

ALEXANDER FLETCHER

Preceding Bowman, and often forgotten, is Alexander Fletcher, the man who developed the east end of Bowmanville. He and his family came from Niagara to Darlington sometime prior to 1800. His son, Archibald, was one of the first children to be born in Darlington. Through government grants and purchase, Alexander Fletcher acquired many acres in the area, some as far north as Peterborough. At one time he owned a large tract which spread from Division Street to Mearns Avenue on both sides of King Street. Unlike Bowman, he lived in town and managed his own affairs. He was a magistrate and, at one time, Superintendent of Schools for Darlington. By 1868, the Fletcher family had signed 168 deeds for properties in the town. The list included the Farmers' Hotel which was located on the north side of King Street slightly east of Temperance.

Early in the century Fletcher built two remarkable houses, both of which survived until recently. In 1805 he replaced his simple log house at what is now 252 King Street East with a handsome frame one. The beams were two feet wide, and the hand split cedar laths were stuccoed. Covered with clapboard by a later owner, it was torn down a few years ago to make way for the Hendry Apartments. In 1812, only seven years after building his frame house, Fletcher erected the first brick house in the area. Its history is covered in the introduction to *Colonial Brick*.