

The History of this History

Many times I'd drive down 30 from Campbellford, turning west at 29, and see in peripheral vision, just before the turn, a small blue sign with the words Historical Plaque JD Kelly and a gold arrow pointing west on 29 to Warkworth, where I was headed, again and again...

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

But it was years before I decided to find out who JD Kelly was, and then I didn't go and look at the plaque instead I looked on the internet and didn't find much there at all except for the plaque and a website that sells prints of his and other Canadian artist's works. But the fact that JD Kelly was an artist, and from Warkworth, or thereabouts, (born in Gore's Landing in 1862, his family moved to Percy Township in 1869 because of the taverns and drunks in Gore's Landing, a wild place it was at that time), growing up right next to Sandy Flats Sugar Bush, an artist whose paintings have been seen by more Canadians than any other, or perhaps more than just most others, who knows, and whose imagery helped shape our vision of who we were, and who we are, perhaps, here in 2013, and because Warkworth is now a "designated arts community" and I am now a designated "artist", I thought that perhaps I should find out more about this JD Kelly...

My friend Madeline introduced me to Aureen Richardson, a former teacher in the area, who had gathered together information in a publication, "Historic Visions of JD Kelly", and had promoted awareness of his importance to the community in talks, presentations, newspaper articles, and carrying prints of his paintings with her wherever she went, even to New Zealand in her wheelchair.

Aureen Richardson

And now she lives in the Nursing Home, as does Stanley Morrow, who remembers JD walking up his farm road with a cane, long white goatee and gold glasses, and usually with a gift of a religious book for young Stanley, JD visiting as he often did from Toronto, where he worked at Toronto Lithographing Company for 71 years. And then my friend Corinne Patterson, who was President of the Historical Society, showed me their files on JD, a history of family members by Orval Kelly, JD's nephew, and a family tree and a board of family photos and some other things, and Bill Kelly told me how JD loved books, and always brought him one as a gift, usually a religious book, when he came to visit.

So I started to learn more about this man, but still he eludes me. Our traces disappear quickly, even the traces of an historian and an artist so I am learning what I can, about those times in this place that he and his family lived and his mother's family (fewer clues), and father's family (more clues) thanks to Aureen in particular, and Corinne and Dorothy and Percy and the other Kellys and the people who saved photographs or made notes, or thought it important to keep these traces fresh while they can, sketchy as they are even now, of a time completely, otherwise, gone by.

I have displayed this material in various temporary exhibits over the past two years, and suggested that the outgoing Board of Directors of the Historical Society leave a legacy of JD Kelly in this form, which the Warkworth Art in the Park Committee suggested posting on their and Warkworth's website. I have composed them of Aureen's words and JD's words and Percy Kelly's words, and my own, picking out headline words and phrases to form a sound bite stream through it all, with images to evoke the times.

Who Was JD Kelly- what is his legacy- in showing us now who we are now as artists and citizens and players in historical dramas and Who Will JD Kelly Be? What can he mean to us? as a "Designated Arts Community" in the Twenty First Century?

JD Kelly

who was he

didn't find much

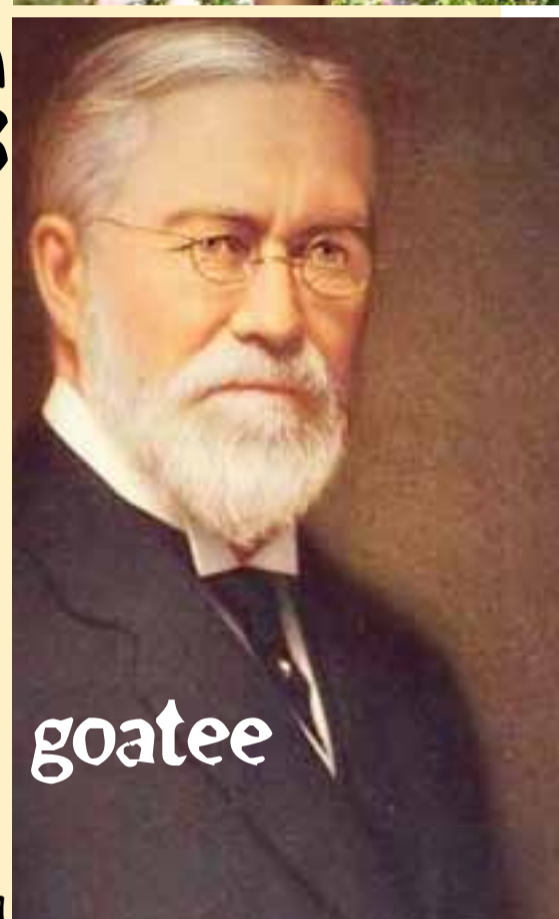
artist

Warkworth

2013

arts

community



goatee

gold glasses

71 years



William Alexander Kelly, JD's brother



Harry Alexander Kelly, JD's nephew

photographs

words

images

players

dramas

questions

legacy

Pine Grove Studios
Clive Russell
Copyright © 2013



Origins

Voyage

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER JD KELLY WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WARKWORTH
PROJECT

