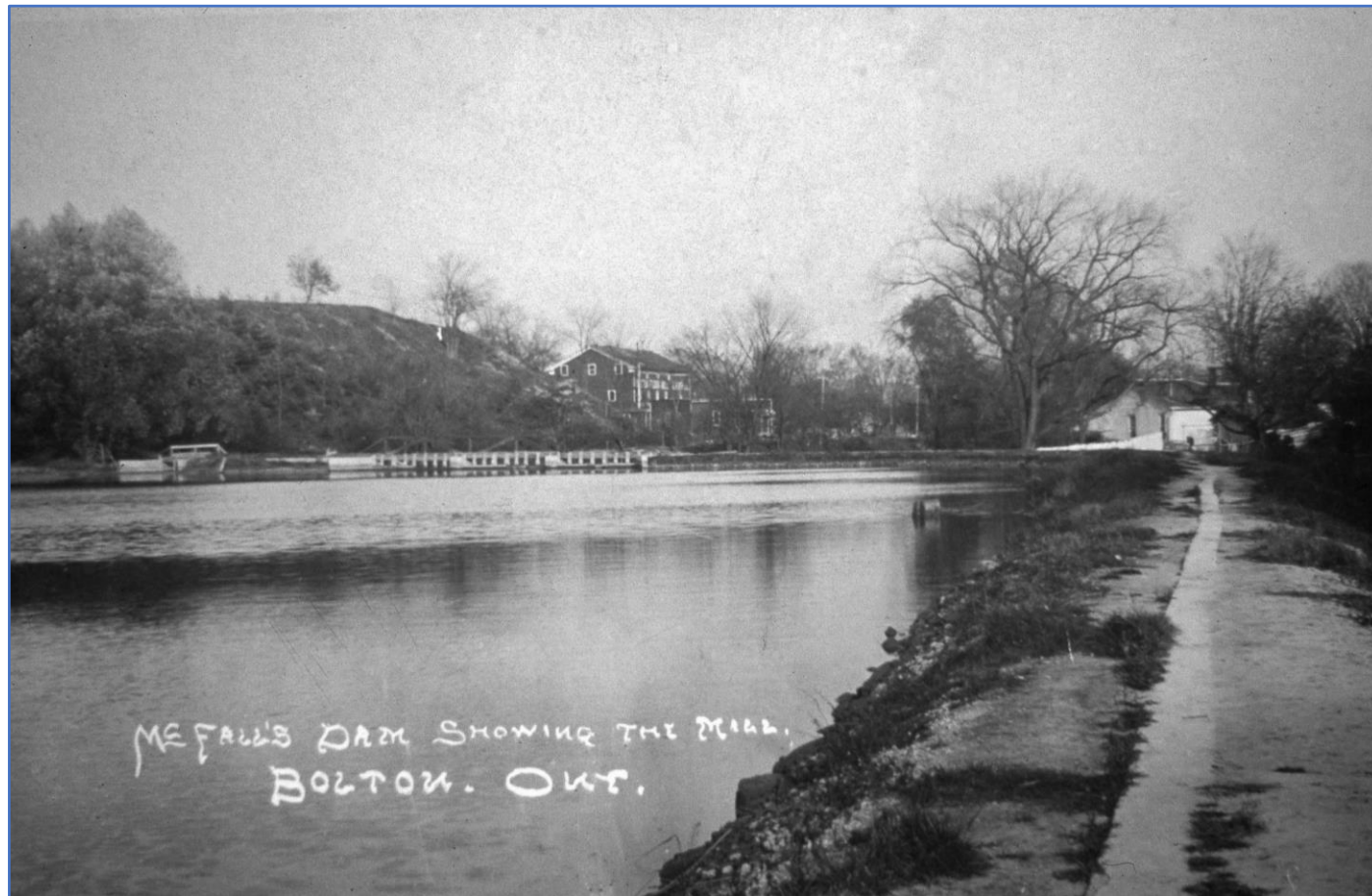


# 1821 BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 2021

## HOW BOLTON CAME TO BE



*Source: Albion Bolton Historical Society*

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL

## 1821 - 2021

### What is a Bicentennial?

- 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a significant event
- The word itself is derived:
  - from 'bi' = 2 and
  - from centennial = a period of 100 years
- A bicentennial commemorates something that happened 200 years ago

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

What happened in this vicinity 200 years ago?

