

Rush Family Genealogy.

READING ROOM



THE RUSH FAMILY ①

Michael Rush came from Ireland in 1840. His journey from the home-land to Canada in a sailing vessel required seven weeks. This ancient ship landed its passengers at Quebec City, and a smaller vessel carried them to Montreal. From Montreal, Michael followed the course of the River St. Lawrence to Kingston. This writer was unable to learn the reason why Kingston was chosen as his objective.

Joseph Foster, the writer's grandfather (one of the first settlers in the Moscow District), was crossing the market place in Kingston, when accosted by a young man seeking employment at farm work, and that young man was Michael Rush. That improvised meeting, between two strangers, resulted in a life-long friendship lasting many years. On the evening following this interview, Michael Rush found himself established in one of the farm homes at Moscow, where he remained for a period of seven years.

Michael Rush during his residence at Moscow made many friends. Having had considerable experience in farming before coming to Canada, he readily accommodated himself to his new surroundings and, like most natives of the "Emerald Isle", possessed a radiant personality. He was faithful to every duty and absolutely dependable, and made a substantial contribution to the pioneer life of this new settlement. It would appear from the story as handed down to this writer that Michael Rush entered upon his new duties without any arrangement or bargain of any kind respecting wages, remuneration or emolument of any kind. All this apparently had been left to the honour of those concerned.

Michael Rush was a Catholic in religion, and the nearest church of that period was at Odessa, and Michael would, on occasion and on Sunday morning, saddle one of the many horses in use on this farm and proceed to the Church of his choice, where the sacrament of the Mass was celebrated.

About this time in the history of the Township of Camden, a family from Ireland had settled on a farm in the vicinity of Clark's Mills, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Doyle. A sister of Mrs. Doyle, a young widow, had accompanied them to Canada. Her name was Margaret Boland Burns, and she was strikingly handsome and of fine appearance. The Doyle family and Mrs. Burns also attended Mass at Odessa. Later a rumour had reached Moscow (from an outside source) to the effect that Michael Rush had fallen in love with this charming young widow. Michael of course was silent on the subject.

From "The History of the Pioneers of The Moscow District"  
by Joseph Foster

Compiled by John Garrison Smith  
1999.



THE RUSH FAMILY (Continued) ②

One day at Moscow an interesting conversation developed, when the following dialogue ensued:

"Michael, we have something to say this morning which we believe will interest you. We have come to the conclusion that it is high time for you to begin farming on your own account. You have resided here seven years and we feel it to be our duty to render you some assistance. We happen to have in our possession a block of land in the Township of Portland which we think would make you a good home, and we are prepared here and now to transfer the ownership of this property over to you, to compensate in some measure the faithful service you have rendered throughout the years." It is needless to say that Michael Rush accepted this offer.

Michael Rush at this period had become skilled in the use of the axe and saw, the instruments used by the pioneers in removing the primeval forest, and made short work of the clearing of a portion of his holdings, sufficiently large for the erection of his first residence, a log house. Since there was no lack of timber for this purpose, only the straight trunks of trees would be used, cut to the right length and carefully notched at their ends, so as to form a neat and secure corner. The next step was the raising bee, when willing neighbours would assist in placing the timbers in their proper position so as to form the four walls. Placing the rafters and the roof covering material would complete the structure. All these preliminaries were carried out in due course and the house made ready for its occupants.

At the period when the incidents recorded in this drama were being enacted, there were no weekly or daily newspapers to announce or proclaim the latest news, and often weeks would pass before it would reach a neighbouring pioneer settlement. Notwithstanding this fact, the time did arrive when a report came through that Michael Rush had married Margaret Boland Burns. The Rush home thus established was a representation of the many good homes to be found in this settlement.

There were born to this union four children, three daughters and one son.

Mary Ann (the eldest)	married	James Hinch
Ellen remained single		
Bridget	married	Thomas Lawlor
John	married	Sarah Gartland

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1899.



