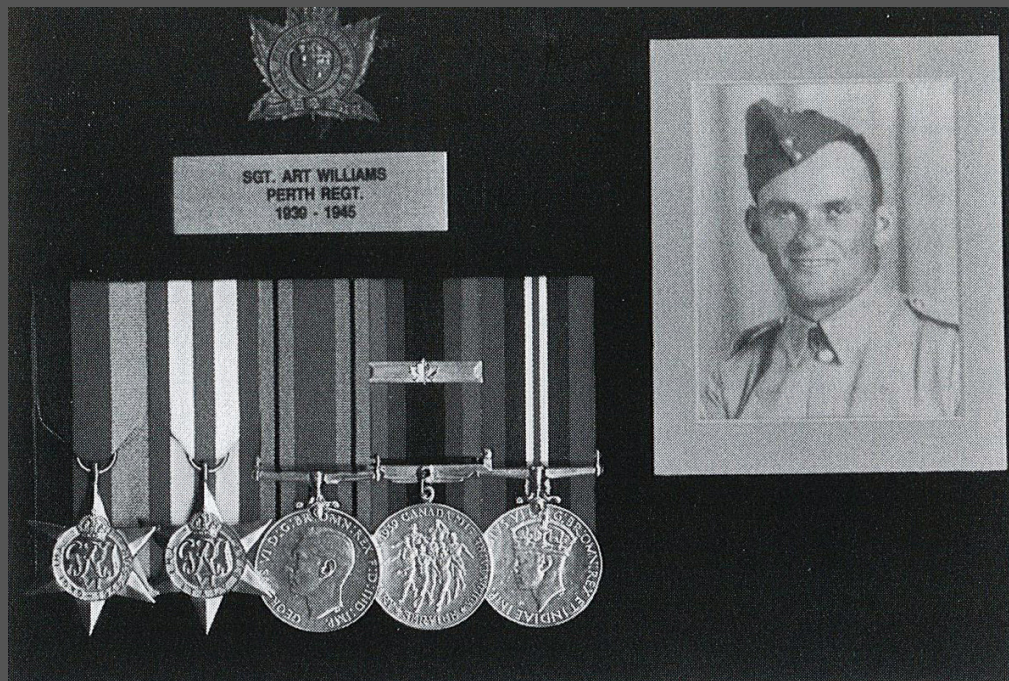
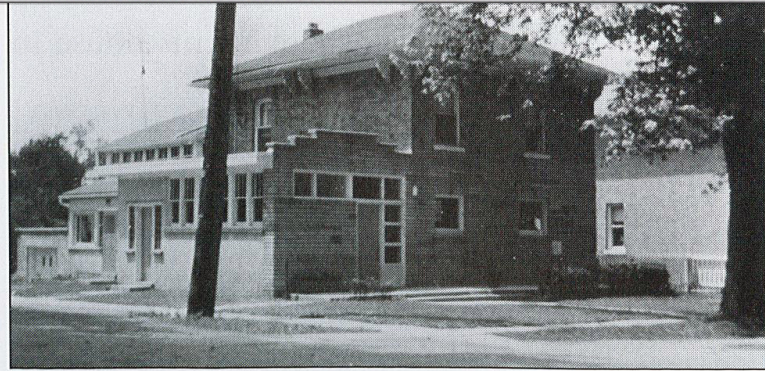


# Arthur W. Williams

1920-1983



Arthur W. Williams, born in 1920 in Windsor, joined the Perth Regiment in Stratford in 1939. He married Sadie Gleason of Lakeside in 1941. Sadie worked in Stratford while Art was overseas serving in England, North Africa and Italy, where he was wounded in action in 1944. Upon returning home, he spent a year recovering in Westminster Hospital in London. On Art's discharge they started farming near Embro Ontario. In 1957, Art & Sadie Williams sold their farm on the west half of Lot 11, Concession 6, and moved to Embro where they built a postal facility at 113 Huron Street.



*The Embro post office and house built by Art and Sadie Williams at 113 Huron St. Sadie was postmistress from 1957 to 1986.*

Sadie was the postmistress from 1957 to 1982. The Williams lived in the rear of the building. They raised two children, Peter [married Marion French], Chilliwack, BC., and Patricia, married Michael James Riach of the Woodstock area. Art worked for the post office in Woodstock until 1981, but he was also a freelance journalist for the London Free Press, Woodstock Sentinel-Review, Stratford Beacon Herald and often wrote of Oxford County local history people and places in his columns. He died in 1983 and is interred in Lakeside Methodist Cemetery. This scrapbook represents a portion of the collected writing of Art Williams.

ART WILLIAMS SCRAPBOOKS - OXFORD COUNTY

The Art Williams scrapbooks have been an invaluable source of information in our historical research of Oxford County.

We have endeavoured, under the C.O.E.D. historical research grant, to accurately transcribe these scrapbooks. Due to the rapidly deteriorating state of these records and the several typographical errors in the newspaper clippings, this was not always possible. However they still retain an insightful record of Old Oxford presented in Mr. William's inimitable manner.

Several maps, photos etc. accompany these articles, however we have not included them in our transcriptions. They have been listed with each transcribed scrapbook and the original scrapbooks may be referred to if necessary.

The pages of the transcriptions have been numbered in accordance with the originals for easier access and co-relate to our files. These scrapbooks have also been name and business indexed.

A compiled index of contents and photos is available in the first book and an individual index in each ensuing transcription.

We are indebted to Mr. Williams for these articles.

B. Crawford

R. Harrington



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Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History

In 1763 when Canada was formally ceded to England there were no permanent settlements west of the Ottawa River. Settlement began in 1783 and then moved westward along the St. Lawrence and around Niagara, as the United Empire Loyalists moved into Canada after the American War of Independence. In 1791 the Constitutional Act divided Canada into Upper and Lower Canada and Colonel John Graves Simcoe became first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1792.

One of Simcoe's first acts towards getting the vast wilderness settled was to induce settlers from the United States to settle here. He offered a township of land to anyone who would provide 40 settlers and families for the township as permanent settlers. One of the first men to accept this offer was Thomas Ingersoll of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, U.S.A. and he was granted 64,000 acres which now make up East, West, and North Oxford townships. In his choice of land he was assisted by an old friend, Joseph Brant, chief of the Six Nations who undoubtedly led Ingersoll down the trail that is known today as the Stage road of East Oxford.

After Ingersoll, many other notables walked or rode down this Indian trail including Simcoe himself when he walked from Brant's Ford to Sandwich. When mail was carried from York to Sandwich, it went along this route. With this in mind a person can understand why it still follows the path of least resistance around hills and skirting swamps. Few changes have taken place in the general layout of this road.

Canfield's

The first settlers in what is now East Oxford and whose farm was where Oxford Centre now is when Samuel and Lucy Canfield who were United Empire Loyalists from Connecticut and their two sons Abraham and Samuel, Jr. They were members of the original 40 of the Ingersoll party. He donated land for a cemetery and he and his wife are buried in the Pioneer Cemetery of Oxford Centre. Others who made up the original 40 settlers in Ingersoll's party were Elisha Hoskins, David Thompson, Leander Barnes, Montgomery Austin, James Piper, Nodias Sawyer, Samuel Ball, Ebenezer Cook, Ichabod Hall, Lucius Morgan,

Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History - cont.

Benjamin Lummis, Thomas Ingersoll, Charles Whiting, John Sherman, John Clark, Seth Putnam, Samuel Canfield, Josiah Crossman, Ebenezer Whiting, Samuel Mack, Justice Allan, Elijah Ots, David Curtis, Elijah Hoskins, Luther Hoskins, Thomas Dexter, Joseph Sage, Samuel Bendeck, Robert Spellman, Elgin Scott, Reuben Thrall, Daniel Ingersoll, James Hopkins, Thomas Lee, David Seley, David Sabine, Joseph Forrester, Reuben Forrester, John Gordon, Medad Parson, William Appleby, Hiram Burtch, William Mills, William Allison and Allan Sage.

First Survey

The first surveying in the township was done by Augustus Jones, Deputy Surveyor of Upper Canada, under direction of John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada in the year 1793. At that time the Old Stage Road was an Indian trail winding through the bush from Brantford to the Forks of the Thames River, now London. Eighteen years later the Statutes for 1811 of the 5th Parliament of Upper Canada, in the 51st year of George III, allotted certain sums of money to be spent for that year on roads as follows: "From Burford to Samuel Kinney's place on Kinney Creek, 20 pounds, from Samuel Kineys to Pine Wind Falls (Cathcart) 20 pounds, from Pine Wind Falls to the Cooley place on the Stage Road, 30 pounds, from Cooley's to the east town line of Oxford, 35 pounds, from thence to Captain Canfield's 85 pounds, from thence to Haskins place, 30 pounds and to the new dwelling at Reynolds Mills, 40 pounds, from thence to Archibald McMillans, London, 50 pounds and the west side of the river to La Tranche (London) to the wilderness, 90 pounds." In later years over a mile of the Old Stage road running through lots 1, 2 and 3 of East Oxford was closed and a new road constructed further north on the fifth line of the township. It took three years and four by-laws to accomplish this change, which was bitterly opposed by some of the persons affected.

Guild Road

Also in the early days there was a road running from the Old Stage road running from the Old Stage road south between lots 8 and 9 to the 6th concession, known as the Guild road, this was closed in 1880. Another road, about which little is now known, is shown on early maps as a "given" road, it ran in an almost direct line from Eastwood to Vandecar.

Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History - cont.

Settlement along this trail was not too speedy as after Simcoe was removed from office the future looked black for these worthy men who introduced civilization along the Thames River.

In 1798 Blenheim, Blandford and Oxford on the Thames along with Burford, Norwich and Dereham became known as Oxford County. The township of Oxford on the Thames remained until 1822 when the section now known as North Oxford withdrew and in 1842 East and West Oxford became separate townships.

Marlborough Immigrant

By this time Woodstock had come into existence and Vansittart had built a mill at Eastwood along with his massive estate. The followers of the Duke of Marlborough who were given grants of land in East Oxford started a second wave of immigrants the effect of this large estate of Vansittart was easily recognized and is still visible today in the large homes that dot the landscape.

Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History - cont.

Marlborough Immigrant - cont.

It was not unusual for a settler to start off in a small two room cabin and as soon as he was able he would build a monstrous house and have it finished inside with the very best of lumber and a fireplace in almost every room. It is said that these English aristocrats did a great deal of entertaining. One had to keep up with the Joneses if they wanted to move in this select circle. In 1830 a second wave of American immigrants passed down this stage road when many Americans on their way to the American west took a short cut through Canada rather than the long trip around the lakes.

Lost Payroll

About this road many tales are told and some can be repeated while others cause considerable doubt in the minds of present day Canadians. One story often told is about a teamster in the employ of the army in 1812 who lost a part of a payroll and who, when he was wounded later confided in a friend that he had hid this money near Kenny Creek. This has never been found and creates an urge among the younger generation to look for this buried treasure. There was found two pieces of slate tied together with copper wire near Kenny Creek with instructions carved on them which would lead to a buried treasure but the family who possess this slate ....?

There are also stories of highway robberies and murders that would make modern television programs seem rather tame.

Vandelaar

Seymour Sage had the honor of having the first sub-division in East Oxford which he called Sagerville. The streets were named after members of his family and it was in the vicinity of what became Vandelaar which in 1862 contained a store, a grist and saw mill, a blacksmith and a shoe shop. It also contained a Wesleyan Methodist Church erected of brick in 1856 at a cost of \$3,500 and a school with an average attendance of 45 pupils.

In 1822 East Oxford had one school and this is presumed to have been at Vandelaar. An early account reads as follows: "This article witnesseth that the undersigned inhabitants of Oxford Township, District of London, Province of Upper Canada, in school meeting assembled, have appointed David Canfield to teach a District Common School in the aforesaid Township, and that they shall pay him for his services for the term of three months of the rate of



Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History - cont.

Vandecaar - cont.

two bushels of good merchantable wheat per scholar, delivered at Samuel Canfield's barn the first day of January next, and they further agree to board him the said term of three months and procure a convenient house and a sufficient quantity of fire wood etc. And the said David Canfield do the covenant and agree to keep a regular District Common School of reading, writing and arithmetic according to the best of his ability".

This seventh day of March 1827. Signed by Henry Canfield, David Curtis, Isaac Curtis and Henry Parken.

Vandecaar post office was established in 1836 and Thomas H. Arnell was the first postmaster followed by W.J. Davis, Thomas Skerred, Johnas Tansley, Thomas Mighton, A.R. Burrows, Thomas Kneale, Thomas Knaggs, and Mrs. Francis Danby. This office was closed in 1913 and inauguration of the rural mail delivery and the area is now served from the Woodstock office.

Town Hall

Oxford Centre was selected as the site for the East Oxford Town Hall in 1850 when the first council met at the home of Daniel Smith on January 21st. The cost of this hall was raised by levying a tax of 225 pounds. The first meeting was held in the new hall on December 30, 1850. The present hall was built in 1910 and later declared a memorial to the men who served in the war of 1914-18. The first purchase made by this council was the official township seal which was purchased from the Hamilton Watch and Clockmakers of Woodstock, at a cost of two pounds.

The first tax roll was 335 pounds, six shillings and seven pence or approximately sixteen hundred and seventy-five dollars. Another source of revenue was the clergy reserve fund, as much as 500 pounds were received from this source.

Taverns which were plentiful paid a total license fee of 28 pounds, six shillings and three pence and Wild Land tax brought in 12 pounds.

Members of the first council were James Scarff, William Burgess, William Peers and Mr. Leake. William Burgess was reeve. Jonathon Tripp was the clerk treasurer, John Hall assessor, James McCallum, tax collector with George Curray and William Lemon, the auditors.

## Old Stage Road Meanders Through Oxford and Through History - cont.

### Roads

The first system of road building and maintenance was carried out by Overseers of Highways who were appointed yearly by the council for each concession or townline. Each one had under his jurisdiction about two miles of road. As an example of one beat, it was described as being from the West quarter town line on the third concession (Blows School) easterly to the large swamp, and another on the Stage road was from William Meeks east corner to Daly's west corner. In the same year Eliphalet Wood's division was from the Oxford Centre corner to William Meek's west corner.

In 1861 Oxford Centre had one store and one hotel owned by H.C. Griswold. The hotel was named the "Oxford House". Alexander Robb was the school teacher William Crawford was the blacksmith, William Moore was a carriage and wagon maker, and William Barbutt the Postmaster. James T. Chapman preceded William Barbutt as postmaster when the office was opened in 1853 and Mr. Chapman was followed by Nelson Schooley, Thomas E. Chambers, William Hallam, J.F. Elliott, Henry Greenley, D.C. Armstrong, Mrs. Jessie Armstrong, Edward Wilson, Stuart Nancekivell, Raymond Wilson and Mrs. Marjorie Butterwick.

When the post office was opened it received service Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between Woodstock and Norwich and was temporarily closed between 1901 and 1903. This office is now served daily from Woodstock.

The loyalty of the British crown by the United Empire Loyalists has been inherited by the present residents of East Oxford and many rallied to the colours in both wars of 1914-18 and of 1939-45 when several gave their lives and are remembered in the memorials at the township hall.

Blenheim was First Well Settled Area

In 1791 the Constitutional Act divided Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada. Col. John Graves Simcoe becoming the first Lieut. Governor of the province of Upper Canada in 1792. Upper Canada was divided into four districts which were known as the Eastern or Johnstown District, Midland or Kingston District, the Home or Niagara District and the Western or Detroit District. These in turn were divided into nineteen counties.

In this land division, York County in the District of Niagara extended west to the Thames River and included Blenheim and Blandford townships as part of the west riding. Blenheim was described as lying to the northward of Dundas Street opposite Burford.

In the year 1798 by an act of parliament, the townships Burford, Norwich, Dereham, Oxford upon the Thames, Blandford and Blenheim were to be known as the county of Oxford and to form the District of London along with the counties of Norfolk and Middlesex. This district is described as the land west of the Niagara District to the south of Lake Huron and between a line drawn due north from a fixed point where the easternmost part of Oxford intersects the river Thames until it arrived at Lake Huron.

This District lasted until 1837 when an act of parliament declared that as soon as a jail and courthouse could be erected the townships of Zorra, Nissouri, Blandford, Blenheim, Oxford, Burford, Oakland, Norwich, Dereham and the town of Woodstock would form the Gore District. The first court for the district was held in Woodstock in 1840.

Of the townships of Oxford, Blenheim is considered to be the first that was settled to any great extent. Simcoe invited a friend and fellow patriot in the American Revolution by the name of Watson to come to Upper Canada and he and his friends and relatives would be given a township to settle in. With this promise, Watson sent his son Thomas Watson who was accompanied by his cousin Thomas Horner north in 1793. Keeping his end of the bargain Simcoe ordered three concessions of Blenheim township to be surveyed by Surveyor Jones and his Indian party on their arrival.

Waited Survey

They waited for the survey to be completed and then chose a site for a mill which they were obliged to build in order to receive this land and as proof of their good intentions. When they returned to the States, Thomas Watson had no intentions of returning but Horner did and spent some time along the border. He eventually arrived at Albany, New York where he purchased material for his mill and help to build it and after a very strenuous trip arrived at what is now Burlington by boat. Here they built sleds and with the aid of oxen pulled their materials along the Indian trails to Brant's Ford and then on to what is now Princeton and commenced building the first mill in what is now Oxford County along a stream which still bears his name. And is called Horner's Creek. As far as it is known the present Woodstock District Boy Scout camp is very near the old mill site.

The mill was got up and in working order late in 1795 but before the mill operated the dam broke and from the scarcity of hands it could not be rebuilt until 1797. It is surmised that these men either returned home or else had taken up land and couldn't spare the time. In 1797 Horner got the mill going and the first plank was cut and the old Horner house which was known as the Old Homestead was built from lumber cut at this mill.

Horner erected a grist mill also the first in the county. The mill accidentally burned in 1809 and was never rebuilt. A sawmill was still in operation sixty years later with Leil Martin as the owner.

When these mills were in operation Horner was in the position to claim his township, he, having at great loss, faithfully performed his part of the contract, in fact he was in possession as possession went in those days but Simcoe's successor would not acknowledge his claim and he like Ingersoll in Oxford was chisselled out of their townships.

The first lot sold by the government was sold to William Wardue and was lot 10 consession 14. The consessions ran from east to west and were 24 lots in length. The sideroads divided the township into quarters and were known as the East Quarter Line, Centre Line Road and West Quarter Line.

The first settlers were from the United States as immigrants from the Old Country had not traversed this far west. They came chiefly from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Vermont States and by 1817 the population of this present county was 530 with most of them in the Oxford on the Thames township and by 1822 there was only one school in Blenheim and the present Springhill School is believed to be the original school but was located on what is now



known as No. 2 highway and known then as the Governor's Road.

Travelling Preacher

As early as 1802 a Methodist preacher travelled through Blenheim and as a result a Methodist Class was formed. In the early 1830's Rev. G. Murray, a Presbyterian minister settled in Blenheim and gave a site for a church on the southwest corner of his farm. This organization would probably get its start shortly after the one in Zorra which was the first Presbyterian church in the county.

The story of Blenheim would not be complete without a few lines about Thomas Horner. He was born on March 17, 1767 at Bordentown, New Jersey, then a British colony and was married in 1801 by Col. James Ingersoll. After getting civilization started in Blenheim township and receiving his squatter's 200 acres of land was appointed Capt. of the Norfolk Militia in March 1798 and on June 16, 1806 was appointed by General Brock of the out-Deputy of County of Oxford, but was removed -- break of the war 1812. He was classed as an unloyal American. Not to be beaten he waited his time and when Col. Norton was having troubles getting Indians to serve with Brock he went and recruited 75 Indian warriors who he took into action ignoring the order that Gen. Hull of the American army would not give a quarter to any man found fighting beside an Indian. After two weeks service he was dismissed and with his Indians sent home but they only got part way when they were called back. He bore the whole expense himself. The following winter when General Winchester was advancing against Detroit, Horner went as a private.

On July 8, 1820 he became the first representative for Oxford in the eighth Parliament of Upper Canada and remained the representative until 1832 when Charles Ingersoll defeated him but on the death of Ingersoll Horner was reelected and was a sitting member when he died of cholera in August 1834 at his home in Burford.

Registry Office

In 1800 a registry office was established for the counties of Oxford and Middlesex in pursuance of an act passed in August 1795 and Thomas Horner was then appointed Registrar. The office was kept at this residence in Burford. The fees for the first year amounted to about eight dollars, there being but three deeds to record. The first was for a lot in Burford. Horner was registrar for about eighteen years for Middlesex and Oxford and later for the county of Oxford until his death in 1834.

Registry Office - cont.

The village of Princeton was first laid out in the year 1853 by William A. Gissing and Manuel Freeman and it was surveyed by W.G. Worham. Lots sold for \$50.00 to \$100.00. Streets were usually named after early settlers such as Gissing, Cowan, Palmer, Murray and Roper with the usual patriotic names such as King, Queen and Prince St. There is also a Simcoe St.

In ten years time this location had several stores, a shingle and a stave factory, three hotels and several workshops. The original Anglican church was a frame structure and later the present brick building was erected in 1866 costing \$3000.00 and seating 600 people. A similar procedure was followed by the Methodist congregation in 1854 costing \$1200.00 and seating 300 people. The present Roman Catholic Church has been in Princeton for about seventy years.

In 1862 Thomas Cowan organized a company of soldiers for local protection in case of an invasion. About 1867 they were incorporated as the No. 3 Company of the 22nd Battalion of Oxford Rifles prior to the war of 1914-18 there was a company of Mounted Rifles training at Princeton.

In 1866 a fire swept through the village but was quickly rebuilt and boasted six hotels, a dentist, a drug store and a photographer over the usual shops. As the village progressed it moved northward in the vicinity of the railroad. The post office opened prior to 1839 and was known as Blenheim. The postmasters were William Grinton, John Thompson, Thomas Ryal, Alex Milnine, John G. Lindsay, H.C. Forsyth, F. Galbraith, F. Vicker, J. Crosby, GERALD Roy Carson.

On Saturday, Feb. 22, 1890 carried a dispatch that two farmers living near Princeton while chopping wood in a timber swamp had come upon a frozen body with two bullet wounds in the head. All identification marks were removed from the clothing by a knife and the pockets were empty. Nearby was found a cigar case which bore the initials F.C.B. The body received an anonymous burial at Princeton and from this find came one of the most publicized murder cases of modern times known as the Benwell-Birchall Case. Reports of this trial were carried to all parts of the United States, Great Britain and Canada and telegraph services were set up in the Woodstock courthouse. Birchall was found guilty of murdering Benwell and was sentenced to hang on Nov. 14, 1890 after a trial which lasted for more than a week.

Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich (Norwich was once part of Norfolk County) In a territorial division of Canada West made on July 16, 1799, Norwich was made a portion of the County of Norfolk. By an Act of Parliament, which came into effect January 1st, 1800, Norwich became part of the County of Oxford.

On July 22nd, 1800, Mr. Wilcox, of York (now Toronto) received from the Crown a grant of 15,000 acres of land lying east of the middle town line, and from the 1st to the 12th concessions.

Norwich was for many years a township consisting of 12 concessions, one mile in width, numbering from North to South and having 28 lots of 200 acres each in its concession, exclusive of the Gore on the east side. In 1855 it was divided into North and South Norwich; the road passing between the 6th and 7th concessions being the boundary line.

During 1809 Peter Lossing came from Duchess County, N.Y. to look for a suitable home for himself and family and being informed that there were desirable lands opened up in Oxford County, he visited them and found that they suited him.

He returned to Canada the same fall, (1809) accompanied by his brother-in-law, Peter DeLong, (also of Duchess County, NY) and they purchased from Mr. Wilcox of York for 50 cents per acre his entire tract of land, 15,000 acres, in the township of Norwich; and on the 14th of July, 1810, Mr. Wilcox deeded to Peter Lossing and Peter De Long jointly, the land referred to first releasing a mortgage that was held against the property by one John Gray. Having secured the property, these two pioneers returned to Duchess County to make suitable arrangements for occupying their new homes.

#### Finds Settlers

Peter Lossing, at once, made every effort to find persons who could purchase and settle upon the land in Norwich; and received hearty support in his project. Adam Stover agreed to accept 1,000 acres of land for each of his children who would go to Canada and live upon and improve their land. Three sons, Michael, Frederick and Adam, and one daughter, Mrs. Peter McLees, accepted of--- for 3,000 acres. Many others --- fer of their father and came



Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

Finds Settlers - cont.

to Norwich and made it their home. Joseph Lancaster agreed --- also decided to come to Norwich, including the Motts, the Cornwells, the Snyders, the Sackriders, the Emighs and others, about 50 families in all. Having secured the co-operation of these others, Peter Lossing and his family moved to Canada in the fall of 1810. He travelled all the way with his teams, bringing with them what goods they could, while another portion of goods was brought by rafts and boats through the Mohawk river, Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario, his two sons and some other young men, who came to seek a home in the wilds of Canada, having the management of the expedition.

After spending a few days at the home of John Yeigh in Burford (who kept an open house for travellers and new settlers), Peter Lossing accompanied by his three sons, Solomon, Edmund and Benson, two hired men and a surveyor named Halstead, started for Norwich. He left his wife and daughters, Mary and Athelinda to remain with the family of Mr. Yeigh at Burford.

First Night

Peter Lossing and his company reached Norwich with a great deal of difficulty, the first seven miles of their journey was to Cooley's Pond, via the old stage road, and the five miles from Cooley's Pond to Norwich was made by a path marked with blazed trees, which had been made by the surveyors. When they arrived at the site of their future home it was near evening, so they cut down a couple of trees and constructed a rude shelter of brush and camped for the night, the site is now occupied by the late family residence of Martin Cornwall on Quaker Street. The first tree cut in North Norwich, was begun by Benson Lossing, then eleven years of age, and finished by his father, Peter Lossing. In a few days, they had a log hut constructed on their



Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

First Night - cont.

own home farm, lot eight, third concession, in which Mr. Lossing and his sons and three men who accompanied them made their home during the winter, while they were engaged in chopping and clearing the land; they also cleared a sled road through to Cooley's Pond.

About the first of March 1811, they had completed a comfortable log house made of hewn timber with shingled roof, and Mrs. Lossing and daughters came from Burford to occupy their new home. These were the pioneer women of North Norwich. A small settlement existed where Otterville now stands, and of great importance it was for there was a small grist mill there built of logs, with no road to it but a bridle path.

Sears Mott, with wife and family of six children, also moved into Norwich township in 1810 and settled on the farm on Quaker Street. In 1811, a number of families arrived in Norwich viz. Peter De Long's, Michael Stover's, Frederick Stover's, Solomon Sackrider's, John and Elias McLees', in 1812 Henry Hilliker's, John Palmer's, William Curtis' and in 1813 Joseph Woodrow. The statistical returns of 1818 gave 11 heads of families and 67 children of these families.

Peter Lossing, being a minister among Friends, established religious services in his house in 1811, and this was the beginning of Friends' meetings here. In the spring of 1811, he brought a number of apple trees from near Vittoria, and planted them on his farm, and the same fall they bore an apple, which is supposed to have been the first fruit grown in the township.

Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

Wagon Road - cont.

Peter De Long with his family moved into Norwich in the spring of 1811, he left his family with Mr. Yeigh for six weeks, while the men cut a wagon road into Norwich and erected his first house on the north half of lot 10 in the 4th concession and therein was born the first white child in the township in the person of Garry V. De Long, on the 2nd day of Nov. 1811 and he afterward became the first reeve of the township.

David De Long, brother to Peter, moved to Norwich the next year, 1812 and purchased the lot opposite his brother on the south side of the concession and lived on the same farm until he died in his ninety-third year.

William Hulet, father of Charles Hulet, was the first teacher in the township, the school was opened in the fall of 1812, in a small log house on the bank of the Otter, the attendance was 15. A few months later a second school was commenced in the northern part of the settlement, teacher Elias Snyder, now Burgessville School, average attendance during the winter of --- 25. Early in 1813 the south school was discontinued and one started in Peter Lossing's house, with Peter Lossing as teacher.

The first marriage in the township was in 1812, and was performed by B. Mallory Esq., MPP, the contracting parties being George Wright and Miss Susan Mott.

In 1813 John Palmer was married to a daughter of Frederick Stover's. They were members of Friends' and there being no way for them to be married in their denomination, they went on horseback, 80 miles to the township of Pelham, Welland County. In 1815, George Southwick, and Mrs. Pauline Howard, daughter of Peter Lossing were married and they too travelled on horseback to Pelham, accompanied by their groomsmen and bridesmaid for the marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Southwick were the parents of the late Mrs. Mary Ann Treffry.

Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

Wagon Road - cont.

Thomas Horner, Esq., a magistrate residing near Princeton, frequently came to Norwich to perform the rites of marriage. In those days no minister of any denomination except the Church of England was permitted to do so.

No Postal Service

One great inconvenience in the pioneer days was the lack of postal service as no post office was established in the county until 1821 at Ingersoll, and a post office was established at Burford about the same time. The nearest post office was Ancaster, then about 55 miles by the roads.

Persons travelling from the Eastern frontier or to it were often made into the carrier of letters., When a post office was established in Burford there was a weekly mail which arrived on Saturday evening making Sunday a delivery day and people travelled many miles in the hopes of getting a letter.

Correspondence was rather expensive then postage on a letter from England sixty cents, from New York, twenty-five.

In the summer of 1811 there were eleven families in the township, 5,200 acres of land had been taken up, the first season 32 acres had been put in crop, the second 735 acres.

In 1820 the surplus wheat of Norwich amounted to several thousand bushels and it had to be teamed to Ancaster. The roads were rough and difficult to travel, so that twenty-five bushels was considered a full load and it required a three days journey.

The first doctor to settle in Norwich township was Dr. Ephriam Cooke who came in 1831. One of the ancient institutions in the township was the early town meeting. The first one held in the township was in 1816 and they met at a hotel kept by Caleb Thompkins, the younger, just one mile north of the village of Norwich, then called Gommorah, later Caralan's Corners. The house was occupied later by Thomas Caralan, who had a blacksmith shop on the south side of the road. In that hotel the township meetings were held to appoint the pathmaster, poundkeepers, assessors, collectors, etc. which was done by the choice of the people by open vote. There the courts were held.

Peter Lossing Got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

No Postal Service - cont.

Joseph Woodrow, John G. Lossee, Solomon Lossing being the first Commissioners appointed by the Government constituting what was known as the Commissioner's Court of Requests.

Election

The first election for the township of Norwich was held in the village of Norwich in 1850, with James Bass, returning officer and John McKee, poll clerk. The councillors elected were Garry V. De Long, John Griffin, Michael Stover, Truman Wilcox and Asa Durkee. The Council chose Garry V. De Long for reeve. In 1855 the township of Norwich was divided into North and South Norwich and in 1856 the first reeve of North Norwich was Hiram Van Valkenburg. In 1871 Thomas Abraham was Warden of the county. In 1876 the village of Norwich became independent of the township. The village of Burgessville in 1886 was set apart from the township for local improvement purposes, first being called Snyder's Corners after Elias Snyder who came in 1811, and who was the second teacher in the township and continued as teacher for several years, but afterwards took up land. Joshua Corbin was another early settler who settled near where the village now is in 1816. The Dennis family settled near Burgessville in 1820 and the street running west from the four corners is named Dennis Street. Captain John Jacques moved into Burgessville in 1835 and was one of the prominent families in the early history of the village. During the Rebellion of 1835 he was captain of a Company of Royal Volunteers and was stationed in Norwich village for some time. The names of Topham and Emigh are also found in early records. E.W. Burgess was born in the vicinity about 1821 and when the name was changed to Burgessville it was in his honor. He served as postmaster for 30 years and station agent for 18 years. Nelson Batterson started the first store in 1845 at Snyder's Corners and in 1887 Henry Sneath started a general store in Burgessville.

Schools

The second school in the township was a log school and was known as school district No. 3. The red brick school built in 1905 is the third school on this site. The present school system for North Norwich centres in Burgessville where a new school was built last year and five buses bring 332 pupils daily,



Peter Lossing got Settlers into Norwich - cont.

Schools - cont.

for the grades one to six. Grades 7 and 8 receive their education in the old continuation school.

Burgessville possesses one of the smallest free libraries; it was organized in 1910. The first cheese factory was started by Harvey Farrington, three miles south of the village and later one started in the village and was later purchased by Borden's. The Burgessville Fruit Co-operative was once the leading industry but has been purchased by the Oxford Fruit Co-operative and mostly storage is done here now. The independent telephone company was organized in 1905. The township took it over as a municipal telephone system in 1927.

The Port Dover and Goderich Railroad first entered Burgessville in 1875 and and was later known as the Grand Trunk, now the CNR. The station closed in 1936 leaving a single train a day from Norwich. This was discontinued in 1941. The first church was the Baptist Congregation organized in 1837 with services being held in the Dennis School and Elder Elliott was the first minister until 1845. The first church building was erected in 1849 and the Methodist congregation organized in 1885. In 1887 the first church building was erected on the present site.



People Think of the Early Scots when Talking of Zorra

When the name Zorra is mentioned in the history of Oxford, we usually think of the early Scots settlers who came out from Sutherlandshire in West Zorra or the early English settlers of the Hickson area. To the north of these already settled areas was a large tract of land known as the Huron Tract. Into this area in 1845 came Henry Hayrock. He built a home in what is now Sebastapol just over the county line in Perth County. He was followed by Henry Eckstein who later moved to what is now Tavistock and he became the first German settler in this section of Oxford County. Henry Eckstein while living at Sebastapol learned that the railroad to Goderich would not touch Sebastapol so decided to move to the railroad location and in 1848 built himself a log building at what is now the corner of Hope and Woodstock streets and later used it for a store. He named the place Freiburg after his home in Germany. Later, during the Crimean War, it was changed to Inkerman.