- On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1821, a young man named George Bolton purchased land along the Humber River
- He bought it from James Chewett, the surveyor of Albion Township

LOT No. 9		CONCESSION			
INSTRUMENT	ITS DATE	DATE OF REGISTRY	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	QUANTITY OF LAND
Patent	24 Aug 1820		The Crown	James J. Chewett	All 200 Acres
Do Sale	5 <sup>th</sup> June 1821	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1824	James Grant Chewett	George Bolton	all
Do Sale	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1830	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1831	George Bolton	John Goodall	60 acres
Do Sale	11 Apr 1833	20 Aug 1833	George Bolton	Joseph Cawthra	44 rods
Do Sale	26 Mar 1839	30 Apr 1839	George Bolton	Charles Bolton	60 acres
Do Sale	8 Dec 1840	14 June 1841	George Bolton	Elijah Harscut	Part
Do Sale	10 Mar 1845	3 Oct 1845	James Boulton wwp	Richard Ripman	3 rods
Do Sale	5 Mar 1845	20 Feb 1846	George Bolton	John Gottbett	20 acres

Land Record showing the purchase

Source: Peel Archives



Humber River on part of George Bolton's property

Source: ABHS

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

## Why was this important?



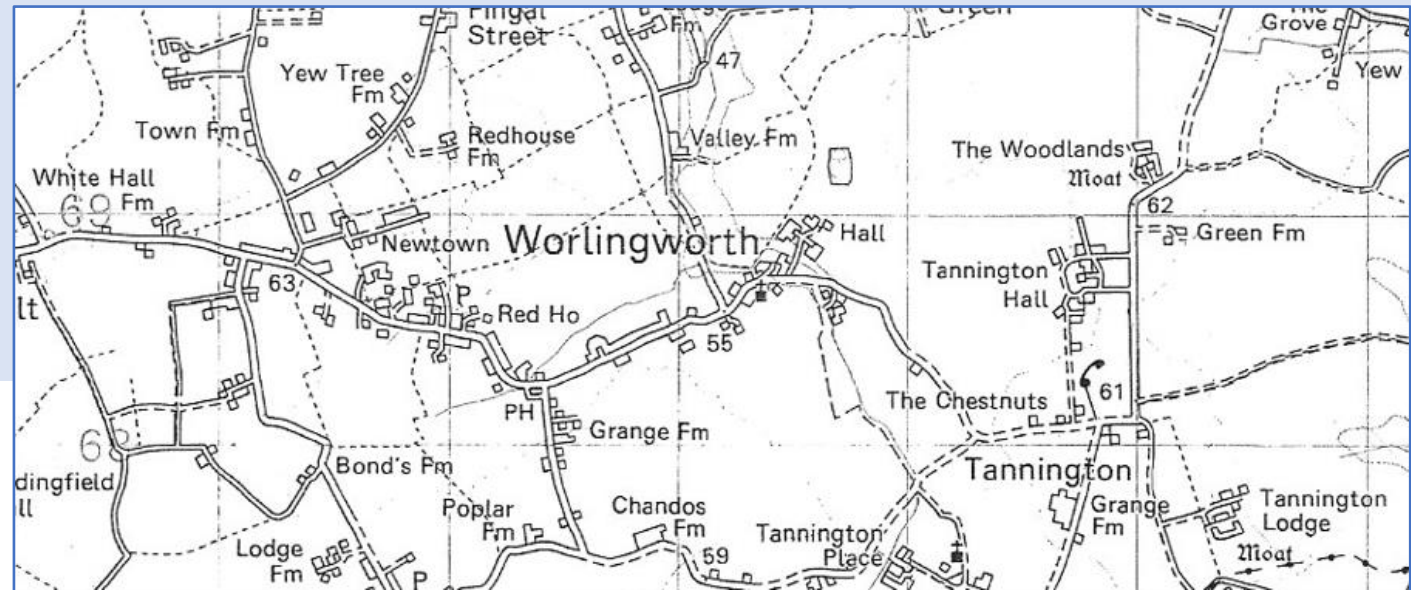
- George Bolton was the first person to settle in what has become BOLTON
- His land contained the best potential mill site in Peel County
- George built a grist mill
- The village that grew up around his mill site was named after him

1897: Part of what had been George Bolton's property

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

## Who was George Bolton?

- He grew up in Worlingworth, England
- He was the youngest of 6 children all of whom were educated
- George was 22 when he arrived in 1821
- His brother James Bolton settled in 1819 about 7km northeast of George's land



# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- First, George built himself a house
- The finished house was clad with roughcast plaster
- Wood shingles covered the roof
- The house was close to the bank of the Humber River

## BUILD A HOUSE



George's house might have looked like this

*Source: Heritage Caledon*

# BUILD A MILL

## BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- Next, George started building a grist mill at the river's edge
- It took two years to finish
- It sat at what is now the curve on Mill Street
- James Bolton, an experienced millwright, guided George who was 18 years younger



George's grist mill might have looked like this  
Note the water wheel

*Source: Internet*

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

What is a grist mill?