Arrival

1841

Cavan

County Cavan
In the north part of Ireland
A landscape of Drumlins
Much like Northumberland



Ireland

drumlins

The absentee landlord system, by which English owners of confiscated Irish land extracted larger and larger rents out of tenant farmers that were remitted to England, impoverished the country, making it a hostile place to live, and resulted, a few years later, in the potato famine of 1845 to 1852. A crop failure in 1841, along with the increasingly onerous conditions, may have forced JD Kelly's Grandparents, Samuel and Nancy Kelly to leave County Cavan in 1841 with their children William, James, John (who would be JD's father-12 years old at the time), Robert and Elizabeth.



famine

poverty



It was a 49 day voyage across the Atlantic
The average was 12 to 15 days
But storms sometimes drove ships back all the way from sight of Newfoundland to Ireland again



storms

49 day Voyage

steerage



Finally entering the St. Lawrence River, stopping on Grosse Ile for quarantine inspection

Quebec

Arriving in Quebec City
And then on to Montreal
by Steam Boat
skirting the rapids



starting point



St. Lawrence

by cart and on foot to La Chine, once the starting point for the Voyageurs
From there by Durham Boat and Stage Coach, up the St. Lawrence to Cornwall, on to Kingston
And from Kingston westward on Lake Ontario by Steam Boat to Cobourg Harbour

La Chine



Voyageurs



steam



Cobourg

Harbour



WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER JD KELLY WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Text by Aureen Richardson, Percy Kelly, Orval Kelly, and Clive Russell. Images as attributed. Design by Clive Russell

In Canada

1841 The Act of Union, a result of the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838, the bankruptcy of Upper Canada due to building of canals, and desire to assimilate and subdue French culture, along with its still solvent economy, unites Upper and Lower Canada into the Province of Canada, with Kingston as capital.



St. Eustache Patriotes
Lithograph, 1840
Lord Charles Beauclerk
Wikimedia Commons

1845

Sir John Franklin and his crew disappear in the Arctic searching for the Northwest Passage.

HMS Intrepid on search for Franklin- sketch by Commander May, RN
National Geographic



Grandparents Homesteading Parents

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

after several years in Haldimand
1848 John moved north

After several years in Haldimand Township,
John moved north
along the plank road connecting
Cobourg to Gore's Landing
on the south shore of Rice Lake.

plank road

There were several saw mills in Gore's Landing
and Harwood in an era when lumbering was king as
forests were being stripped bare and rafted to mills
along the lakeshore. John worked in the mills and
worked with carpenters to build many houses.

houses

A steamboat ran from Peterborough
to Harwood, Gore's Landing and
Crooks Rapids (Hastings) carrying
grain, supplies and lumber.

In winter, John worked in the woods
cutting cordwood.

6 feet 2 inches, tall, a giant with an axe,
old-timers record that John and his friend, Murnay,
cut and split six cords of hardwood in a day.

giant

axe

On October 24 1853, he married Margaret Ranney,
JD's mother, a beautiful dark haired,
dark eyed lady, and a true pioneer.

six cords a day

Margaret was born in Baltimore,
youngest daughter of Alexander and Mary Ranney
who had left their home in
Dufftown, Aberdeenshire, Scotland,
the capital of Scotch whiskey production
and a place torn by battles between
bootleggers and government enforcers.

scotch

and

water

Baltimore

The pure waters of Baltimore, Northumberland
run through a lovely valley,
a good place to settle.

beautiful

Margaret

pioneer
marriage

1853

On October 24, 1853, the marriage
was performed by Rev. William J. Mackenzie,
Presbyterian minister in Baltimore

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada
1847

Canada is overwhelmed with immigrants,
104,000 in 1847 alone, many with typhus,
1848 fleeing the Irish Potato Famine.

The Province of Canada's first responsible government by
party - the Great Reform ministry takes office led by
1851 Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin.

Canada's first postage stamp is issued, a three-penny stamp with a beaver on it,
designed by Sandford Fleming.

Rice Lake

This beautiful Rice Lake setting was a charming place for the children's early years.
They enjoyed their games on the secluded lake

Family

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



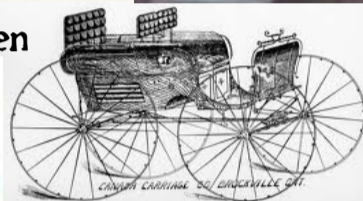
Artwork

In Gore's Landing,
John built a frame house
with the help of his friends
William Ranney
(Margaret's brother),
and a fellow known only as Murnay.

