

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE

FEBRUARY 6, 2023

IN PLAIN SIGHT

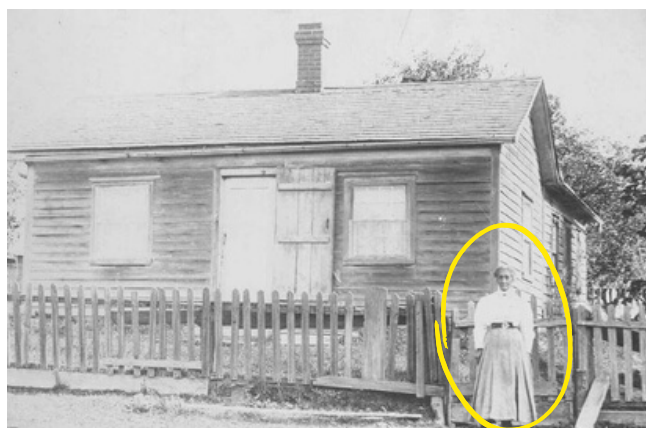
In a 2022 Black History Month newsletter, the subject of viewer bias was discussed. When looking at archival images, from early Canadian settlements, most of the people in the photos are assumed to be white. Black figures, although fewer in number, are certainly present. Generally, viewers see what they expect to see.

A number of factors may have caused Black people to be less prevalent in the photographic record: socio-economic status, inherent racism of the time and our present-day bias of not looking closely at these early photos and not even seeing the Black citizens who *are* there in the images.

The "discovery" of Black figures, when this Kinghorn farm photo was colourized in 2021, led KHCC staff to start looking at archival photos in the collection more closely.



Farm near Kinghorn, date unknown - original and digitally coloured versions



Left - Nellie Barnhardt in front of her Laskay home, c. 1900
Right - beloved teacher Walter Rolling (far right) with Kinghorn School class, c.1930s

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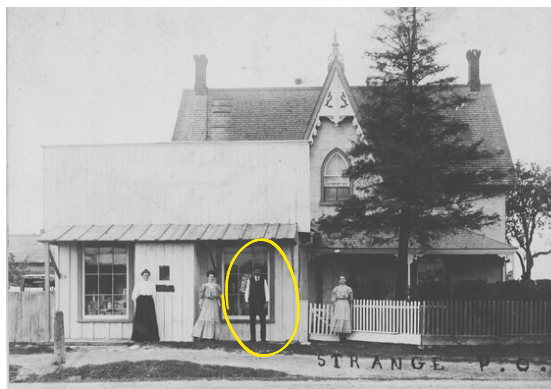
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BLACK HISTORY

Some Black families are well known in King Township's history. For example, there are many photos of beloved school teacher Walter Rolling who taught at Kinghorn School for 41 years.

There is a single known photo of Nellie Barnhart, daughter of Richard and Charlotte Barnhart who, made their way to Canada through the Underground Railroad and, settled in King Township.



Store and Post Office, Strange, c. 1900
Possible member of the Rolling family

HIDDEN FIGURES

While reviewing archival images at the King Heritage & Cultural Centre recently, staff have discovered more hidden figures in the collection. The challenge will be to find the names and stories of these people in the historical record. As we continue to upload images and documents to a new database, we hope to find more Black History that has been hidden in plain sight.



Nobleton Brass Band, late 19th century



Last day of work on the Schomberg & Aurora Railway Line, c. 1902