- A grist mill is also called a flour mill
- Large stones ground wheat into flour
- Settlers used flour to make bread
- Planting successful wheat crops was essential for the early settlers



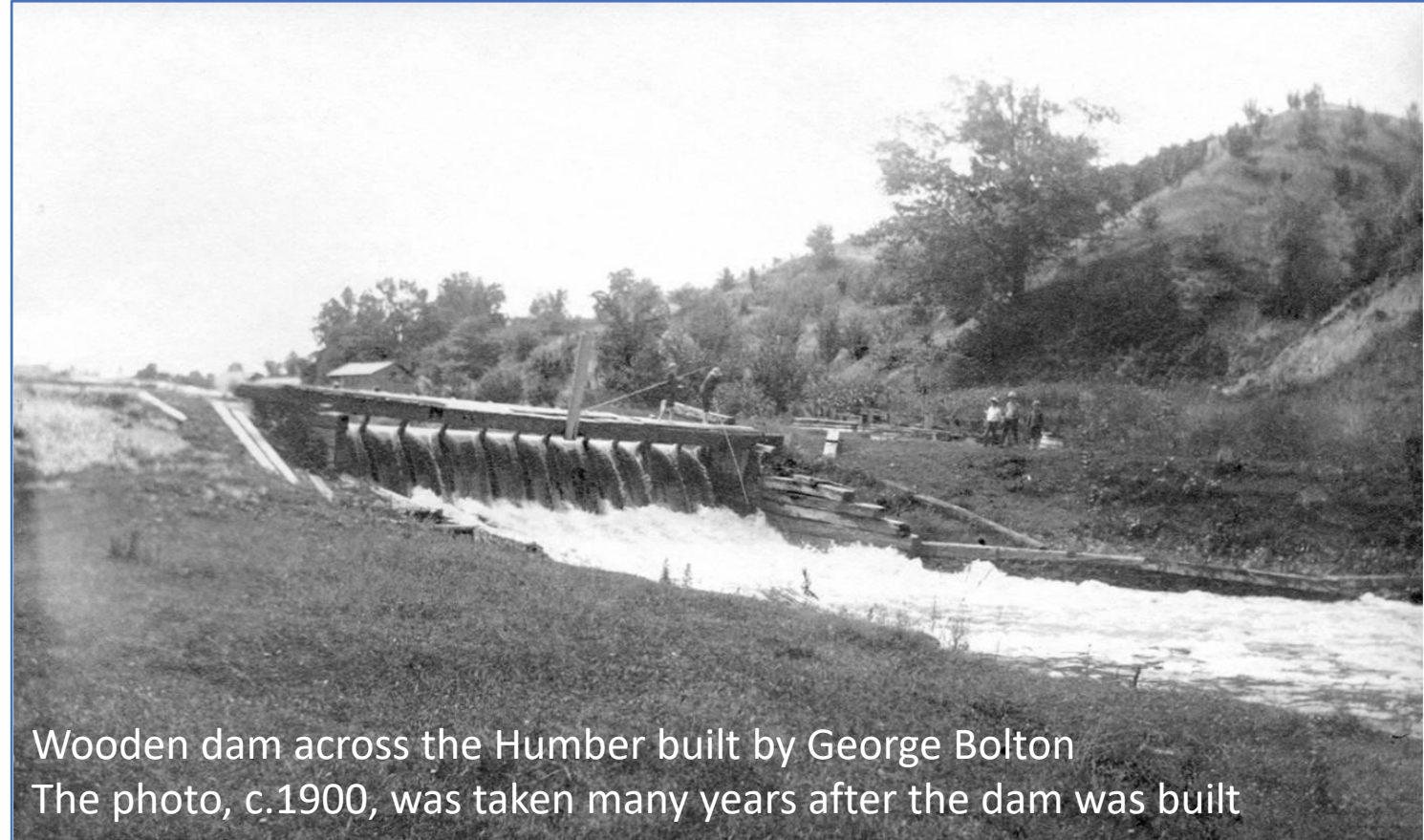
A typical early mill stone found near Bolton