John + Margaret + Gore's Landing Friends + Home



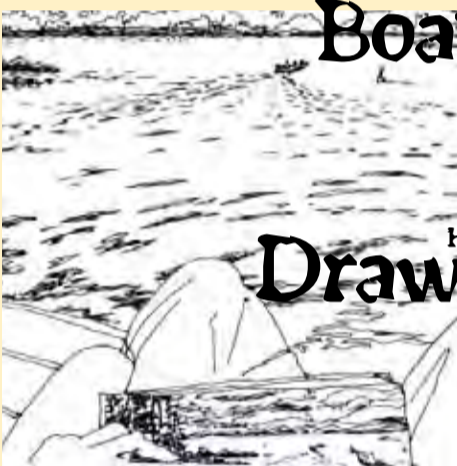
And there Margaret and John had 6 children
Mary Anne 1855,
Samuel James 1857,
Ellen Margaret 1859,
John David 1862,
William 1865,
Robert 1867



Children

Rice Lake

Boating



John, JD's father,
loved boating and drawing
He encouraged the children to draw
the boats on Rice Lake

Drawing

The house was filled with magazines
and pages removed from art catalogues,
and JD spent his spare time drawing



One of JD's childhood friends
in Gore's Landing was William Herald,
son of Daniel Herald, designer
and builder of canoes, with whom JD
maintained a lifelong friendship.



Art Catalogues

But older brother Sam was the best artist
... when they were young.

Artist

Sam

But there were taverns
and drunks in Gore's Landing.
Not a good place
to bring up the kids, decided Margaret,
whose family had left the whiskey capital,
Dufftown, Scotland, knowing well the evils of drink!



Taverns

Move the Family

to Percy Township!

They purchased a farm in Percy Township and prepared to move the family...

Margaret's Island on
Rice Lake intrigued
the Kelly family for
decades. They loved
to return there for
picnics, reunions
and lazy summer
holidays.

Magazines

Artistically the water must
have impressed John David. More than 70
percent of his 28 paintings in the "Gallery of
Canadian History," John David has water in
the background. Water, with its symbolism of
wholeness, life, intuition and mystery, had an
important role in his historic vision.



Drunks

Old East, the blacksmith, whose wife was a great Methodist,
had several falls from grace lately, owing to too much 'skitty
wa wa boo (whiskey)'. He had an old tin flask which he kept
at the forge and he used to send it down to the hotel to be
filled too often to be good for him.

In Canada 1856

Grand Trunk Railway opens its Montreal - Toronto line.

1857

Queen Victoria chooses Ottawa as new capital of the
United Province of Canada.

1860

Parliament Buildings cornerstone laid in Ottawa.

1867

Dominion of Canada created, with John A. Macdonald sworn in as prime minister.



Victoria Hall opens in Cobourg.



Percy Township Farm Home Community

From
Northumberland
and Durham
Historical Atlas
1878

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

From
Northumberland
and Durham
Historical Atlas
1878

1869

John

bought a farm

In April, 1869, William Ranney, John's friend, and brother of Margaret, drove her and the children in a horse drawn carriage to their new home in Percy Township, along with two loads of furniture. John had previously bought a farm on Concession 4, Part Lot 6: the Lacey, or Losie property in Sandy Flats. Next to what is today Sandy Flats Sugar Bush.

Sandy Flats

They moved into the Jackson home, an old log house that John had rented, living there for two years while John and neighbours built a new frame house on the farm a short distance away.

They named their new home Maplewood.

About this time, that the new house was being built, while his father was working, JD, age 9, played with an axe and gashed his foot.

It was sewn up, and healed.

But was perhaps a sign of things to come

sewn up and healed

With a keen interest in country fairs, JD's father was president of Percy Agricultural Fair. At fairs he won first prizes with his axe handles that could not be equalled in shape and strength.

Two more children were born in Percy Emma in 1870, and Edwin Percy in 1876.

Sap Shanty

The Kelly's had a sugar bush and Sap Shanty

This photograph, undated, was taken of the family with friends and neighbours- the McCrackens and others.

who's at the Sap Shanty?

Individuals are not identified- which one is John David?

This is probably Grandfather Samuel

Probably Father John

This is a studio photo of JD probably in his twenties, a successful artist and urbanite and a match for the reclining figure in the white sweater. That would date the photo about 1885. His siblings would be Mary 30, Sam 28, Ellen 26, JD 23, William 20, Robert 18, Emma 15, and Percy 9. Who is Margaret, his mother- is she in the dark dress, seated behind the boys?



WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada

1869 Economic depression grips Canada until the late 1890s

Riel establishes a legal provisional government in Rupert's Land.

1872 Demand for leather destroys the buffalo herds, and western native economy.

Surveys begin through northwest Ontario for the Canadian Pacific Railway line.