The first German settlers came to Canada in 1820 from Hesson Darmstadt and Hesson Nassau on the banks of the Rhine in West Germany. They were persuaded to settle in Canada by Christian Naffziger of Munich. On hearing that many German settlers were very prosperous in America he sailed for America from Le Havre, France and landed at New Orleans. He worked his way north to the German settlements in Pennsylvania only to find that if his people wanted cheap land they would have to go to Canada. Aided by the Mennonites of Pennsylvania he was able to make his way up into Waterloo county which was being settled by the Mennonites aided by capital raised by the Mennonites of Pennsylvania. They advised him to take up the immigration question with the government and they offered 50 acres for each German family adding that more land could be purchased on easy terms.

Amish Settlers

Naffziger returned to Europe and had the agreement ratified by the British Government and in 1824 the first settlers arrived. They were chiefly Amish. About 1825 a mass migration began from Germany and lasted for some 25 years. These people were Lutherans and Roman Catholics who came to avoid conscription into the army. Most of them came to New York and made their way on into Canada. From New York they made their way to Buffalo either on foot or by

People Think of the Early Scots when Talking of Zorra - cont.

Amish Settlers - cont.

boat and crossed into Canada by ferry at Black Rock. As Mennonites were still migrating to new land in Canada and were moving all their belongings with them, it was not hard for these European Germans to take up with these Pennsylvania Dutch and get transportation and employment up to Waterloo County, and eventually strike out on their own.

A group of these arrived in the Sebastapol-Tavistock area and by 1861 the census showed 500 people born in the German-speaking countries living in the South Easthope area and in 1864 English and German were both being taught in the schools of the area.

These people came out to this country to avoid compulsory service in the army and we find that they kept little or no record of their activities. It is known that they organized a church at Sebastapol in the early 1830's with Rev. W. Horn conducting the first service. In 1856 a church was erected. It was from this centre that many purchased land settled by the Scots in Zorra. By the late 1840's in the Maplewood area we find names such as Schaeffer, Kalbfleisch, Krug, Bloom, Youngbluts, Heinbuck, Wilkers, Snyders, Hormans and Metz. They never erected a church at Maplewood but kept contact with the home church at Sebastapol. Many of the German settlers changed from Lutheran to Methodist due to the fact that there were very few Lutheran ministers in Canada. The Methodist circuit rider who put into practice the old John Wesley Dictum "the world is my parish" soon found that his regular visits were specially suited to pioneer conditions.

Church at Maplewood

A Methodist church was organized at Maplewood and was later moved to Harrington where it now serves as the United Church. The Presbyterians who remained in the area erected a log structure on lot 30 tenth line of East Zorra and formed the Burns Presbyterian Church. The present Burns Church has title deeds dated November 21, 1874. Their first minister was Rev. Robert Scott who conducted services at Burns and Brooksdale. In 1920 Burns Church was connected with Tavistock and in 1930 Burns and Harrington were made a joint charge. At present it is connected with Shakespeare.

It seemed strange that the Scottish and English settlers did not prefer to

People Think of the Early Scots when Talking of Zorra - cont.

Church at Maplewood - cont.

remain in this part of the township but if one studies the ways of the German farmer and the British farmer we find that the latter preferred gravel bottom farms as are found in the south part of Zorra while the Germans were more used to the heavy fertile soil of the Rhine Valley, much like the land found in the Tavistock area and the neighboring turnip-growing townships.

To these German Settlers the farmers of this part of Ontario owe much as they brought with them many ideas from the old land that still may be seen today. The English of East Oxford prefer large homes but these German settlers preferred a good barn before a spacious home and consequently we find them introducing large bank barns; they had stone stables beneath the frame structure for their stock and a forebay extending out over the stable entrance which acted as a granary and also as protection from the weather for the stable openings. The stable opening was usually at the south with a ramp on the north side leading to the threshing floor. Today this type of barn is found over a large part of Ontario as it proved to be the best for our type of farming, although the modern trend is away from this type of barn.

Fine Cooks

The German women soon established a reputation for being excellent cooks and many of their dishes such as sauerkraut, cole slaw, smarkase (cottage cheese), chicken pot pie, doughnuts, waffles and apple butter are all products of the German kitchen.

In the Maplewood area we find a school started prior to 1880 and in 1880 Alex Stewart was the teacher. He later left and became a Presbyterian minister and served as moderator of the Presbyterian Church. In 1872 we find a Mr. McKenzie as blacksmith and in 1890 David Braby was a well-known thresher and William McDonald operated a wagon and carriage shop. A post office was established in 1874 with Christopher Bean as postmaster, Samuel McKay and Donald McIntosh followed until 1916 when the office was closed. The mail was brought to Maplewood from Embro by Mr. Vannatter twice

People Think of the Early Scots when Talking of Zorra - cont.

Fine Cooks - cont.

weekly. From 1900-1910 saw a migration of many young men from this area to the west.

Tavistock

With the completion of the railroad in 1857 Inkerman took deep root and started to grow and many of the inhabitants of Sebastapol moved to the fast-growing village. A post office was opened up the same year and was given the name Tavistock. The exact reason for this name is not known but it is claimed that a government official named it after a home town in England. From that time on more substantial and modern homes and business places were erected. Even before this Eickstein took the lead by starting the erection of a hotel in 1850. Among the early names we find those of Henry Schaeffer, Antoni Gluecklick, John H. Holmer, Mr. Bellinger, August Bechberger and Duncan Stewart. In 1868 John Zimmerman opened a barrel and stave factory, carriage factory, sawmill, flaxmill and a flour mill was established by John Malcolm in 1866. In 1880 a flour mill on a site now occupied by the Tavistock Milling Company was established by Messrs. Klein, Kalbflesch and Paehlman. It was reorganized in 1886 as the Tavistock Milling Company and enlarged to a 125 barrel capacity. Seven years later the mill was destroyed by fire, later rebuilt and again destroyed by fire. The present plant was erected in 1924.

The woolen mill was first established in 1868 by Mr. Preston who sold out in 1869 to John Steinman and George Gerhardt. Steinman bought out Gerhardt and in 1877 sold to Field and Hetherington and Field later bought out Hetherington. In 1868 John Zimmerman established his stave factory and this became known as Zimmerman Bros. in 1919. In 1906 they purchased the planing mills of J. Kalbfleisch. At the time the plant was destroyed by the recent fire it had a daily capacity of some 10,000 boxes requiring in the neighborhood of 40,000 feet of lumber.

In 1899 the Standard Bank opened a branch and seven years later the Traders Bank opened. The Bank of Commerce now controls the banking business.

The first medical man was Dr. Preiss of Hamburg, Germany.



People Think of The Early Scots when Talking of Zorra - cont.

Incorporation

In the year 1909 Tavistock was incorporated as a separate municipality. The vote was taken in January and the first meeting of the council was on Monday, February 15 with the following in office: Reeve Henry Vogt, Councillors, John Zimmerman, Henry Schlemmer, John Roth, David Rudy; clerk, J. G. Fields.

Prior to 1880 the scholars from Tavistock went to school at Sebastapol. In the early part of 1880's a public school was erected in the village with Val Stock as one of the first teachers. In 1916 a two-room addition was added to the north side. Previous to this, a room in the basement had been fitted for a classroom.

The Tavistock Gazette was established in 1895 by J.W. Green and since then its owners have been F.H. Leslie, N.E. Dopp, W. Appel, L.W. Appel and G.K. Brown. It is independent in politics and has been a service to its community.

The Baptist Church was organized in 1851 by Rev. Mr. Snyder and services were held in a log building. It is credited with having 15 members and a few adherents but with the opening up of the country the congregation increased to 63 in 1866 when they erected a brick church. It was rebuilt in 1904 and in 1925 was taken over by the Presbyterians and renamed St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church dates back to 1878 when Rev. Mr. Fleming was sent to the village to preach and to organize a congregation. The following year Rev. Mr. Stewart of North Easthope became a stationary minister and the congregation which had held services in a hall over a hotel shed rented the Baptist church. When the vote of Church union was taken in 1925 the majority voted to go to union. The Tavistock Lutheran Church was organized on July 31, 1881 with Rev. L. Becker as pastor. The name of the church at that time was United Evangelical Church and on Nov. 6th, 1982 connections with the Reform church were severed and Pastor Kaiser of Wartburg under the Missouri Synod came to serve the congregation. In 1886 Christoph Merkel became the first resident minister.



Mount Elgin Fame began in Stopping Place

When Col. John Graves Simcoe divided Upper Canada into 19 countries in 1792, the township of Dereham was allotted to Norfolk County along with Norwich, Oxford upon the Thames and Burford Townships. In 1798 Dereham along with the townships of Norwich, North, West and East Oxford, Blenheim, Blandford and Burford were incorporated into Oxford County. Oxford along with Norfolk and Middlesex counties became known as the London District.

In 1800 the courts were held at the home of James Munro in the township of Charlotteville (Norfolk) and the next year they were moved to Turkey Point where they met at the home of James Lodor until a jail and courthouse were erected at the expense of the district. These were taken over by the militia during the War of 1812. In 1815, the court was moved to Vittoria. In 1822 a brick courthouse was built at a cost of \$9,000. This structure was destroyed by fire in 1825. The courts were moved to St. Thomas and later to London. In 1839 the county of Oxford became known as the Gore District and a courthouse and jail were erected at Woodstock. The township of Dereham which was often referred to "Swampy Dereham" was first surveyed in 1799 by William Hambley with concessions and lots marked by rows of blazed trees. The first land sold by the government was in September 1800 when Robert Hamilton purchased a large block of land for speculation purposes. The first settler according to the Oxford Gazetteer of 1876 was Stilton Hackett in 1834 who purchased the north half of the 12 concession one. For several years this township was attached to West Oxford Township for municipal purposes. The first township meeting was held in January 1832 when Harvey Tillson was appointed township clerk. The township is supposed to have been named by an English nobleman visiting in Canada.

Plank Road

The township was well supplied with a good stand of timber and consequently sawmills were numerous and when the township started to open up it was necessary to fill the numerous bog holes, with lumber and logs being plentiful many of the roads were originally plank or corduroy roads. One of the best plank roads was known as the Ingersoll and Port Burwell Plank and

## Mount Elgin Fame Began in Stopping Place - cont.

### Plank Road - cont.

Gravel Road which went from Ingersoll through Salford, Mount Elgin and Tillsonburg to Port Burwell, a distance of some 32 miles. It is said that often the sound of the horses' hoofs could be heard long before they could be seen and the innkeeper was aware of the approaching coach and his supply of refreshments would be all ready for the weary travellers. Quite often the driver took more than his share of spirits offered by the innkeeper and the next lap of the journey would be rather hectic for the passengers especially if the horses became frightened. More than one traveller was thrown out of the coach or his baggage lost on the road. One of the operators of the coach line was Reuben Carroll of Ingersoll who also had an interest in the road.

There was also a brisk trade up and down this road as prior to the coming of the railroad all incoming merchandise to Ingersoll would come to Port Burwell by boat and then teamed up the plank road. Likewise all exports of timber or produce would have to travel this road to the docks.

### Passing on Left

It is interesting to note that the freight wagon had priority over the stage and the driver sat on the left hand side of his wagon; when not walking beside his team; as on this side was the brake lever if the wagon was so equipped. This inaugurated both in Canada and The United States the idea of passing on the left side contrary to the practice of a coach driver who followed the ideas of the English and preferred to pass on the right side. With the coming of the railroad to Ingersoll much of this traffic stopped but the railroad saw enough future in this business to build a railroad from Ingersoll to the lake. In 1901 the Ingersoll - Port Burwell and Pacific railroad came into existence. Today the CPR still operates trains from Ingersoll to Port Burwell but transport trucks are coming back onto the road now known as Highway 19 and are hauling coal from Port Burwell to the industries of inland Oxford. Last year Port Burwell handled four hundred and thirteen thousand tons of shipping which was mostly coal. On the long draw from the lake inland Mount Elgin or Dereham Heights as it was originally called played an important part. The 32 miles was too far for a loaded wagon to be drawn in one day so with Mount Elgin being half way between Tillsonburg and Ingersoll it became a well-known stopping

Mount Elgin Fame Began in Stopping Place - cont.

passing on the left - cont.

place where repairs and lodging for man and beast could be readily obtained. There were two licensed hotels here in 1848. One was owned by Ira Harris who also owned several hundred acres of land in the immediate vicinity. One hotel was burned and the other was located at the corner now belonging to the Prouse Transport. It is believed this one was known as the Mount Elgin House. Some of the innkeepers were Messrs. Siple, Gould and Gray and Madame Huntley.

Distinguished Visitor

It is interesting to note that Lord Elgin stopped off at Dereham Heights during his term of office 1847-54. The people were so impressed with him that immediate steps were taken to re-name the place Mount Elgin. Some of the residents at about this time were families of Harris, Collins, Tripp, Elliott, Hadock, Mitchell, Stevens, Miller, Varden, Mayberry, Erwins, Morrison and Bodwell. E.V. Bodwell was later elected to the first parliament after confederation.

One of the first industries was a saw and planing mill later including a cheese box factory started by J. and R. Miller. The Miller Bros. later obtained a contract from the government to help build the Welland Canal and later moved to Toronto where they became successful building contractors. Mount Elgin being in the centre of the cheese and butter district of Oxford County it is interesting to note that the cheese factory known as the Mount Elgin Milk Products Co. was among the first to install a cream separator. When the whey was separated it was run into wooden tubs and the farmers received his whey by being allotted so many strokes of the pump for every hundred pounds of milk he shipped. The fat formed on the top of the whey was originally used for greasing the cheese. In 1875 the output from this factory was two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine cheese weighing one hundred and ninety-two thousand seven hundred and eighty-six pounds. Another enterprising business was the wagon works operated by a Mr. Miles later by John and Marshall Mayberry. Above this shop Division Court and other municipal meetings were held. The village had a fair reputation for the musical ability of its residents; one of its better known quartets consisted of Milton, Ida, Ella Haycock and Charles Caverhill. A community singing school was conducted in the evening in the red school which was the first school and was located one mile south of the village. This school was



Mount Elgin Fame Began in Stopping Place - cont.

Distinguished Visitor - cont.

removed and the white brick school was erected in 1872. Some of the early teachers were Mr. Bucknell, Mr. Mercer and Miss Barker. In 1922 a Continuation School was erected and was considered to be the first of its kind in Western Ontario.

Girls' School

Mount Elgin also had the distinction of having a finishing school for girls which was operated by Mary Bodwell who later became Mrs. Nicholas Smith and was located in a cottage now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Harvey. The Methodists were presumed to be the first organized form of worship in Mount Elgin, being served by circuit riders who operated under rev. John Baillie who served Oxford, Beachville, Ingersoll, the 12th line of Zorra, Woodstock, North Oxford, Embro, Aylmer, Mount Elgin, Dereham and Salford in 1832. In 1849 this circuit was divided in half and Mount Elgin was served by the circuit riders from Ingersoll. The first Methodist Church was built in 1859 and burned down. The second church was so poorly built that it had to be taken down in 1900. The present church is the third church on the same site. The original land being donated by Ira Harris who also donated land for the Mount Elgin cemetery.

The first Baptist Church was the result of Elder George Wilson visiting friends in Mount Elgin in September 1859 when he sent out word that he would preach at the red brick school for two evenings. Such was the response that he continued to preach for two months and during this time about 45 were baptized. The Baptist Church was organized in 1851 with the church being built in 1852. The same building is still in use today with only minor changes being made.

The first postoffice was opened in Mount Elgin on July 6, 1851 with D.C. Wood as postmaster and since that time 20 postmasters have served the community. At one time the telephone and telegraph system both operated from the post office with Andrew Beath as the telegraph operator.

With the coming of the railroad Mt. Elgin was able to survive the fate suffered by many communities of Ox. County as it became the shipping centre for that part of the County but in recent years it has settled down to a quiet county village and considered by the residents as a most pleasant place to live.

Bright Owes Existence to the Railroad - cont.

Blandford Settled - cont.

to settle in the Blandford township area traversed by what is now known as highway 97 was a Scot from Kirkenlettock by the name of George Baird who arrived here about 1830 and settled near what was to become Chesterfield. Other early settlers were John Sheerer in 1852 and Reisbury, Bullock, Broughton and Hewitt who came from Norfolk, England about 1836 settling in Waterloo County and came to Oxford in about 1842.

To George Baird goes the credit of the name Chesterfield being chosen for the community that lies on the townline being Blenheim and Blandford and is still the location of the Chesterfield United Church. The name is in honor of Lord Chesterfield, an English nobleman. Baird later became the first storekeeper and postmaster, Charles Decker was the last postmaster when the postoffice closed in 1914. By 1826 Chesterfield was being served by the Presbyterian minister of Ayr and West Dumfries and a log kirk was built. In 1855 a brick church was built, the clay for the bricks being obtained from the present farm of C.M. Woolcott, onehalf mile west of the church. In appreciation of the good work done, the three masons were each presented with a pocket bible by the session. In 1850 the session consisted of James Fairbairn, James Swan and James Hatchley and one of the early ministers was Rev. W. Robertson. As was usual in those days a cemetery was laid out so that settlers could be laid to rest where they worshipped. The first grave at Chesterfield was for a child of Robert Brown. There being no minister in attendance Mr. Brown conducted the service and the mourners joined in the prayers and hymns.

It is interesting to note that at this church a member of the session was barred from membership for six months and from the session for gathering an overflow of sap on Sunday. He was later re-elected to the session. It shows how devoted these early scotch settlers were to their religion. Many of these same settlers would walk miles to church carrying their shoes with them and as they neared the church they would wash their feet in a creek and put on their shoes and proceed to church.

Mail Service

This village received its mail from Hamburg and Plattsville daily at 11 in the morning presumably by stage which at one time was driven by Ed. Gatzkal of Plattsville who made two trips a day to meet the train at Bright.



Bright Owes Existence to the Railroad

On July 16, 1792 Lieut. Gov. Simcoe issued his proclamation dividing Upper Canada into 19 counties. The townships which form Oxford County today being attached to York and Norfolk Counties. The county of York, to which the townships of Blenheim and Blandford were attached to York and Norfolk Counties. The county of York, to which the townships of Blenheim and Blandford were attached consisted of all land bounded on the east by the most westerly line of a tract of land belonging to the Mississauga Indians, running north 45 degrees, west to the Thames River; on the south side to Lake Geneva (Burlington Bay) and a carrying-place leading through the Mohawk village to where it intersects the river Thames, thence up the same river to the northwest boundary of a tract of land belonging to the Mississauga Indians. Six years later the township of Blenheim and Blandford along with Burford, Norwich, Dereham and Oxford on the Thames were incorporated as Oxford County and to form the London District, along with Middlesex and Norfolk and all the land that lay west of the Home and Niagara Districts to the southward of Lake Huron and between them and a line drawn due north from a fixed boundary where the most easterly end of Oxford intersects the River Thames until it arrives at Lake Huron.

The District of London was first represented in parliament in 1804 at the third Parliament of Upper Canada (no record exists of an earlier representative). The election was held at Averills Mills (now Waterford) in the township of Townsend with the Hon. David William Smith and Richard Corkwell as candidates. Smith was elected and was appointed speaker of the house.

Blandford Settled

Up until this time, most of the settlers in the county were located in Oxford-on-the-Thames or in the southern part of Blenheim and it was not until about 1830 that Blandford began to be settled. The first survey was made by Augustus (Indian) Jones in 1797 and later four more surveys were made as the wilderness was pushed north by incoming settlers, many coming up the Huron Road from Hamilton and Galt. About the first settler

## Bright Owes Existence to the Railroad - cont.

### Mail Service - cont.

A native of Chesterfield, who went forth to pioneer in other parts of the world was D.B. Chome Oliver who went to India as a medical missionary. Bright, like Hickson, owes its existence to the fact that even in those days finances played a bigger part in the choice of a route than did already settled villages and it was considered more economical to build a station on the choice site offered at the community now known as Bright than to build the necessary bridges and right of way into the already prospering village of Plattsville. When the decision for the southerly route was made, the station took on the name of Platts Station but Baird who had come to live at this settlement was instrumental in having the name changed to Bright after John Bright a prominent English statesman of that time. The Grand Trunk Railroad which ran a line from Buffalo to Goderich to speed up travel to the west opened this line up about 1857 and the first train went through with flags flying and the station was gaily decorated and crowded with people who were really thrilled as the wood-burning locomotive steamed through at the fantastic speed of six miles per hour. The coming of the railroad was a big asset to these people as they had a surplus of wood and this was a good outlet for it both in the roadbed as ties and as fuel for the monsters of the rails. It also gave them a handy outlet for their surplus crops and livestock and therefore shipping day became the big day of the week.

### Great Future

When George Baird moved to Platts Station he foresaw a great future for this hamlet and laid out the village pretty well as it is today and named three streets after his sons, John, George, and James. He built a sawmill which prospered right from the beginning and with a good supply of fuel on hand Baird soon opened a stove factory which was operated by steam and at one time employed about 40 men with the power being supplied by a 12 horsepower steam engine.

It was sometime after the coming of the railroad that schools, made their appearance in Bright, Mrs. Alex Scott conducted a primary school and the older students had to go to Ratho, Blink Bonnie or the the tenth line school for their education. After the Baptist Church closed following

## Bright Owes Existence to the Railroad

### Mail Service

the ministry of Rev. John Geerie it was purchased in 1870 to be used as a school and in 1875 it was decided to build a new school and the village fathers proceeded to raise 2,094 dollars by debentures to which residents who wished their children to attend this school contributed from 50 cents to two dollars as their share while others donated labor and teams. The school was built and remained until it was removed in favor of the recently erected new school on the same site.

During the life of this school it is interesting to note the following: until 1904 the school operated on a budget of less than \$1,000.00 and in 1898 a motion was put on the books asking that a fee of one cent a day be charged all students from outside the school area. In 1900 the trustees were allowed to loan school funds and collect interest as no money was kept in the banks as there was no bank in the village and they did not favor paying by cheque. In 1906 and 1907 it was decided to teach the equivalent of first and second year high school in this school in order to obtain a bigger school grant; and it was not until 1935 that hydro was installed in the school.

### Stores and Shops

Bright, being a railway centre, was well supplied with stores and shops as well as hotels for the traveller. Today the Arlington Hotel is still operating the name being changed from the Anglo-American Hotel which was run by William Cuthbertson in 1867. In 1863 a postoffice was opened with William A. Sharpe as postmaster and mail was received off the trains from the east and from the west and stage service connecting it with Plattsville. Today mail is received from Woodstock by truck twice a day and T. Cuthbertson is the seventh postmaster to serve the village.

Bright is one of the few communities that can still boast of a cheese factory which is still making cheese. The original Bright Co-operative Cheese Factory was to the south of the village and early in the 1890's a new plant was built on the present site where Max Smith, the present cheesemaker, makes cheese daily.

Although it is divided down the main street into Blandford and Blenheim townships, it is the home of the Blandford Township Council which located

Bright Owes Existence to the Railroad - cont.

Stores and Shops - cont.

here shortly after Woodstock withdrew from the township and council at that time were meeting at Bond's Corners.

The religious needs of the community were served by the Wesleyan Methodist and the Baptist. The Presbyterians received their spiritual education at Chesterfield until the Church union and later held services in the hall in Bright. The first Methodist Church was built in 1865 and was served by the Plattsville mission. The Methodist ministers or circuit riders as they were called would often open the meeting by saying "I am a Methodist preacher and my manner of worship is to stand while singing, kneel while praying and to stand while preaching to the people who are sitting." For their troubles and travels these saddle bag preachers received varying amounts for their duties varying from \$1.50 and an order for a pair of overalls to \$32 and 23 pairs of socks. Of course they were boarded free of charge where ever they stayed and were all single for at least four years after they started. The spinsters of that time showed their intentions of not wishing to remain so by trying to win the attention of the riders by keeping him well supplied with socks or home spun clothing. The Plattsville circuit consisted of Plattsville, Mount Carmel, New Hamburg and Bright, Later Bethel and Washington were linked with Plattsville while still linked with Plattsville while still later Bright, Bethel and Chesterfield formed the charge of the United Church after church union. The present church was built in 1892 at a cost of \$5,500 and the first couple married were Mr. and Mrs. James Cassidy on February 10, 1895. The coming of the motor age saw the decline of railway traffic and this village has met the fate that has been dealt to scores of similar hamlets with industries moving to larger centres and now it prefers to be known as a quiet country village in the north of Oxford where a stranger is always made welcome.



Springford once Called Springbrook

The oldest known camp of the Neutral Indians in Oxford County was founded on lot 8, concession 7 of South Norwich in 1920 and is known as the Uren Pre-historic Village. This important find gives us a little of the history of the people who inhabited this county prior to 1652 when Iroquois wiped out the Neutral kindred. Both these tribes along with the Huron and Tobacco Indians; who were north of the Neutrals; all belonged to the same basic family known as the Iroquoians. The Iroquois were the most vicious and warlike while the Neutrals could be the most peaceful. The Neutrals retained their neutrality by controlling the flintstone beds on Lake Erie and at Kettle Point. The Neutrals when they went into battle were very fierce fighters and records have been found where they fought against some of the Algonkian tribes in Illinois and treated their prisoners with unexampled cruelty torturing even the women whom most Iroquoian tribes adopted into their own families. The Neutrals had a strange custom unknown in the rest of Canada; of killing every animal they encountered whether they needed it for food or not lest it should carry a warning to other animals of its kind and keep out of reach when food was needed. In the year 1626 it is estimated that there were 28 villages of Neutrals.

Varied Names

The Indian Tribes in western Ontario were divided into two groups, one known as the Algonkin and the other as the Iroquoian tribes. The Algonkins consisted of the tribes to the north of Lake Huron and different from the Iroquoians in that they were of the hunting class and their chief occupation and hunting fur-bearing animals and lived chiefly on meat. They did little or no farming. The Iroquoians consisted of what is called the agricultural tribes of the eastern woodland and consisted of the tribes of the Hurons, the Tionontates or the Tobacco Nation, the Atiwandaronks commonly called the Neutrals and the warlike Iroquois or the Six Nations. They differed from the Algonkins in that they were an agricultural tribe and grew considerable corn, beans, pumpkins and tobacco which were traded at their Indian fairs for hides with the Algonkins.



Springford once called Springbrook - cont.

Varied Names - cont.

The Iroquois name means "real adder" and this they proved when in 1648 they found the Hurons were suffering from a strange disease which proved to be small pox, a European disease introduced by the French and they destroyed three or four villages. Instead of returning home they spent the winter in south eastern Ontario and returned to attack before the snow was off the ground. Many of the Hurons were killed or captured while the rest fled to the land of the Tobaccos or Neutrals or to the French settlements. After this victory the Iroquois systematically wiped out the Tobaccos and the Neutrals, the latter partly because they were holding large numbers of Huron refugees as prisoners which was a violation of their neutrality and also because they no longer needed them to supply them with weapons for the hunt or battle. Remnants of these tribes have been found as far west as Oklahoma and a small reserve was set up for them in Lorette, Quebec. Few of the Lorettes show the slightest trace of Indian today having intermarried with the French.

South Norwich

For the next 150 years the land now known as Oxford was completely in the hands of the Iroquois and it was not until 1799 that William Hambly, a deputy surveyor began to survey Norwich township laying it out in lines and concessions and 200 acre plots. The only marks being blazed trails, marked trees and by placing of stakes, Norwich township was part of Norfolk county at that time and became part of Oxford in 1800.

On July 22, 1800 William Wilcocks of York received a crown grant of 1500 acres lying east of the middle townline and from the first to the 12th concessions, one mile in width. In 1855 the township was divided as North and South Norwich, the sixth concession being the boundary line. The first reeve of South Norwich was A. Durker with Jesse Cornell, R.B. Cromwell, Chauncey Wilcocks and David Randall as councillors, E.M. Schooley was clerk and treasurer.

The first concession opened was the eighth concession from Springford to the east quarter townline. Previous to this the only roads; if they could be called such; were paths or trails usually from one settlers' cabin to another. Some were known by the names the Indians had put on them when they controlled the land. One of these was known as the Wolf Track and extended from Bald Hill to the Coal Road in Otterville. It is interesting to note that about this time the two parts of the township were better known as the Upper and the Lower Settlements, or, jokingly, by Sodom and Gomorah.

## Springford Once Called Springbrook - cont.

### Spitler Creek

About 1808 the first horse was brought into the township by Josiah Gilbert who settled at Springford. J. Spitler was another early settler. The Spitler Creek bears his name. Anthony Sells, John Phillip and a Mr. Fox were also early settlers. The Foxes settled near the creek at Springford and the first cemetery was known as the Fox Burying Ground, today is is the Springford Cemetery. John Philip planted an apple orchard in 1810 and one tree still in 1953. Sarah Gilbert was believed to be the first white girl to be born in the township in 1810. By 1811 there were 11 families living in the township and 5,200 acres of land taken up. The first year, 32 acres had been put into crop and the second year 735 acres. By 1817 the population was 170 and 22 families farming. By 1820 there was a surplus of wheat and it had to be taken to Ancaster by wagon, a trip of some 60 miles and 23 bushel made a complete load. The trip required three days. At Ancaster also was the nearest post office, the office at Burford and Ingersoll not opening until 1821. The mail was rather scarce as the rates were too high for the average person. It costing 60 cents for a letter to travel from England and 25 cents from New York.

### Springford

Springford was first known as Springford around 1830, but when it was discovered there already was a Springbrook in Upper Canada the name was changed, but the name Springbrook can still be found under the new siding of the United Church. The land for the village was made up of lots taken from the point where the farms of Dyer Wilcocks, Squire Haley, Joseph Gilbert and W.M. Bell met. Most of the early settlers came originally from England, landed in the United States and for various reasons made their way up to Canada by way of the Erie Canal to Buffalo and then some came overland while others came by boat to Port Burwell. Some of those coming up from Port Burwell stopped off at Dereham Forge now called Tillsonburg and stayed with the Tillson family before travelling on to Springford. The first school was built about 1812, a short distance south of the arch on the seventh concession. It was 16 by 18 feet and the walls were built of round

Springford Once Called Springbrook - cont.

Springford - cont.

logs and logs formed the roof and were covered with four foot shingles which were held in place by poles running lengthwise of the roof. The door was made of rough boards fastened to cross cleats by wooden inch pins, the windows were holes covered with oiled paper. The desks were boards supported by wooden pins driven into the walls and seats were simply logs placed around the room. For heating a huge fireplace, seven foot in width was built of mud and sticks and it was the duty of the bigger boys to keep a supply of logs ready for fuel. Not a stone, brick or nail was used in the construction of this building. John Phillips Junior was the teacher.

Dundee

The next school was built of hewn pine logs on the northeast corner of the William Kellit farm in the west end of Springford and known as the "Black School". This end of the village was more commonly known as Dundee. A third school was burned in 1869 and for a time classes were held in the wagon shop. The new school was in use until 1927. Miss Emma Nesbitt, as sister of E.W. Nesbitt, was the first teacher of the new school.

In 1832 Deacon William Henley donated land for the Baptist Church and Dyer Wilcock gave land for the Congregationalist. The land for the latter later reverted back to the estate and in 1866 Charles Jenvey bought the land and gave it to the Methodists it is now the United Church. The first Baptist was replaced by a white frame church and in 1887 the present church was built. The frame church was moved across the road and used as a meeting hall. It was set on ground rented to the community by the Bell family at the rate of \$2.00 per year for twenty years. The agreement was between Richard Bell and F.W. Vardon and G.A. Maguire and dated April 1887. At the end of 20 years it was decided that something must be done to the hall or it would fall down so after many meetings it was handed over to the Women's Institute who are now the owners of the village hall.

Port Burwell has always been an important port of call on the Great Lakes and with the coming of the steam age, a railroad company was formed to connect Brantford with the lake. The line was known as the Brantford, Norfolk and Port Burwell and it joined the Canada Southern Railway at



Springford once called Springbrook - cont.

Dundee - cont.

at Tillsonburg. The Brantford, Norfolk and Port Burwell railroad passed through Springford in 1875 and since that time this railroad has gone through good times and bad but it has finally had to give way to modern transportation and is now but a memory of by-gone days to the people of Springford.

The earliest mail service in the village came by stage from Woodstock via Holbrook, Burgessville, Norwich and Otterville until 1872 when it was received from Cornell Station off Canada Southern Railroad and in 1875 mail was received at the station in the village daily. Today trucks deliver the mail on route between Brantford and London. Sydnor Wright was the first postmaster, being appointed June 1, 1852. Since that time there have been fourteen postmasters, serving the village with W.A. Mowat being the present postmaster and general storekeeper.

Mounted Scouts

Springford is believed to have the first mounted Scout troop in Canada, being organized May 1, 1957. It is being sponsored by the Lions Clubs of Norwich and Otterville.

Between 1850 and 1860 in and around Cornell there were no less than 20 steam and 14 water mills sawing out fine pine lumber. About 1855 John and Samuel Cornell settled here on the Arthur and Ira Pearce farms. These farms were later marked off as village lots under the name of Cornell. These two brothers built a large store, a warehouse and a pork packing factory on the southeast corner of the Arthur Pearce farm. The Cornells developed a large trade in the egg, pork and grain business. Produce was gathered as far west as St. Thomas and as far east as Port Dover.