*Source: Settling the Hills*

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- Finally, in 1823, George built a dam across the Humber
- A mill pond formed and created pressure behind the dam
- Water, channeled through a millrace to the water wheel, in turn powered the mill

## BUILD A DAM

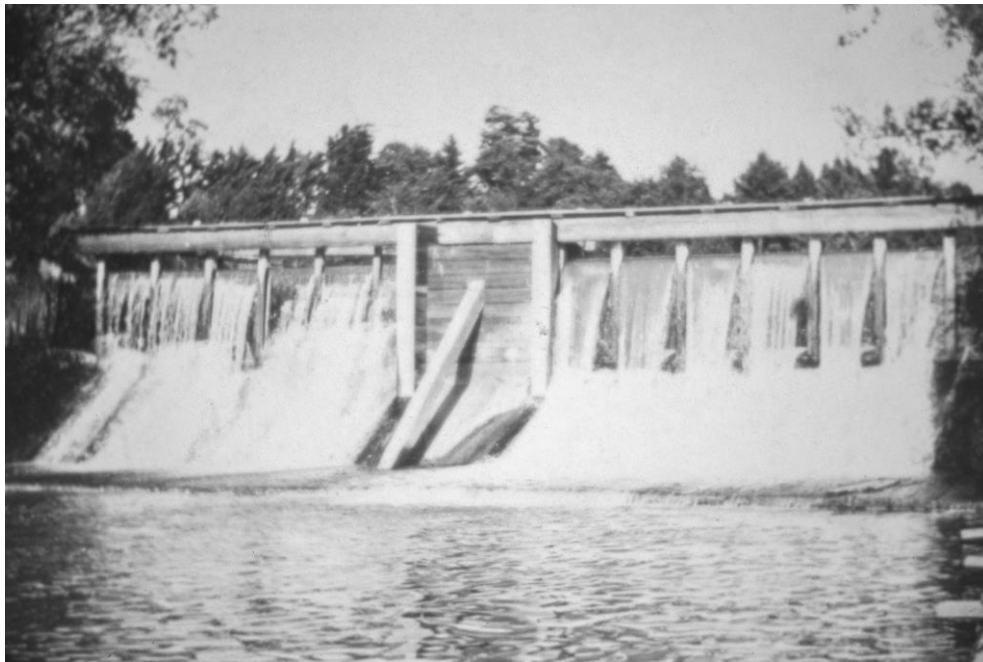


Wooden dam across the Humber built by George Bolton  
The photo, c.1900, was taken many years after the dam was built

*Source: ABHS*

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

Is a water mill the same  
as a grist mill?



- A water mill is a mill that uses a water wheel to drive a mechanical process
- A grist mill is a specific type of water mill that grinds wheat into flour
- Other types of early water mills include sawmills and fabric mills
- Bolton's sawmill started up in 1846; a fabric mill to the west started in 1855

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021



Founding of Bolton plaque in Founders Park  
Plaque is across from original dam position

- The grist mill was operational by 1824, and was the first built north of Weston
- It initially served farmers within a radius of up to ten kilometers
- Settlers were responsible for clearing the roads beside their land
- Many sections of road were not cleared because of absentee landlords
- Gaining access to the mill was challenging because of the surrounding hills

# BOLTON'S MILL c.1834

Thomas Rogers' Inn and Smithy



Dam



Grist mill operating by 1824

George's niece Harriet Bolton and John Godbolt settle around 1823



Samuel Sterne's log house

Humber River

Schoolhouse circa 1830



4 corners



Rough trail leads to the mill

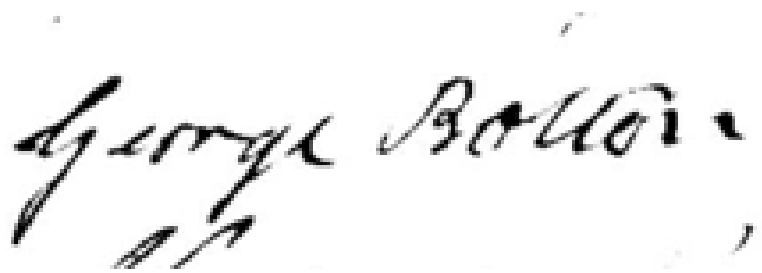
George Bolton's house



George Bolton's 1831 log store + 1832 post office

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

What else do we know  
about George Bolton?

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Bolton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and a flourish at the end.