1873 MacDonald's government resigns over scandals of Conservative campaign financing by the Canadian Pacific Railway





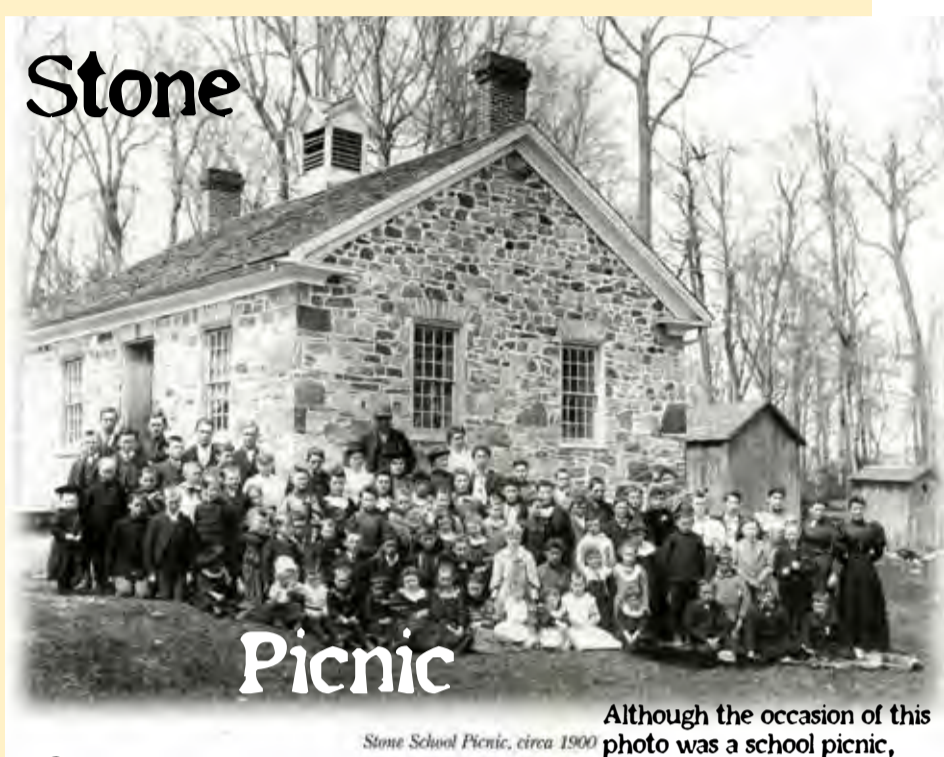
School Disaster Opportunity

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

S.S.6 Percy, a stone school built in 1847, was a short walking distance for the Kelly family, but a very long distance for many students. His teacher, John McHale was his Dad's good friend who frequently argued with Kelly over politics. John David passed each grade, but was better in nature study than history, arithmetic or geography.



Although the occasion of this photo was a school picnic, everyone from the area showed up to be in it. Photography was a rare and exciting event.

Rules For Teachers 1872

- Men teachers may take one evening per week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
- Following ten hours in school, the teacher may pass the remaining time reading the Bible or similar good books.
- Any teacher who smokes, drinks liquor in any form, visits pool or public halls or is shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention and honesty.
- The teacher who performs his labours faithfully and without fault for five years, will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in pay, providing the Board of Education approves.

House

The school always had a beautiful garden, winning an award in 1942 for "Best School Garden"

Gardens



America's Cup

At 14, he was excited by the Third America's Cup Challenge of 1876, in which was entered a Cobourg built boat, the Countess of Dufferin.

This painting of the 1876 race is by Edward Moran The one by the young JD Kelly has not yet been located

He made a painting of the race that would, years later, carry him into a new life.

His life must have seemed crushed when, at 16, his foot was crushed under a stump in a logging accident.

crushed

stump

Though he could walk again within a year, he was disabled for farming, and thereafter limped, and carried a cane.

disabled

Realizing and appreciating John David's love of art, his father bought him art materials- charcoal, paints and books on art and he began to study seriously, learning the technical and perceptual skills of drawing and painting.

art materials



charcoal

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

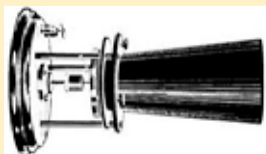
In Canada 1873

American whiskey traders kill 56 Assiniboine in the west, leading to formation of the NWMP, later the RCMP.



1876

Bell invents the telephone, in Brantford Ontario.



1877

Artist Tom Thomson is born, in Claremont, Ontario



Art Training

beginning a career

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At 18, he was accepted into the Ontario College of Art, then housed in the Toronto Normal School, on the basis of his painting of the America's Cup race. He graduated with the highest honours- the Gold Medal.

Ontario College of Art

First working independently, he joined the Grip Engraving Company, where members of the later Group of Seven also worked, doing engravings for advertising, and in the evenings worked on his drawing and painting skills.

TLC

To expand the scope of his work, he joined the Toronto Lithographing Company in 1884, the largest media company of its time in Toronto, doing drawings and paintings for reproduction in magazines, calenders, and special editions, as well as in advertising.