Wagon trains of Cornells were often seen at Woodstock and Brantford and their produce was sold as far away as New York city and the eastern United States.

Cornell came to be a thriving metropolis and in 1872 when the Canada Southern Railroad (now the New York Central Railroad) laid out the Cornell Station it was located on the Jesse Gray farm and the village stretched for two and half miles along the right of way. But fate dealt Cornell a fickle blow when a series of misfortune befell the hamlet. The main store which served also as a bank was robbed and later it burned. The pork factory also burned. With the end of the lumbering boom the sawmills moved on and the pork factory was not rebuilt. The Messiah Church and the

Springford once called Springbrook - cont.

Mounted Scouts - cont.

Dennis hotel went to Tillsonburg and Cornell grandually turned back to agriculture.



Plattsville was Progressive Village Despite no Railroad

The first acquisition of lands in this province from the Indians, appears to have taken place on the third of April 1764. The Seneca Nation, who held the lands along the east side of the River Niagara, and also claimed jurisdiction upon a strip two miles in width, lying along the west side, from the mouth of the river to the great cataract, a distance of some 14 miles, through their principal chiefs assembled at Johnson Hall, concluded an agreement with the superintendent of Indian Affairs, to cede to His Majesty, and his successors forever, all their right and title to said lands. The Missassaugas, however, claimed ownership over all lands lying on the west side, and it was found necessary in justice to this title, to arrange a further treaty which confirmed His Majesty's dominion.

On the 23rd of March 1784 Sir John Johnson was directed to purchase from the Missassaugas the whole territory lying between Lakes Huron and Ontario. On May 22nd a meeting of the Missassaugas and the chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations and Delawares was held at Niagara, when Chief Pokquan, a Missassauga, informed the assembly that his nation did not own all the land between the Tree Lakes, as that part lying south of the River La Trench (Thames) and west of Cat Fish Creek, which included all that territory within what is now the township of Sandwich on the west and Yarmouth on the east, belonged to the Western tribes, the remainder however, which consisted of some 2,842,480 acres, the Missassaugas were willing to dispose of, and for the sum of eleven hundred and eighty pounds, seven shillings, and four pence, they surrendered all their right and title to this vast tract of country.

Demand for Land

By the year 1790 more lands were wanted for prospective settlers and on the 19th day of May of that year, the aforesaid tract, about two million acres of land bounded on the South by Lake Erie, on the West by the Detroit River, on the North by River La Trench and on the east by Cat Fish Creek, was ceded to the Crown by the Ottawas, Chippewas, Pottawatomies and Hurons, for a consideration of 1200 pounds.

In the year 1818 the Missassaugas of the River Credit and of Rice and Mud

Plattsville was Progressive Village Despite no Railroad - cont.

Demand for Land - cont.

Lakes, surrendered some 2,600,000 acres for annuities of 522 pounds to the former and 740 pounds to the latter. This was followed by another surrender of 2,748,000 acres in 1819 by the Missassaugas of Alinwick, for which they were to receive an annuity of 642 pounds.

In 1818, 1820 and 1825 the Chippewas of Lakes Huron and St. Clair, Chancel Ecarte and River Thames, signed away 2,800,000 acres of their hunting grounds, for annuities of 1,200, 1,100 and 150 pounds respectively.

Blenheim

The township of Blenheim is one of the three largest townships in Oxford and when it was completely surveyed it contained some 66,400 acres being 200 more than any other township in the county. Although this township was the first settled, it did not progress as fast as some of the others but as the township opened up it soon came to the front and obtained a reputation for excellent farms and bumper crops. By the census of 1852 it produced 50,340 bushels of wheat, an average of 21 3/4 bushel per acre. In 1830 it had 498 beef cattle, by 1852, there were 1,158. In 1830 it had 245 milch cows and in 1852 there were 1,585 milch cows.

The township of Blenheim formed part of the west riding of the county of York in the first territorial division in 1792 and was described as follows: "Blenheim lies to the northward of Dundas Street opposite Burford" and in 1798 by Act 38 George III, Chapter Five, the township became part of Oxford when it was first formed. The first part of the township was surveyed by Augustus Jones in 1793, a second part by Mr. Riddell in 1795 and a third part by A. Stigman in 1798.

Among the first to receive land up to 1800 were Rev. Thomas Raddish, John Powell, A.C. Willmot, Bell McLean, and Henry McLean. The first lot sold by the Government was lot 10, concession 14 to William Wardue for 15 shillings per acre on August 28, 1833. The first white child born here was in 1801., a female child and the first male was born in 1804. Although Horner built the first sawmill in the township in 1797, by 1857 there were only five sawmills in operation in the township and were capable of sawing one million, eight hundred thousand feet of lumber per annum and were valued at 1,150 pounds and there were also two gristmills.

## Plattsville was Progressive Village Despite no Railroad - cont.

### Plattsville

About the year 1851, Samuel Platt arrived on the spot now occupied by Plattsville and one look at the Nith River then called Smith Creek told him that it was an ideal spot for a gristmill and shortly after arriving here he built the first gristmill in this part of the township. So good was his choice of a location that there has continually been a mill at this spot. The original mill contained four run of stone. The town site was surveyed by James Black and ten years after it was surveyed it was one of the most progressive villages in Oxford especially when you consider that the railroad had passed it by and the nearest station was four miles away. Ed Gatzka drove the stage which made two trips a day to the train with mail and passengers.

The village contained a steam woollen mill which was established on Albert Street and operated by J. Crombie and Company, and hired about 50 hands steadily to manufacture tweeds and stocking yarn. It contained 16 looms, 5 spinning jacks, 1200 spindles and all the other requirements for a complete mill. All this was propelled by a 60-horse power engine. In support of this woollen mill, there was a steam cabinet factory, three carriage and wagon factories and a stave factory. The cabinet factory also manufactured chairs and pails employing about 15 hands. There was also a large foundry owned by A. McArthur and Company who did a large trade in manufacturing mowing and reaping machines and all kinds of agricultural implements.

In 1858 a second flour and grist mill was opened along with a cooper shop which kept both mills supplied with barrels and in 1873 flour from these mills won first prize at the World's Fair in Paris, France.

### Telephone

In 1886, Plattsville was connected with New Hamburg by telephone and became one of the first municipalities of Oxford to be connected onto the long distance lines of the Bell Telephone Co. which at that time was the eighth wonder of the world. The first telephone was located at Veitch and Neals Drug Store, a second one was located at Snider and Stickles. The old Blake telephone that was installed in Plattsville consisted of three boxes mounted on a back board. The topmost box contained a magneto generator, the middle box had a hole in it for the mouthpiece and the bottom box contained the battery for the "talking current". A bell shaped receiver dangled on the left at the top of the box and a crank protruded on the right.



## Plattsville was Progressive Village Despite no Railroad - cont.

### Telephone - cont.

In the nineties, C.A. Rutherford became local manager and the long distance switch was moved to his combination residence and grocery store. There were six customers at that time and the switchboard was installed in a bedroom at his residence. Besides the two original the Baird Furniture Factory, McKie Buggy Works, Dr. J.L. Brown and Dr. A.I. Wilson made up the select group. A uniform rate was charged for a five minute conversation according to the distance. Timid folk would dictate their messages to someone brave enough to use this new fangled piece of equipment.

In 1902 Plattsville applied for local telephones to connect them up not only with their neighbors but to connect business establishments with the railroad at Bright. In 1903 a switchboard was installed in the Bank of Commerce building and the village exchange became a reality with J.K. Curry who was also postmaster and CNR freight agent, as local manager. Mr. Curry retired from this position in 1942 at the age of 82 after 39 years of service. In 1911 24hour service was inaugurated, and Plattsville's 100th telephone was installed. On October 15, 1960 dial system replaced all this and brought about the retirement of Miss Jessie McMeekin and Mrs. Love, the former with 31 years and the latter with 24 years service.

In 1888 a skating rink was built and in 1907 the local hockey team won the OSHA championship. The players on the team were E. Sipes, Doug Brown, H. Shosenberg, Andy Grieves, Perc. McKie, Ab. Grieves, Frank Foster, Jack Robson and Ed Siebert. The rink was destroyed by fire Dec. 30, 1947 but within a year a new one was built to replace it.

### Police Village

In 1908, Plattsville became a police village having had a post office since 1855 when Samuel Platt was named postmaster and held his position until April 4th, 1872 and John Smart became postmaster until December 1887 and John Kiseman Currey served from January 1888 until April 8, 1942 and James Edward Ferguson from 1942 until April 20, 1959. Cameron Gillis Shantz, the present post master was appointed on May 17, 1960 and when he moves into the new post office he will be the first postmaster to operate a post office in Plattsville in a government owned building.



Plattsville was Progressive Village Despite no Railroad - cont.

Police Village - cont.

Little is known of the schools in Plattsville except that Samuel Platt received the contract to build one in 1857 for \$590. This school had an average attendance of 75 students but the enrolment numbered 126. Levi Master was the teacher. During the term that W. Veitch served as secretary for the school he sent two bottles of water from the school well to Toronto for analysis and received a very favorable report. It said that the water was fit for drinking but that two bushel of lime should be put in the well and all the water pumped out. This would clean the well of any impurities that might exist.

The religious requirements of the people were looked after by the Wesleyan Methodist who in 1851 formed part of the Dumfries Circuit in the Blenheim Mission with Rev. J. Shepley in charge and the first church was erected in 1853 at a cost of \$800 and seating capacity for 200. The German Lutherans also had a church in Plattsville, it was erected in 1860. The Anglicans met in the school house in 1862 with Rev. Clotworthy officiating.

Newspaper

Plattsville also boasted of a newspaper known as The Echo which was first published in 1887 by Mr. Chester and continued until 1925 when Mr. Graham published the last edition.

In 1905, a group of businessmen were convinced that oil lay beneath the village and after pooling \$500 , they hired an oil driller who drilled to a level of 1500 feet and struck a sulphur spring and a second hole proved the same and all that A. Echel, J. Baird, R. McKie, John Hall and Dr. Brown got for their efforts was a flowing sulphur well.

Plattsville as not suffered the fate of many other communities even though the railway did pass it by and through the determination of its citizens to make a thriving community out of this hamlet, they were able to get the Canada Sandpaper Company to locate here and today it is the heartbeat of Plattsville.

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart

What were Clergy Reserves? When and why did they originate? What was the final disposition made of them?

There are few men living today who can give a complete answer to these questions yet for nearly half a century they were burning questions with the taxpayer of the township. They were one of the chief causes of the Rebellion of 1837.

The 36th section of the Act of 1791, made provision for reserving out of all grants of public lands, past as well as future, and emoluments arising from the lands so appropriated were to be applicable solely to the maintenance and support of a Protestant Clergy. The endowment of Rectories were also provided for.

These Reserves, instead of being located in large blocks, were scattered all through the townships in lots of 200 acres lying between and surrounded by the lots of actual settlers, who by their labors in clearing and developing the country enhanced the value of these reserves without any outlay by the interested parties. They greatly increased the difficulties of the early settlers in road making., preventing direct communication and intercourse. The Provisions of the Act were intended to establish and make permanent in Upper Canada a State endowed and State supported church without any consideration whatever as to the religious beliefs of the majority of the future inhabitants of the Province.

The words "Protestant Clergy" was interpreted by those in power to mean, "Clergy of the Church of England", and in carrying out the provisions of the Act the benefits obtained were applied solely to the Clergy of that body.

Strong Protest

This soon led to a strong protest from the adherents of the Church of Scotland, who claimed that the term "Protestant Clergy" was applicable to their Clergy as the State Church of Scotland, which had been acknowledged as such since 1707. It was urged on the other hand that the term "Clergy" was commonly used in reference to Ministers of the established Church of England only and had never been officially applied to designate ministers of the Church of Scotland. For many years the claims of the Church of Scotland remained unsettled. In 1819 the question was submitted by Earl Bathurst to the law Officers of the Crown in England which was given out on the 15th of November 1819 the question

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Strong Protest - cont.

as follows: "We are of opinion that through the provisions made by 31 Geo. III chap. 31, for the support of maintaining of a Protestant Clergy, are not confined solely to the clergy of the Church of England, but may be extended also to the clergy of the Church of Scotland, if there be any such settled in Canada (as appears to have been admitted in the debate upon the passing of the act) yet they do not extend to the dissenting ministers, since, we think, the term "Protestant clergy" can apply only to Protestant clergy recognized and established by law."

It was not until the following year that this authoritative opinion of the crown officials was communicated to Lieut. Governor Maitland, but it was suppressed and concealed and was not known in Canada for many years thereafter. In 1823 petitions addressed to the King, Lords and Commons by Doctor Strachan, on behalf of the Upper Canada Clergy Reserves corporation was, transmitted to Earl Bathurst. The Petitioners professed to be seriously alarmed not only for the rights of the Church of England, but for the cause of religion itself. They claimed that the powers and privileges of an Established Church in Canada belonged only to the Church of England and could not include the Church of Scotland. They considered that the setting up of new and rival establishments in Canada would result in disloyalty and would effect the stability of the state.

It has always been a favored method of attack against their opponents, by those enjoying exclusive privileges at the expense of the State, to hint at disloyalty. There was not the slightest foundation or the shadow of an excuse for any such insinuation regarding the conduct or bearing of the dissenting bodies of that period.

Petition Forwarded

In 1826 another petition was forwarded to the King but it produced no immediate results. The Imperial Government however at last decided that some pecuniary aid be granted to other societies than that of the Church of England, but from other sources than the proceeds of the Clergy Reserves. An annual allowance of 750 pounds each, to be taken from the monies received from the Canada Company, were granted to the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church. These payments were first made in 1827.

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Petition Forwarded - cont.

Kings College chartered in 1827 with an endowment of 225,000 acres of land, a part of which was located in the township of Burford, was designed to place the higher branches of education in the Province under the control of one religious body. The president was to be a clergyman of the Church of England and none were to receive the degrees of D.D. but members of that body.

According to a return presented in the year 1833, 1,600 acres had been set apart for the clergy of the Church of Scotland, 400 acres for the Roman Catholic Church, 22,345 for the Clergy of the Church of England and none for any other denomination.

An event occurred in 1836 which caused the most intense surprise and indignation. The Governor in Council created and endowed 44 rectories. To each was assigned an average of nearly 370 acres. This Act aroused the other religious bodies as nothing in the past had done and they joined together to try by a united protest to prevent any further such grants and to bring about the entire separation of Church from State.

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont. page 5

Petition Forwarded - cont.

The Imperial Act of 1841 gave three-fourths of the further proceeds of the Clergy Reserves, to the Clergy of the Churches of England, Scotland and nothing to any other Church. The remaining one fourth was left at the disposal of the executive for religious purposes. It was arranged that small allowances should be made to other churches.

In 1853 another Act was passed by the Imperial Parliament permitting the Canadian authorities to make a final settlement of the question, but provision was made that the legislature should not cancel, suspend or reduce any of the yearly salaries or allowances which had already been given to the clergy of the two denominations recognized by law as established churches or to any other religious denominations of Christians to which the faith of the Crown was pledged, during the natural lives of the parties now receiving the same.

Act Passed

The Act which finally alienated the Clergy Reserves from religious to secular



Act Passed - cont.

purpose was passed by the Canadian Parliament in the year 1854. The sum of \$1,113,770 was set aside for the clergy of the Church of England, nearly half a million to those of the Church of Scotland, and about \$100,000 to the Roman Catholic Clergy. The Methodist Church received \$39,083 in settlement of all of its claims.

The Clergy of the Church of England decided to give their money to the Church in exchange for an annuity during their lives. The final arrangements were made in the year 1855, at which period, the Rev. James Padfield, of Burford who was 52 years of age, received his annual stipend of 121 pounds, 13 shillings, 4 pence, which was figured to be worth \$6,678 based on an average calculation of expectation of life for a continuation to 19 years.

In consideration of the said commutation money to be paid to the said Church Society, the said Church Society covenanted and agreed with the said Clergymen to pay them the annual sum of 100 pounds by equal payments, on the first days of January and July in each and every year, so long as they continued to do duty in Holy Orders from the Diocese.

In the first territorial formation of the county of Oxford in 1800, the township of East Oxford was formed as part of East, West and North Oxford on the Thames. By the Act 33 of Geo. III Chapter III of 1793 it is provided that when any township shall contain over 30 inhabitant householders, it shall be lawful for the township to elect officers, etc. and such that do not have shall be attached to this authority East Oxford became detached from West Oxford about 1822.

The township was surveyed in 1793 by Augustus Jones and Zachariah Burtch was the first settler who came up from New York State about that time but the property on which he settled is now incorporated into the City of Woodstock and the new YMCA building has been erected upon it. Therefore, to Samuel and Lucy Canfield goes the distinction of being the first settlers in what is now East Oxford. Others who followed these settlers into East Oxford before the 1800's were William Tulley, Thomas Merritt, Gordon Tiffney, Sylvester Tiffney, Samuel Street and P.M. Peters. The first lot sold was the east half lot 9, concession one. It was sold to John Phelan on November 12, 1832 at 10 shillings per acre. The first deed registered (the sixth in the county)

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Act Passed - cont.

was on April 20, 1802. A deed from Sylvester Tiffney to William and James Crooks for lot 12 concession 5 consisted of 200 acres.

Hall Erected

In 1850 the township council erected a town hall at Oxford Centre at an expense of \$215. White and Dixon of Woodstock were the contractors. Through this township passed the first recognized road through Oxford and it was known as the Old Stage Road which formed part of the link between Niagara and Amherstburg at the time of John Graves Simcoe in 1793. Simcoe also ordered the building of the Governor's Road along the boundary between East Oxford and Blandford which is now known as No. 2 Highway. The reason for this road being built was that Simcoe foresaw trouble with the United States and figured that better communication should be arranged between Amherstburg and Niagara. Later a plank road was laid through the township which connected the town of Woodstock with Burford and Brantford and is known today as Highway No. 53. The main line of the Great Western Railway between London and Toronto had a station in East Oxford at Eastwood.

Prior to the opening of the Town Plot (Woodstock) in 1830 by the followers of the Duke of Marlborough most of the settlement was done by Ingersoll and his party but when Vansittart arrived at Woodstock and saw the Thames River was only a small stream he moved his family five miles east of the Town Plot and built at the place now known as Eastwood. There are two versions of how Eastwood got its name, one being that he moved to the woods east of the Town Plot and named it Eastwood while the other claims that it was named after his sister, Mrs. East who was his housekeeper.

Henry Vansittart was born at Bishan Abbey in Berkshire, England, a son of George Vansittart. He retired from the Royal Navy as a Admiral and decided for the sake of his children to go to Canada, sailing from England on May 1, 1834 on the Packet Ship Canada arriving in New York on June 1. He was accompanied by Rev. William Betteridge. Another party had proceeded in advance of them to arrange for their accomodation at Woodstock. The wife of Henry Vansittart died at Saratoga on July 2 but was taken on to Woodstock for burial. They entered Canada by way of Hamilton and their belongings which included the rigging for a sailing ship which he had hoped to sail on the river Thames were drawn by oxen on sleds from Hamilton.

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Vansittart's Home

The original forest home of Vansittart reminded an early visitor of both an African village and a man-of-war when she had a chance to visit it in 1837. It was located a couple of miles off the main road in the middle of the forest and at the first glance looked as if several cabins had come together and remained. It is presumed that the Admiral erected the first cabin and as the need arose another was added, all of different shapes and sizes and connected with all sorts of corridors, galleys and closets. The drawing room occupied a whole building and was really a noble room with a fireplace in which they would pile 20 logs at a time. Around this room was a gallery, well lighted with windows there circulated a constant flow of air keeping it cool in the summer and warm in winter. The Admiral had so many ingenious and inexplicable contrivances for warming and airing the house that no insurance company would insure it. Although it was a strange picturesque sort of dwelling, it boasted of luxury and comfort such as were seldom found inland. This house was destroyed by fire about 1843 and Vansittart immediately rebuilt, this time of brick and masonry.

This new home was a typical home built by the English aristocracy of that time only more elaborate. One of the unusual things of this house was that in one corner of the kitchen, 10 steps led up to a little platform sort of a place behind which was an alcove opened cupboard set in the wall. This was a pulpit from which the Admiral used to read the lesson to his staff of servants every Sunday morning.

There was a broad stairway leading up to the second floor sitting room which had a great skylight in the ceiling. In the basement were to be found the wine cellars, laundry and the vault. This vault was the exact replica of the family vault in Old St. Paul's churchyard in Woodstock only smaller and as it was on the same <sup>site</sup> as the original house it is presumed that maybe Mrs. Vansittart was entombed here waiting the completion of a fitting vault at the family plot. His estate was surrounded by a stone wall and made it a little bit of England in Canada.

Admiral Vansittart died due to a fall when a horse threw him. the horse was shot the day after the Admiral died and was buried beneath a large chestnut tree in front of the house and a brass plaque was placed upon the tree stating why the horse was shot and that this was his final resting place. At the Admiral's funeral four clergymen were present and conducted the service.

Sawmill Built

At Eastwood, Vansittart built a sawmill which was considered to be the best in the county. It was run by a 35 horsepower engine and had three upright and six circular saws, two turning lathes and a planing machine. In one year they sold 500,000 feet of lumber and the mill was capable of sawing 50,000 feet in a 12 hour shift and was valued at 1,500 pounds.

Logs were brought to the mill by a homemade railroad. A ridge of ground formed the right-of-way and on it wooden tracks were laid. Flat cars which were pulled by oxen drew logs from the holdings of Vansittart in Blandford township to the mill at Eastwood. Along with this mill was a gristmill capable of grinding 30 bushels per hour and valued at 400 pounds. In 1857 there was born in Eastwood a girl by the name of Elizabeth Bigley who was to become notoriously famous as a swindler known as Gold Brick Cassie. Before she left home she had obtained in the neighborhood of \$1,000 from neighbors and then went on to commit several forgeries and was ruled insane. She later married a doctor Chadwick and went to Cleveland to live. While living in Cleveland she forged the signature of Andrew Carnegie and obtained \$250,000. When questioned at the bank, she claimed that she was his daughter. In all, she swindled one and half million dollars from unsuspecting people. She died in jail in 1907 and was buried at Woodstock.

In 1861 the village of Eastwood had a population of 150 people. It still had a sawmill owned by R.W. Burrows Co., while Peter Belton and John Robinson were the blacksmiths, John T. Jack and George Arkell were storekeepers, Daniel Phelan was the innkeeper, William Nunn was the schoolteacher, John Shaw, the shoemaker, Rev. Stephen B. Kellogg was the rector of the Church of England and Michael Overholt was the justice of the peace.

About the year 1836 Eastwood had a very prosperous brick yard which was operated by Joseph Clark and the first brick house built in Woodstock, which was situated immediately west of the rectory, was built from bricks from this yard.

Had Railway

From the very beginning Eastwood was a crossroads for transportation in Oxford and in 1853 the Great Western Railway placed enough importance on Eastwood that



Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Had Railway - cont.

it opened a station there. The reason for this importance was in no small way due to the fact that it was the junction of the Governor's Road and the Great Plank Road.

The Plank Road was constructed because the freighters who hauled commerce between Hamilton and London preferred any road than the road through Paris and its long steep hill.

In 1842 operations commenced on the Plank Road under the direction of the Provincial Board of Works. Colonel Gzowski the famous Polish Refugee, was Engineer-in-Chief. His deputies were authorized to provide for a first class roadway, graded up to a width of 32 feet. Material to grade the road-bed where it ran through level country, was taken from the sides, leaving shallow ditches eight feet wide and two feet in depth and for the high grades across the low spots, the heavy cuttings furnished an abundant supply of soil and gravel.

Robert C. Muir received the contract for constructing the road through Burford and across Oxford to its intersection with Dundas Street.

After the grading was completed preparations were made to cover the centre of the roadbed to a width of 16 feet with three inch Pine plank, resting on six 3 x 8 pine sleepers, which were imbedded in the earth to a depth of six and seven inch spikes of the very best quality, were used to secure the planks to the sleepers.

The driving of the last spike opened to traffic, what was probably the finest piece of road ever constructed in Canada. Immediately there was an enormous increase in travel. The first railway between Hamilton and London, was set 10 years away and all the trade, commerce and traffic between the two cities flowed backwards and forward through the centre of the township, adding much to the growth and general prosperity of the village in particular and the township in general and to the satisfaction of the 12 innkeepers located along the line.

Two of the most prominent teamsters were Foote and Rowland, who transported large quantities of merchandise over the new road. The wear and tear caused by the immense loads continually passing up and down, soon made it necessary to effect repairs and in the course of a couple of years it became evident to the government, that as a permanent road-bed, wood was a failure.

Eastwood Sawmill Built by VanSittart - cont.

Planks Removed

It was then found necessary to commence removing the plank and replace them by a heavy coat of gravel and broken stone, extending when passing through the villages, to the full width of roadway. In some spots both sleepers and the partly worn planks were covered over, and up to a recent period some of these were visible a short distance west of Cathcart, still in a good state of preservation.

A telegraph line had been erected adding to the importance of the "Stone Road" as it was later called and Burford village had become a prosperous place, with an energetic and progressive community. Prosperity continued until the opening of the Great Western Railway in 1853. when traffic almost entirely ceased and travel gradually fell off. Today Eastwood still remains the crossroads of Oxford County as three highways converge at this point being No. 2, 53 and 401 and the main occupation of the residents is unending task of catering to the travelling public.

The first District Council of the District of Brock, met in the Court House, Woodstock, on Tuesday, the 8th day of February 1842, pursuant to the Act 4th and 5th Victoria, Chapter 10, by which Act a meeting of the council was to be held on the second Tuesday of the months of February, May, August, and November with no meeting to be longer than six days. The Governor to appoint a warden, treasurer and clerk. Each township to elect one councillor and townships, which have more than 300 freeholders and householders on the assessment list, to elect two Councillors elected for three years and their qualification, 300 pounds freehold, free from all incumbrances. Lands were not to be taxed more than 1½ per acre in any one year. By-laws were to be submitted to the Governor General, who might disallow them within 30 days and were without effect until the expiration of that period. Councils might be dissolved at any time by the Governor General. Two auditors were appointed annually.

The Hon. Peter Boyle de Blaquiere was the first district warden. William Lapenotiere was the clerk, H. C. Barwick was the treasurer and James Cull was the surveyor.

In 1846 an amendment was made to the District Council Act by which the councillors were not to be paid more than 6 shillings, 3 pence per day and they had the right to appoint their own Warden, clerk and treasurer and were to hold two meetings a year, in February and in October, and not to last over nine days. Jared Vining of Nissouri was the first warden under this Act.

#### Districts Abolished

In 1849, when districts were abolished, further amendments were made to the above Act by which the reeves and deputy-reeves of the several municipalities composed the county council, Benjamin Van Norman of Dereham was the first County Warden (1850) H.C. Barwick was the treasurer and T.C. Shenston was the clerk. Previous to the establishment of the municipal councils monies were granted from time to time for public improvements. In 1806, 1600 pounds was appropriated for the improvements of "the old stage road", the leading highway through the province from the

Brownsville was the Site of Many Firsts - cont.

Districts Abolished - cont.

eastern to the western district. How judiciously these appropriations were expended we cannot say, but one thing is certain, that not until the county had the managements of it's own local affairs, were public improvements prosecuted with vigor and success and the County of Oxford in this particular case compared favourably with any other in the province. One example of this was at the time of the building of the Great Western Railway, when after much debate, it was finally agreed upon to invest 25,000 pounds of the county funds and it was not until after its' completion that the investment was appreciated by the residents of Oxford. The last year that all taxes were levied by the county (or district) council with the assessed value of 298,189 pounds, 12 shillings, 5 pence was 1849 and the total taxes were 2,651 pounds, 16 shillings, 10 pence. Of this, 681 pounds, 19 shillings, 8 pence was for school purposes, 966 pounds, 18 shillings, 9 pence went to the townships for local improvements leaving 1,002 pounds, 18 shillings, 5 pence for the operation of the county. The government grant of 750 pounds went to public or common schools and 150 pounds for grammar or secondary schools. They also paid the judges and all expenses attending the criminal administration of justice.

Territorial Division

When the first territorial division of the province was made, the township of Dereham was attached to Norfolk County. By the Act 38 George III, chapter 5 (1798) the township was attached to the township of Oxford. The first portion of the township was surveyed in 1799 by Mr. Hamley, another portion in 1810 by Samuel L. Willmot and a third portion or rather a resurvey by Russell Mount. The first land granted in the township was on the 4th day of September 1800 to John and George Ball, the Hon. Robert Hamilton. Robert Addison and the Hon. Peter Russell and the first lot sold by the government was the north half of lot number 12 in the first concession of the township. It was sold on January 22, 1834 to Stilson Hackett at 17 shillings, 6 pence per acre.

For several years the township of Dereham was attached to the township



Brownsville was the Site of Many Firsts - cont.

Territorial Division - cont.

of West Oxford as they did not have the necessary 30 inhabitants or householders to become a separate township. In 1825 the following were the names on the assessment roll of the township; Ira Bishop, Daniel Dopp, Stillman Smith, Henry Dopp, Stillson Hackett, Haron Sinclier, George Turner, James Bodwell, Phileas Colburn, Daniel Deane, George Parry, Dohn (sic) Deans, Robert Miller, Philip Gillard, James Merchant and Charles Anson. These men had 68 acres under cultivation, five horses and 22 oxen. The first township meeting held after Dereham separated from West Oxford was held in January 1832 with H. Tillson being the first township clerk. On January 1, 1870 Briston Paine Brown married a daughter of James Burdich at Walsingham and after much moving around settled on Dereham on lots 22 and 23 concession 9 and immediately began building and securing more land until they secured a total of 1600 acres and as his sons grew up he divided this land among them.

Methodist Preacher

Briston Brown was a Methodist preacher prior to coming to Dereham and had preached at the Wade schoolhouse and received permission to perform marriages from the officials at London. When he came to Dereham in 1841 there were only 10 settlers in the neighborhood of what is now Brownsville and these settlers held no respect for the Sabbath so Briston Brown proceeded to hold meetings at homes or barns and to help him in this work he persuaded two of his former associates to move to Dereham by the names of James Louck and James Dennis along with their families. About the year 1842 they established a church and in 1843 formed a Temperance Society and had Rev. E. Bailey, a famous saddlebag preacher, to include this church in the Malahide Circuit and preach here every fourth week. This was the beginning of Brownsville and by 1855 the original church was too small so a new frame church was built at a cost of \$1,200.00. The Brown family donated the ground and H. Helmka was contracted to do the building. In 1867 the Methodist Church was part of the Tillsonburg circuit and in 1874 Brownsville became the centre of the Brownsville Circuit. The first Baptist Church was organized on January 28, 1880 and J.B. Moore was invited to perform the services and in November

Brownsville was the Site of Many Firsts - cont.

Methodist Preacher - cont.

1880 the present Baptist Church was opened with Mr. Moore as the minister in charge.

There was a school started in an empty log house about 1841 and Mrs. Abraham Matthews was hired as teacher for the summer at \$8.00 per month with board. She lodged with the students at their respective homes. In the winter Mr. Hewitt was engaged as teacher at a salary of \$12.00 per month with board. A new frame school was erected in 1844 and in 1867 a two-room brick school was built with one half mile north of the main corner and served as the centre of education until 1914 when the present school was built.

First in Canada

To Brownsville goes the honor of having the first Co-operative Cheese Factory in Canada which they formed in 1867 and by 1869 three other factories had joined this co-operative movement. They were the factories at North Bayham, Cambellton and Culloden. In 1903 the Canada Milk Co. purchased the Brownsville plant and started another first for the dairy industry of Brownsville when they started to make powdered milk here. This was the first commercial plant in North America to produce powdered milk commercially on a large scale. This was not really anything new as the people of ancient times knew that by putting milk on a hot stone that it would evaporate the water content and leave a powder milk on a stone which they would scrape off and keep for future use. This basically was the procedure at Brownsville only that they let the milk flow over hot rollers and then with large knives scrape the powder from the rollers. This was known as the roller method and the product from this factory was sold largely to the baking trade. Later the spray method was introduced. In this method the milk was first heated in vacuum tanks to remove most of the moisture content, then under pressure, it was sprayed through a fine mist nozzle into the drying chamber where the rest of the moisture would be evaporated and the powdered milk would settle to the bottom of the tank. The Borden Company purchased this plant and it closed in 1928.

## Brownsville was the Site of Many Firsts - cont.

### First in Canada - cont.

In 1900 there were approximately 550 brick and tile yards in operation in Ontario and one of these was located at Brownsville and today is one of few still remaining in operation and is known as the Deller Tile Yard. It was started about 1870 by Henry Helmka who first experimented with brick making and he sold out to John Kaar who later sold to Deller and it has remained in the family ever since.

### Erie Clay

The source of supply for this industry is an area of Erie clay which is located here and the quarried clay is taken to a pugmill to be ground and then to disintegrator where all the stones and foreign material are removed. The powdered clay is then mixed with water and forced through tube dies of the required size. The molded tile are then put in a drying area and when ready are put into ovens to be baked. The temperature in these baking ovens is in the neighborhood of 1,700 degrees. Modern improvements have been made from time to time but the basic principals still remain the same.

A cheese box factory started here in 1865 when H. Helmka started a sawmill and after several years of successful operation sold out to George Eddington. In 1903 it was destroyed by fire but soon rebuilt and remained in operation until early in the 1940's.

