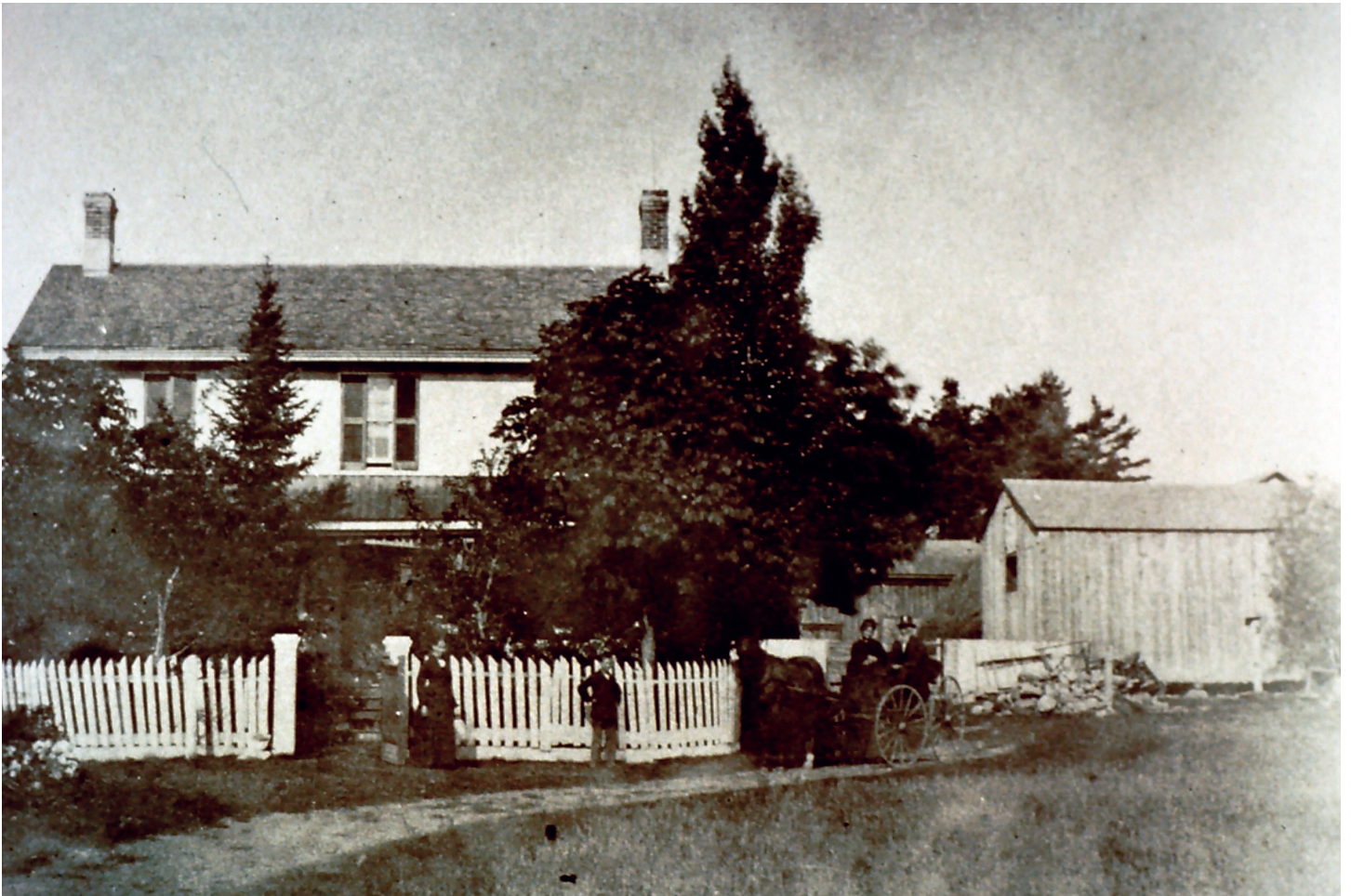


## Downsview Stories

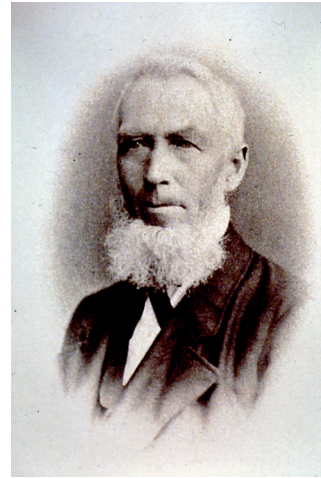
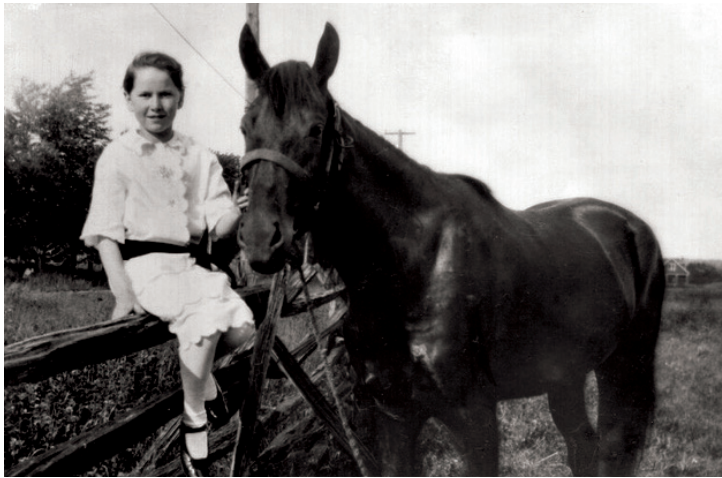
# EARLY IRISH SETTLEMENT

Many of the first European settlers to arrive in Downsview came from Ireland in the 1830s. They cleared fields, built homes, and farmed on large parcels of land in the area that would now be known as Sheppard and Dufferin but, at the time, was called Dublin Village.



The Boake Family's "Locust Lodge" in Downsview by Keele Street

The Boakes and Bull-Perkins families established themselves in the area over several generations. Edward and Sarah Boake built a solid house, 'Locust Lodge', so called for the grove of locust trees surrounding it. Here, four generations of their family lived and prospered until the land was expropriated by the military in 1951 to expand the airfield.



Left: Olive (Boake) Cherry and “Topsy” on the Boake Farm—“Locust Lodge”—circa 1915  
Right: Edward Warren Boake, one of the original Boake brothers who farmed Downsview

When Downsview Park was being planned, the design team preserved a single row of maple trees along the Boake’s southern property line, marking the last remaining traces of the family farm’s fields. Downsview Park’s preserved woodlot is called Boake’s Grove (seen below). This is where Locust Lodge once stood and still features a healthy stand of black locust, silver maple, and walnut trees.



An aerial view of Downsview Park under development showing the cluster of trees from the Boake farm—now called Boake’s Grove

The name Downsview was conferred on the neighbourhood by another Irish family, John and Caroline Bull, who settled in the area in 1830 with their young children. The view, looking down the fields towards the city, was distinctive, earning the 200-acre farm the name 'Downs View'.



The Perkins-Bull House circa 1900

Their son, John Perkins Bull, stuck around and became the local Justice of the Peace, earning him the nickname Squire Bull. He became quite involved in community and religious affairs, adapting his spacious home to accommodate services of the Wesleyan Methodists, and to function both as a modest courthouse and, in the basement, a temporary lock-up for convicts. In the 1960s the Perkins-Bull house was transformed into the North Park Nursing Home which is still in operation today.

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