Engraving

1884

Lithography was the primary means of mass media communication in this time before photography became widespread. Images were researched, created, mass produced and distributed for similar reasons and to similar effect as the media of today, such as television and the internet.

Years later, Percy, JD's younger brother, would also graduate from the Ontario College of Art and join TLC as an artist and photographer

Lithography demanded extreme precision in the skills of draftsmanship and colour rendering, and it also required accuracy in portrayal of its subjects, which were closely scrutinized for information by those to whom they were sold.



The message that the illustrations communicated were carefully constructed of elements that inspired, excited, or attracted attention, much as in today's advertising, but in a narrow, constrained and stylized manner bowing proudly to the traditions of the Empire but empowered by the burgeoning commerce of America.

The building that Toronto Lithographing Company occupied was divided up into departments that formed an assembly line for production and dissemination of images and messages of empire and commerce.



Research

Folding



Sales

Lunch



Spittoon



Distribution



WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada

1879

First organized games of hockey played with a flat puck, at McGill, in Montreal.

1880

Emily Stowe is first woman to be licensed to practise medicine, which she has been doing since 1867.

1884

Sanford Fleming's proposal for Standard Time, along with time zones, is adopted internationally.



McGill Hockey Team 1881
Library and Archives
Canada/C-81739

1884 Pocket Watch
Collection of Barry S.
Goldberg

Emily Howard Stowe
National Library and Archives
of Canada C-9480



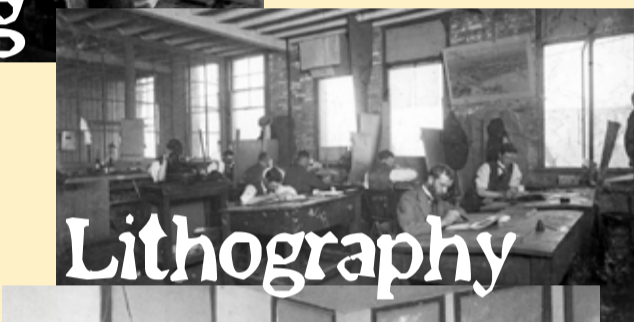
1880



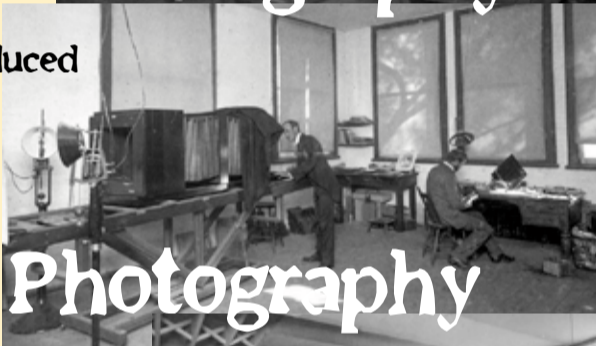
Gold Medal



Lithography



Photography



Printing



West by train

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Northwest Rebellion broke out in the following spring and the company printed an illustrated weekly called 'The War News'. JD was one of the Illustrators. Armed with charcoal and sketch book he sent back drawings of soldiers at Batoche, Cut Knife Creek and many other romantic (sic) places. The rebellion was broken In July of 1885 by Canadian troops and JD returned to Toronto on the new CPR line with the Grenadiers, a never to be forgotten journey.

1885

Rebellion War News

romantic?

Batoche

Riel

Dumont

Big Bear

Rails

CPR

Fish Creek

Grenadiers

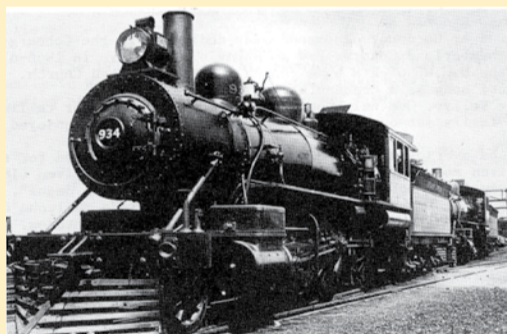
The Battle of Fish Creek, a contemporary lithograph artist unknown. Kelly's sketches not yet located

JD was very impressed with the soldiers and their uniforms, equipment and regalia and loved talking with them on the rail trip back to Toronto, incorporating this first hand knowledge into his paintings. There is no mention of Kelly's feelings or awareness of the local people of that area, or the issues giving rise to the rebellion. He was a conservative patriot and a deeply religious man of Presbyterian background with a Victorian Christian view of the world as straight and as constrained as the rails, and that view is what he portrayed.

JD's father, John Kelly, was an avid supporter of the railway, and a Conservative because of MacDonald's efforts to get a line built across Canada to the west. The need to get troops out to the wild (for Canada) territories stretched along an undefended border ignored by whiskey traders and buffalo poachers gave impetus to the railway, which became an important theme in his life and work.