The first post office opened here on the 1st of August 1854 and received mail on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 12 noon with E. Foster Brown the first postmaster. Since that time 13 postmasters have faithfully served the citizens of Brownsville with the Corbett family of Jonathon (1889 - 1922) and Norman (1922 - 1957) serving as postmasters from 1889 to 1957 which is a noble achievement.

In 1862 a blacksmith shop owned by George McSherry was producing a plow which was superior to any other plow on the market and his finished product was a constant winner of Gold Medals at the provincial exhibitions.

### Railroad

In 1872 when the Canadian Southern Railroad was laid out it travelled to the south of Brownsville and a depot was located on the farm of Benjamin Hopkins which formed a ready outlet for the products of the mills and

Brownsville was the Site of Many Firsts - cont.

Railroad - cont.

factories of Brownsville to large metropolises of the east. Contact with the centre of Oxford County was chiefly by way of the Culloden Road which connected Brownsville with Ingersoll.

Although Brownsville has been able to stand the march of progress and her oldest industry had been able to keep abreast with the times, the village itself was faced with destruction when in 1948 fire broke out in the local feedmill and spread to the library and private residence. It took the combined efforts of all the residents and aid from the fire brigades of all the surrounding communities to bring this \$35,000 fire under control. Today all the scars of this fire have been removed and its citizens enjoy the peace and happiness that their forefathers also enjoyed.



Oxford County has long been famous for its dairy products and it is interesting to note one of the first efforts to make these products known on the British and American markets was and still is known as the Big Cheese.

In 1863 Harvey Farrington of New York State, who was a cheesemaker by trade and desired a change in his place of living, paid a visit to Oxford County to examine the possibility of establishing a cheese factory here and was so impressed with what he saw that he returned home and disposed of his business there and brought his family to the Norwich area in 1864 and opened a factory about June 10 of the same year. In the first season of operation he made 15 tons of cheese which was sold for shipment to England. The following year (1865) Hiram Ranney, James Harris, George Galloway and John Adams built factories and they produced 40 tons of cheese for export their first season. It is presumed that a season was the time cattle were on grass as in those days cows yielded little milk when confined to the stable.

In 1866, within two years of the opening of the first factory, plans were underway for an undertaking of great magnitude, the making of the Big Cheese. An organization known as the Ingersoll Cheese Manufacturing Company of Oxford County was organized for making the largest and best cheese ever to cross the Atlantic to England to compete with the then long established American factories who had a monopoly on this market. If Canada was to get its' share it would have to send something spectacular and of excellent quality that could be exhibited in the British Trade Fairs. Therefore the sole aim and purpose of the Ingersoll Cheese Manufacturing Company was to firmly establish a market for Canadian Cheese in England.

#### Plans Laid

Plans were made in 1865 for the making of the cheese in 1866 and in the early days of June, Hiram Ranney, James Harris and George Galloway all arranged to make cheese on the same day. This cheese was made and put into the press in each factory and was in 60 lb. cheese and was pressed for 48 hours. Then all the cheese was taken to the Harris factory

Big Cheese Spread the Dairy Products Fame - cont.

Plans Laid - cont.

which was located just south of the corner of the second concession and what is now No. 19 highway in West Oxford. The well of this factory is still to be seen here and the Harris home still stands at the junction of 401 and No. 19 highways on the high ground overlooking the factory site.

When the cheese arrived at the Harris factory it was all put through the curd mill under the watchful eye of Robert Facey, the head cheesemaker, who had learned the trade with Mr. Ranney, possibly in the United States. His assistant was Miles Harris. The cheese was all cut in small cubes in order that it could be properly salted for safe keeping and proper curing. When the salting was completed it was put into a large metal hoop and when it was filled it was put under the pressure of six large screws which were tightened the same amount on each screw so that equal pressure was exerted on all points of the hoop. The cheese was kept under pressure for eight days and turned twice a week by a special mechanical device specially made for the job. The finished cheese weighed 7,300 pounds and was 21 feet in diameter.

Shipped to England

This cheese was shipped from Ingersoll on August 23, 1866 to the New York State Fair at Saratoga, being hauled to Ingersoll on a special lumber wagon as no ordinary wagon could carry this load. After being on display at Saratoga it was loaded aboard ship at New York and shipped to England and was eventually sold to a Liverpool cheese merchant. By all reports this cheese achieved its objective as in a few years Canada was shipping over 300,000 boxes of cheese to England annually.

This was not the largest ever made in Canada as Mammoth Cheese was made later in eastern Ontario. These facts were obtained from an early issue of an Ontario Milk Producer in the Ingersoll Public Library and the article was by James A. Crawford.

The township of West Oxford was originally part of the territory known as Oxford on the Thames and in 1798, West Oxford became one of the first townships of the county. The township of Dereham was attached to

Big Cheese Spread the Dairy Products Fame - cont.

Shipped to England - cont.

West Oxford for administrative purposes until 1832. The township was first surveyed in 1793 when Augustus Jones partially surveyed the township. Later in 1825 Mahlon Burwell completed this survey. Prior to 1800 the following were granted land: Benjamin Loomis, Thomas Dexter, Samuel Canfield, Sr., and Allen Sage. Major Thomas Ingersoll was entrusted with the task of settling the township. He and Benjamin Loomis were the first to move in coming about 1793. Ingersoll brought with him two cows which were possibly the first two cows in the county. The first white child born in the township was in 1801. The first lot sold by the government was lot 9, concession 1 sold to Nicholas Brink at 15 shillings per acre on May 1, 1830. The second lot registered in the county was in this township on December 22, 1800, when Thomas Dexter of the township of Burton in the district of Niagara transferred lot No. 6, concession 2 to Luther Haskins. From this we find that all who received land grants did not remain in the township.

First Sawmill

James Burdwick built the first sawmill at Centreville about 1805 which measured 16 by 16 feet. About 1810 it came into the possession of Andrew Westbrook who hurriedly left the country just before the War of 1812 and returned as an American General to lead a raiding party which created havoc in Oxford and also destroyed the mill by fire.

An early school in the township was located on lot 13, concession one in 1817 and here Peter Teeple conducted a meeting where queries proposed by Robert Gourlay, an agitator, were answered. In a school report of a school kept in West Oxford by Rufus Foster in 1825 we find the following family names: Carroll, McCarthney, Reynolds, Foster, Galloway, Sage, Stephens, Piper, Nicholis, Hess and Scrambling. A Sabbath school was also reported in July 1827 with 15 students who had committed to memory over 3,000 verses of scripture, some learning over 500 verses.

Long before the coming of communities in Oxford County, churches were formed and the first one recorded in West Oxford was a Methodist meeting house which was formed by Nathan Bangs early in 1802 and he would hold

## Big Cheese Spread the Dairy Products Fame - cont.

### First Sawmill - cont.

meetings at settlers' cabins with other joining in as they arrived. In the diary of Charles Askin, who in 1806 rode through West Oxford on route from Sandwich to York, claimed to have found a settlement in Oxford with a Methodist meeting house. In 1823, we have record of a church being on lot 15, concession 1 at the farm of John Galloway, one half mile south of the Stage Road. The frame church built February 18, 1824 was registered with Horner who was registrar of the county at that time. To-day this church is known as the West Oxford United Church and many of the early settlers rest in the cemetery here.

One of the early communities of the township which have since disappeared was Pipers Corners, which came into being at lot 13, concession 2 about 1817 in the same area in which an early school was established (before 1817). A second school was built at Burtch Corners which was a mile south of Pipers Corners. This school was burned down in spite about 1833 and a third school was built in 1834 on lot 13, on the property of Simon Mabee. The Mabee home is still standing on this location. In July 1808 Simon Mabee along with Peter Teeple, Zachariah Burtch, Deborah Sales, Abigail Burtch, Elizabeth Scott, Abigail Mabee banded together to come under the watchful care of each other and to hold covenant on the second Saturday of each month. This formed the original Baptist organization in the county.

### Lumbering Community

Sweaburg (Sweaborg) was a lumbering community in West Oxford but with the passing of the lumbering trade it was able to adjust itself and remain in existence. It was originally called Floodtown after its founder a Mr. Flood and it was laid out by Calvin Martin in 1855. Flood built a sawmill near where the four corners are and with the Stage Road only two miles away the combination of a good road and a sawmill was a good inducement for settlers and this area rapidly filled. Two schools were started, one, one half north of the village on the east side of the road and the other on the third concession in the gore where the Stage road crosses the third concession. In 1858 the following reports appear concerning these schools: In November 1857 Benjamin Thornton received \$500.00 to



Big Cheese Spread the Dairy Products Fame - cont.

Lumbering Community - cont.

build a new schoolhouse which was completed in 1858 when the old school sold for \$5.25 at a public auction. Frederick Cody received \$30.00 for collecting fees from the students and paying the teachers and other obligations. The pupils were charged 25 cents per quarter. The head teacher received \$241.66 for his services, a second teacher was hired for the younger students at \$60.00 per year. Twelve cord of wood were purchased at 49 cents per cord delivered and was to be of solid beech or maple, all body wood and no limbs and cut in two foot lengths.

Saw Mills

By 1867 it contained two sawmills and in connection with one owned by J.R. Bastedo there was a shingle factory and a lath mill. The sawmill contained three circular saws propelled by a 16 horse power engine and in the shingle and lath mill four saws were driven by an eight hp engine. John Carr was the proprietor of the other mill.

In 1865 the settlers here were a group who, though they had different religious beliefs, saw no reason why they couldn't all use the same building for this purpose and the Free Will Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians agreed to build a Union Meeting House. The Baptists and the Presbyterians eventually withdrew leaving it for the Methodists who in 1888 erected a brick building which is still in use.

Floodtown was also a stopping place for the stages that operated in this part of the country and boasted of two good hotels, as hotels went, to accommodate the traveller with lodgings or refreshments. It seems that refreshments for the traveller were the biggest concern of the tavern keeper as the sleeping accommodations were of the bare minimum with usually not more than a bed in a very small room. They were not equipped with a wash stand or any of the paraphernalia of a dressing table. But lest I should be hereafter accused of disseminating erroneous or garbled statements, it may be as well to inform you that, on descending from the bedroom and walking outside the door, they would find something in the shape of a pig trough supplied with water and in this way they could wash if they so pleased after they had dressed or before if they had any disposition to walk out in their morning-gown.

Big Cheese Spread the Dairy Products Fame - cont.

Post Office

In 1873 this community was to post office ---? and the name was changed to Sweaborg after a port in the Gulf of Finland. Its fortifications protecting the city of Henensfors in 1855 during the Crimean War when it was bombarded for two days and the name was chosen for an act of respect for its heroism. W. Sudeworth was the first postmaster and James Pullin closed the office in 1915 in favour of rural mail delivery service.

In 1973 this community was to receive the horrible news that five people had been murdered by a maniac. Early on Sunday morning on Dec. 21 Timothy Topping killed his wife, two sons and two daughters. Two older boys fought with their father and secured the axe which had beheaded the other members of the family and threw it away. Topping then secured a knife and attempted to cut his own throat. He only partly succeeded and they got control of the knife. Topping was arrested and charged with murder but was allowed to go to the funeral under guard. At the funeral there was about 120 democrat wagons carrying friends to the funeral which took place at Beachville. Topping was committed to the asylum at London where he attacked a guard and was knocked with a club and died of injuries.

Today Sweaburg has become a typical local community frequently found on paved roads in this county. Many of her citizens find employment in Woodstock and on the outskirts of Sweaburg is the main source of the water supply for the city of Woodstock.

After the early settlers had started to clear the land the question is what did they raise and how did they make a living? The growing of hemp was strongly advocated. Flax was cultivated by nearly every farmer for domestic use as they were obliged to manufacture nearly all their own clothing, there being scarcely any market for their produce. They were unable to export any of their crops at this period owing to the duties imposed in England and having little or no money to pay for the necessities of life they were compelled to get along with what they could furnish from their own labors. It is on record that not enough could be obtained from the distillers for a bushel of wheat to pay for the cost of production. The Hessian Fly was much in evidence and added to the difficulties of the farmers. The orchards produced abundant crops of apples which were sold for 1 shilling 3 pence per 60 lbs. and when manufactured into cider 10 shillings per barrel of 32 gallons. Ordinary laborers were paid 35 pounds per year and if hired for the summer months only three pounds 15 shillings per month and if just for the harvest 5 shillings per day. The cost of clearing and fencing an acre of wild land was reckoned as 3 pounds 15 shillings, a horse was worth from 15 to 20 pounds, a cow six pounds, an ox 10 pounds, sheep 12 shillings six pence.

#### Market

About 1833 Hamilton became an important market where cash for wheat and other products of the soil was the inducement which caused many Oxford farmers to team his produce to that village. The current prices were for wheat per bushel, seven shillings, flour was three dollars a hundred, oats two shillings six pence, beef \$5.00 per hundred, butter one shilling a pound.

We have not been able to ascertain when the first township meeting in Nissouri was held but after much searching we have found that there was a meeting held on January 7, 1821 at the house of James Howard. The warrant was issued by Peter Teeple and Thomas Horner and addressed to A. Lewis, constable, James O'Brien was elected clerk, John Uren and James O'Brien were the assessors and John Stephens collector. It was moved by E. Withers seconded by James O'Brien and resolved that the next township meeting be held at the house of James Howard lot 13 concession 6 on the first Monday in January 1822. The assessment roll of 1822 contains the

First Settlers to Medina Arrived in the Year 1819 - cont.

Market - cont.

following names of people living in what is now East and West Nissouri as the two townships were not separated until 1851. Bowers, Burgess, Uren, Coleman, Smith, Wheaton, Dean, Cunningham, Paul, Logan, Vining, Comstock, Perkins, Saithere, Bailey, Farley, O'Brien, McDonald, Hosman, Allwood, Shielock, Caiten, Agar, Stephens, Enor, Moore, Davis, Haywood, Bovard, Burdick, Day, Cross, GraCameron, Ramage, McNee, Cocon, Titus, Brown, Withers, Kellsall, Shaw and Lewis.

No Mention

In the first territorial division of the province on July 16, 1792 we found no mention of the township of Nissouri and we find that it was first mentioned by Act II George IV, Chapter 3 (1821) by which Act it is together with the township of Zorra added to the county of Oxford. Previous to that period all the territory of the Nissouri and Zorra townships along with West and North Oxford were assessed together and their united population being 1,719 souls. By 1850 it had increased to 14,914 for the same area. The population of Nissouri in 1820 was 97 souls and in East Nissouri in 1852 there were 2,118 souls.

The area of Nissouri and Zorra was surveyed by Shubal Parke in 1820 and Thaddeus Davis was granted land in Nissouri township on July 6, 1820. By the Act 14 and 15 Victoria Chapt. V (1851) it was enacted that East Nissouri would include and consist of that part of the present township of Nissouri which lies eastward of the line dividing the seventh concession from the eighth. The first lot sold in what is now East Nissouri by the government was the second lot of concession eleven and was sold to John Campbell on July 17, 1834 at 10 shillings 6 pence per acre. In 1844 21 pounds, six shillings and nine pence was granted for roads and bridges in East Nissouri and in 1851 31 pounds, 15 shillings and 3 pence. The 1851 grant being for county roads. Since the establishment of township councils in 1850 they were to raise within their respective municipalities any sums they may require for public improvements. Any appropriation made by the county council since that time has been only to county roads and bridges; that is such that lie between two or more municipalities.



## First Settlers to Medina Arrived in the Year 1819 - cont.

### Reeve Elected

Jared Vining was elected reeve of Nissouri in 1850 and had served on district council since 1842 being elected warden in 1847 and 1848.

Thomas Bailey also served on the district council as a second member for Nissouri from 1845. In 1852 R. McDonald was clerk of the township and tax collector and the total assessed value was 175,487 pounds. The taxes levied were 107 pounds, 3 shillings, 2 pence, this being the county rate only.

One of the earliest settlers in Nissouri who left his mark in the township was Thomas B. Brown who was a devout Methodist who first settled on or about lot 26 concession eight about 1820.

In his autobiography he tells of the days when whiskey was king and Sunday was just another day of the week. If you had a job to do and required the help of your neighbors the first thing you did was get a supply of local whiskey in and it was quite often a concern of the settler to see that the refreshments lasted a little longer than the job or the job might not be finished. Generally the night was spent in a spree, and it was not considered good etiquette to leave before all the refreshments were consumed. This applied to all gatherings whether for work or for pleasure. He tells of a marriage in his own family where 12 gallons of whiskey and one gallon of rum were provided. As he had been brought up a devout Methodist he was very much against this type of carrying on and was active in starting the first temperance society in Oxford.

### Wedding

He recalls the first wedding in the township between Donald McDonald and Sarah Cameron. They were married by Charles Ingersoll UP and it was a genuine scotch wedding with all the highland dnaces, jigs and reels performed by old and young alike. The first death that he recalls was that of Hugh Davis who was killed by a falling tree and the first sermon which he heard was by a Mr. Jeffries in a barn on lot 13 concession 3 who later turned out to be an imposter. He mentions no dates but he does mention that Elders Mabee and French were two Baptists who came up from Oxford to preach about this time. Baptist records show that they were here in 1827 and on June 17 of that year Jared Vining was baptized into

First Settlers to Medina Arrived in the Year 1819 - cont.

Wedding - cont.

the Baptist faith and that on the fourth Friday of May, 1828 Salmon Vining was ordained in a new barn on his property. At the same time a Methodist preacher by the name of Mathew Whiting of the London circuit visited the homes of John Uren and Frances Bowers in the Cherry Grove area and started a Methodist class. It was at one of these meetings that T.B. Brown became active in 1829 and later preached the first sermon, heard in the town of St. Mary's at the shanty of George Tracey. Through this work he became better known as "Bishop Brown".

The first school in the area known as Brown's Corners was a co-operative type school with three families joining together Thomas Brown, James Brown, Chauncey Purdy and building a schoolhouse which was located half way between the seventh and eighth concession, one-half mile south of the Medina sideroad, this being about equal distance from all three homes. They shared the expenses of the teacher and in obtaining fuel. The exact date is unknown but according to the ages of the students it is presumed to have been about 1840. One of the teachers was Icabod Horsman who taught readin', 'riting and 'rithmetic to the tune of a hickory stick which was with him all through the day and he never hesitated to use it. It is not known if it helped persuade her but he did later marry one of the Brown girls.

This school was abandoned and in 1852 Emily Brown was granted a certificate to teach by Mr. McDonald who was superintendent of education at Thamesford and started at the age of 15 to teach in the old log house of James Brown who had moved to Michigan. Shortly after this another school was erected near the present school corner in the mid '50's. This school was of logs and faced north. The pupils sat on benches arranged around the side, a slanting board served as a desk and the slates had a red felt cloth around them to reduce the noise. A large box stove supplied the heat and the back wall was adorned with pegs for hats and coats, etc. while a black-board and a map adorned the other walls. This school was later replaced by the present school which was made from bricks made at the Lakeside brickyard. In 1862 Brown's school had an attendance of 86 with an average of 59 attending with Montgomery Walden as the teacher.

First Settlers to Medina Arrived in the Year 1819 - cont.

Wedding - cont.

Like many other churches in the county, the church at Brown's Corners was built in response to the desires of the people for a place where they could worship as they wished. They felt that it showed signs of progress by having a special building for services rather than meeting in homes, barns and groves as they had done for some years. The first building used was the schoolhouse in the 50's and in 1860, there are records of John McKim, Rev. T.B. Brown, Rev. F.S. Ryerson, Brother Joseph Lince and J.N. McAinish preaching here. The member formed a branch of the Good Templers Society to promote temperance and by 1863 they had a church building of their own with much aid coming from Rev. T.B. Brown and his five sons. The present church is on the original site which was given by John Uren. One of the things that was rather unusual on the inside was that ranged around and facing the big box stove were three straight backed pews where people could warm themselves in bad weather before going to their family pews and the first departure from them would have gladly been delayed as these stoves never did a first rate job of heating.

Needs Supplied

Although this corner supplied the wants of the people with spiritual and educational needs it was necessary to go to Oliver or Medina for the necessities of life.

Oliver is located on the township line between east and west Nissouri at lot 20 and at this corner the government, through the efforts of Thomas Oliver, located a post office at the store of John G. McLeod on April 1, 1878 and it remained here until the 30th of October 1914 when rural mail took over. The H. Lockrey family also served as storekeepers and postmasters here. Due to the fact that Thomas Oliver had done so much to secure a post office here the local residents felt that it was only right that the place should be named after him. A cheese factory was started here and Mr. Williamson was cheesemaker with John A. McKay serving as secretary for over 25 years. The present factory was built about the turn of the century.

First Settlers to Medina Arrived in the Year 1819 - cont.

Needs Supplied - cont.

The first settlers at Medina according to Crown deeds were John Bessey (Beasley) and Gleasons, Bessey coming from Niagara Falls in 1819 and the Gleasons coming from Port Covington, New York in 1826. Reuben Gleason located on the south side of the present village. Joseph Gleason later occupied the Bessey farm and the community became known as Gleason Corners. Reuben Gleason gave the land for the first school about 1846. The first school was built a little further north than the present school which was built in 1871. Some of the teachers at this school were Annie Donnohoe in 1862, Mr. Hunt, Mr. John Henry, Miss M. Molland and Miss Mary Atkinson. They all taught prior to 1900.

Name Given

The name Medina was given by Joseph Beek the first postmaster. The name Medina is an important name to Mohammedins ranking next to Mecca in importance. The name "Medinet el Nabi" which means "the city of the great prophet" is the most sacred city of the Moslems as its mosque contains Mohammed's tomb. The post office was established here in 1862 and originally received mail from Thamesford on the route which served Thamesford, Kintore, Medina, Lakeside and Harrington. Later Harrington was dropped and Mr. Harlick the hotel keeper at Lakeside was courier. Joseph H. Beek was the first postmaster in November 1862. Donald McDonald in 1880 and Alfred Goodbow from 1884 to 1913 when rural mail took over and Red Heem Gleason became the first rural carrier.

In 1867 the community boasted of a fine general store, a blacksmith, a wagon shop as well as a boot and shoe shop. Charles Ingli being the blacksmith and Arthur Blannerhasset being the wagon maker. By 1862 a hotel presumably the Half Way house was operated by David Sturgess and later by John Hurford in 1869. The first store is presumed to have been started by Mr. Braess.

About the turn of the century a telephone system was formed here and the line extended from Kintore to Medina with phones at the Kintore side, the Medina store and A. Whetstone. The exchange being at the Medina store in 1905 and it was connected with St. Marys and known as the Medina and St. Marys Telephone Co. There still is an independent exchange at Medina being part of the Blanshard Municipal Telephone System. In 1917 this was the largest rural firm of its kind in Canada. In this system, the subscribers pay their phone bills with their taxes.



The Government of the Province had fallen into the hands of a clique, composed chiefly of the aristocratic element, called the Family Compact. They filled almost entirely the offices of trust and had the management of the public lands. They ruled in an arbitrary manner, which made them very unpopular in the country. After seeking in vain for redress for their grievances, a party led by William Lyon Mackenenzie raised a rebellion which however was soon quelled with the loss of only a few lives.

Of all wars a civil war is most to be dreaded, for your nearest neighbor may be your greatest enemy. Mackenzie was naturally a good man, but was led to take a wrong step. As the Family Compact had been fairly beaten by sound argument through the press and as their maltreatment of the colony had been clearly proved, if they had been patient they would have got redress. The Rebellion, however, had the effect of bringing about reforms sooner than would have been done in a constitutional way for the British Government sent out Lord Durham to inquire into the administration of affairs in Canada. His report gave the Home Government a better idea of the troubles of the colony and they granted Canada a new Constitution, embodying the principle of responsible government and also gave them a Liberal Governor, Lord Elgin. These changes caused the downfall of the Family Compact. Under this new administration the country became settled, the people, generally at least, being well satisfied with our present form of government, preferring it to any other and it has developed into one of the finest in the world's history.

#### Boiling Points

In the township of South Norwich the Rebellion was a big item and was the centre of one of the boiling points of Upper Canada. The three main points being Otterville, Norwich and Burford. The leader in this uprising for the Oxford District was a Dr. Charles Duncombe who was a member of provincial parliament from 1830 - 1837 and for whom the government offered a reward of 500 pounds for his capture. At the outbreak of hostilities Duncombe led a party of followers up to the village of Scotland where they set up defences but on word of the defeat of Mackenzie near Toronto, he ordered his men to their homes and told them they could not be harmed as they had done nothing, but in a civil war often your

Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Boiling Points - cont.

best friends will turn you in if it is for their own good to do so. Consequently, when Colonel McNabb reached Scotland with government forces many arrests were made. Those arrested in and around Otterville were imprisoned at Otterville in a building now located at the railway crossing but which originally stood in the heart of the town. One night the wife of one of the prisoners pulled a trick which would today be considered a very serious offence for all concerned. The guards had left their arms stacked outside and went to the tavern nearby and when she saw this she threw the rifles into the mill pond and released the prisoners. The mill pond had to be drained in order to retrieve the lost rifles. No doubt there were some red faces in town that night.

Many Were Sought

Duncombe became a fugitive and with the aid of many friends and often dressing as a woman he was able to make his way to the border at Windsor and when he was safely into Detroit he sent word back telling them where he was. Others who were sought included Eliakim and Finlay Malcolm also Robert Alway, a Captain Anderson and Joshua Doon. Finlay Malcolm, who was later captured and tried, was sent to England with the chance of being sent to Van Deman Land (Tasmania) but the queen granted him a reprieve and sent him back to Canada with a Bible which she told him to live by. His descendants living at Sweaburg still have this precious book in their possession.

Many of the prisoners were taken to Hamilton and kept there until court sat in the spring when they were tried. They were more or less being held as hostages in hope that Duncombe and Mackenzie would surrender for the release of the prisoners.

Otterville, which is the largest community in South Norwich, is situated on the Otter Creek and though its name has been changed often, the word "Otter" always remained. When the first settlers arrived they noticed that the playful otter had mud slides all along the creek and so called the first mills Otter Creek Mills and as the village took shape it became known as Otter Creek Village. Later it was called Otter Village,

## Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

### Many Were Sought - cont.

and finally Otterville. The first settlers in and around Otterville arrived in 1807 and were John Earl and Paul Avery who had a grant of land and also some machinery given by the government. They realized the great future for the water power of the Otter and set about building a grist and saw mill here. Since that time at least one mill has been in operation on the river. At present there is one mill south of the main street still running by water power. Between 1850 and 1860 there were no less than 12 steam and 14 water mills in operation. Most of the mills being saw mills as this part of the country was covered with some of the finest white pine in North America and up until 1870 lumbering was the chief industry of the village and township.

### Builds Furnace

About 1831 Peter Hamilton and William Hardy built an iron smelting furnace a short distance down river where they obtained good water power. They brought a great quantity of iron ore from Middleton and had the river surveyed from the lake up in hopes of it being navigable for lake barges but before this all could be accomplished an accident happened to the furnace and all was abandoned. In 1833, Art Durkee started a tannery and boot and harness business which thrived until after the turn of the century. In 1845 Edward Bullock purchased the old mill from J.C. Ferrie and it was the beginning of what is often thought of as the Bullock Era as Edward Bullock was a very energetic man and saw a great future in Otterville. He built a custom woollen mill to go along with the two flour mills and saw mills that he already owned. In 1854 a foundry was built by David Stage who built the bell for the old schoolhouse. Other industries included the Erb's saw and woollen mill. J.G. Williams' distillery, stock stables and grain warehouses. John Furlong's shingle and cooperage shops, the Parson's carriage works also a canning factory and Warner's Match Factory. This Match Factory was one of the first in Canada and was known as the Tip Top Match Co. These matches were crude in comparison with ours of today. They consisted of a small block of wood cut into strips but not separated,

Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Builds Furnace - cont.

making 72 matches in a block and were coated with sulphur from a quarter to half an inch from the tip and the tip received an extra coat of white sulphur. They were all done up in paper packets containing 12 blocks.

Mrs. R.M. Holmes still has some in her possession.

No Railroads

During this time no railroads existed in this part of Oxford and consequently teaming their products to a city or town was a big responsibility and called for good roads. The Coal Road came into being at this time and was so called because with the impression it would make a good road bed white pine logs were piled about five feet high and covered with earth and fired to produce a charcoal road bed and for years after if you travelled on this road in the dry weather you were badly in need of a bath when you arrived at your destination, "truly as black as coal". Richard Talbot had the contract to build the first plank and gravel road from Delhi to Ingersoll and collected fees at toll gates. Walter Reavely was the last toll gate keeper. This included the Coal Road. The great need for railroad was felt for some time and as early as 1850 a movement was under way to obtain one here and finally construction of the Woodstock and Lake Erie Railroad began. By 1854 fencing and bridging was completed. The ties were delivered and all was ready for the rails when Mr. Zimmerman the chief promoter was killed. So died this railroad. Later the bridges were taken down and floated to the match factory to be made into matches. By 1872 another effort was made to obtain a railroad. Through the efforts of J.E. Bullock and Gilbert Moore the Port Dover and Lake Huron Railroad became interested. This railroad eventually took the old survey lines of the Woodstock and Lake Erie Railroad and at last a railroad became a reality but the great days of the white pine forests were over and it did not bring the great benefits that were anticipated, also other railroads had moved into this area and there were 20 stations within a radius of 12 miles of the village. Also with the passing of the lumber trade farming came to the fore and cheese-making and hog raising were the chief sources of income for the rural area.



## Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

### Canadian First

In 1879 H. and J. Bullock of Chicago and F. Bullock and W.F. King of Otterville started the Otterville Sweeper Co. making the first carpet sweepers in Canada. Later it was changed to the Otterville Manufacturing Co. and they also made piano stools and ornamental grill work with their products being exported to Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. South Africa and South America as well.

In 1870 the Burkholder Bros. who lived two miles east of Otterville invented the steel yard stumping machine and they were manufactured in the village and this machine was in great demand wherever stumps needed pulling. A similar machine to this may be seen at the pioneer village at Doon near Kitchener.

In 1887 the great telephone era began and one of the first lines was from Aylmer to Port Colbourne and before long Norwich and Otterville were connected with it. R. Paxton was the first manager at Otterville. The early phone had no switchboard and it was just one big happy party line and for 19 years there was only one phone in Otterville. An exchange was installed in 1906 with 23 subscribers and by 1913 there were 100 phones in the village. Florence Dunker was one of the first operators. Though the early phone was not popular, the village had several newspapers for conveying the news of the day. In 1876 the Otterville Angus was published weekly. In 1882 the Guide was read weekly and in 1892 the Echo and in 1899 the Herald were monthly sources of information on local events.

### Religious Groups

Spiritually Otterville was a mecca for many of the religious groups of the day that were banned in other parts of the country. About 1882 the Salvation Army, though being banned in other parts of the country was able to build a citadel in the village. Today this building still stands and is used as an IOOF hall. The negro slaves congregated here and were made welcome and developed quite a community. They built themselves a church and laid out a cemetery north of the village about 1860. At the season for camp meetings the darkies would gather from all parts of the country,

Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Religious Groups - cont.

often coming from as far away as Windsor. Some of the families who supported this church were the Bennetts, Clause, Gowans, Grays, James, Joiner, Martins, Taylor, Wagner, Williams, Osbourne and the Andersons, one of their number Sam Bennett at one time was considered to be the strongest man in Ontario. He could with little effort, lift a 300 lb. barrel of salt off the ground and place it on a wagon. The majority of these people had strong religious convictions and Jeremiah Wagner, an ex-slave was one of their known ministers. The area which they used for their cemetery is now unmarked and a growth of trees covers the area where many lie buried. In 1830 the first Anglican service was held with Rev. P. Green, a travelling missionary conducting services at the home of John Jones and Henry Powell and in 1864 the first church was built with Rev. Kennedy as the first resident minister.

The first house of worship, though, was east of Otterville where the Society of Friends conducted services. Their cemetery still remains. The first post office in Otterville was opened about 1830 with John Cornell the first postmaster. This was the third post office to be established in Ingersoll (Oxford) being the first and Norwich was established shortly before Otterville.

In 1839 there was a colored school in the middle townline taught by a Mr. Holingback, was built at the end of the lane behind Dr. A. J. Collver's house and was considered to be one of the best in the country. In the 1830's Chauncey Wilcox was the teacher.

In 1857 the old two storey school was built. H.N. C---land was the first teacher, in the upper room and Miss Hattie Stover taught the lower room.

Otterville today is quite proud of its park which offers rest and relaxation from the troubles of the world to all who visit it and there is always a welcome awaiting both old and young within its gates.

At the end of the American Civil War there existed a strong anti-British feeling and antagonisms among certain elements of the American population and took little to persuade them by Irish agitators to organize forces to invade Canada as a means of showing their hatred to Britain. This became known as the Fenian Raids and caused no end of fear and excitement among the sections of the Canada separated from the United States by only a river such as the Niagara and Detroit rivers. The Irish agitators were past masters at causing panic and would start rumours that would cause families to flee from the border in fear of their lives. Some Canadian banks vacated their border banks in favour of inland towns. They could hardly be blamed as these raiders were supposed to contain many war-hardened veterans of the American Revolution and masters in the art of looting.

Such was the situation and when the border towns asked for more protection, two companies of the Oxford Militia were called out and sent to the Windsor border area where 12 companies of infantry were stationed. The Oxford Militia were quartered at what is now known as the General Brock public school. It was the public school of the town of Sandwich at that time and it's location commanded a good view of the river in the area of the American fort at Detroit. This is one of the narrow spots for rum runners to cross at. From this vantage point they would patrol to the west until they met the patrols from Amherstburg. Frequently they were called out as both sides seemed to delight in keeping the other side alerted. One night it is reported that flares were being fired from one end of Detroit and were answered by flares from the other end of Detroit. This looked like the real thing and the general alarm was sounded on the Canadian side. Large bonfires were lit and picket boats were sent to engage the enemy on the water. After an all night stand they relaxed at dawn only to hear from the readers of the Detroit paper that it was just another hoax. The troops at Windsor were not to be outdone and frequently sent out gun boats loaded with uniformed troops to cause alarm on the American side.

