

The Globe article below is a reasonably straight-forward white settler perspective of a particular event -- in simplest terms: "we are here now and no one else matters". We should ask students to analyze and critically evaluate this particular very skewed perspective from long ago ("critical thinking") and then imagine and create / synthesize their own account of a perspective that is practically never addressed or recognized in the European-based historiography ("creative thinking"). A variety of alternative accounts from students are likely: some focusing on decline of the local game population and near-starvation, others on the land-grab. A few might get into the total unfairness of treaties, deliberate introduction of disease and so on. The forename of the innkeeper was Levi – not Leir. The author, Thomas Conant, is believed to be a great-nephew of Levi Annis' wife.

COUNTRY LIFE: INCIDENTS IN EARLY HISTORY OF ASHBRIDGE'S BAY AND ...

CONANT, THOS

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COUNTRY LIFE.

Incidents in Early History of Ashbridge's Bay and Scarboro'.

WHEN INDIAN RAIDS WERE COMMON.

Encroachments of the Lak:—Old Cemeteries Engulfed—Pioneers' Bones Strawn Along the Shore—Characteristics of Present Spring.

About the year 1814 Ashbridge kept an hotel at Ashbridge's Bay, just east of Toronto, and near the Eastern Gap of the Island, and he gave his name to the bay, which it holds to this day. At the same time the Leir Annis of whom I spoke in some former letters, kept an hotel in Scarboro', on the Kingston-road, which then ran south of the present Kingston-road a half mile or so. The Indians robbed Ashbridge's tavern, and made the inmates flee for their lives. It is hard to say if they would really have committed murder to accomplish their aim of robbery, but they scared the inmates away and plundered at their own will. Leir Annis heard of this robbery and resolved to defend his hotel and property at the risk of his life. He was a giant in physique and of undoubted courage.

One night about three weeks after the robbery at Ashbridge's, about ten o'clock an Indian came into the bar-room and set down on a bench before the great old-fashioned fireplace. Soon another Indian came in and without a word seated himself beside the first Indian. A third Indian in a few minutes came trooping in and sat beside the other two. The fire was burning brightly in the fireplace, with its great logs, and andirons aglow, for it was in the depth of winter. Annis suspected that

HIS TIME HAD COME

for robbery, and possibly murder, quietly signaling the females of the house to escape by a back door, which signal was before agreed upon, to flee to the nearest neighbour, a mile away, he remained, the only white person about the place, to meet unaided the Indian band.

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He then came between the Indians and the fire, taking up the poker as if to stir the fire. This poker was an iron pike upon a hardwood handle, like a handspike entering a socket at its upper end, and would be a formidable weapon in a strong man's hand. As he began poking the fire, he at a side glance, saw one of the Indians, deftly pull a long knife out of his sleeve, and make a quick thrust towards his side. Springing instantly to one side he drew the poker, and threatened to knock in the head of the first one who arose from his seat. Thus he had them prisoners, as it were, with the big poker on guard at his shoulder. But if he had the Indians prisoners, they had him equally their prisoner, for he had no guard to relieve him, and had to march back and forth behind them, never daring to take his eyes off them. This state of affairs continued for the space of half an hour, Annis continually pondering in his mind a solution of the question, as he marched up and down the floor. To allow them to rise he dare not, for the three would, no doubt, overpower him, and as long as they sat he could knock down the first one who attempted to rise. The three squaws outside finally becoming weary with waiting, and

BENUMBED WITH COLD

solved the problem for him. They came in one by one, as the Indians did before them, singly and alone, and he made them sit on the bench beside their bucks, and kept on his poker sentry march. After a few minutes the squaws began to cry, and said, "Indian not mad any more," and "Indian want go home." He told the Indians to hand their knives to the squaws, all of them, and bade one of the squaws bring the knives to him, which she did.

"Now," he said, "You Indian on the end of the bench nearest the door, get up and go out and latch the door after you, and don't you stop or look around on the way, for if you do or if another rises, I will knock his brains out."

And the first Indian went out; repeating the process he got rid of the second one, and likewise the third one in his turn. Then he dismissed the squaws in a bunch, and jumped to the door and clapped the bar behind it, which fastened at its ends in a hole and shot in the logs composing the walls of the house.

Whether they meant murder or not, Annis never knew, but he thought not, but only meant to scare him, to get him to run away that they might plunder, and that the thrust with the knife was only done to intimidate him. At any rate he defied them and saved his property.

THOS. CONANT.