Trains

The trip to the west probably aroused his interest in history and started him painting pictures with a historical background.



G.T.R. Mogul 934 Photograph by Percy Kelly

Kelly designed the original railroad maps used by the C.P.R.
Not yet located



'The Ocean Limited' painted by J. D. Kelly, about 1915 photographed by Wm. Notman and Son Probably 1916. Mcord Museum Collection



His painting of Canada's First Railway, though probably his worst, a childlike illustration of garish colour and design, was used in relief on a 100 dollar gold coin minted in 2011.

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada 1885

Riel is hanged in Regina

The last spike of the CPR driven in Eagle Pass



7 Nov 1885 Alexander J. Ross National Library and Archives of Canada na-1494-5

*I must
Speak of God in whose
I trust.
In him I have room
To hope.
The rope
Threatens my life; but
Thank God, I fear not.*

Handwritten by Louis Riel and given to a Mountie guard at a Regina jail ahead of his 1885 hanging for treason.
<http://www.leaderpost.com/news/Photos>
+Louis+Riel+executed+Regina+1885



An Established Artist Toronto Years

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Family Changes 1886-1896
as Recorded by John David Kelly

1886

Father's health

"In 1886, Father's health began to fail. On February 18, Sam and I received word of his serious illness. We walked from Roseneath, 7 miles in deep snow. Father's heart was affected and he could not lay down because of dropsy. On March 18, 1886 father died and was buried in Warkworth Cemetery March 20.

7 miles

"After father's death, I stayed for a time to settle the affairs and rent the farm. By July, 1886, it was time for our family to move to Toronto. Mother, Ellen, Bert, Emily and Percy came with me, but William arrived later. Our home was a rough cast house at Davenport Road at Dupont. The good garden and orchard there helped Mother adjust. I was most happy that she adopted city ways and made many new friends.

Toronto

"Then we had a home on Sussex Avenue at Wilcox Street. There was great sadness when Ellen, a store clerk on Yonge Street, died in 1887. She was buried near Dad in Warkworth. Percy attended Lansdowne Public School. I built a summer home on Beech Avenue and summers were spent there. At this summer home Mother and Emily or other visitors greatly enjoyed life. Sometimes they went to Niagara Falls on one of the big steamers. Winter months were spent in a rented house.

Family

Emily

Sadness

"As a child I loved nature. Naturally these feelings deepened with time. I enjoyed camping and canoeing with old friends William Jephcott, Frank Roden and William Weston. Beautiful times were shared with Mother as we walked to Lake Ontario."

canoeing

camping

Nature

In 1890 The Toronto Lithographing Company became the Stone Company and JD remained with them. He was gaining in popularity and began to exhibit his paintings at the Ontario Society of Artists exhibitions, where he was elected a member. His pictures were hung at the Toronto Exhibition, The Royal Canadian Academy, The Montreal Art Association and at the Pan American Exhibition.

Popularity



JD

Ontario Society of Artists

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada

1890

Worldwide economic depression continues

1891

John A. MacDonald dies at age 76

1893

Governor General Lord Stanley donates the Stanley Cup as a hockey trophy





Sickness and love Bermuda Europe

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

All of his paintings began to be works of meticulous care and he earned from his fellow artists the name "Mr Accuracy". Many hours of research went into each painting so that every uniform, Indians headdress, etc. would be authentic and correct. While painting his picture "The Battle of Queenston Heights" also known as "The Death of Brock", he trudged over the battlefield in snowshoes to ensure correct depiction of topography.

1893 influenza severe attack

In 1893 influenza broke out in Toronto.

John David had a severe attack and recovery was slow. He was urged to take a warm sailing trip. A canoe club member and friend, Mr. Wattington arranged a trip to Bermuda for him. As well as the sunshine, coral and scenery, he anticipated the history of a new place.

coral Bermuda

For six weeks, he enjoyed the British warships, sea bathing and fishing.

Mr. Wattington sent letters of introduction to his friends. In the home of Mrs. Bennett, he met a special lady, Alice Biglow, an American of English background. Through correspondence this romance continued and culminated in a wedding in New York on June 16, 1896, by a Baptist minister.