#### Return Home

Finally the American Government realized the seriousness of this border filibustering and took active measures to stop this carrying on and the Oxford Rifles were once more allowed to return home being under arms from March to late June 1856.

Return Home - cont.

The township of Dereham was originally attached to Norfolk from 1792 to 1798 when it became part of Oxford County with surveys being done in 1799, 1810 and 1832. Land was granted to John and George Ball, Robert Hamilton (Mt. Elgin), Robert Addison (Culloden and Verschoyle) and Hon. Peter Russell. The first land sold was lot 12, concession 1 which was sold to Stillson Hackett on January 22, 1834 and he paid 17 shilling, 6 pence per acre.

For several years Dereham township was attached to West Oxford for assessment and administration purposes and in 1825 the following names were on the assessment roll for Dereham,; Bishop, Dopp, Smith, Hackett, Sinclair, Turner, Bodwell, Colburn, Deane, Perry, Miller, Gillard, Merchant and Anson. All told they had 66 acres under cultivation at that time.

Booming Business

In the early days of Dereham, farming was of secondary importance as the land was covered with choice stands of timber including white pine, chestnut, and cherry. The white pine being of the finest and at one time the ship builders from Boston paid handsome prices for Dereham pine for ship's masts. One one occasion \$2,400 was paid for eight such masts and the best one bringing \$450.00. Even today that would be a fair price for a log from one tree.

The yearly output of this area was in the neighborhood of 4,000,000 feet of lumber and an equal amount exported in the log.

As the township opened up and the swamps of the township became overcome large amounts of cherry and chestnut were drawn inland to Ingersoll and Woodstock for making furniture and many prize pieces of furniture of the 1800's originated in Dereham.

It was with this market in view that the Culloden road came into existence as this part of the township was beyond the Ingersoll and Port Burwell plank Road and if it was to become settled and it's choice stand of timber taken to inland markets a road was a necessity. So many a choice log was reduced to a plank and the many swamps were bridged with a corduroy road and this road for some time equalled the Port Burwell plank road in



Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Booming Business - cont.

importance as there was a steady stream of teams drawing lumber inland and the necessities of life back. There was a flourishing stage business between Ingersoll and Brownsville equal to that of the other road. As the lumbering business began to wane and farming began to take over farm produce replaced the loads of lumber and milk from many farms along this road went into the making of the big cheese. On this road between Ingersoll and Brownsville there sprang up two thriving communities, Culloden and Verschoyle.

Culloden

The village of Culloden received its name from one of two sources. One version being that it was given by the Welsh settlers as the word "Culloden" is Gaelic and means "back of the swamp" while the second version is that it was given by the Scottish settlers as it was at Culloden Moore when Bonnie Prince Charles was defeated by the English. As early as 1849 a mail service was inaugurated between Ingersoll and Bayham and at that time there was not a tree cut at the present site of Culloden but about this time a family of four brothers arrived here. They were James, Richard, David and Arthur Williams who had left their home in Swansea, Wales and settled at York in 1839. They later moved to the Niagara district and with unrest along the border they decided to take up land farther inland and travelled by boat to Port Burwell and took up land in Dereham. One of the reasons was that it resembled the home county in Wales. Another early settler was Andrew Stewart who arrived here in 1847 and was supposed to have walked to Tillsonburg to get a newspaper on the days that it was available.

There is no definite date when the village was started but in the early 1850's the Presbyterian Church held services in the main room of the McArthur hotel which was located on the southwest corner of the Culloden Road and the eighth concession and in 1856 they held a meeting at the home of Andrew Smart to make arrangements for building a church. As a result of this meeting a canvas of the settlers was taken and they raised \$135.00 towards the building which cost \$1,200.00 and was dedicated January 17, 1857 by Rev. Robert Rodgers, and contained no pews or pulpit, planks were used for seats.

## Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

### Orangemen

At this time there were enough Orangemen living in and around the site of Culloden that in 1855 they were able to form the Culloden Loyal Orange Association No. 648 and met the first Friday on or after each full moon. By 1861 the Wesleyan Methodist were holding services with Rev. Reed being one of the early ministers and in 1887 St. Albans Anglican Church was erected on land donated by Robert J. Pedlaw.

In 1867 Culloden was listed a post village, that is a village with a post office, and contained two stores, two wagon shops, two sawmills, a shoe shop, two hotels and two doctors. Mail was received three times a week Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 12 noon and dispatched at 2 p.m. Mrs. M. McKenzie was the postmaster and the village had a population of 200.

J. Smith had one of the sawmills and also had a contract to supply cherry and chestnut to furniture and cabinet maker of Ingersoll and Woodstock which was a very profitable contract to the village as it was one of the main reasons for the planking of the Culloden Road. There were four toll gates on this road, two being at Culloden, one at VEr Schoyle and one at Prouse's Corners and the toll gates closed in 1905. Two of the toll gate keepers in Culloden were Mrs. Waddell Dymes, operating the gate south of the present United Church and Mrs. Waite operating the one west of the village. The fee at that time being 15 cents per team.

### Profitable Industry

Another profitable industry was the ashery operated by Fred Richards who purchased ashes and paid for at least part of it in soap. He made lye out of the ashes and delivered it to the soap factories at Woodstock and Brantford. For a short time Culloden had a newspaper known as the Culloden Lively Times about 1853. One of the stores that started here and later moved to Ingersoll is still in business and is known as Waters Jewelry Store.

Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Profitable Industry - cont.

The twenty-fourth of May was an important day in the lives of the early settlers and Culloden was not to be outdone by larger centres. The village would close off a certain amount of the main street and hold horse races here. Some of the races possessed all the thrills and excitement found at the races in larger centres.

The first school was a log school and was located a short distance west of the village and in 1877 the present brick school was built. H.G. Murray and Minnie Emprey being two of the early teachers. Miss Emprey received her education here and after receiving her teacher's certificate at Ottawa returned to teach.

Verschoyle

The first school here was a log school built in 1857 and was located at Cody Corners on the Cody road which is now the road from Verschoyle to Beachville. This school burned in 1876 and a new school was erected and forms part of the present school. One of the early teachers was Mr. Winterburne. (?)

In 1877 the first store opened here being in the building built by Mr. Collins and had been used as a hotel. However with the arrival of the railroad at Mt. Elgin, business began to fall off so he sold to Nelson Harris who kept the store here until 1880 when E.C. Corbett purchased the business. Among their competitors was H. Wood who drove a covered wagon from door to door doing a good business with people living on their back concessions. On the main road pack pedlars and tinkers were fairly frequent. They carried a good supply of tinware and would also mend pots and pans for exchange with produce from the farm.

Verschoyle rivalled Culloden and Mount Elgin in the making of cheese and at one time had two cheese factories which later amalgamated and located on the fourth concession at the Culloden road. The lumbering business was also big business here and the Corbett sawmill sold lumber to the Noxon Farm Machinery Factory at Ingersoll and to Baines Wagon Works at Woodstock.

Creek Played Big Part in the History of Otterville - cont.

Verschoyle - cont.

While with most communities the name "blacksmith" had disappeared and a welding shop replaced it at Verschoyle Roy Bains still operates a blacksmith shop and can still shoe a horse as good as Charles Marshall could who was the first blacksmith here.

Toll Gate

There was a toll gate at Verschoyle and Mr. Hawkins was the toll gate keeper. It is interesting to note that there was no charge for clergy or for people going to or from church but they did find that it was necessary to move the gate away from the cheese factory as people would go around the factory to avoid paying the fee.

There was a frame church at Ebenezer across from the Wilkinson Cheese Factory before 1880 but it burned and a stone church was built. The Presbyterian Church was built in 1891.

Saturday night was a big night here and for entertainment boxing matches were staged. There were often bouts between hardworking lumberjacks who had worked for 4 shillings per day cutting logs and were ready to take on all comers much to the delight of the local menfolk.



Election Day of 1800's Passed with Much Spirit - page 21 (Northern Zorras)

The early pioneers did not take a very active interest in politics. Their arduous toil in grappling with the giants of the forest from sunrise to sunset through the heat of summer and the cold of winter did not give them time for political controversies. True, at town meetings in the Brock District crowds would assemble annually at the local meeting hall or hotel. Quite often the meeting would get allheated up, but as a rule, the same district commissioners would be nominated and reelected year after year until it became almost a matter of form. Obviously they were content to leave the affairs of the district in the hands of older and experienced men who no doubt served the people faithfully and acceptably. On Dominion election days things were different. The candidates would often send out conveyances of various kinds to bring in the voters and it seems that the voters would make the day of it and so spirits ran high both from the bottle and on the political views with many a good fight thrown in for good measure. When the election was over, all would return home and life returned to normal. Some of the older residents can still recall the shenanigans of election day in the 1800's. One of the earliest polling booths in Oxford was held at Martin's Hotel, Beachville, in 1830. this being the only one in the county at that time.

Zorra Township

The township of Zorra was first organized in 1822. Previous to this North Oxford, Nissouri and Zorra were all assessed together and the population at this time was 719 for the whole area. Zorra was organized under a warrant issued by Charles Ingersoll and Peter Teeple and the first township officers were Joseph Fitch, clerk and Fitch and Henry Laire, assessors with Alpheus Taft collector.

In 1882 the following names were listed on the assessment roll as householders and landowners - Alanson Harris, Ira Day, Daniel Cook, Peter Vannatter, Israel Reed, Abraham Vannatter, Levi Lewis, Alpheus Taft, Leonard Kam, Barbabus Ford, Elizah Harris, Theron Hallock, Robert Ford, Peter Alyea, Isaac Burdick. Of these Israel Reid had 1,000 acres, Isaac Burdick had 400 and the remainder had one and two hundred acres each. The land owned by Israel Reid was located in the area now occupied by the Zorra Highland Park School extending north to include the

Election Day of 1800's Passed with Much Spirit - cont.

Zorra Township - cont.

present community of Brooksdale and west beyond the third concession.

In 1850 the municipality of West Zorra elected its first separate council, before that time East and West Zorra elected a joint council. The members of the West Zorra Council included Donald Matheson, reeve, Angus Munro, Benson Pelton, J.M. Ross, Alex Clark, council-treasurer, Allcock, assessor.

-----?? One of the first motions passed by this council was to purchase a dozen tallow candles for use at the council meetings. One of the first by-laws passed at this council meeting was a by-law prohibiting sheep of the township from running at large and they were to be kept in a confined area the year around. From this it is assumed that sheep were allowed to roam after the crops were taken off.

In later minutes of the township meetings there is considerable mention of payment being made to farmers for sheep being destroyed by dogs. In 1862 there were over 6,000 sheep in the township and only 3,000 pigs, a great change from what it is today, as sheep are fast joining the horse in becoming a rarity on local farms. The council held their meetings in the Great Western Hotel at Youngsville until 1911. There was a room reserved for them for council meetings as there was no township hall.

In the settlement of the township north and west of the village of Embro, we find that Scottish settlers came and that the names Archibald McCaul and Hugh McCorquodale appear having purchased land on lot 14 and 15, concession one. They came from Argyleshire, Scotland and worked on the Welland Canal. Archiblad McCaul purchased his farm from Mrs. Elizabeth Force of the Niagara District in 1822 and the transfer was made to McCaul in 1825 for 100 pounds. The following years saw more settlers arriving from the old country and from the United States and we find the names Munro, McPherson, McArthur, Ross, Pelton, Duncan, Hall, Matheson, Innes and Youngs. Gabriel Youngs purchased 1,000 acres of land in the area now known as Youngsville. In the area owned by Gabriel Youngs and Israel Reed there sprung up three communities, Youngsville, Brooksdale and Bennington.

Election Day of 1800's Passed with much Spirit - cont.

Bennington

Bennington is located off the main road but was a thriving community. As it grew in importance, Mr. Hall, the great grandfather of Frank Cowan named it after his native town of Bennington, Vermont. The cheese factory was moved from the third line to its present location. A cheese and butter company was formed with the executive consisting of J. Pelton, R. Ross, D. McCorquodale, Robert Youngs, Ira Hummason and W.J. McKay with James Baffin as cheesemaker. J.A. Thomson made cheese here from 1898 to 1931. When schools were an individual's responsibility instead of a township affair there were classes held in the upstairs of the homes now occupied by Ames Strickler. The first regular school was built on the northwest corner of the first concession across from the present school.

The Farmers' Hall was erected about 1890 and is still the home of the Bennington Union Farmers. Bennington also boasted of a flax mill which was operated by William Ross and always remained in the family name. Later the McBurney steam sawmill was purchased and operated here until it blew its boiler. Roy Ross was the operator at that time.

The store which also served as the post office was originally located north of the Methodist Church on the town line. It collapsed on being moved but was rebuilt which replaced the original store which had burned while operated by the Heron family. Robert Heron was the first postmaster from the first of May 1874 until 1885. Peter W. Murray served from 1885 until the postoffice closed in 1914. Very seldom is the name Bennington mentioned that Pete Murray's name will not come into the conversation.

One of the Bennington's best known products were the pumps built by Peter Pelton who in an ad in the Embro Courier on Wednesday June 3, 1874 made the following statement: "Peter Pelton begs respectfully to acquaint the farmers of West Zorra and adjoining townships, that he has commenced the manufacture of pumps on a principal believed to be equal to any in use in this province. The sucker and valve are removable from the top log together at any time when repair is necessary which is a great convenience saving time, trouble and expense. Cistern pumps furnished at moderate prices warranted equal to any in use."



Election Day of 1800's Passed with Much Spirit - cont.

Bennington - cont.

Although Bennington is not located on a main road it did become a stop on Ingersoll and St. Marys railroad and was served by two stations. In 1879 a charter was secured to build a railroad from Woodstock to Lake Huron by way of St. Marys railroad and was served by two stations. A bonus of \$60,000 was voted by St. Marys and \$10,000 by Embro. There was a time limit placed on the charter. Much time was lost with trifling affairs and the charter expired. The project dropped not to be taken up until 25 years later when an agreement with the CPR was reached to construct a railroad from Ingersoll to St. Marys. This road was completed in 1909. The Bennington Station was located south of Bennington while the McConkey Station was located west of the village opposite the present school. This was a big asset to the village as it gave a year round outlet for their factory and farm and allowed their children to go on to higher education at the high schools of Ingersoll. Woodstock or St. Marys or Embro at a cost within reason which was a great privilege at that time. Originally two trains a day travelled the route but was later dropped to one. Both stations at Bennington have been removed but the spirit of Bennington lives on being centred around the activities of the Junior Farmers and the community hall.

Brooksdale

The land on which Brooksdale now stands was given by Israel Reid to his son George Washington Reid, named after the American president for whom Israel had great admiration. Israel Reid coming from Bedford, Mass., and often told of the burning of that town by the British during the American Revolution. He left and moved to Niagara in 1800 and in 1807 moved to Norwich and in 1807 he moved to Norwich and in 1821 he arrived in Zorra. Today he lies at rest in the land he once worked in the vicinity of the Highland Park School, passing on in 1841.

Of the three communities, Brooksdale is considered to be the oldest as it received its first post office on May 1, 1859. John Innes was the postmaster at that time. Other postmasters included S. N. Bannerman, John Bagrie, Thomas Heron, Edward Shirr, R. B. Gill, John S. Youngs, Annie Youngs, now Mrs. Annie Matheson of Woodstock helped her father here when the post office closed in 1914.



Election Day of 1800's Passed with Much Spirit - cont.

Brooksdale - cont.

As early as 1830 the Scots settlers started to hold meetings of religious nature at the home of Squire Gordon, north of here. Later when the session of the Log Church refused to allow the church to be used for a school for the reason that it bordered on blasphemy, this log building became a schoolhouse and served until the frame school was built on the northwest corner of the village prior to 1840 and remained until No. 7 school was built in 1858. In the frame school services were held prior to the building of a church in 1883. There was also a Methodist Church there from 1823 to 1914, being part of the Embro Town Line and Brooksdale circuit, all of which are no longer in existence.

The name was given by Dr. Hugh McLeod who was a teacher at the school and who went on to fame as a family doctor who served the township faithfully for years.

There was also a cider mill, blacksmith shop and two stores located here and John Bagrie, the blacksmith was the man of the village as he acted as advisor to all who sought advice and served as secretary-treasurer of the church and also made the pulpit which is still in use here and long it will remain as a fitting memorial to his name.

One of the unique things about Brooksdale is that it contains a farm that is still known as a Clergy Reserve Farm and is still owned by the local church. The 200 acres of this clergy reserve were first granted to the Presbyterian Church in June 3, 1839, and the grant was made to Jom Fraser in trust.

## Cassel Served as Centre for the Early German Immigrants

The first parliament of Upper Canada was convened on October 15, 1792 at Newark (Niagara) and met under a tree. This parliament lasted until June 5, 1796, and the second parliament was from July 3, 1797 to July 4, 1800. From early records we find no mention of a representative from Oxford, Norfolk and Middlesex due to the lack of number of settlers in the district.

The third parliament convened on July 9, 1801, and was dissolved on March 9, 1804 and in this parliament we find Oxford, Norfolk and Middlesex represented by the Hon. D.W. Smith who was elected at the election held at Averill's Mills (now Waterford) and he was opposed by Richard Cockwell. James Walsh was returning officer. When the parliament met, D.W. Smith was appointed speaker of the house. It was during this parliament that the Representative Act was passed. The fourth parliament was from March 6, 1805, until March 16, 1808. The election of a representative for Oxford, Norfolk and Middlesex was held at Turkey Point with Benjamin Mallory and Samuel Ryerse being the candidates, Mallory being elected. During this parliament Norfolk was granted a representative of its own, Oxford and Middlesex still being united. This being the first indication of this part of Ontario being settled and there were 119 sitting members in this parliament March 9, 1809, to March 6, 1812, against 116 in the previous.

The fifth parliament was from March 9, 1809 to March 6, 1812 and we have no record of a member for Oxford and Middlesex, but when the sixth parliament met on August 5, 1812 until April 1, 1816, Malon Burwell was the member and was also a member in the seventh parliament from February 8, 1817 to March 9, 1820. It was during this parliament that an act was passed allowing each county with a population of 1,000 or more to a representative of their own and with 4,000 of a population two representatives. Oxford having a population of 2,425 was entitled to one rep.

### Representative

When the next parliament met on April 14, 1821 to January 19, 1824, Thomas Homer was the representative for Oxford. This election was held at the old "Canfield Place" in East Oxford. Thus after 29 years, Oxford had at last come into its own and was duly represented in parliament by a man with all the interests of Oxford at heart as he was actually the father of Oxford being among the first to settle here.

Cassel Served as Centre for The Early German Immigrants - cont.

Representative - cont.

By the time the ninth parliament met on January 7, 1825, to May 7, 1828, the population of Oxford had increased to such an extent that it was entitled to two members. The election was held at Martin's Tavern, Beachville, and Thomas Horner and Col. Charles Ingersoll were elected. Once again the voters showed their respects by choosing another man who had done much for the county.

It was from here on that the voters became aware of their responsibilities and keen interest was shown at all elections and as a result when the next election took place in July 1828, at Henry Carroll's in West Oxford, Col. Ingersoll was defeated. Thomas Horner and Finley Malcolm were elected but at the following election Thomas Horner was defeated with Col. Ingersoll and Dr. Charles Duncombe being elected. Col. Ingersoll died in 1832 and Horner filled the vacancy until he died in 1834.

Between 1836 and the union of Upper and Lower Canada, Oxford was represented by Dr. Chas. Duncombe and Robert Alway with Dr. Duncombe being expelled in 1838 and R.H. Hunter replacing him. Until this time, no elections were held in Woodstock and only one (the twelfth) was held in Ingersoll. The men elected were all local men which was not the case after the union parliament met in 1841.

Surveyed

The township of Zorra was first surveyed in 1820 and included the land now forming East and West Zorra and until 1822 was assessed along with Nissouri and North and West Oxford. The population at that time of all this area was 719. By 1822 the township of Zorra had landholders on 8,338 acres of uncultivated land and these same 45 landholders had 145 acres under cultivation and owned 14 horses, 44 oxen and 84 cows and the only taxable house was a log one of Alexander McGregor. By the Act VIII Victoria Chapter 3 (1845) East Zorra became a separate township and was to consist of all land east of the line dividing the eighth concession from the ninth concession from the ninth concession. The first lot sold by the government in this township was lot 2, concession nine to John Strong at 11 shillings, 3 pence per acre on June 14, 1830.

Cassel Served as Centre for the Early German Immigrants - cont.

In 1852 Shenstone reports the following about this township: "The township is settling and improving very fast and the Woodstock and Huron Plank and Gravel Road passes through the township and about four miles from Woodstock. On this road is a church and small settlement called Huntingford. In this neighborhood is located the house of Arthur Farmer which is considered to be the best house in the county."

Lumbering Active

There being a good stand of hardwood in the township, lumbering was fairly active and three sawmills turned out about 148,000 feet per annum in the mid 1800's. There was also active trade in oatmeal and in wool. The output being 9,500 barrels of oatmeal, 7,000 pounds of wool and 1,500 yards of cloth per year at this time.

On April 27, 1853, the East Zorra Agricultural Society was formed and on October 6 held a successful show at Donaldson's Cumberland Inn. The classes included thoroughbred and grade classes for cattle and sheep; oxen were included in the grade cattle. The best cow in the show received 1 pound in prize money, this being the top prize. The best mare received 15 shillings for top money in the horse class as did the best fall wheat in the produce class. The fair was well attended and drew an exceptionally large number of contestants for the 78 prizes offered. Unfortunately this fair did not continue to thrive and eventually met the fate of many similar fairs in the county. The date of the last known fair has not been recorded.

In 1849 districts were abolished and further amendments were made to the District Council Act which allowed for reeves and deputy-reeves of the township councils to make up the membership of the County Council. In 1850 the following were elected to the council of East Zorra: reeve, John Harrington; council William Wilson, R.H. Campbell, J. Brown, Alex M. McKay. There was not enough population to warrant a deputy-reeve at this time. the assessors were William Fraser and William Rowell and George Forbes was the tax collector with Adam Marshall as clerk and treasurer.



## Cassel Served as Centre for the Early German Immigrants - cont.

### Cassel

In the northeast corner of the township there is a community known as Cassel which served as the centre for the early German immigrants who had come here from Germany during the mass migration of Lutheran and Catholic Germans between 1825 and 1850. The name Cassel (Kassel) was taken from a city in West Germany which in 1567 was the capital of Hesse - Kassel Province and the capital of Westphalia from 1807 - 1813. It was also the capital of Hesse - Kassel Province from 1866 - 1945. It is situated on the banks of the Fluda Rand and is the centre of the heavy manufacturing area of Germany where locomotives and other heavy machinery were built. Due to this, it was the centre of allied bombing raids which virtually destroyed the city during the Second World War. It is also the art centre of West Germany though the gallery was destroyed by the bombings. The paintings were saved. It is not hard to understand why this name was chosen as most of the settlers had come from Hesse Nassau and had come to this country to avoid coming under the heel of Prussian militarism.

In the census of 1852 there were 322 German born people in Oxford County and of this 212 were living in East Zorra. These German settlers were persuaded to come to Canada by Christian Naffziger who had come to Canada previously to explore the possibilities of forming a German community in this new land. He was so impressed with the possibilities that he returned to England and in 1824 he took up the immigration question with the British Government and cleared the way for German settlers to obtain land in Canada and in 1825 the first settlers arrived. Previous to this settlers of German descent had come up from Pennsylvania and formed a colony in and around Waterloo.

### Hired Out

When the settlers arrived from Germany a lot of them were not financially able to start on their own so they hired out with the Pennsylvania Dutch settlers until they were able to strike out on their own. The Huron Tract at this time was open for settlement and many went to this. The majority stayed here while others moved a little south and took up farms that had already been settled, buying out the Scottish settlers who did not prefer

Cassel Served as Centre for the Early German Immigrants - cont.

Hired Out - cont.

the heavy land in this area. The Germans were particularly fond of this type of land as it was similar to the land they had worked in Germany. Today this type of land in the Zorras and in Easthope and Willmot townships to the north are readily recognized by the large acreage that is devoted to turnip growing and to the magnificent orchards. In this area you will also notice that the buildings are usually very large and it is of interest to know that the German settlers were the originators of the present type bank barns that have become quite common in Oxford.

Among those who settled around Cassel we find such names as Schwartzentraver, Roth, Pletch, Schroch, Lingelback, Junker, Kalbfleisch, Kaufman, Gickling, Erb, Iutzy, Ianzy, Heinbuck, Hoist and Moghk.

Nicholas Kaufman was one of the early settlers and when he arrived on this side of the water he accidentally became separated from his wife and they both made their way here unknown to the other. Catherine Kaufman took up employment with some of the settlers. One of the ways the settlers tried her out for her good housekeeping habits was on her arrival to lay a broom across the door to see if she would pick it up or step over it: she picked up the broom and was hired. When she and her husband were reunited they took up land now occupied by Cassel and eventually built a hotel here.

Becomes Known

The Kaufman name became well-known as they operated a hotel, sawmill and a chopping mill and on the map of East Zorra in the Atlas of 1867 we find no less than five Kaufmans owning farms in and around Cassel. Others owning land in and around Cassel included Caistor, B. Elliott, Saltzer, Peters, Ropp, J. Currie, D. Morton, G. Hoist and J. Wettlaufer. At this time the village contained a good hotel, a grocery store, a wagon shop, blacksmith shop, two shoe shops, a sawmill and a comfortable schoolhouse. The population was never very large having about 50 residents.

There is located here a cheese factory and one of the early owners was Valentine Grenzeback who came out from Germany in 1848. David Morton, a Scot, also operated a cheese factory. In 1875 the Cassel cheese factory became known as the Elm Grove Cheese Factory and they made 2,300 cheeses that year with an average weight of 57 pounds. A post office was opened

Cassel Served as Centre for the Early German Immigrants - cont.

Becomes Known - cont.

here in 1866 and Henry Junker, the local boot and shoe maker, was selected as postmaster. He also was one of the proprietors of the hotel. In 1888 Simon Robertson, the local grocer also served as postmaster.

South of the village, J.C. Kaufman had a sawmill and around this mill several houses sprang up and it became known as Slabtown. There was also a gristmill in connection with the sawmill.

These German settlers formed an Evangelical Church east of the village. It was a type of German Methodist and the present building now occupied by Mennonites was built through public subscription in the 1890's and many of the early settlers are at rest in the cemetery. In the passing of the years the Evangelical congregation diminished and the building was taken over by the Mennonites who in recent years have moved into this part of the township in increasing numbers.

Early Schools

Little is known of the early school but in 1839 three schools existed in the township. Each locality was responsible for its own education and later, when school sections came into effect, Cassel School became known as School Section No. 1 and is located at the road in front of where J.C. Kaufman had his Slabtown sawmill.

In the northeast tip of East Zorra where it joins Willmot and Easthope townships, a community sprang up around a sawmill and a cider mill which was operated by German immigrants. Though this community never reached any great size it did become famous as PunkyDoodle Corners. This name was given to it in fun by Squire David Peat of Ratho when he was getting some work done here and the name has stayed long after all else has been forgotten and today it is one of the best known names in Western Ontario.

After the union of Upper and Lower Canada, the first parliament was from the 1st of July, 1841 until the 9th of December, 1843. The election for the county was held in Woodstock (the first to be held here) and was held on March 15, 1841. There were two candidates seeking election, Francis Hinks, who was the editor of the Examiner of Toronto, and Peter Carroll of West Oxford, Hinks was elected with a majority of 31 votes. Hinks was appointed Inspector General (this would be Finance Minister today) but had to vacate his seat but he recontested it against John Armstrong of Zorra on July 14, 1842 and was elected with a majority of 218 votes. Lord Metcalfe dissolved this parliament in 1844 but it did not pass a new election law which required a polling booth in each township and simplified the election oath.

The second election took place in October, 1844 with Parliament convening on December 20, 1844, and dissolved on July 28, 1847. Nominations took place at Woodstock on Friday, October 8 and the polls were open in the townships the following Wednesday and Thursday. Those seeking election were Francis Hinks and Robert Riddle. Hinks received 722 and Riddle 742 and Riddle was elected much to the annoyance of Hinks who went to Montreal and established a new paper - The Pilot - and carried on his battle from there.

#### 1847 Election

In the next election of 1847, he again was a candidate but being out of the country on nomination day, although his papers were properly filed with Shenstone, the county clerk Mr. J. Vansittart, the returning officer disqualified him even though he had a majority of 346 votes over Mr.

Peter Carroll of Hamilton. The election took place on December 30 and January 1st, 1848 but Mr. Carroll was unseated by a majority in the house. Mr. Hinks again accepted the office of Inspector-General and therefore had to seek re-election but was opposed at nominations. In this parliament further changes were made with the sheriff and township clerk being ex-officio returning officers for their polls open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for two days.

In the election Hinks was opposed by John G. Vansittart and in the election Hinks won with a majority of 79 votes.



Village of Ratho was Started from Scotch Religious Meetings - cont.

Prime Minister

In 1851 Hinks was appointed Prime Minister by the Governor General and in 1852 he visited England in the interests of the Grand Trunk Railroad. His proposition to the Canadian parliament to spend \$16,000,000 in furtherance of this project was considered by many beyond the financial powers of this country. Incidentally he was a Liberal and also president of the Confederated Life Insurance Company.

Previous to the next general election which took place in 1854, the county was divided for electoral purposes into a north and south riding. In the south riding there were three candidates Hinks, Carroll and Miller. Hinks was elected with a majority of 480 votes over Carroll who received nine votes. In the north riding D. Matheson, the warden of the county was unopposed being the third to be so honored. Horner and Hinks being the other two. This parliament sat until 1857.

In the election of 1857 there were eight candidates in the south riding being Dr. Cook, Bodwell, Gourlay, Connor Mason, VanNorman, Ball and Closter. The fight was between Connor and Ball with Connor being elected by one vote. I wonder if they had recounts in those days? In the north riding D. Matheson was opposed by D.G. Miller and George Brown, owner of the Toronto Globe. Brown was elected by a large majority but he was also elected for a riding in Toronto and he accepted the Toronto seat calling for another election in this riding. Hon. J.C. Morrison and William McDougall were the candidates with McDougall being elected by a majority of 207 votes.

In the first territorial division of Upper Canada on July 16, 1792 the territory which afterwards formed the township of Blandford formed part of the west riding of York and was described by the first surveyor-general as the most westerly in the west riding of York lying north of Dundas St. opposite to Oxford. In 1798 it was attached to Oxford.

Township Surveyed

The township was surveyed first by Augustus Jones in 1793, another section by Mr. Law in 1797 with further surveys being made by Andrew Miller in 1824, Mahlon Burwell in 1832 and Peter Carroll in 1834. The first lots

Village of Ratho was Started from Scotch Religious Meetings - cont.

Township Surveyed - cont.

granted were on November 15, 1832 when Graham Nellies was granted land on the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 19th concessions. The first lot sold by the government was the east half of lot 25, concession 1 on January 19, 1832 to Thomas Rowland for 12 shillings, 6 pence per acre.

In 1820 20,000 acres of land were appropriated for the endowment of a college. The township was attached to East Oxford until 1836 in which year the first township meeting was held with Rev. Adam Vansittart acting as the chairman of the meeting, W.H. Langdon was appointed assessor, L.T. Thorpe, tax collector and William Laponotiere the township clerk. About 730 acres of the township were included in the town of Woodstock and in 1861 Woodstock became detached from the township. On the formation of township and city councils in 1850 John Barwick was elected the first reeve with John Gillespie, G.W. Whitehead, George Alexander, John M.F. Wilson as the councillors. The assessor that year was Thomas J. Clark, tax collector, George Edgar, clerk, L.F. Sharp and H. C. Barwick, the treasurer.

College

For some time it did not look as if Oxford would get a college but in 1856 the Baptist denomination chose Woodstock as the site for their second attempt at operating a college. The first one at Montreal was forced to close for want of support. Woodstock was chosen over Fonthill and Brantford and Mr. Archibald Burtch gave the land and residents of Woodstock and area guaranteed \$16,000 towards the college. The cornerstone was laid on June 23, 1857 and the school opened on the fourth of July, 1860. The tuition for primary and higher departments was \$20 and \$28 per year and the 30 theological students attended without charge.

Girls as well as boys attended this school and it was the first co-educational college in Canada. In 1861 fire destroyed the building but it was rebuilt and in the meantime classes were held in the Woodstock hotel. It was known as the Canadian Literary Institute until 1833 when the name was changed to the Woodstock College and in 1881 the theological department was removed to the Toronto Baptist College on Bloor St. Toronto and eventually in 1887 McMaster University came into being and incorporated

Village of Ratho was Started from Scotch Religious Meetings - cont.

College - cont.

all three institutions and for the next 20 years Woodstock College became a prep school for boys. It was about this time that Joe Boyle was sent here to get an education that would enable him to be a minister which was his parent's wish but it was not Boyle's wish and he ran away from school and went to sea. There were many others that graduated from here who made a great name for themselves but Boyle went on to become one of the most famous soldiers of fortune of our time.