## George Bolton

- donated land for the first school 1830
- opened the first store in 1831
- became postmaster in 1832 and housed the post office in his store
- donated land for two churches
- helped others establish businesses
  - first blacksmith
  - cooper
  - tanner
- must have been physically strong
- persevered and was successful

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- George Bolton operated the mill until 1845
- He then sold it to his nephew James Bolton Junior
- James Junior built a new, much larger mill in 1846
  - it was three storeys high
  - a stone basement opened out on the riverbank

## A NEW MILL



James Bolton Junior's mill as it appeared in the early 1900s

Source: ABHS

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- Bolton was no stranger to flooding
- It was an ever-present threat
- In 1912, temperatures dropped after a major storm destroyed the dam; flooding ensued
- ice coated everything

## FLOOD OF 1912

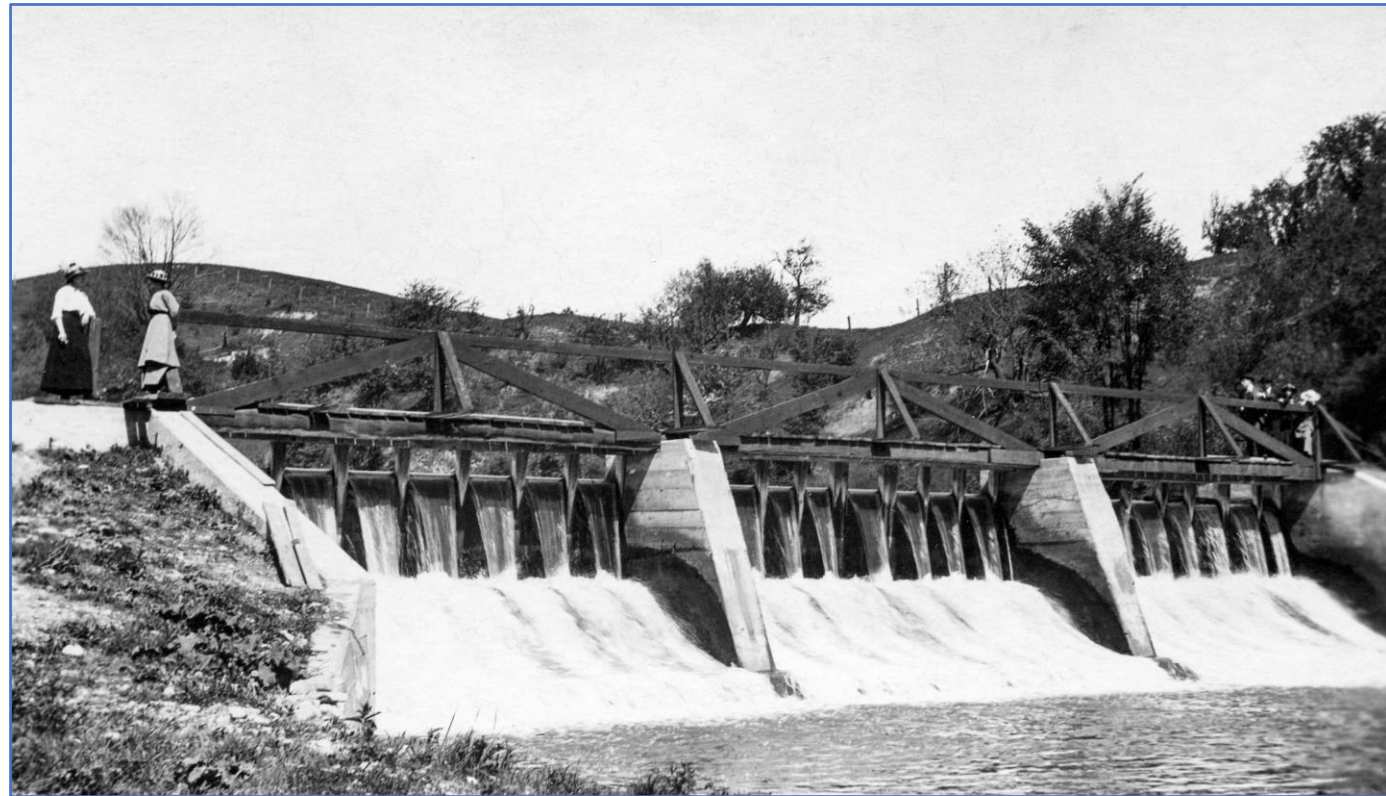


Source: ABHS

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

- After the flood, the old wooden dam was replaced by one built from concrete
- The mill continued to produce flour until 1955
- It was key to Bolton's economy for 130 years
- Part of the 1912 dam remains visible from the McFall Lookout