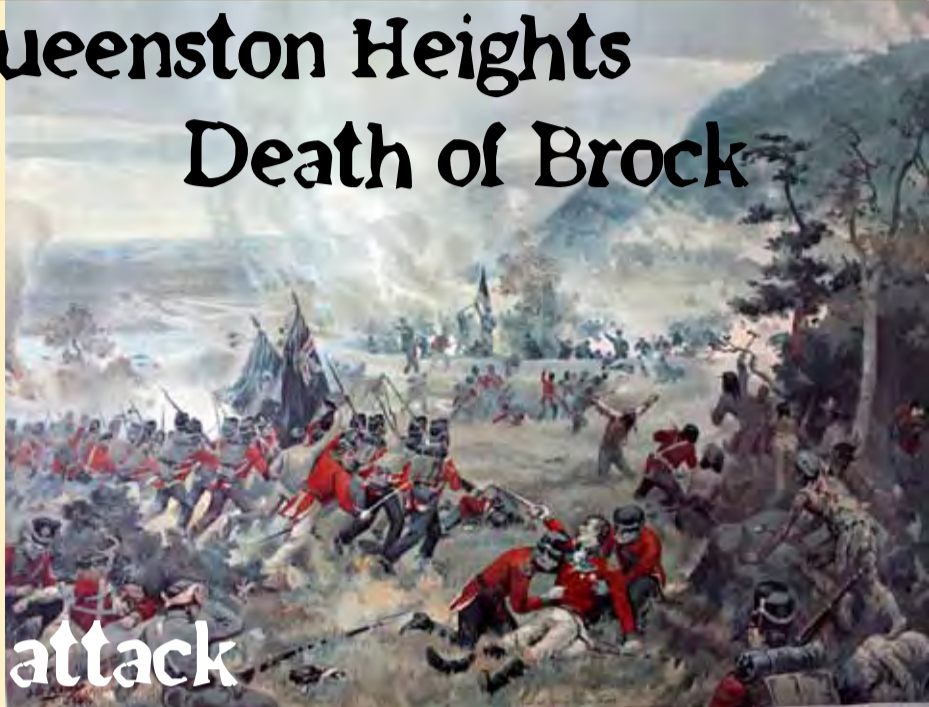
New York 1896

On June 26, the bride and groom sailed to England on a Cunard steamer which took six days. They enjoyed time in North Wales, in Surrey and harvest procedures at Dorking. With historic interest they explored Birmingham, Hastings and London. From New Haven they crossed the channel to France. From Paris to Switzerland, to Germany, down the Rhine to Cologne, Strasbourg, Bonn, and then to Antwerp.

historian

As a historian he saw the great cathedrals, art galleries and scenery of Europe. He appreciated the paintings on Swiss trains. They returned via London, Liverpool and New York, by rail to Lewiston and by steamer to Toronto and their bridal home on Classic Avenue, Harbord and Spadina.

Queenston Heights Death of Brock



Kelly's finest painting

The Battle of Queenston Heights is, perhaps, JD Kelly's finest painting. It conveys the fire and fog of war, the fear, courage, perplexity and strategizing, with deft strokes and skillful washes of greys and colour. This is a turning point in the battle, as Brock, with his dying breath, cries out "Push on, York Volunteers", and native warriors prepare to rush from their tree cover, take the Americans by surprise, and help win the battle. The composition conveys this tipping point with the lines of militia and invaders zigzagging back and forth with the landscape, and with those in the foreground seeming to be overwhelmed by the weight of the towering hills, their commander dying on the ground, but their flags high, their forward inertia of movement and startling colour, pressing forward even on their knees, and with the dark weight of the trees in the foreground providing the visual mass necessary to prevail, symbolizing the native warriors it hides, with their decisive but largely hidden role.



HMS Pickle in Bermuda waters
artist unknown



Bermuda Cottage Hospital, postcard

Wedding

Alice Bigelow

Cunard Steamer, MS Umbria, 1896

England



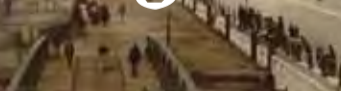
France



Switzerland

Germany

Belgium



art



bridal home

Classic Avenue

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada

1894

Massey Hall opens



Toronto's original Union Station opens



Original Union Station- blogto.com

1896 Gold is discovered in the Klondike

JD Kelly designed 100 dollar gold coin

Canada's thirty year long economic depression ends





Sudden Loss

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In September 1896 the newlyweds returned to Toronto and JD to his painting.

newlyweds returned

On July 5, 1898 a son was born to JD and Alice, Leroy Kelly, but on July 14 Alice suddenly died.

a son was born

A capable nurse cared for the infant child but he became ill in the summer heat and followed his mother only two weeks later, July 28, 1898.

Alice suddenly died

A sorrowing JD was comforted by his brothers and sisters. He was a deeply religious man and his faith in God was strong. From his family, friends and God he drew strength and returned to work. He was to remark that "he left no family but his paintings were his children."

Leroy

JD Kelly had a great love of nature and wildlife. As eight great-nieces and nephews were queried about his historic prints, each said, "I remember Uncle Jack telling us more about nature and canoe trips than about the history he painted."

Love

Nature

Indeed his hunting adventures were so important to him that he recorded five diaries which have been preserved on microfilm in the National Archives in Ottawa.