Klondike King

After a short jaunt at sea he returned home and went into the racing business and through this practically controlled Broadway and later ended up in California promoting a prize fighter. From here he took off for the Klondike where through his sheer determination he became known as King of the Klondike and it was through his endeavors that huge dredges were brought into the Yukon. At the outbreak of the War of 1914 he raised a machine gun battalion and took them overseas as their colonel and his pips were of solid gold.

The regiment was disbanded and used as reinforcements and he went to Russia on the Allied Railroad Mission and was decorated for his ability in getting the railroads reorganized before the Revolution of 1917. At the time of the Revolution he got the crown jewels and the cash reserve of Romania out of Russia by camouflaging them in Red Cross baskets and upon arrival became advisor to the Queen of Romania.

No job was too big for him and he had a way of getting it done where others would fail. While he was living in New York he and his brother trained a race horse which won for them \$56,000 and the first thing they did was to wire their mother who was living in Woodstock telling her to buy the "Firs", a house that she had greatly admired and is located across the road from the monument of Springbank Snow Countess at the eastern edge of Woodstock. His life story is told by Kim Beattie in "Brother, Here is a Man" and is in the Woodstock library.

The Woodstock College failed to attract students and by 1926 was forced to close its doors and after attempts by others to use it which failed it was closed and in 1958 was torn down. Today a new vocational school is rising on this spot.

Village of Ratho was Started from Scotch Religious Meetings - cont.

Ratho

Among those who settled at the north end of Blandford were the Peats, Sillens, Bairds, Peas, Pettigrews, Olivers, Leuszler, Vance, Littles, Cowing and Millers. They were mostly Scottish and the family of Squire Peat still worked the same land and are in possession of the crown deed. It was these families that eventually formed the community of Ratho. As early as 1850 these Scottish settlers were holding meetings of a religious nature and by 1852 they built a church at the crossroads at a cost of \$800 which could seat 350 people. This was about the beginning of the village which was to grow and with the coming of the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad it was to have an upper and lower town, the upper town being at the railroad and the lower town at the crossroads. The lower town is considered to be a little older as the railroad did not come until 1857. A post office was opened here on July 1, 1855 with James Thomson as postmaster and continued to operate until 1913 when George Steedman had the post office in the large building which served as a general store and one of the few buildings still standing in Upper town W.S. Elliott, Joseph Williams, Joseph Morrow also served as postmasters. By 1852 the population had reached about 100 and the village boasted of having a store, two blacksmith shops, shoe shop and a tavern along with the Presbyterian Church with Rev. Andrew Tolmie as pastor. In 1850 a log school served the community which was located on the northeast corner of the Sylvester's farm and in 1880 a school was built on the north side of what is now highway 97 south of the village. Some of the teachers here included Dan Burke, A. Davidson, Halliday, W. Cuthbert, Ede and A. MacMicken,. The present school is south of the highway. While a second school was being built the students were educated in the Community Hall at the western edge of Lower Town. This hall was known as the Forester's Hall and was also occupied by the Good Templers and the Patrons of Industry. It is still in use and was used as a polling booth at the last Federal election and is a regular meeting place for quilting bees and annual meetings.



Village of Ratho was Started From Scotch Religious Meetings - cont.

Stores

There was a general store east of the hall at the main corner operated by James Kerr who also operated a shoe shop next to the store while on the opposite side of the road in partnership with John Currie he had a blacksmith shop. George Kerr was the tailor. James Hewitt later became the blacksmith and served this area for 50 years. Another thriving industry here was the carriage works of William Smith who specialized in custom made wagons, carriages and buggies. It was natural for the hotels to be located near the railroad and Ratho was no different. The Blue Dog Hotel was located on the east side of Upper Town. William Hughes the proprietor would hold dances in the loft over the stables and one night fiddler Jack Brown was a little late in arriving because he forgot that trains don't stop for buggies and was **hit** by the train but lived to tell the tale. The dance went on as usual.

A milk receiving station was located at the tracks and prior to this a cheese factory had been located near the old log school. The train did not stop there unless it was flagged and it was the duty of the station master to get the mail onto the train by use of the pole method where he would hold the mail up and one member of the train crew would take it off. If they dropped the mail the train would be forced to stop and back up to the station, much to the displeasure of the engineer. The station, which was located near where the turnip factory is now located, burned about 1870 and was not rebuilt but later a station was located west of Upper Town on the north side of the track but has now been removed.

Although Upper Town boomed during the era of the railroad, it did not manage to stand the march of time as well as Lower Town and today it is a ghost town while Lower Town is a residential area surrounding the church and cemetery in which may be found the names of some of those who helped make Oxford what it is today.

Dr. Connor, the sitting member for the south riding of Oxford, took an office with Brown-Dorion Government and this called for an election in 1858. He was opposed by S. Richards and Gourlay and was elected by a large majority. Gourlay never received a vote for a total of one vote in two elections.

In the election of 1861 there were two candidates for election in the south riding, Dr. Connor and Stephen Richards, with Connor being elected. In the north riding McDougall, the sitting member of the last parliament was opposed by Isaac Buchanan of Hamilton, whom he defeated by a large majority. McDougall accepted the appointment of Commissioner of Crown Lands and had to return for re-election. He was elected by acclamation. In 1863 Hon. George Brown represented the south riding while Hope F. McKenzie represented the north riding by defeating John Barwick of Blandford. McKenzie died in 1866 and Thomas Oliver was elected to replace him. Hon. George Brown accepted the appointment of President of the Council in the Coalition Government of 1864 and was obliged to once more to the south riding for re-election and was returned without opposition.

In 1867 Thomas Oliver represented the north riding and Hon. George Brown the south. Oliver was returned in 1872 and E.V. Bodwell took the south riding but in 1874 Col. James A. Skinner was elected for the south riding while Oliver retained the north which he held until his death in 1880 when James Sutherland of Woodstock was elected to complete his term of office.

#### Assembly

These members were all elected to the Legislative Assembly and in 1858 a Legislative Council was formed and George Alexander was elected to represent the Gore and Thames Division comprising of Oxford, part of Waterloo and Norfolk counties. He, along with Oliver Blake, who represented the Thames Division in 1862, were by the Act of Confederation left without a seat but in 1873 Mr. Alexander was called to the Senate of the Dominion Parliament, a tribute to his merits as a statesman and a patriot.

Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

Assembly - cont.

In the township of Blenheim there was an experiment in colonization that was not tried in any other township and by all reports it was successful.

Stimulate Interest

In the 1840's in England, Arthur Mills was striving to stimulate interest in the British Empire and its possibilities as an outlet for the hard-pressed lower classes to gain a new start in life. He was so sure that it could be made to work that he was willing to put up money and experiment on his own theory of colonization. The location he chose was the Blenheim district in Canada West and a yeoman from Warwickshire, England, Daniel Wakefield, was selected by Mills to lead a band of settlers here.

The agreement that Mills and Wakefield had drawn up is as follows: In consideration of the sum of 500 pounds paid by the said Arthur Mills to the account of said Daniel Wakefield with the Canada Company at Toronto the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged the said Daniel Wakefield agrees to repay to the said Arthur Mills, the said sum of 500 pounds in the following manner, that is to say, that he will on the 1st day of January AD 1847 pay to the said Arthur Mills the sum of 5 pounds, and on the 1st day of January in each succeeding year, a sum not less than 15 pounds until the whole sum of 500 pounds be fully discharged and the said Arthur Mills promises so soon as the said sum of 500 pounds shall have been repaid to convey and grant the said land so purchased to the said Daniel Wakefield absolutely into his own possession - and the said Daniel Wakefield further agrees so soon as he can advantageously do so after his arrival in Upper Canada to invest not less than 200 pounds of the said sum of 500 pounds in the purchase of land, to be purchased in the name of and conveyed to the said Arthur Mills and to transmit any patent deed on consequence of the said land forthwith to the said Arthur Mills at his residence in England at No. 2 Paper Buildings, Temple London and the said Daniel Wakefield also agrees to apply the residue of the said sum of 500 pounds in manner following, that is to say not more than 100 pounds thereof in the purchase of farm stocks and implements of husbandry, and construction of habitations and the residue of the said sum of 500 pounds in the maintenance of William Randall, J. Hall, James Towneley, J. Struck until the 25th of October 1845 being Old Michaelmas Day at which time they shall be considered to

Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

Stimulate Interest - cont.

have worked out the expenses of their journey from England defrayed by the said Arthur Mills and shall afterwards be entitled to reasonable wages besides maintenance so long as they work with the said Daniel Wakefield."

Gets Underway

The project got under way in 1845 and for several years Wakefield reported to Mills on conditions and progress being made. His letters present a graphic picture of life in Canada at that time. The party arrived at Boston on May 19, 1845 and in Blenheim on June 17, 1845 where Wakefield purchased 75 acres on lot 11, concession 12 which has about 30 acres cleared and 14 more chopped ready for logging. There was a farmhouse but no barn. There were 25 acres in wheat and four acres in oats. In his letters he states that Galt was his nearest market being 13 miles away, also the nearest post office. Later a post office was mentioned in Ayr. He told Mills that the land was pretty well settled and mostly by English people and that there was no church but a Methodist chapel on the next lot.

In another of his letters he mentioned buying one yoke of oxen for 13 pounds, 10 shillings or \$65.00; one span of horses, 33 pounds, 15 shillings or \$163.00; two cows for milking 11 pounds, 5 shillings or \$54.00; two barren cows for feeding, 6 pounds 5 shillings or \$28.00; seven pigs for feeding, 317 pounds, 6 shillings or \$18.00; 15 pigs for winter, 4 pounds, 18 shillings or \$23.00; one wagon, 18 pounds, 10 shillings or \$94.00; one weaving machine, 5 pounds, 10 shillings, or \$26.00; two plows for 2 pounds, 6 shillings or \$10.00. While in another letter of January 1846 Wakefield gave Mills information of the cost of buildings. A shanty could be built for 4 or 5 pounds (\$17.00 to \$23.00) while a good log house would cost 16 pounds (\$78.00). Laborers wages averaged 2 shillings to 3 shillings per day or 20 pounds (\$97.00) per year. The best hands might get 24 pounds (\$106.00). Carpenters got 4 shillings or 38 cents a day and board.

In his letter of March 20, 1845 Wakefield states the need of a minister. Most of his neighbors were Methodist and at Galt was the nearest church. He also stated that there was a need for a flour and grist mill.



Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

Inspects Settlement

Mills came to Canada in 1845 to inspect his settlement and wrote the following on his views of what was going on in Blenheim in that time. "I am persuaded that much might yet be done to repair past negligence, in the systematic Colonization of this Province though it is impossible now to restore this Country to the position, she might have held if a good system had been adopted from the first. The results of my little colony at Blenheim will be a fair test whereby to try the probable effects of such a scheme on a larger scale. There are now about 20 souls - men, women, and children there . I have allotted to each family 50 acres of woodland and have given them wherewithal to build their houses." But as bad as it might seem to be, he continued to send settlers out including Wakefield's parents.

In 1848 Wakefield reports on crops on land owned by Mills. Spring wheat, nine acres; barley, five acres; four acres in peas, eight acres in oats, one half acre in potatoes, five acres in turnips and 12 acres in hay. The average yield and price was as follows, wheat, 12 bu. at 2s. 9d; barley, 25 bu. at 1s. 10d; oats 30 bu. at 1s. Wages had increased to 30 to 35 pounds per year; for haying 3s, 9d; in harvest 5s and at all other times 2s, 6d to 3s, 1d per day.

Methodist Chapel

By February 1849 Wakefield reports that the Methodist Chapel was prospering and a village had been started close by but still no mill had been built. The chapel continued to prosper and in 1858 Henry Reid, a Wesleyan Minister wrote to Mills thanking him for his contribution of 10 pounds and for a bible that he had sent to the Methodist Church at Washington. This Bible is still in use here.

The village of Washington was originally settled by English and Scottish settlers but an American is given credit for naming the village. The survey for the village took place in November 1851 with James Black doing it for A.J. Robertson and Mr. Street of Niagara. The two main streets being Washington and Willmott streets, Washington running north and south and Willmot east and west. Prior to being called Washington it was simply

Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

Methodist Chapel - cont.

"The Corners" but the story can be told that an American came here and built a tavern and as the building neared its completion he went up on the roof with a bottle of whiskey and christened it "Washington" (both tavern and village) in honor of George Washington.

Another story tells of the estimable ladies of Plattsville sending their washing here to be done and when asked where they were going they replied "to get their washing done". A third story gives Adam Shark the first postmaster credit for choosing the name when the post office opened here. All these stories are told but little is known which one is correct although the latter one seems more logical, but towns have got their names in stranger ways than these.

By 1862 the village contained two stores, a church, a school, a first class cabinet and chair factory, a tannery, a wagon and blacksmith shop, two shoe shops and a tavern. There was a Temperance Lodge which was organized in 1859, the same year that the Wesleyan Methodist Church was built. The village became a stronghold for the Wesleyan Methodist and always remained the church of the village. The population at that time was approximately 100.

New Industries

As the village prospered, new industries were started and about 1870 to the north of the village a cheese factory began to operate. It was located at the foot of the hill. The tannery was kept busy supplying leather to the two shoe shops, one was located on the site of the present school and the other a little west of the northwest corner of the village. The creek which runs west of the village supplied the water power for a flax mill and for the cabinet and chair factory. The cabinet and chair factory was run by Vogt and Gilles and in the list of professions for the village everybody but the other merchants and professional people were employed here at the factory.

The southwest corner of the village was considered to be the older part as its deed dates back to the Crown in 1802 when a Mr. McDougall received it.

Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

New Industries - cont.

In 1859 Elias G. Chamberlain operated a store on this corner which handled just about everything that was required and it was in the hall above this store that the Temperance Lodge met on a Monday evening. To the south of the store there was a brickyard that did much to replace the log cabins and frame shacks with fine brick homes that are still to be found throughout the township. The bricks for homes as far away as Ayr also came from this yard.

Surprising though it may seem, Washington had no rail connections but in the early 70's it was the centre of the large cattle market and cattle would be driven here from quite some distance to be purchased by buyers from Toronto, Buffalo and other large centres. There being no bank here the buyers would carry cash with them and deposit it with the shopkeepers until it came time to pay for the cattle purchased.

The first school was on the brow of the hill west of the village on the north side of the road. It was a typical school of that era only that with an average attendance of about 75 pupils it was necessary to have two rooms and two teachers.

Post Office

The first post office was opened on Feb. 2, 1852 with Adam B. Shark as postmaster. Daniel Wakefield, William Dunn, Walter Robson and Miss May Patton followed him until April 30, 1914 when it was closed in favor of rural mail.

We find that the Methodist chapel mentioned by Wakefield served as the first church and was located at the present cemetery, one mile east of the village but by 1859 a new church was built in the village and dedicated Jan. 1, 1859 and still serves the community. The seats from the first church were used in the Sunday School of the new church and the Bible presented by Mills in 1846 is still used as the pulpit bible.

It seems that all villages living under the threat of fire breaking out and Washington was no exception. In August 1875 the threat became a reality and all the buildings on the northwest corner down to the creek were destroyed as well as buildings north of the church and some of the east side of Willmot St. Children playing with matches was given as the cause and it was a typical August day with everything as dry as tinder and it only took a spark to create the fire which in more ways than one spelt the doom of the village.

Arthur Mills Experimented in Colonizing Around Washington - cont.

Post Office - cont.

Very little of this part of the village was rebuilt but a Temperance House was built on the corner formerly occupied by the tavern, commonly called the Farmer's Inn, John Mecker operated the Temperance House while Henry Harmer was one of the many operators of the Farmer's Inn. The Temperance House was later destroyed fire.

By the late 1880's considerable decline in the commercial enterprises was noted with the directory of 1888 listing only a cheese factory, wagon and blacksmith shop, a shoe shop, a hotel and one store, a far cry of what existed here 20 years previous.

Today the village of Washington is just a quiet corner in the township of Blenheim but nearby the farm operated by the members of the Utterite Faith keep the village's name in the public eye with their famous geese and noodles which are marketed throughout all of Western Ontario.



A variety of causes brought about Confederation. In a sense, deadlock was its parent in the Canadas where strife between the parties had reached the stage in which the separation of the two provinces seemed to be the only means of placating troubles arising out of intense racial and religious feelings. Yet disruption of the Union meant increased weakness of organization, policy and influence at a moment when United States hostility was being actively expressed in the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty; tactily shown in the toleration of the Fenian Raids and pleasantly pictured forth as to possibilities by the evolution of a million soldiers from the recent Civil War. So it was that external pressure largely helped to avert internal disintegration and to bring about closer provincial union. The kindly help advice and cooperation of the mother country must not be forgotten.

Although Confederation became a reality in 1867 it had been proposed as early as 1690 when General Francis Nicholson proposed the union of all Anglo-American colonies and in 1783 Col. Morse proposed a union of all remaining British possessions in North America and in 1837 the Imperial Parliament passed a resolution in favor of it and from then until 1867 it was strongly supported by nearly all who sought public office. In 1864 delegates from the Maritimes met at Charlottetown to consider a Maritime Union and at this conference delegates appeared from the Canadas and applied for permission to discuss the larger union.

#### First Meeting

As a result of this request a meeting was held at Quebec on October 10, 1864, with delegates from all the provinces of British America including Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. Newfoundland was represented by Sir F.B.T. Carter and Sir Ambrose Shea. P.E.I.'s representatives were Col. Gray Coles, T.H. Haviland, E. Whelan and A.A. McDonald. The delegates from the other provinces who became known as the Fathers of Confederation included Honorables Sir Etienne P. Tache, John A. Macdonald, George E. Cartier, William Macdougall, George Brown, Alexander T. Galt, Alexander Campbell, Oliver Mowat, H.L. Langevin, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, James Cockburn, J.C. Chapis, representing Canada. Honorables Charles Tupper, W.A. Henry, Jonathon McCully, Adam G. Archibald and R.B. Dickey came from Nova Scotia.

In what is now termed East, West and North Oxford was originally known as Oxford on the Thames and was one of the first townships surveyed. Augustus Jones accomplished this in 1793 with his band of soldiers and Indians and the concessions and lots were marked by stakes driven into the ground or marks cut upon the trees. The first township meeting for the Oxford was held in March 1800 and it is presumed to have been held at Beachville. Although Horner formed the first settlement in the county in Blenheim two years before the first settlement in the county in the Oxfords, it must be admitted that the settlement at Oxford on the Thames was the most important of the two and became the nucleus around which the county was settled. Of these settlements, Mr. Gourley had this to report - it commenced settling in 1796 and in 1817 had a population of 530 with 76 inhabitant houses, one Baptist minister, one grist and two sawmills. By the Act 33 George III Chapt. 3 it was enacted "that when any township shall contain 30 inhabited householders it shall be lawful for the justices to issue their warrant calling for a township meeting." On January 1, 1842, North Oxford having the necessary qualifications became a separate township.

#### Granted Lots

The following in North Oxford were granted lots prior to 1800, Hon. D.W. Smith, on July 16, 1799, 500 acres, and the Hon. J. McGill on August 3, 1799, 2,000 acres. The first lot sold was to Calvin Martin on January 23, 1830, at 15 shillings per acre. On the assessment roll of 1825 the following were residents of the section now known as North Oxford:

George Karn, John McNames, Horall Fuller, John Creig, John Strong, James Carroll, Reuben Martin, Jacob Carroll, Ira Fuller, Richard Livings, John Johnston, Jerimah Finch, Abel Thornton, Thomas Bedford, Christopher Karn, John Baldwin, Horace Cross and Darius Cross, John McNames, James Carroll, and Abel Thornton were the only persons who had taxable houses and they were all made of squared logs.

By 1852 there were three sawmills capable of 800,000 feet per annum and a flour mill worth 250 pounds and capable of grinding 4,000 bushels per annum and a lathe mill. In 1852 30 lots were added to the township of

Banner Once Used Patton Siding as Shipping Point - cont.

Granted Lots - cont.

North Dorchester and 725 acres of North Oxford were attached to Ingersoll. A portion of the village of St. Andrews now Thamesford was gained in this annexation from North Dorchester.

By 1861 the township contained a population of 1,771 and there were two good gravel roads in the township and the Great Western Railway crossed the length of the township.

Railroad

The Great Western Railway was for sometime the most important railroad in Canada. On May 6, 1834, an act was passed by the Canadian Legislature incorporating the London and Gore Railroad Co. Among the incorporators were Allan Napiere McNab, George J. Goodhouse, Edward Allan Talbot and 70 or more prominent men of that time. They were given authority to build a single or double track, wooden or iron railroad, from London to Burlington Bay and also to the navigable waters of the River Thames and Lake Huron, and to employ either the force of steam or the power of animals or any mechanical or other power. The capital was fixed at \$400,000.00 (100,000 pounds) in 8,000 shares at \$50.00 per share and in the event of it being extended to Lake Huron the capital might be doubled. The time for its completion was limited to 12 years. Nothing was done under the powers granted and in 1845 when it was about to lapse the act was revised with amendments, one of them being to change the name to the Great Western Railroad Company. It was decided to build the line to some point on the Niagara River and the time allowed extended to 20 years. The capital was increased to 600,000 shares at \$100.00 a share and of this 550,000 shares were subscribed in England.

The spirit of speculation which prevailed from 1853 - 56 was a source of embarrassment and expense to the railroad but this state of affairs was attributed chiefly to the railroad not only the Great Western, but to the other lines being built at this time. So great was the demand for labor, livestock, timber and material of all kinds by the competition that prices increased as much as 50 percent. Contractors failed one after another and work had to be relet at advanced figures and original estimates fell far short of the actual costs. It was found in 1854 that an estimate made by the company engineer in 1852 for the main line fell about a million and a half dollars short. A single instance will explain how this could occur. The original cost of land was estimated at \$60,000.00 whereas the amount



Bannner Once Used Patton Siding as Shipping Point - cont.

Railroad - cont.

actually paid was \$700,000.00. The share capital was raised five times by five acts of legislature, until a total of \$25,300,000.00 was reached. The sum of \$3,850.00 was advanced by the government at six percent and that three percent was to be set aside as a sinking fund. The Great Western did repay a large part of the Great Western Railway until May 25, 1882, when it amalgamated with the Grand Trunk Railroad which later became known as the Canadian National Railroad.

Officially Opened

The section of the Great Western which passes through North Oxford was officially opened December 15, 1853, and the first train, drawn by a small engine with a large stack and an enormous appetite for wood, roared down the track at the thrilling speed of six miles per hour. Every station was decked out in its very best bunting as was the train which had all the officials aboard. Even at this speed it was no pleasure ride and the passengers travelled in fear of their lives, accidents and mishaps were numerous.

With the coming of the railroad came a different type of immigrant to Oxford. They were the Irish laborer immigrant who were induced to come to this country by the recruiting offices of the railroad. The potato famine in Ireland about this time also helped many make up their mind to try their luck working on the railroad in Canada. They were a fairly young type who just lived for payday when they would take out all their grievances on "John Barley Corn" and it was not safe to be anywhere near a tavern if you were not an Irishman who was not good with his fists or feet as both were considered fair in the brawls of the railroad workers. Many of these were of the Roman Catholic faith and settled here abouts and did much to support the Roman Catholic Church at Ingersoll and their families became stalwart members of the community.

Banner

In the southwest corner of North Oxford on the land that was originally in North Dorchester is situated Banner. In 1800 this land was all owned by a Mr. Baby who was engaged in the lumbering trade and lived at York (Toronto) and in 1822 he sold this land to a Mr. Dunlop of Glasgow, Scotland, a



Banner Once Used Patton Siding as Shipping Point - cont.

Banner - cont.

Scottish lumber merchant and in his purchase he secured all the land from Banner west to Dorchester and north to the Governor's Road. Although the land was open for settlers, very few arrived before 1840 and William Dundas along with J. Connor, John Mathews, Jerimiah Minkler and Joseph Spearman were among the first to settle here, most of them of Irish descent. As more settlers came it became necessary to open up roads and trails and the trail that led from Oxford (Ingersoll) to London wound its way through Banner and PUtnam and since has been altered some and is now known as the fourth concession of North Oxford. The trail was still visible until recent years and it never went over a hill or across a swamp if it were possible to go around and so followed the path of least resistance.

By 1849 family names such as Falconer, Chapman, Armstrong, Connor, Oliver and Hyde began to appear and by 1851 the community became known as Spearman's Corners. In 1852 with the disposal of Clergy Reserve lands, more settlers arrived, including the Clark, McFadden, Knowx, Sutherland, Leslie, Ovens, Loughlin, Doty, Irwin, Holcroft and Morris families.

At that time there were several mills on the north branch of the Thames including one operated by the Grey Bros. but, owing to some difficulties over the mill privileges, it never became a success. A Mr. Luminson also operated a mill on this branch.

Woodyard

Banner boasted of a woodyard and a shipping station which was owned by Armon Clark and was situated at the railway tracks just south of the village on a corduroy road which led off from the main road near where the hall now stands. The siding was known as Patton Siding and acted as a station and shipping point for Banner and surrounding district and it was from this point that Banner got its mail after the arrival of the railroad. Prior to that it came from Putnam and Ingersoll. In 1893, Sarah Clark was named postmaster and when it came to deciding a name, J. Spearman thought that Spearman's Corners was too large a name and at a meeting it was suggested by Jerimiah Minklar that the name Banner be used and it was readily accepted. The official postoffice remained at Banner from March 1, 1893, until the first of July, 1914, when Sam Gibson

Banner Once Used Patton Siding as Shipping Point - cont.

Woodyard - cont.

took over the rural mail delivery. During the time that it was received off the train, James Clendening had the contract to meet the mail train and place the bag on the hook at the side of the track for the mail crew to hook off while another would throw off the incoming mail. The mail train went through at 2:30 p.m. daily. In conjunction with the post office, Mrs. Clark ran a local store which was originally started by the Patrons of Industry. There was also a blacksmith shop nearby. Banner unlike most communities near a railroad or on a main road, never boasted of a hotel or tavern.

Methodist Preachers

The first form of religion brought into these parts was by the saddle bag preachers of the Methodist faith and they could have been served by two circuits. A London Circuit started in 1823 while the Oxford Circuit started in 1832. The exact date is not known when services first commenced here, but local names appeared on reports in 1839 at which time there were 12 preaching places on the Oxford circuit. A school was erected on Spearman's farm and was also used for religious services until a church was built in 1857 which is still in use as the Banner United Church. Prior to the building of the new church another form of the Methodist faith sprang up here. It was known as the New Connexion Methodists while the others were known Wesleyan and they built a frame church which stood near the present school. This branch of the Methodist faith was organized in 1829 chiefly in opposition to the right to hold services at the hour convenient to them. This group eventually died out here and later the building was moved to its present site as a hall and was used by the Grange Society, Literary Society and is now used by the Foresters' Lodge. Along with the Wesleyan Methodist an Anglican church flourished here. It was located east of the community on the knoll on the far bank of the river. Among its ministers was Rev. H. Revell who came out from Ireland in 1844 as part of a missionary effort and had the choice of coming here or going to Cincinnati, Ohio. He later became the second rector of St. James Church, Ingersoll. This church was attended by Anglicans from as far as Thamesford and it is believed that some alternating

Banner Once Used Patton Siding as Shipping Point - cont.

Methodist Preachers - cont.

of places of worship was done between the two communities. Little is known about the church, but in 1845 the cemetery was dedicated and in it rest two of the first councillors of North Oxford, Mr. Mathew and Mrs. Armstrong. For many years after the church and congregation had disappeared, the site of the church would be a mass of rose blooms each year. The cemetery still remains, a tribute to the pioneer families of that faith. The pioneer families of the Methodist faith rest in the Banner Church Cemetery which was given by Mr. and Mrs. David Doty for a consideration of five shillings of lawful money. This charge was made to make the transaction legal in 1856.

First School

The first school was built on the Spearman Farm and the next school stood at the road about where the hall is now. It was too close to the road and when the law demanded a playground at each school it was moved to the place where the present school is. The present school was built later. The teachers who taught here since 1871 include J. Cain (1871), Nancy McKellar, Maggie Creighton, Miss A.S.M. Richardson, Miss Mary Rumbell, Charles Elliott, Maggie Hotson, Miss M.A. Dundas, Miss McKay, Dalas Cameron, Mr. Hill, Miss Nora Birie, Mr. Eckhardt, Miss Enpey, Mr. F. Strobridge, Miss Evelyn Augustine, (Mrs. Frank Pirie), J.G. Yelland, Miss Edith J. Wigglesworth, Miss M. Campbell and Miss Annie McMurray (1910).

There were two cheese factories active in this area, the first one known as the Maple Leaf factory which was operated by Thomas Caddey and was located east of the Anglican cemetery and the present Banner factory, located between Banner and Thamesford which began operations about 1907. Near this factory on lot 9, concession 3, Benjah Leslie operated a brickyard which supplied the local residents with bricks for their homes. For many years there was an Indian encampment down at the Cold Springs near the railway and they would make baskets etc. and sell them throughout the countryside. Though main highways have taken the place of the trail to London and Banner has settled back to rest, her residents just ask to be allowed to live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man.



Previous to the year 1793, the great majority of marriages heretofore contracted in the province of Upper Canada were according to the law of the land illegal; and the children of such marriages illegitimate. Only such marriages as had been performed by a clergyman of the Church of England was held to be in accordance with the statutes then in force. The children from all other marriages, most of which had been conducted by Military Officers and civil officials could not legally inherit the property of their parents. For the relief of such parties, to make valid all marriages heretofore irregularly contracted, and to provide for the future solemnization of marriage, a Bill was introduced during the second session of the first Parliament of Upper Canada which met at Newark, on Friday, June 14, 1793.

The exclusive position which it was intended the English Church should occupy, as the state endowed Church of Upper Canada, was difficult to maintain as before long the majority of the inhabitants were members of other religious societies. In the year 1798 there were but three clergymen of the Church of England in the Province and most of the marriages contracted by Protestants were performed by Magistrates. Among the Scottish Roman Catholics settled in the Eastern part of the Province there does not appear to have ever been any questions raised as to the rights of Bishop McDonnell and his Clergy to unite the members of their congregations in marriage according to the rules and regulations of their Church.

In 1810 the six ministers of the Church of England stationed in Upper Canada each received 100 pounds per annum from the Government and 50 pounds from the society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. In 1819 the number of clergymen had increased to 10 and in 1823 to 16. The nearest to Burford at this period was the Rev. R. Leeming, stationed at Ancaster.

#### Richwood

There is located at the junction of the fifth concession and the east quarter line of Blenheim township a hamlet that has survived the passage of time and bears the name Richwood. This community was originally settled by the English who were presumably of the Baptist faith and it was some 10 years after the first settlers arrived that the first church and cemetery was started.

The first baptist in the township was Jacob Goble who settled on the first concession about 1816. The first settlers at what was later called Marl-



Laycock Put Richwood on Road to Success - cont.

Richwood - cont.

borough, after the English town of that name, was a squatter by the name of Coe and the first settlers of whom any records were kept were the Secords who came here in 1817 from Niagara also the Bawtenheimers.

In 1824 Henry Rupert arrived from New Brunswick and when one of his daughters died shortly after arriving here, he gave land for a cemetery and his brother-in-law Frederick Burnett gave land for a church. This was organized as a regular Baptist Church about 1828 and was first called the First Blenheim Baptist Church and later as Riverside Baptist Church. Others who settled here were Squire Jackson in 1833, Robert Kennedy in 1839, M.B. French in 1837, W.A. Scott in 1857, James Dickson in 1832, Thomas Daniel in 1842, Henry Rupert in 1826, W.J. Stockton in 1823, James Moses and Isaac Innes in 1827 and Henry Daniel in 1823.

The community continued to grow and by 1852 it was one of the few rural communities shown on Shenstone's map of Oxford of 1852 and by 1862 it boasted of a population of 150 and was a station on the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad and had two stores, two churches, a school, a hotel and the usual shops such as blacksmith, wagonmakers and cobblers. In the village between 1840 and 1870 were several distinguished families who had reached the social level that a carriage and horses were a must with them and they did much entertaining. A. Mr. Smart was a linen (flax) buyer with a New York Firm and when at home was always seen in a silk topper, gloves and cutaway coat and gray trousers. Among those who carried on business within the community at this time were the Pines who had the first store, Ogilivies had a tailor shop, Robert Scott had a store, Mr. More was proprietor of the hotel near the station, J.D. Hughson operated The Richwood Exchange Hotel, Henry Munro was a shoemaker and Joseph H. Laycock was the township clerk and Justice of the Peace.

Village Surveyed

In 1857 Robert Kennedy laid out the land which he owned to form the village and had James Black survey it and it consisted of 21 lots and the streets were named Queen, King and Head. Each of the lots were two chains long and one chain wide. The lots were numbered from the station towards the

Laycock put Richwood on Road to Success - cont.

Village Surveyed - cont.

south. As the villages became organized, the township council gave each of them either enough lumber for a two plank sidewalk or gravel for a gravel walk.

One settler who made a great contribution to Richwood's success at that time was Joseph Laycock. In 1829 Joseph and Eliza Laycock arrived here from Colne. At first they lived in a small house and eventually there was quite a large family of them and were engaged in the lumbering business with the Laycock mills being established on the third concession on the west quarter town line. About 1845 Laycock began building a large three-storey brick house which was completed in 1850 and is still standing. Laycock served as township clerk from 1839 to 1872 and the first township hall in Blenheim was erected on his land. He also donated the land for the school and cemetery and the present church is still on land obtained from the Laycocks in 1861.

