

PROMINENT FAMILIES OF THE PERIOD

GEORGE MORSS JUKES BOSWELL 1804-1889

As a leading barrister of the day he defended rebels charged with high treason.

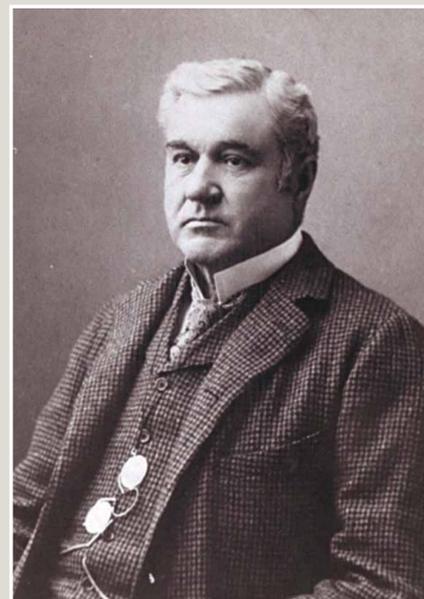


WHO HE WAS:

George M. Boswell, was born in 1804 in Hampshire, England and arrived in Cobourg with his parents in 1822 (his father was supposedly related to James Boswell, Samuel Johnson's biographer). George became one of Cobourg's first lawyers and rose through the ranks to be the senior judge of the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham by the time he retired in 1882.

WHAT HE DID HERE:

In 1829 he married Susannah Radcliffe with whom **he had 12 children**. At least two of their sons also became lawyers. The eldest, Augustus George, served as clerk of the Division Court, and **Arthur Radcliffe was elected Mayor of Toronto** and served one term, 1883-1885. After Susannah's death, George married Mary Wrench.



Arthur Radcliffe



Susannah Radcliffe



Judge Boswell with his second wife, a nurse and four granddaughters circa 1900

Boswell entered fully into the development and promotion of his chosen community. He was first Secretary of the **Cobourg Harbour Company** and a member of the first Board of Directors of the projected railroad to Rice Lake and later director of the **Cobourg & Peterborough Railway Company**. He also became a large landowner with a number of stores and houses. He built his last residence at 230 King Street East, and named it Balmuto after the family ancestral estates in Scotland. It is now demolished.

As a conservative in principle, Boswell identified with the reform movement and was an advocate for responsible government. With Captain Archibald Macdonald and his father-in-law, James Radcliffe, he led the moderate reformers in the area. Even so, when the Rebellion of 1837 broke out **he served in the government militia and saw action at Chippewa**. It then became his lot and duty, as a barrister with sympathy for the reform movement, to defend a number of the rebels charged with high treason.

In 1841 he was elected a member of the first Parliament of the United Canadas where he continued to forcefully argue for responsible government.

When Judge Boswell died in 1889, he was considered the last survivor of the first parliament of the United Canadas and the last of the initial group of Upper Canadian lawyers created as Queen's Council in 1841.