- 45 -

History of the Pioneers of the Moscow District Page  
THE RUSH FAMILY (Continued)

There are three grandchildren: Mrs. Matt Hinch of Napanee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawlor; and Austin Rush and Leonard Rush, sons of John Rush, who reside at Moscow.

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rush were successful in a material sense, and their home can truly be designated as A CHRISTIAN HOME remembered for its generous hospitality toward the poor and unfortunate.

The Rush Homestead was located one-half mile north of the Village of Petworth, in the Township of Portland. Petworth at this present period is "A Deserted Village" but one hundred years ago was a busy mart with a population of two hundred souls. Among these people were a number of very poor and destitute families, and it was a common sight to find poorly clad children from these homes wending their way to the Rush Homestead, in the hope of securing a piece of pork or a measure of flour to replenish their scanty larder, and they were never turned empty away.

In the chamber or upstairs floor of this fine old log house were to be seen three beds, two for the male members and hired help, and the bed at the west end of the chamber was reserved exclusively for strangers seeking a night's lodging, and many a troubled soul, who had not where to lay his head, on some cold and stormy winter's night, found refuge under this hospitable roof and was pillowed in this warm and comfortable bed.

After thirty years' residence in the log house, Mr. and Mrs. Rush built a fine new modern home, a little west of their pioneer residence. This new home was completely finished and ready for occupation when Michael Rush was stricken with what proved to be his last illness, and passed to his reward from his own room in the old log house of sacred memory. Mrs. Rush, following their removal to the new house, met with a serious accident from falling and was an invalid until her passing. She bore her suffering with Christian fortitude, tenderly cared for by her faithful daughters.

John Rush, the youngest of this interesting family, inherited this estate and later acquired the well known residence and farm of the late George Garrison of Moscow, where his widow and their two sons, Austin and Leonard, reside.

From "The History of the Pioneers of the Moscow District"

By Joseph Foster. 1946

Compiled by John Garrison Smith.  
1999.



"Area Residents" - "The Rush Family"

The 1861 - Census of Portland Township list:-

Name	Relationship	Age	Born	Religion	Occupation
Michael Rush	(Head)	43	Ireland	R. Catholic	Farmer
Margaret	" (wife)	38	"	"	on Concession 6
Mary Ann	" (daug)	6	Canada West	"	Lot 19
Ellen	"	3	"	"	(near Petworth)
Bridget	"	1	"	"	75 acres (log house)

The 1871 - Census of Portland Township list:-

Name	Relationship	Age	Born	Religion	Occupation
Michael Rush	(Head)	59	Ireland	R. Cath	Farmer
Margaret	" (wife)	54	"	"	
Mary Ann	" (daug)	15	Ont.	"	
Ellen	"	11	"	"	
Bridget	"	10	"	"	
John	" (son)	7	"	"	

The 1881 - Census of Portland Township list:-

Name	Relationship	Age	Born	Religion	Occupation
Michael Rush	(Head)	73	Ireland	R. Cath.	Farmer
Margaret	" (wife)	59	"	"	
Mary	" (daug)	22	Ont.	"	
Ellen	"	20	"	"	School Teacher
Bridget	"	18	"	"	
John	" (son)	16	"	"	

The 1891 - Census of Portland Township list:-

Name	Relationship	Age	Born	Religion	Racial origin	Occupation
John Rush	(Head)	73	Ont.	R. Cath.	Irish	Farmer
Margaret	" (mother)	69	Ireland	"	" (widow)	
Mary A	" (sister)	34	Ont.	"	"	Dressmaker
Ellen	"	32	"	"	"	
Bridget	"	30	"	"	"	

The 1901 - Census of Portland Township list:-

Name	Relationship	Age	Born	Religion	Occupation
John Rush	(Head)	35	Born in Ont (on 12/May/1865)	R. Cath.	Farmer
Mary A	" (sister)	40	" " " (on 31/Aug/1860)	"	Dressmaker
Ellen	"	38	" " " (on 24/Apr/1862)	"	

(Compiled by John Garrison Smith, 1999)