrates and John Lawlor for their work and concern in this area."

"Mr. Tom McPherson's efforts with respect to the library are evident to all of you in the fine room he now has available for the library, and his work in this regard, as in all aspects

of the association both as Vice-President and in charge of meetings, has made him an invaluable assistant for the past two years.”

“Mr. Ross Linton has to be the thriftiest Treasurer in any organization, and I believe he still owes me \$5.65 from last October, because I lost a bill and have been unable to locate the same. I can therefore assure you that his best efforts have been used to preserve the association’s treasury through his reign of office.”

“The remaining members of the executive, the Past President, Joseph Vale, Q.C., Thomas Evans, Clare Green and Mr. Bill Thomas, I thank you for your support and your work, as well as your attendance at meetings albeit usually called on somewhat short notice.”

“To the members of our organization, my thanks for your co-operation and presence at the meetings, and my apologies for any inadequacies you may have had to put up with. The position of President has provided me with a good deal of satisfaction and has afforded me an opportunity to meet many people and visit organizations that I would not otherwise have had the opportunity of so doing. Not the least of these was the appointment to the York County Area Committee of Legal Aid.”

- I had intended to read the Membership List from 1965, which consisted of 35 paid-up Members, and the Membership in 1971 which had grown to 72 Members, but time does not permit. It had also been my intention to read the names of the Presidents of the York North Law Association from 1963 to 1981, however, these are presented on the notice board for you this evening.
- I would therefore conclude my remarks on the history of our Association, with a few comments on what I perceive the value of York Region Law Association is to its Members.

- I believe our profession was a kinder and gentler place to practice in the '60's and '70's than it is today – that is so, notwithstanding the much improved facilities since the '60's.
- The main reason for being a kinder and gentler place to practice was the camaraderie and personal relationships each of the Members practicing in the north-half of York County had with each other. We not only had the opportunity of meeting each other when we closed real estate transactions when we met in the Magistrate and Division Courts, but in the social activity and professional meetings of the York North Law Association held from in the mid-sixties through to the end of the 1970's.
- Nothing can substitute for personal relationships when dealing with each other on a business or professional basis.
- Undertakings in the late '50's and early '60's in real estate transactions and other matters, were verbal undertakings.
- These later became written undertakings, as dictated by the Law Society of Upper Canada, and properly so. Nevertheless, the personal relationship the practitioners had with each other enabled them to accept these undertakings without hesitation, and allowed transactions to close without the benefit of photostat machines, with only very primitive dictating equipment – and certainly without the advantages of electronic registration or cell phones.
- I fear that electronic registration, apart from my other concerns, continues to contribute to what I would refer to as a “faceless profession”.
- We can sit in our offices and complete most aspects of a real estate transaction electronically without any human contact.

- Should electronic discoveries and/or electronic hearings of administrative proceedings as rumoured, come into effect, it will further contribute to our "faceless profession".
- The York Region Law Association is even more important today than it was in the '60's. While our facilities for practice may be better, the importance of being able to meet each other at professional seminars and on social occasions so we can assess the character of each other, is most important, and I wish the York Region Law Association every success in its continuing endeavours in this regard
- I commend your President for his efforts in bringing to the attention of the Members the history of your Association and his contribution towards the archives.
- I regret that my active participation in the York North Law Association ceased during the mid '70's, when I became President of another organization which held its meetings on the same night as our Association.
- I assure you this invitation has renewed my intentions to actively participate once again.
- Thank you for inviting me this evening - I sincerely hope some of these reminiscences have been of interest to you.