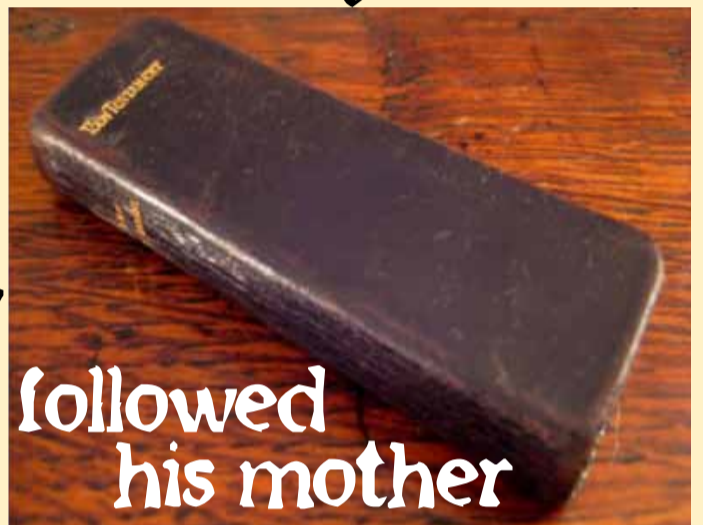
Rice Lake

These adventures primarily took place in the Rice Lake area with his friend, William Herald.

The trip recorded on these pages is from one of JD's diaries, that he called "Log of the Yam". It took place three months after the death of Alice and Leroy. No doubt Herald knew this trip was important to help Kelly's grieving process.

grieving

And so JD entered the twentieth century, painting and painting, and painting his vision of Canada's history. This vision of the past is what we grew up with, in the illustrations in our history books, prints on the walls of schools and banks and libraries, and as references for docudramas. A vision arising from inspiration and awe, it may sacrifice much of the gritty reality, the social and economic motivations that are at the core of history, but so are awe and inspiration, which are available to us through his art.



From an illustrated personal travel log, *Log of the Yam*, J. D. Kelly, 1898 (CSTM/Daniel Herald - Rice Lake Collection, 1994.0348.4)
From Canada Science and Technology Museum Collection
<http://www.images.technomuses.ca/swf/sublime/>



William Alexander Kelly, JD's brother, with William Rennie on Rice Lake, from "Rambles", Selected Writings of Northumberland Naturalist Orval Kelly (Wm. Alexander's son)

WARKWORTH'S ARTIST PIONEER

JD KELLY

WARKWORTH PERCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Canada

1899 7,000 volunteers leave for South Africa to fight for the British in the Boer War

1900 LeRoy, the first Canadian production car is built in Berlin (Kitchener), Ontario

Leroy

1914 690,000 Canadians travel to Europe to fight in World War I, suffering a 39 percent casualty rate





In 1917 Ralph Clark merged with the Stone Company and JD remained with the new Rolph Clark Stone Company. At about the same time he began his series of historical paintings for Confederation Life. There are 28 of these paintings owned by Confederation Life (now Rogers Communications). They travelled across Canada, the United States and were flown to London for the opening of Canada's Centennial in Sir John A. McDonald House. Copies of his paintings can be seen in Newfoundland's Confederation building, city halls in Halifax, Vancouver and Toronto. Two dramatic murals cover the walls of the Royal York Hotel, Toronto. The original of "Mackenzie's First Glimpse of the Pacific" is in the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario and others are in the National Gallery, Ottawa.



JD was to suffer many trials during his lifetime besides the loss of both wife and son, his sister Ellen and his younger brother and fellow artist, Percy. He had an operation for cataracts, infections in the foot he had injured when a boy and a broken hip, the result of being struck by a car. Although he was 81 at the time that he broke his hip and his family were very concerned, he walked again. As he said, it was "an answer to his prayers that the bone may heal and that I can walk again". His faith helped him to heal, and so he was able to return to his studio and continue to work until in 1955 when at the age of 95 he laid down his brushes in the Ralph Clark Stone Building after 71 years of recording great moments in Canada's history.

His remaining years were spent quietly in his home in Toronto where, when family and friends visited him he would in his quiet yet resonant voice reminisce and tell delightful tales of former days along the Rice Lake Shore and Sandy Flats, when the country was young he was younger.

On December 27 1958 John David Kelly died quietly in his sleep. He was laid to rest beside his wife and son in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Toronto, the inscription on the modest grave marker now barely visible.

1958

Mackenzie's first glimpse of the Pacific 1792

paintings

Title in JD Kelly's handwriting from thecanadasite.com



J.D. Kelly's desk at Toronto Lithograph Company, 1900
Photograph by Percy Kelly



J.D. Kelly painting Fort Edmonton, 1949
From Confederation Gallery of Canadian History

trials

faith

William Herald and J.D. Kelly in the 1940s from "Gore's Landing and the Rice Lake Plains" by Martin, Milne and McGinnis, 1986



prayers



Kelly's grave marker, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Toronto



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