## A NEW DAM 1912

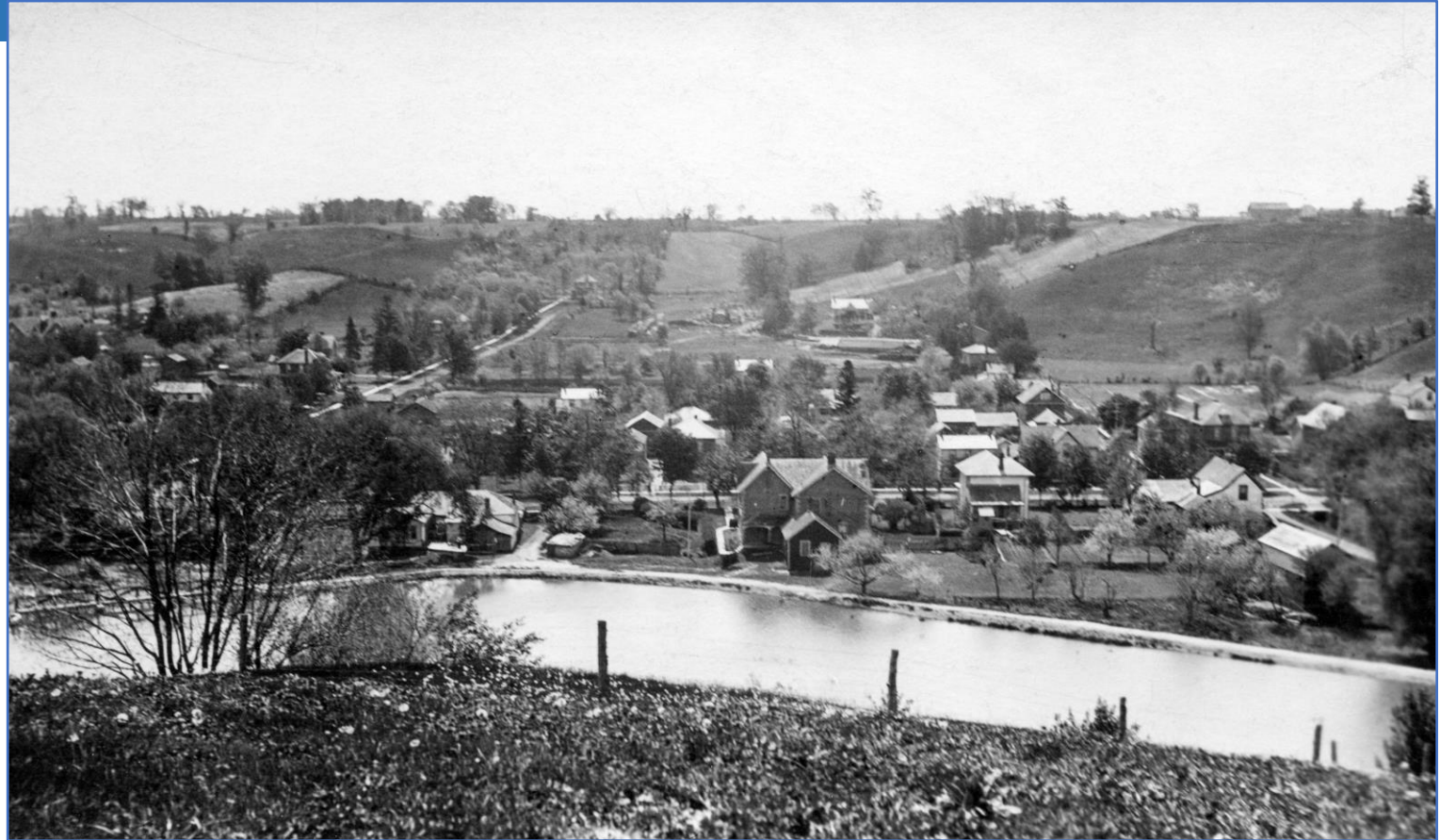


Source: ABHS

**BOLTON BICENTENNIAL  
1821 - 2021**

# A COMMUNITY EVOLVES

Around 1912: Looking  
across the Humber River  
at what had been George  
Bolton's property



*Source: ABHS*

# BOLTON BICENTENNIAL 1821 - 2021

From George Bolton's purchase of land in 1821 and his subsequent grist mill, our community has evolved to what it is today.



Bolton circa 1905: looking through the four corners

*Source: ABHS*