Railroad

The Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway went through Richwood in 1857 although the survey was made in 1853. The right of way was purchased about this time and while it was being built a settlement of over 100 people sprang up in this vicinity and became known as "the patch". It's residents were made up mostly of Irish laborers and their families who were hired to fill the gravel cars with gravel with shovel and hard manual labor. From these people came Richwood's only mystery.

One of these Irish laborers, who was a heavy drinker, beat up his wife quite frequently and one night she disappeared. An inquest was held but as no body was found at that time Squire Jackson dismissed the case, but years later, two Frenchmen were digging gravel and they found the body. They dropped everything and ran. Nobody remembered the name of the woman so her remains were reburied in the Riverside Cemetery and the mystery of the missing woman was considered solved. Some of these laborers stayed after the railroad was completed and names such as Shehees, Hesters, Muirs, Mitchells, McClures and Aldens became common names. There is no record of the first school in Richwood but prior to 1852 John

Laycock put Richwood on Road to Success - cont.

Railroad - cont.

W. Clinton was a school teacher here coming from Clinton and in 1852 married a local girl so it is presumed that it was started prior to 1850. The stone school was built about 1857 and was a two room school at one time. In 1875 John Sipperell taught night school for writing. By 1862 it was known as school section number 14 and had an enrolment of 171 with an average attendance of 71. Robert McLean was the teacher. By 1888 the village had a population of 75 and contained two churches, two stores, a wagon shop, shoe shop and two blacksmith shops along with a railroad station for the Grand Trunk Railroad.

It was while Richard Wood operated the store here that the name was changed to Richwood which was prior to the opening of a post office on the sixth of October, 1851 when C. Pine was appointed postmaster. John Pine, J.H. Laycock, David Kyte, Henry Kloss and Miss Grace E. Kloss also served as postmasters until it was closed on September 30, 1947.

Beside the Baptist Church there was a Wesleyan Methodist Church here being erected in 1861 which has survived the changing times and still serves the community as the Richwood United Church.

Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - Page 1

In the history of Zorra, credit is given to those stalwart pioneers from the Catskill Mountains of the New England States, the Pennsylvania Dutch of Pennsylvania the Germans from Hesse Nassau, the English from the Midlands and rugged Irish along with those who had previously settled elsewhere in Canada but there also settled in Zorra a group of people who proved to be so outstanding that other immigrants picked up their ways and in a few years it was so hard to tell who were the original Scottish settlers and who were not.

Scots Made

The first of these hardy Scots to arrive here was William McKay who was followed by his brother Angus. William McKay arrived in Zorra in 1820 after working on the Erie Canal in U.S.A. He had been a captain in the 93rd Regiment of the Sutherland and Argyle Regiment. He was one of the few survivors of a bloody battle in Peninsular War when his regiment was almost wiped out.

When he arrived in Zorra he settled on the ninth line on or around lot 12. With Mother Nature for his only neighbor he proceeded to build a shanty for himself. When Captain William was settled he sent word to the United States for Angus to join him.

We do not hear of William returning to Scotland but in 1829 Angus returned to Scotland. When he returned he brought with him his aged parents whom he had tried to persuade to stay in Scotland. His mother saying "Na, na, where my laddies go, I'll gang too". Such was the spirit of the McKays.

Brought Others

Along with his parents he persuaded many families from his native Sutherlandshire whose names are common to all today to stop fighting with the lords of the Highlands and come to this great country where they could get land for themselves. In Canada he told them they would not be mere vassals but instead men and women equal to their neighbor. These people arrived in the fall of '29 after a harrowing crossing where a ship's biscuit at times was almost a delicacy. Three months after their arrival, the mother of Angus and William, Mrs. Isabell McKay died.

Within the space of a few years these people had taken root. They proceeded to make Zorra a wee bit of the Highlands. In 1830-31 they were holding a prayer meeting in the homes or meadows of the neighbors. By



Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - cont.

Brought Others - cont.

1832 they decided to build a church. The church and cemetery still commemorated as the Log Church Cemetery were located on lot 9 concession 7, Mrs. Isabell McKay was the first one buried here. Undoubtedly this spot had been selected as a suitable site sometime before it was decided to build a church on it.

Rough Building

The church was made of logs and was 39 by 48 feet. It was completed in the summer of 1833. Monthly prayer meetings were held here for the rest of the summer. Come winter they had to revert back to meetings in the homes as there was no means of heating the church. The logs were smoothly hewn inside and out chinked with plaster and lime. There was a gallery with access by an outside stair. There were no towers or spire. For almost two years the edifice was without a pulpit and pews. The seating consisted of planks laid on blocks to accommodate about 400.

In 1833 the Synod at Upper Canada made a grant of 50 pounds to the Presbyterians of Zorra to provide a place of worship. One half of this sum was used to procure a pulpit, pews and other necessities for the church. The other was put aside for the building of an additional place of worship when the need arose. By the middle of August 1834 the first Presbyterian minister to preach in Oxford took their service. In June 1835 Rev. Donald McKenzie returned to be inducted as their first minister.

McKay School

The date of the building of the first school is not known. The McKay School located on lot 8 concession 8 was considered to be the third school to be established in the township. Hugh Gordon was one of its first teachers. In 1862 it was one of 10 schools in Zorra. Catherine Ross its teacher had an average of 22 pupils in attendance.

On January 21, 1867 one quarter of an acre of land was sold to the school trustees of S.S. No. 8 and the school was moved from lot 8 to lot 5 to fit into the school section plan of the township. Later more land was purchased but the original school on this site still stands. Students living to the south of what is now Golspie might have attended a school known as the Corner School which was located at the corner of the tenth

Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - cont.

McKay School - cont.

line and the Governor's Road where James Robertson taught in 1857. James Robertson was born in 1839 in the Tay Valley at the village of Dull in Scotland. In 1855 his family immigrated to Canada and settled in East Oxford Township. By the time he was 18 he was teaching school at the Corner School. From here he went to Innerkip and from there to Princeton, New Jersey where he graduated to become a Presbyterian minister. On November 18, 1869 Mr. Robertson was ordained and inducted into the charge of Norwich which included South East Oxford and Windham Centre. He received a call from here to the west at Winnipeg. While there he became known as the "Giant of the West". It was claimed he did more for the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church than any other man. His actions stirred Ralph Connor to such an extent that in 1908 he wrote the life story of James Robertson.

With the building of the school on lot 5 the community took on the name of Elmsdale from a good stand of trees. Within a mile of the school Murrays had a sawmill. In January 1893 H.J. Smith of Hensall erected a store on this corner. On November 1, 1895 the Elmsdale post office was opened. The name did not suit the people of Scotland. They wished to remember their county town. On the suggestion of the Sutherland family the name was changed to Golspie after an attractive red sand village which was the seat of the Duke of Sutherland at Dunrobin Castle. On May 18, 1896 Mrs. Robert Murray was the postmaster until it closed in 1914. Outside of the store was a blacksmith shop operated by Mr. Iredale. The nearest cheese factory was the Spring Creek Factory (Willow Lake) or the West Zorra factory at Embro.

Cody's Corners

Among the first to take up land in West Zorra south of the present village of Embro was Elijah Cody who came up from Marcellus, New York. He first settled in West Oxford in 1820 where he kept a tavern. In May 1821 he purchased 200 acres of land in Zorra on the corner of what is now the fourth line and Cody's Sideroad at a cost of \$1 per acre and moved there in May 1824. Others who settled in this area included Burdicks, Alyeas, Tafts, Harris, Kams, Cooks, Days, Hallocks, Fords and Galloways. These settlers were mostly of British descent coming up from the United States in the early thirties. They were of either the Baptist or Methodist faith.

Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - cont.

Cody's Corners - cont.

Shortly after the arrival of these settlers a school was built on the farm of Elijah north of the buildings. It remained until 1848 when a frame school was built on the southeast corner. Up until this time the local residents went to Beachville for their worship. With the building of this school both the Baptists and the Methodists had services here. Some of the teachers were A. McDonald in 1818, Clark Rose, H.C. Ross, J. Fraser, and B. Blair. Rev. Donald McKenzie of Embro was the school inspector. The present school was erected in 1870.

Between the corner and the village of Embro several industries started up including a brick yard operated by the Sharpe family. In 1866 Sam Elliott operated a cheese factory. In 1846 the Scotia Mills were erected by J.M. Ross. Mr. Ross arrived in Zorra in 1842 and purchased 500 acres south of the village at \$2 per acre. At one time Governor-General Lloyd Byng and Lieutenant-Governor H. Cockshutt were guests on the Scotia Farm. Later A. Hamilton and James Thompson operated the Scotia Mills. The Archiblad Milling Co. of Beachville had a store house on the northeast corner of the sideroad south of Embro. The West Zorra cheese factory was located one mile east of this corner. A Mr. Nasmyth arrived from Scotland in 1832 and started a Methodist class in the village of Embro in his own home. In 1854 a Methodist Church was built on the fourth line at the sideroad south of the village along with a cemetery. The cemetery still remains but in 1875 the church was sold and moved into the village.

Walker's

To the west of Cody's Corners the junction of the first concession of West Zorra commonly called the Ingersoll Road is known as Walker's. The place derives its name from the fact that A. Walker arrived from Bucks County, New York in May 1832 by way of York, Aurora and Newmarket. Upon arrival he stayed with the Munro family on the second concession. One of their first moves was to start a school which was held in the Walker barn at the top of the hill. Later a log school was built at the corner where the present school now stands. In the early days of these corners George Harris, who was a lay preacher, conducted Methodist services in the school. He donated land for a church and cemetery north of the corner.



Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - cont.

Walker's - cont.

The cemetery became a reality but a church was never built.

One of the outstanding features of this corner was the splendid growth of black walnut on the low land. North of the cemetery on the farside of the river Sam Elliott started a cheese factory which was the first of two begun under his initiative. John Adams who also settled at Walkers went over to the 12th concession of Nissouri to start the Adams Cheese Factory. He later moved to Toronto where he started a milk-receiving station and is considered to be the first to sell bottled milk in Canada.

Zorra Station While this area was never on a railway line a station was operated on the main line of the CPR for service to these parts. When the line was first constructed the station was known as Code Junction after Walter Code who was the roadmaster in charge of the construction. Three years later a line was built from Zorra to Ingersoll the name was changed to Ingersoll Junction and finally changed to Zorra. Prior to 1908 there was a station on the main line known as Embro. In 1908 it was moved one mile west to the location of the present Zorra Station. The Embro Station was erected in 1890. It was used as a mail and passenger stop for this area. A stage coach operated between the station and Embro meeting all trains. It was driven by W.S. Vannatter, B.J. Smith was the station agent. His son Oswald J. Smith later became the well known minister of the People's Church, Toronto. In 1862 John McKay operated this stage line between Beachville and Embro and maintained the Toll Road. A toll gate was operated at lot eight south of Embro and the toll being 5 cents for a single horse and 10 cents for a team.

Holliday

East of Walker's on the town line between Zorra and Nissouri a group of Scots from Argyleshire came taking up land that had been granted to British soldiers for services rendered. Among these soldiers was a Captain Clark who was granted 600 acres here in 1804. His daughter Mrs. Force of Niagara sold 200 acres of it to Archibald McCaul in 1823 for 100



Scots Made Zorra Wee Bit of the Highlands - cont.

Holliday - cont.

pounds. McCaul arrived in Canada in 1820. He spent some years working on the Welland Canal and in the Niagara district spending part of his time in Zorra each year clearing his farm. He was accompanied by Hugh McCorquodale who took up land north of McCauls. Until 1834 it was necessary to go to Ingersoll for most things even to getting married. At that time there was no minister of the Church of England within 18 miles and James Ingersoll JP was allowed to perform marriages. About this time a spot was located on the high ground near the creek for a cemetery. On its tombstones are found the names of many early settlers including McCauls, McArthurs, McPhersons, Munros, McCorquodales and Sutherlands. Neither church nor school were located here but as time progressed a store was opened. In 1853 a post office was started to be known as Nissouri post office until it closed in 1889. The place was also known as McBrayne's Corners due to the fact that Archibald McBrayne had a hotel and post office there from 1873 to 1884. Henry Straitch also operated a store and postoffice from 1885 to 1889 when the post office closed. In 1892 it was reopened with N.R. McKenzie the local blacksmith, being postmaster. The office was finally closed in 1913 in favour of rural mail delivery. For many years Bob McDonald operated a sawmill. During the harvest season he operated a threshing outfit. There was also a tannery located at the place.

It was just a few miles east of these corners that the Nissouri Fall Fair was held on the Thornton farm. For many years this was one of the better fall fairs in the county. On the same site were held camp meetings which would attract believers from all over the county. At these meetings it is told, the local boys would wait outside the tent until the meeting reached a fever pitch then they would release the ropes supporting the tent and thereby break up the gathering.

Thamesford was Thriving Village in Middle 1800's - page 4

A post village situated on the middle branch of the River Thames became Thamesford. On the Governor's Road which passes through in the townships partly of East Nissouri and partly in North Oxford, the village is 14 miles from Woodstock, 14 miles from London and five miles from Ingersoll. It is connected with Ingersoll and London by the Ingersoll and Thamesford Gravel Road and also with St. Marys by the gravel road leading from it to St. Marys. Thamesford was thus described in 1862. Though some of the names of the roads have changed the description still fits today.

Thamesford was first known as St. Andrews. Until 1852 part of the land now occupied by the village was part of North Dorchester township in Middlesex county.

The first settlers in this immediate area included Ebenezer Titus who in 1815 settled on lot 5, concession 10 of Nissouri and built himself a shanty. Another James O'Brien built on lot 6, concession 9 in 1821. The Horseman family arrived in 1823. In 1824 a family of Howards came up from Niagara and were in possession of a plow. When not using the implement themselves they rented it out for a shilling a day. About all that can be recalled about this plow is that it only had one handle.

Most Crown Grants in the district date from 1822 - 24. In the immediate area of the village John Finkle, father of Judge Finkle, and Jake Allen had two of the first houses. They obtained their lots when property was auctioned to form the village. Grants of land were also made in different denominations to allow them to build churches. It was announced at the sale that a hotel would be erected shortly. It was also noted that the village was to be located on the Governor's Road. As this road was not a toll road it would be an asset to the village, the announcement added.

Mills

In the early 1840's a mill was erected. It measured 35 by 45 feet. From stone basement it rose four storeys in height. Three run of stone were driven by water power. In conjunction with this mill was a sawmill with a capacity of 750,000 feet of lumber annually. In 1847 these mills were owned by John Finlke. They were operated by Joel McCarty until 1859 when they were purchased by John Johns. In 1874 Joseph Cawthrop took them over. Eventually the Hogg family obtained them.

## Thamesford Was Thriving Village In Middle 1800's - cont.

### Mills - cont.

On one occasion Joel McCarty wishing to dry some green lumber in a hurry piled a large amount of green lumber in such a fashion as to form a kiln. He built a fire in the middle to dry the wood. A strong wind came up one night during the drying. The lumber toppled. In the morning all that remained was a pile of ashes.

As the village grew it was found that the name St. Andrews was already taken in the postal list to the name Thamesford was suggested, the name coming naturally, as the river Thames had a ford at the village. This was accepted as the village name in 1851.

### Schools

One school was located on Delatre Street and served the Nissouri residents. A second school was located a mile south of the village on the first concession of North Oxford for the use of the North Oxford students. About 1867 a two room school was erected on Delatre Street. This was a brick building 30 by 40 and two stories high. The lower room was used by the third and fourth classes. The upper floor was used for the younger pupils. Eight years later No. 1 Section of North Oxford joined with No. 5 Section of Nissouri. All pupils went to the Delatre street school. This institution continued to serve the village until 1901 when a new school was built. This latter is still in use. Some of the early teachers were Mr. Sutherland, Miss McMillan, J. S. McKay, John McWilliam, F. Kennedy, Bessie McKay, Bella Rose, Tena McMurray, and T. Eckhardt. Some of these names will also be recalled as teachers of other schools.

### Anglican Churches

In 1845 the first Anglican service was held in St. Andrew's. The service was conducted in the grist mill which has been just recently built by John Finkle. Canon Betteridge of Woodstock conducted the service. Services were alternated with Spearmans Corners' Anglicans. Canon Betteridge alternated with Rev. H. Revell who officiated at the Spearmans Corners' services along with other rectors from St. James' Church Ingersoll. It is recorded that many of the members from St. Andrew's village were baptized at the Spearmans Corners (Banner) Church.

Thamesford was Thriving Village in Middle 1800's - cont.

Anglican Churches - cont.

Prior to 1859 a Miss Vansittart donated land for a church and cemetery. The daughter of John Brock was the first to be interred here being buried under an upturned tree. In 1859 a congregation was formed. Rev. William Bookman was appointed missionary in charge. He served Delaware, Edwardsburg (Dorchester), Lakeside as well as Thamesford. The first service was held in the Methodist Church. Later the barns of offices of Doctor Dawes, E. McCarty, Thomas Owens, John Tomlinson and Thomas Lougheed served this purpose. Finally the congregation decided to build a stone church. John Forbes, Charles Cobbe and James Keyes were the builders. Material was donated by John Halpin and R. Rutledge. Rev. Samuel Belcher was the second incumbent. This building is still in use and the tower and bell were added at the time of the Queen Victoria Jubilee. The cornerstone for the original part was laid by Archdeacon McLaren in June of 1861.

Methodists

Records show that as early as 1857 there was a Methodist church in the village. In fact, all three branches of the Methodist denomination are recorded here and in 1884 they were united as one. In 1866 the frame church was bricked over. Those active in the congregation at that time included Messrs. Chenoweth, Cogswell, Bartlett, Story, Sherlock, Judge, Kester, Horseman and Dicky.

Presbyterians

With a large number of Scots arriving in this area in the 1830's, it is only natural that there would be a Presbyterian Church formed. At first the Scots would walk over to Embro for services. In 1845 steps were taken to form a separate congregation. A site was chosen and purchased from John Finkle for five shillings. About this time Isaac Buchanan, a wholesale merchant of Hamilton offered one hundred dollars to each of the first five churches to be built in the western district. Some of the more energetic men set to work to obtain funds to take advantage of Mr. Buchanan's offer. In 1847 Rev. W.C. Burns of Mission fame in China laid the cornerstone for the 36 by 47 frame building.



Thamesford was Thriving Village in Middle 1800's - cont.

Presbyterians - cont.

It was of the plainest design both inside and out. The seats were pine slabs with pegs inserted on the round side for legs. The seats were without sides or backs. There was no sleeping during the sermon in those days and this church on the hill served until 1875 when the second St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church was built.

In those 23 years there were 60 member families attending. The first services were conducted in Gaelic. In later years both Gaelic and English were used. In the new church it was common to have two services, one in Gaelic in the basement and the English service was held here at the same church.

This church was of white brick and possessed a tower. A cemetery was laid out surrounding the church. The last Gaelic service was held here at the time of the Jubilee in 1905.

Industries

The village never lacked for industries. Along with the mills there was a planing mill on Washington street operated by Hazzard Hull and James McMurray. An ashery was an important industry. Mr. Garner was its proprietor. In 1883 a cheese factory located on Harris street Ingersoll was purchased and moved to Thamesford. This plant was operated for 12 years until it was auctioned in 1895 to Charles Jenkins.

One of the more important mills, Sugden Woollen Mills was located on the west side of the river on Delatre street. This firm gave employment to both men and women. It was later used as a flax mill where 20 men were given employment.

During the summer "Flax" Brown as its owner was called would hire boys and girls to spread flax on the clover fields to dry, turn it as need be, then gather and return it to the mill where it would be made into tow. This mill was later owned by James Livingstone of Baden who developed a large industry in the making of oil cake at Baden.

In keeping up with the times Messrs. Hull and Kennedy found employment for some 16 residents in their carriage factory. Later the Gowper Bros. conducted this business. While they operated it they erected a tower

Thamesford Was Thriving Village in Middle 1800's - cont.

Industries - cont.

and bell which rang daily at eight, twelve, one and six, as well as for services on Sunday. This bell was later located at the fire hall. Not to be outdone by Embro, Thamesford at one time published a local newspaper. One of its first editors was James Stewart of Embro. It was later purchased by W.J. Taylor, publisher of The Sentinel-Review at that time.

Services

Thamesford being located on a main road attracted Dr. Odgen and Dr. Dawes to settle. For many years they cared for the residents for miles around. In 1880 Dr. J. McWilliam located in the village after returning from Edinburgh where he had taken a post-graduate course. He soon had a large practice. To go along with his practice he opened a drug store where for over a quarter of a century he filled prescriptions. He also found time for other interests such as the manufacturing of peat, growing nut trees and organizing a telephone system. He also ran as Liberal candidate in a Dominion election.

A personal friend, George Mills would often spend long hours with the doctor. With the coming of the telephone they both became interested and decided it would be nice to be able to talk to each other from their homes. So they erected the first line between their homes but the more the doctor thought of it the more he was convinced that in times of emergency a telephone would be priceless. This belief led to a line extending as far north as Kintore with a small switchboard on the Mills farm. The venture proved to be a success from the first. The Nissouri Telephone Association was formed with shares at five dollars each. The line was incorporated in 1897 with a capital of \$1,645. The central switchboard was set up at Kintore.

George Mills later formed the Mills Telephone Co. for Thamesford and often the lines for the two companies would extend down the same street with one on either side. The rates for the telephones were \$10.00 for residential and \$12.00 for business phones for a year.

Thamesford Was Thriving Village in Middle 1800's - cont.

Railroad

When the Western Ontario Pacific Railroad was being formed it was supported by such leading merchants of Thamesford as Nelson McCarty, J. Cawthrop, Cris. Brock, Washington Kester and Mathew Cooper. They were able to get bylaw 225 passed in the township council in favor of the railroad but residents of the townships took the matter to court where the bylaw was ruled illegal. As a result when the CPR was built through Thamesford, the village was left without a station. However the village raised the sum of \$2,500 and for this amount the railroad agreed to put a station in the community.

With the railroad finally erecting a station, Thamesford enjoyed a wave of prosperity. The Trader's Bank saw fit to establish a branch. To cater to the travelling public there were at one time three hotels. While the place thrived it never increased the population at this time. In 1862 Thamesford had a population of 650. In 1888 the population was only 450. Prior to the coming of the CPR mail was brought to the village by stage from Ingersoll. At one time mail was delivered three times a week from Thamesford to Dornoch (Raeside), McBrines, Lakeside, Medina and Kintore with connections to Harrington at Lakeside. In all, 35 miles of mail route were served. The first post office was opened on July 6, 1851, with Rosetta McLellan as postmaster. Later Joel McCarty (1854), Lawrence Whalen (1862), N.C. McCarty (1863 - 1915), D. Quinn, E.R. Patterson and now Mrs. D. Richardson have all served as Thamesford postmasters.

## Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister was Law in Harrington's Early Day Brawls

Page 6

Looking over the early residents of Zorra we find that in the Harrington area W.C. Brown had established a farm in 1827. He came from another part of Canada, presumably the Niagara district. In 1837 S. F. Rounds, coming from the U.S.A. established a mill. It was on his property the village of Harrington had its beginning although he was not the person responsible for the village being laid out.

W.A. Ross in his history of Zorra states a man by the name of Demerest owned a sawmill where the village of Harrington is now situated. North of the village lived Weston Allen and Ned Fletter. A mile east lived Alexander Ross. South, on the second concession was John B. McKay and his brother William, Robert Munro, Robert Murray, John McKay, Alex Sutherland, and Colin Sutherland. It was D.L. Demerest who had the location surveyed by William Smilley in 1856. In the survey most of the streets were to the south of what is now called the Harrington sideroad. This survey contained 20 streets. These included West, Prospect, Cornelia, Elizabeth, Fraser, Victoria, Albert, Adelaide, Caroline, William and East street running north and south, Main St. Charlotte, Maria, Park, Queen and David streets running east and west. Charlotte and Fraser Streets were the only two streets laid out north of Main Street. The main part of the village was laid out between the mill pond and the Presbyterian Church. The church was built at the eastern extremity of the village on the north side of the road and is still in the same location. The old mill pond is better known today as the Harrington pond of the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

### Post Office

This section of Zorra being somewhat hilly was well supplied with creeks as well as the north branch of the Thames River with its many tributaries. Consequently there were several mills scattered throughout the region. With this activity drawing settlers, a post office was established here on April 4, 1854, with Davil L. Demerest as postmaster. In 1866 Donald REid took over. He was followed by Hugh McKay, Robert Heron, May Heron



Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister was Law in Harrington's Early Day Brawls - cont.

Post Office - cont.

(Mrs. Mary White), Robert McCool, Robert Beattie until 1906. Today Harrington is one of the few small post offices still operating. It serves 22 patrons. Since 1906 A. Clark, G.M. Bossemer, R.H. Darling, J. Clark, A.M. Ross, Colin A. MacDougall and Norman Ford have been postmasters.

Some of the industries and residents located in the village in 1867 included William Bailey, proprietor of the Harrington hotel; John Campbell, shoemaker; Richard Paige, proprietor of the Harrington Mills; John Harris, carpenter and joiner; Robert Heron, tailor; Levi Johnston, chairmaker; J. MacKay, a blacksmith; James McKay, mason; Hugh McLeod, MD, physician and surgeon; D. McMullen, shoemaker; Rev. W.M. Meldrum, Presbyterian minister; John Pitt, justice of the peace; Donald Reid, postmaster and shoe ship; Duncan Reid, shoemaker; George White, proprietor of the oatmeal mill located on Lot 31, concession 3. The population of the village at this time was approximately 100 people.

The congregation of the Presbyterian Church was established in 1856, when John Fraser, a village merchant, invited Rev. Wm. Meldrum of Puslinch, who was doing missionary work, to come and preach. Mr. Meldrum conducted services in the bush back of where the present church now stands. An understanding was reached that as soon as a building was erected he would be offered the charge.

Mr. Fraser gave the land. Early in 1857, a church was built a few feet to the rear of the present church. It was opened in June, 1857. Mr. Meldrum accepted the call to serve as the first pastor.

The first manse, which was built in 1885, is in use at the present time as the Dickey Store.

Many men served this parish but few left their mark as did Rev. Daniel Gordon who arrived in 1871. He was a man of exceptional ability. In his college days he had been the champion boxer of his year. The manse at this time was located within earshot of the hotel. Harrington was well known for its rowdy parties. It wasn't unusual for the reverend gentleman to enter the barroom and straighten the fellows out. His size and physique doing most of the influencing.

## Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister Was Law In Harrington's Early Day Brawls - cont.

### Ralph Connor

The Gordons had a son whose name is one well remembered for his skill with the pen. C. W. Gordon who took the pen name of Ralph Connor. His boyhood reflects in his books, as he used scenes of happenings in the Harrington area. The barn he often mentions still stands on the third line of Zorra. He took an active part in its raising. The well known binding bee he mentions in his books, actually took place on the Morris farm. Some of Ralph Connor's books include Black Rock, Glengarry School Days, The Sky Pilot. In all, his book sales reached the 65,000 mark.

### Dollar Wheat

The older generation remembers Rev. Daniel Gordon for his long sermons. Often when the day was hot the menfolk would drowse. Suddenly the minister would call out in a loud voice "Wheat is selling at a dollar a bushel in Stratford." All heads would jerk up and he would chastise them for sleeping, saying the mere mention of dollar wheat could wake them while he could preach all day about the wheat and tares of life and to this they would slumber. Very few would fall asleep again that day.

It was this same gentleman who described the residents of Harrington better than anyone else ever did before or since. When he and his family arrived from Glengarry he wrote back to a friend, "the people hereabouts were Scots with a few of the lesser breeds mixed in."

A little north of Harrington there was a very strong Irish settlement but the boundary road between Perth and Oxford has been like a high board fence. Very few from one side have gone to the other.

### Schools

While the majority of settlers arrived during the 1840's, it was not until 1850 that David Demerest sold one quarter of land for a shilling for the site of the school. At first, the school site was known as Springfield. The institution was of log construction. This school remained until 1869, when a Mr. Grant of St. Marys was given the contract to build the present stone school. When it opened 112 children attended under N. Meldrum, the teacher. By 1878 it was necessary to build an addition. The brick section was added at a cost of \$725.

## Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister Was Law in Harrington's Early Day Brawls - cont.

### Schools - cont.

Some of the early teachers were Jane Sutherland, James Hill, Mrs. T. McBurney, Hugh Ross and Jean Morgan. For some unknown reason the name Springfield was not acceptable as the village name. Francis Hinks of Woodstock was influential in having the name changed to Harrington in honor of one of his staunch supporters. Squire Harrington, of East Zorra. There being another Harrington, the village became known as Harrington West for postal purposes.

The magnificent stands of rock elm and hard maple in Zorra were among the best to be found along the Great Lakes due to the gravel bottom of the land. Great loads of lumber made their way to the lakeshore for shipment to the shipbuilding centres of the Atlantic coast. Among the biggest timber was a mast 14 inches square at the butt and 70 feet in length which was shipped out by Wilson Bros. of Woodstock to Boston. With the mention of timber the name Sam Pearce is recalled. Sam was one of the greatest lumber men in these parts and his descendants are still to be found in the district.

### SawMill

For some time Harrington had no sawmill. Lampmans of Perth County purchased a sawmill at Bennington. When moving it to the St. Marys district they reached Harrington on a Saturday night. While waiting over Sunday they were persuaded to set up and cut a few logs which they did. As a result the mill never moved to St. Marys, but remained here until the age of sawmills had passed on.

The old Harrington mill had its beginning in the early 1850's. Though this grist mill is on the same site it is the third mill to be so located. Twice it was destroyed by fire. In over a century there have have only been three owners who were Messrs. Demerest, Hill and Duncan. The mill is still operated by water power as there is an ample supply of water in the Thames River authority pond alongside the mill.

### Methodists

There was a Methodist congregation formed in the village about 1840. A frame church was erected. It was never a large church but formed an ideal

Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister was Law in Harrington's Early Day Brawls - cont.

Methodists - cont.

training ground for many prominent ministers in their student years. Among these were the Parr Brothers and Albert Moore. The present church was moved from Maplewood in 1925 and the salvaged material from the original church was incorporated with the new one to form the present building. The story of Harrington would not be complete without the mention of some of her sons. Maybe the best known to the outside world is Dr. Gordon P. Murray who was raised among the hills of Harrington. He went on to fame as the blue baby doctor and for his pioneer research on surgery of the heart. Another, Dr. Hugh McLeod, through sheer determination worked his way through medical school, only to come back here and spend his lifetime as the country doctor. No storm ever blew that hard or mud or snow block the roads bad enough to stop the rig of Dr. McLeod. In the entertainment field Billy Sutherland was called Ontario's Strathspey King for his skillful renditions of Scottish music on the violin.

Fairview

A little to the northeast of Harrington where the Embro road crosses the boundary into Perth is found a community the traveller of today hardly sees, while to the traveller of yesterday it was an important stopping place. Located on the high ground, the community was appropriately called Fairview. The first settlers obtained land here in 1822, but it was not until the 1830's that any took up residence. It was just south of the big gulley that Captain Gordon built a log house on lot 33. This was later to become one of the first schools in Zorra. In 1839 Hugh Matheson taught 20 boys here. Later the school was moved to the corner at the Harrington sideroad and became known as the red brick school (Wadland's School).

Fairview never reached any size, but with the location of a hotel, cider mill and blacksmith shop, it was a welcome spot to the weary traveller. Being a place of call a post office was established in 1854 with John Armstrong as the first postmaster. Geroge Purdy, L. Robinson, F. Seegmiller, R. Forest, Sam Robb and Mrs. C. Thompson carried on until 1912 when the office was closed. Mail arrived from Stratford three times a week. One of the



Two-Fisted, Kirk Minister was Law in Harrington's Early Day Brawls - cont.

Fairview - cont.

better known couriers was Charles Bell who would make the trip via Stratford, Harmony and Fairview come rain or shine.

Today as one makes the turn at Fairview, it is readily realized some of the problems that faced the teamsters of those early days. The need for a blacksmith, who was located in the stone building on the corner was frequent after they had drawn their heavy loads over the steep hills to the south, on their way to Stratford.

The first building in Norwich was erected by William Barker in 1828 on the south side of Main Street near the main corner. It was on property previously owned by Adam Stover who arrived in 1812 from the vicinity of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York to take up land purchased for him by his father. Frederick Stover had purchased 1,000 acres for each of his children, Michael Frederick, Adam and his daughter Mrs. Peter McLees. This land was bought from Peter Lossing and Peter DeLong.

Lossing had come to Canada in 1809 to a Friends' meeting in Prince Edward County. There he heard of land being offered for sale in Norwich. Later the same year he returned with Peter DeLong and purchased 15,000 acres from Mr. Wilcox of York (Toronto) for 50 cents an acre.

The farmers of Dutchess County were wanting to get out of that county for several reasons. Principally, they desired to move as the land was rocky and hard to work. Also after the American Revolution, the landowners such as the Livingstones, Roosevelts and Beechmans had seized most of the land belonging to the Loyalist Tories and made life difficult for the small farmer. There had been a long feud between the small farmers and the large landowners first the Dutch Patroons and later the land hungry British landowners. These land barons operated on a system similar to the Feudal system and subjected the small farmers to excessive taxes and fees. Finally most of these families were members of the Quaker faith and strongly objected to the republican form of government. It was not hard to dispose of the 15,000 acres in Canada. These now form the town of Norwich and part of the townships of Norwich.

#### Development Begins

After Barker's store was opened most of the development was done on the north side of the street on property owned by Michael Stover. Michael Stover's house was on what is now Clyde Street. His son lived north of the high school building. In 1842 James Wickham started to make sleighs and wagons in the village. In the 1830's John McKee started a tannery. He married Paulina Stover, the first white child born in the township. They were given land now occupied by the library and surrounding lots and located the tannery on a stream which ran through the east front of this lot.

Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

Development Begins -cont.

The couple eventually built a large home which was for a long time the finest in the village. It later became the Baptist parsonage. During the Rebellion of 1837 this house was headquarters for the Loyalist forces and any prisoners taken were lodged in the barn. In 1849 Lord Elgin the governor-general was entertained here.

Friends Meeting House

In the early days of the Norwich area the Society of Friends were more numerous than any other group. In their settlement on Quaker Street a mile north of the village they built their meeting house. The first school was on the banks of the Otter Creek near here. The first meeting of the Friends was held in 1811 at the home of Peter Lossing.

The "old brick" meeting house was erected in 1849. Later a white brick meeting house was erected on Stover Street North just beyond the village limits. The story of the "Old Brick" meeting house, although not in the town of Norwich has been an important part of the town especially in its early days. It is only proper that its story should be told here.

In October 1847 a committee was named by the Norwich Society of Friends to raise money to build a new meeting house. This was to replace the frame one built in 1813 at the old burying ground where they had previously worshipped. The first meetings were held at the homes of Peter Lossing and Joseph Lancaster. They obtained 25 acres from Frederick Stover but later sold some of the land to raise funds which were needed for the new meeting house. The new meeting house was made ready by the end of 1850. Between 1880 and 1890 extensive repairs were made and the seating arrangements were changed. The seats formerly faced the north and there was a partition between the men's side and the women's side with wooden shutters. These shutters were left open for worship but were closed for business meetings. The women had a fully organized meeting of their own and had their own clerk. The box stove formerly in the ante room was said to be the first box stove in Norwich township.

## Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

### Friends Meeting House - cont.

The Quaker faith is one of the few Christian faiths that have always granted women full power in the church. They have no salaried ministers and all ministers are lay preachers. Today after 150 years of the meetings there are approximately 25 still meeting in the Norwich area. Nearly all other congregations have members who come from Quaker stock whole families were members of the Society of Friends. There are approximately 625 members in all of Canada today. It was through the influence of this society that Emily Stowe was able to become the first woman doctor in Canada obtaining her degree in New York 1868. Before her marriage, Dr. Stowe taught in Dr. Nelles Academy, the first woman high school teacher in Canada. Her daughter Dr. Augustus Stowe Gullen was the first woman to obtain a medical degree in Canada in 1883.

### Post Office

The first post office was in Peter Lossing's house in 1830 and for some years after in Dr. Cook's barn. Isaac Peckham had a wagon shop here at that time. There was a hotel built in 1840 which stood on the present corner of Quaker St. and Highway 59. The village continued to grow and in January 1876 became incorporated with Gilbert Moor as the first reeve. From that time on Norwich grew steadily. Its places of business included a cabinet factory, foundry, carriage works, tinsmith, furniture factory, planing mills, brickyards, the first co-operative cheese factory and the usual stores such as were found in a thriving municipality at that time. The first fire brigade was formed in 1876 with 40 members on call. This included a hook and ladder company.

Until 1890 the only light on the streets of Norwich was in front of The Standard, the local newspaper. Few streets other than the main streets of Main and Stover had plank sidewalks. In 1890 William Merrill introduced an arc-light type of lighting. The generator dynamo was made in Waterford. The power to drive it was supplied by a threshing machine. This plant was located near the present Canada Vinegar Works. It was used until 1897 when a new station was erected on the site of the present transformer station on Front St. Here a coal burning engine and generators for incandescent lighting was installed which supplied power for street lighting and domestic use. This was a big improvement over 10 years previous when it was necessary for one to carry a lantern if they



Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

Post Office -cont.

ventured out on a moonless night. There were 1,850 electric lamps in use on this system.

The first business block built in Norwich was built by D.W. Miller in 1876 and was known as "the old reliable store".

The man who did more for Norwich to make it a thriving village than any other person was Gilbert Moore. He was largely responsible for the Port Dover and Lake Huron Railroad coming to Norwich. He also built a block of stores on Main Street which at that time compared favourably with similar buildings in much larger centres. The year 1881 was noted for its building boom with \$75,000 being invested in new buildings erected that year. The main business section took on an entirely new look. A fruit evaporator was erected on the present school site only to burn down a few years later. At this time S. Allan started for the first time in Canada a factory for the manufacture of vinegar. By 1910 they were processing about 100,000 bushels of apples annually. This was the largest industry in Norwich employing from 25 to 60 hands according to the season and exported great quantities to Great Britain and to markets all across Canada. It was later purchased by the Canada Vinegar Company.

The burning of the Oxford Flour Mills belonging to Isaac Rank was a heavy loss to the town in 1909. This ended an era of over 50 years of milling on this site. In the early '50's William Buch had a grist mill in the village near the site of W. Bowman's planing mill. This mill was afterwards taken over by Mr. Barr and Mr. Collins. This mill was burned twice. After the second fire, it was not rebuilt. Later Edwin Palmer built an oatmeal mill on this site and Palmer and Hadper converted it into a flour mill. It burned was rebuilt and in 1909 burned again.

The introduction of a weekly newspaper was contemporary with the incorporation of the building. Mr. Pelcher, proprietor of the first newspaper The Standard soon gave way to others. Among those who followed were P. Craib, Jaffary Bros., and Mr. Bartholomew who took over the paper then known as the Gazette. After 28 years he sold out to J.S. Winterbourne of Berlin (Kitchener) who continued to publish it for 20 years until

Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

Post Office - cont.

selling out to S.N. Manore. It was in the office of the Standard that the public library was first located. This later moved to Pitcher's Store.

Telephone

It was in 1887 that the first telephone exchange was established by the Bell Company had come into existence. There were 27 subscribers at that time. In 1890 a line was built from Norwich to Brantford. Voice transmission in those early days was limited to a distance of a few miles. This first long distance line into Norwich was probably the chief topic of conversation over the local line. By 1904 there were 44 subscribers. The Otter Mutual Fire Insurance Company was formed in July 1887, the first co-operative venture in Norwich. There were 69 shareholders with a risk of \$110,279.00. In the next 20 years the policyholders increased to 1,789 and the risk to \$3,643,535. Today the number of policyholders is about the same. In the first year of operation this company suffered no losses. In 1829 there was one school listed in the area of the village of Norwich with Nathan Town as the teacher. The second school was located on Main Street East near the McKee farm. The next school building was located south of Stover Street bridge. In 1843 the school was located on Elgin Street opposite the present site. The red school was located for 15 years on Front Street behind the Presbyterian Church. The next was a two-storey brick building situated on the north side of South Court Street east of the Anglican Church. A two-room addition was erected in 1878. By 1895 the attendance had increased to such an extent that a new school was necessary and the present school was opened on Jan. 1, 1896. When the public school was moved to its new location in 1896 the upper grades were elevated to the status of a continuation school.

The first Anglican services were held in Norwich as early as 1820 in the log school on Main Street and in 1847 a frame church was begun but burned before completion and in 1867 the present church was erected and dedicated in 1869. The Methodist circuit riders commenced holding services here as early as 1812. Their first church was erected in 1824 on

## Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

### Telephone - cont.

land donated by Michael Stover. A new church was erected in 1862. When the Methodist bodies united in 1884 the present United Church building was erected. By 1849 there were enough Presbyterians to form a congregation. Their present church was built in 1879 on Main Street. A son of the pastor in 1879 Rev. William Martin became Judge Martin and was onetime premier of Saskatchewan. The Baptists organized first in 1884 under Rev. H. Woodward with 16 charter members. In 1885 they bought the Methodist Episcopal Church.

One of the oldest businesses to operate in Norwich under the same family is that of Pitcher Bros. It was started by Seneca Pitcher who came from New York State in 1852. In 1854, he opened a general store carrying a full line of merchandise. Today the fifth generation of this family carries on the business.

### Rebellion

No story of Norwich would be complete without the part played here in the Rebellion of 1837. On December 6, Dr. Duncombe, then a MPP, arrived stating that McKenzie had possession of Toronto. He called a meeting and made a patriotic speech asking for volunteers. On the 12th he had a force of about 180 men besides officers and departed for the village of Scotland. When they reached Scotland their ranks were swelled to about 300. The following day Duncombe received word that Captain McNabb with a British regiment was within a day's march with 500 men. Duncombe and party retreated to Norwich where they dispersed. McNabb followed and made his headquarters in the village. He proceeded to round up the rebels who were sent down to Hamilton for trial and some sent to England. The prisoners were eventually pardoned except Daniel Bedford who was hanged at London on Jan. 11, 1839. He was buried in the Friends cemetery. Another of the rebels was Dr. Ephraim Cook who was the first doctor in Norwich. After he was pardoned was later elected to Canadian parliament. He went to Quebec in 1864 to the Quebec Conference on Confederation. While practising here he was a keen worker for the good of the village.

Society of Friends Meet Led to Norwich Settlement - cont.

Rebellion - cont.

He helped Gilbert Moore organize the Port Dover and Lake Huron Railroad. Another of the rebels was John Tidey who came as a surveyor to settle some disputes on boundary lines. He stayed on to operate lumber and flour mills. After he was pardoned he later became superintendent of Oxford County schools. He also introduced a small printing press into Norwichville which was the original name for the village. The name remained so for 20 years after it became a village.



When the first territorial division of Upper Canada was made in 1792, Governor John Graves Simcoe allotted Dereham township to Norfolk County. Also to Norfolk went most of the land south of the Governor's Road. In 1798 the townships of Dereham, Norwich, North, East and West Oxford, Blenheim, Blandford and Burford were incorporated to form the Brock District. With the addition of Nissouri and Zorra and the re-allocation of Burford township back to Norfolk County we have our present Oxford County.

The first survey of Dereham was in 1834 to Etaoin Etaet in 1790.

Settlement was rapid and further surveys were made in 1810 by Wilmot and in 1822 by Russell Mount. The first land sold by the government was in 1834 to Stilman Hackett who bought the north half of lot 12, concession one at 17 shillings, six pence per acre. This was 12 years after the village of Oxford (Ingersoll) had become a post village.

Prior to this land, in Dereham had been given as grants for military service. These military men often received more land than they ever hoped to work. They were often without funds to even go and locate the property. They would remain at places such as Niagara and wait for immigrants to arrive. When an immigrant from United States or Europe would arrive they would approach them with the offer of some cheap land.

Such was the case when Richard Wilson arrived in the Niagara district in the early 1830's. Wilson had arrived at New York from Yorkshire, England. Here he was offered a choice of two jobs. He could go to the southern United States and drive slaves. The other was to work on the Erie Canal. He chose the latter and worked his way to Buffalo.

#### Salford's Beginning

Hearing of the cheap land available in Upper Canada, he crossed to Niagara. He met Colonel Ball, the holder of a large tract of land in the area of what is now Salford. A deal was made for two dollars an acre to be paid as Wilson was able. This sort of a contract was not unusual. Quite often the mortgage would be sold to another for much less than the original agreed price. In this case it is presumed that Col. Ball held the mortgage himself as Wilson is reported to have gone back to Niagara and worked for the colonel during the winter months. With the coming of spring the colonel supplied him with an ox and cart plus tools, provisions and seeds to start his farming operations on lot 23 of Dereham township. Wilson in his reports tells of making trips back to Niagara and on one of these trips the Colonel met him at Hamilton along with Wilson's wife and family.

Oxford's Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road now Salford - cont.

Salford's Beginning - cont.

There were no roads and it was necessary to make use of the Indian trails. In using the Indian trails they struck up a freindly relationship with the Indians. The Indians who travelled through this part of the country were from the Six Nations Settlement at Brantford. This friendly relationship was profitable to both parties. With his oxen Wilson would help to transport the fruits of the hunt for the Indians to their different campsites. In return they would keep him well supplied with meat and hides which were very necessary. This allowed him more time to clear his land.

From these Indians Wilson learned how to live off the land. An important lesson in survival in a new country. To further supplement their meagre crops many of the early settlers would go up into "the Harris Street settlement" founded by Ingersoll in 1793. There they would help flail grain during the winter months in exchange for a portion of the grain. It was then necessary to carry the grain to a mill.

After the miller had taken his share for milling they would have what was left for their labor.

Barter Trade

As they cleared more land, the settlers themselves eventually had grain for sale. The nearest community where it might be sold was Brantford, a good 12 to 14 hours drive. Quite often when they reached Brantford, they would find that there were no buyers available. It would then be necessary to barter their grain for whatever they could get. Often only a barrel of salt was gained in exchange for a load of grain. In order to raise cash some of the settlers would contract to team salt between Hamilton and London along the Governor's Road. For this they would receive five dollars a trip making one trip a week. Such were the trials and tribulations of the early settlers in Dereham.

The village of Manchester (Salford) was formed on the bend in the trail which vended its way from Oxford village to Port Burwell. With the coming of the Ingersoll and Port Burwell Plank and Gravel Road in 1849 a community sprang up on both sides of the road. The public buildings occupied the main corner.

On the northeast corner was the first school. A sawmill was on the northwest corner. The Methodist Church was on the southeast and the Baptist

Oxford's Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road now Salford - cont.

Barter Trade - cont.

Church was on the southwest.

On the plank road there were eight toll gates. Originally one was located a mile south of the village. It was found by taking a trail to the west of the road. The gate could be avoided. To overcome this, the gate was moved north of the village. This road remained a toll road until 1903. until it was taken over as a county road. During the days of the toll road this road was the main artery for the northwest section of the county to the lake and remained so until the coming of the railroad. The Ingersoll and Port Burwell Plank and Gravel Road had the reputation of being one of the best kept roads at that time.

Post Office

The name Manchester remained the official name of the village until 1855. In that year application was made for a post office and it was found that the name Manchester was already taken by a community in Eastern Ontario. At a meeting of the townfolk to decide on a name the name Salford was suggested by a woman who had recently received a letter by way of Ingersoll from Salford, England. This name was readily accepted. As a result from November 1, 1855 when A.S. Harris opened the first post office on the bend in the road as you enter the village the name has been Salford. He was followed as postmaster by Robert Nicholson and William Boon. In 1874 J.F. Snider became postmaster. He also operated a grocery store and shoe shop with an excellent reputation for making custom-made shoes. James Dumphy became postmaster in 1881. He was also school teacher and ran a store in conjunction with the post office. William Wilkinson served as postmaster until 1886 when Alfred Stevens took over until 1924, a period of 38 years. The office remained in the Stevens' name for 14 years. After this it was in the Nancekivell's name from 1938 to 1960 when Stanley Gould the present postmaster took over.

Schools

After the first school had served its purpose it was moved to the Salford Cheese Factory and was used as the curing room. In 1860, a second school



Oxford's Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road Now Salford - cont.

Schools - cont.

was erected and served until 1877 when the red brick schoolhouse was erected on the site of the present school. The red brick school was erected by Justice and Roger Miller of Mount Elgin for \$2,400. It was removed to make way for the present building.

There was a fair amount of rivalry between the Baptist and Methodists in the settlements of Dereham and bordering communities. Many of the American settlers were followers of the Methodist faith. Many of the English were also members of the Methodist faith but were known as Wesleyan Methodist. These Methodists until such time as they organized their own church were served by the travelling Methodist preachers commonly called the "saddlebag preachers". The Methodists were not quite so strict in many of their beliefs as were the Baptists.

Churches

The early settlers who did not hold to the Methodist faith became members of the Baptist faith. As a result in 1850 the Baptists erected their church on the site of their present church while in 1851 the Methodists erected theirs east of the Baptist church. In 1891 the church now known as the Salford United Church was erected. There was another Methodist church known as the Thompson Church located on the north side of lot six on the second line. There was also a small cemetery here. what few Anglicans resided here worshipped at Choates Church on lot 25 concession one of West Oxford which was served by St. James in Ingersoll. This church has long since passed out of existence.

In 1874 the Good Templars erected their temple on the south side of the road and called it "The Arch of Safety". Later it became known as the Fidelity Temple and later became the village hall.

Salford was never a big industrial centre but it was the centre for local industry. The first blacksmith was Frank Mayberry. On the south corner of his farm was located the steam sawmill across from the Baptist Church. James Mayberry operated a wagon and carriage shop. Coridan Lewis had the cooper shop which was one of the more important shops, as it supplied all the pails, vats, tubs, etc. necessary for the local cheese industry.



Oxford's Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road now Salford - cont.

Cheese Making

In the early 1860's Hiram and Lydia Ranney took up land. Having learned the cheesemaking trade in the New England States they made cheese from the milk of their own herd and some of their neighbors.

From a small beginning they worked up to owning 700 acres and milked 100 cows by hand. Mrs. Ranney undertook to teach others the trade. This supplied help for the making of cheese from their own herd.

Charles Wilson operated a cheese factory two miles west of Salford. It was later purchased by Simister and Co. of Ingersoll but the price they charged was too high for the farmers. The farmers banded together and formed the Dereham and West Oxford Factory on the Culloden Road.

In 1865 James Harris operated the first co-operative factory in the Ingersoll district one mile south of Ingersoll near the sign of the "Big Cheese". He learned the trade while courting his wife at Mrs. Ranney's. In 1866 the "Big Cheese" was made at the Galloway Factory located a half mile east of the Harris Factory. This factory was later sold and moved to Thamesford in 1902. In 1875 Wilkinson started a cheese factory near here. In 1882 - 84 John Wilford, the cheesemaker won several awards in London, England, with his products. This factory later became the Virtue factory of East Oxford. In 1882 James Harris built the Salford factory. It was located one half mile south of the village. The output of this factory at one time reached 300 tons of cheese. It was the co-operation of Harris, Galloway, Ranney and John Adams that made possible the making of the "Big Cheese" in 1866. This helped to firmly establish Oxford County as the cheese producing county of Ontario. In a few years Canada was exporting over 300,000 boxes of cheese to England annually.

Amie Semple McPherson

No story of Salford would be complete without some mention of Amie Semple McPherson. She was born Amie Kennedy on a farm one and a half miles west of the village of Salford. Her education was received at the village school and in Ingersoll. She attended Evangelistic meetings in Ingersoll being conducted by Robert Semple and it was a case of love at first sight. They were married in 1909 and went to China as missionaries. While in

Oxford's Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road now Salford - cont.

Amie Semple McPherson - cont.

China, he died. Amie returned home to Canada and took up her late husband's work. Her revival meetings, known as the "Sawdust Revival Trails" led to the building of the Angelus Temple in Los Angeles, California. This huge temple can seat 5,300 people in its main auditorium.

Through her activity in "The Four Square Gospel" missions were sent to 19 countries. During the days of the depression in the 1930's she did an untiring job of organizing soup kitchens, relief centres for the needy of Los Angeles. She made several trips to all parts of the world to her missions. Though she died in 1944 her mission work still carries on. Each year many travel to Ingersoll and Salford from as far away as California just to see where Amie Semple McPherson was born and lived. The only marker left is an old windmill on the farm where she was born, the house having burned down. She was married on the lawn of the farm east of her old home.

Her father's grave, marked with a simple stone bearing the inscription "erected by Amie Semple McPherson" is located just inside the gates of the Harris Street cemetery.

Her father was the builder of the first two floating bridges which were erected over a bad bog hole a quarter of a mile east of Salford.

Harris Street Settlement

Between Salford and Ingersoll there were two well known localities. One was known as the Harris Street Settlement. In 1793 when Thomas Ingersoll was obtaining settlers he brought out 12 families of Harrises including Daniel, Elijah, Warren, James and Christopher. These 12 families took up land along the present highway south of Ingersoll. The second wave of Harrises settled near Salford and the third settled near Mount Elgin. This road became known as Harris street. In 1812 a cemetery was begun on the site of the present Harris street cemetery. The first grave was in 1813. It was just a few rods west of the archway at this cemetery that a Baptist church was located. The frame church was here from 1828 to 1868 for worship purposes. In the cemetery there were 22 plots bearing the Harris surname.

Oxford Cheese Making Began Near Bend in Road now Salford - cont.

Harris Street Settlement - cont.

James Harris, a son of one of the original settlers, purchased 25 acres on the east side of the road. To this home site he took his bride, Julia Ranney. They erected the first Harris Cheese Factory just behind the knoll which runs along the east side of the road. Farmers would use the lane to this factory to avoid paying at the toll gate along the main road. Harris was progressive and built other factories including the Salford Cheese Factory. In 1872 he built the large home which now overlooks Highway 401, at a cost of \$5,000. It still stands, a fitting memorial to the man who did so much for the cheese industry of Oxford.

The other community was known as Hagles Corners where Sam Hagles had a brickyard. The brick from this yard was used in the construction of some of Ingersoll's churches and other buildings as well as many of the farm homes in this district. At this corner was the only hotel between Ingersoll and Mt. Elgin, there being no hotel at Salford.

The first settlers in Norwich township were Sears Mott and Peter Lossing who arrived in 1810 from Dutchess County, New York. At that time there were settlers already in Burford Township. It was at the home of John Yeih's that these settlers stayed until they had a house ready on their own land.

Mott took up land on concession four on the north half of lot 13 and 14, about 20 acres in all. Lossing decided to settle on lot eight concession three. In order that they might work together Mott took a reserve lot on the north half of lot nine concession three.

When the men folk were approaching their land, two of the boys raced to see who would be the first white boy to enter the township. The race must have been a draw as both boys claimed the victory until their dying days.

In 1811 the Lancasters, Cornwells, DeLong's arrived and from then until the end of hostilities few if any settlers arrived. After the war the country settled quickly with settlers coming from the U.S.A. as well as from Europe. Then came the Snyders, Youngs, Hunts, Sackriders, Woodsrows, Corbins, Emighs, Gellams, Barkers, Nichols, Dennises, Tomkins, Hellikers, Sipples, Stringhams, Holmes, Duncans, Palmers, Haight's, Losees, Suttons, Peckhams, Griffins and the Cohoes. These settlers all came from Pennsylvania while others were of Irish extraction. In the 1820's the McNallys and Carolans arrived. They were Irish and of the Catholic faith.

In 1811 there were 11 families living in the township. By 1817 the population had reached 170. In 1820 the township produced a surplus of wheat amounting to several thousand bushels which was teamed to Ancaster in lots of 25 bushels to the load. This trip required three days of good weather. If it turned wet it was quite often necessary to hitch two teams or more to a wagon to navigate the low lands.

#### Needed Doctors

This was only one of the many hardships that faced the settlers. The greatest hardship was the lack of doctors. Dr. Ephriam Cooke was the first doctor to settle in Norwich. He arrived in 1831. The nearest doctor until that time being at Tillsonburg some 20 miles away. It was common at that



Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Needed Doctors - cont.

time for a capable and intelligent woman to be sort of a local physician and tend to the ailments of women and children. Mrs. Adam Stover was one who excelled in these lines.

Home life in these early days was one long series of demands from early morning to late evening. People "got up with the roosters" and after a breakfast by the old iron lamp which used grease and a cotton wick, the menfolk would take to the outside work in field and forest. The women folk would do the milking and such chores around the buildings.

As for housekeeping, it was not too demanding a chore as the furnishings were not too plentiful. They usually consisted of just the bare necessities. Furniture usually found in the early homes consisted of benches, tables, dower-chests, and bride's boxes. They were mostly of soft wood although as things progressed, walnut became the main wood used in furniture. Most of this early furniture was homemade and quite plain but it was sturdy, which consisted of a rope.-----??

Beds

There were several types of beds but one of the most common kind was the rope bed which consisted of a rope criss-cross between two boards which served as the sides of the bed. A hide or later a straw or feather tick was placed upon it for a mattress. Some homemade quilts or such like were used as covers. The master bedroom was unheard of in those days. The head of the family slept in the kitchen or main room of the house, that being the warmest place. Other members of the family usually had to make use of a ladder to get up into the loft of the cabin and spend the night. Even today on some of the older farms you will still find the couch in the kitchen where the farmer will retire for 40 winks after meals or on a rainy afternoon.

Cooking was done on the old fashioned fireplace and the utensils were almost invariably iron pots. Some brass or copper kettles were in use having been brought by the bride from her home in the United States.

In planning for the storage of food much of it had to be cured. This

Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Beds - cont.

could be done in many instances by drying, salting, smoking, pickling, burying or canning. In cellars were stored all kinds of foods, all sorts of vegetables, apples, barrels of corn beef and salt pork, hams in salt brine and also butter. There were tumblers, jars and crocks of all kinds, fruits, jellies, pickles, ciders, and vinegars. The loft or attic also provided good storage space for smoked hams, bacon, beef and sausage; dried fruits, nuts and onions. Hams could also be stored by burying them in the grain.

Water Supply

Water was not always as handy as it is today. Water for home use such as drinking and cooking would have to be carried in wooden pails from a nearby spring. Eventually the garden pump took over being used to get water from a dug well of some 12 to 20 feet in depth.

Usually the wall of the well was stoned in with field stones to keep it from caving in.

Family Bible

The family bible was never too far from reach but a smaller hand Bible was always to be found at the table for frequent reading by father or mother. A catechism was in the parlor or if someone was joining the church or being catechised it would be with the Bible at the table.

There was always a devotional period each day. This would often follow a meal when the family was gathered together.

Life was not all work and no play in those days. Bees were quite common and if one had a larger job than usual to get done, that would call for a bee. Threshing, logging, butchering and building bees were held by the menfolk. The women would be there to assist in the feeding. They also held their own quilting and rug-making bees. If a girl was to be married this would call for extra bees to help her complete her bride's box. Often following a work bee a party would be held with much singing and dancing, if dancing was tolerated. Otherwise singing parties and story-telling parties were held.

Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Family Bible - cont.

Some of the early musical instruments included the zither, the dudelsock and the dulcimer. All have given way to the piano and the organ. This was an ideal time for courting and as one writer has said at such times the young people would mingle, telling stories and playing games not neglecting kissing games. Kisses were usually short and snappy as teeth brushing was for the most part little heard of and intimate kissing was too messy or too "tasty" - someone has called it "schnecklick".

Another highlight was the arrival of the travelling salesman. This worthy was often the cobbler, tailor, blacksmith or tinker. A cobbler who was also known as the disciple of St. Crispin would travel to the country making shoes for the farmers from the farmer's own hides. Leather was much in use around the farm so a farmer would have the hides tanned at the tannery after a butchering bee.

To make a shoe the cobbler would have the person stand against the wall. With their heel to the wall he would measure to the end of the big toe using a splint to do so. Shoes were generally made broad enough as shape was of little importance. The cobbler would make about six dollars a week for his troubles. He would be fed and boarded where he was working. His visits would also bring a good supply of local gossip or news.

If two or more of these travellers should happen to be staying at the same time all the questions of church, state and morals would be threshed out thoroughly. These men loved to smoke, tell tall tales, argue, eat well and loaf. If they arrived at a place that fed better than average, work would be extended over a few extra days because of the good meals.

Home Remedies

These men would also double for a dentist or a doctor. That is, they could pull or knock out teeth or advise what to do for an ailment. One of their remedies was "blood letting". This bleeding was a common belief as a way to rid one of certain illnesses such as that tired feeling or sluggish blood in the spring. This treatment was generally reserved for the menfolk.

Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Home Remedies - cont.

The tinker would make calls at regular intervals and from his pack or rig one could get just about anything from a needle to a roasting pan. He would only be too glad to bring you anything you desired on his next trip. He would accept cash or produce in exchange for his wares. While these early settlers were good living people they were very superstitious. At the barn there would always be found a horseshoe nailed above the door. The open end would be up to cup or to hold the luck it was supposed to bring. Another superstition was that persons fond of cats or dogs would make good husbands or wives. Let a cat look into a mirror or feed her at night and she would stay, was another. Great pains were taken not to violate the Sabbath and Friday seldom qualified for anything good, stemming from the crucifixion or hangman's day. People then were often swayed by the signs of the Zodiac. Days, months and the four seasons were supposed to be regulated by something that happened on the first or last day, such as ground hog day on February 2nd. It was supposed to control the weather for the next six weeks according to what the ground hog saw at high noon. St. Swithin's Day foretold of rainy days to come or not to come for the next 40 days. The month of March if it comes in like a lamb will leave like a lion. During the equinox "Mary goes over the mountain" wet or dry and comes back in the opposite manner. They would never put shingles on a roof during the up sign of the moon fearing the shingles would turn up also. The almanac was an important book for these people as it guided them in preparing for the weather that was to come as well as being a usual guide in their everyday living. The almanac is still to be found in many homes and is eagerly looked for each spring. Such was the way of life who settled not only in Norwich township but in all of Oxford. -----????????????????? it was being dug it was necessary to remove the dirt by means of a pail and rope with one man at the top and the digger in the well. Later cisterns were placed in the cellar to hold the rain water that ran off the roof. Rain water was always soft and was much more economical to use for washing as it required less soap. Even in those days women would use the soft soap to wash their hair.



Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Home Remedies - cont.

As time progressed and the settlers moved from the log cabins to the frame or brick home many changes were noted. The fireplace was replaced with a flat top "ten plate stoves" in the kitchen with the eventual arrival of the Pandora stove with its many warming closets, water reservoirs for hot water and large ovens. The iron kettles began to give way to tinware which was peddled by the travelling sales man of the late 1800's.

Furniture

Furniture did not change much until well on in the 1800's when over-stuffed settees of horsehair began to appear. With these furnishings the parlor came into being. This was the room set aside for special visitors, for weddings and funerals. This room remained a mystery to the children of that era.

The floors of these homes were usually bare until the mid 1800's when carpets began to appear. The carpets or rugs were usually made of rags and were hooked or plaited. With their coming also came carpet rag parties. At these gatherings the womenfolk would hook or braid rugs of various designs. This gathering was an important social event which rivalled quilting bees in the life of a bride-to-be.

For keeping the floors clean the first brooms were made of twigs or boughs of a fir or hemlock to be replaced by the corn and hair broom. For scrubbing, a brush was made from cat-o-ninetails before they were ripe. While they didn't last long they were easy to replace.

The walls of the homes usually plastered directly on the brick. Wall-paper was unknown. The walls would be covered with a coat of lime - today we would call it whitewash. Some of the more industrious women would color this lime with dyes. Later this came to be known as calcimine. Figures could be added by slicing a potato in half and cutting some sort of a design on it. This would be transferred to the wall by dipping the potato in a different colored lime and applying it to the wall. Pictures were scarce. Outside of the odd family portrait of one's parents most of the decorations were usually framed needlework.

Handmade Furniture, Rope Bed, Family Bible All Had Their Day - cont.

Furniture - cont.

"God Bless Our Home" and a sampler made by one of the girls of the house were the most common. The sampler was usually the girl's first masterpiece in needlework. It would consist of the alphabet and a design done in colored silk or wool. It would also contain the name of the person making it and the date it was completed. About this time came the invention of the kerosene lamp.

Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came:

Limestone was an Early Industrial Factor - Page 14

The first known white man to enter Oxford County was a French explorer, Etienne Brule, in 1615 and 16. He spent 22 years among the Huron Indians of the Georgian Bay area. He is given credit for being the first white man to explore the La Trenche River (Thames River) to Lake St. Clair. In the area now known as North Oxford there is located what is known as the upper forks of the Thames River. This was the highest point of navigation for canoes and formed the western end of the northern portage trail over from the Grand River.

In 1626 Daillon, a Recollect Missionary lived among the Neutral Indians which roamed this area and became a member of their tribe. In 1640 the Jesuit missionaries visited the Neutrals. These men were the first to see the county through the eyes of a white man.

It was not until 140 years later, that we have record of any other white man settling in Oxford. In 1784 John Carrol of New Jersey made his way northward into Canada. He made a deal with some of the remnants of the Indian tribes for land. Carrol proved his claim according to British law and returned to New Jersey. His land was lot 23 and 24 and was within sight of Beachville. It was at this location mail was left by the couriers who made trips each year from Quebec and Niagara to Delaware and Sandwich. Carrol brought his family back in 1789. On his land he raised nine sons and one daughter. The youngest became a doctor and later a member of parliament for British Columbia.

John Carrol died in 1854 at the age of 102 and was buried in the family plot. Later his remains were removed to the Harris Street Cemetery in Ingersoll.

On Carrol's return in 1789 he found a number of settlers consisting of a number of Royalists from the United States. These Royalists had arrived from the United States in a destitute state. They had been subject to all sorts of mistreatment from the victorious colonists. The government had to come to their aid. Each family received a supply of pork and flour for food along with tools and implements for farming which included one cross-cut saw for every six families. Each family was given one hand saw, one hammer, two gimlets, a quantity of nails, one set of door hinges, an axe,

Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;

Limestone Was an Early Industrial Factor - cont.

a mattock, one spade, a scythe, a sickle, one set of plow irons, one set of harrow irons, a broad axe, two augers, two chisels, one gouge, one draw knife and one kettle. These were considered to be the necessary articles at that time to start farming.

Grist Mill

By 1791 there was located in the vicinity of Beachville a grist mill. This mill was among the first to be set up between here and Delaware. It was operated by Mr. Beach. The exact site of it is in doubt as it is long since disappeared. It was in honor of Mr. Beach that the name Beachville was chosen when it became necessary to name the community so that a post office could be established. The post office was not an official post office in that the mail was simply left to be picked up by either the settler or the passing courier.

In 1793 Governor Simcoe on a trip from Niagara to Sandwich stopped in the area and set aside a site for a town five miles east of the village. This later became the city of Woodstock.

The governor also stopped in the Beachville area and this was a red letter day for the settlers. Their jubilant feelings were short lived as they soon heard that their land had been given to a Thomas Ingersoll, a "Yankee". Being refugees from the United States they had no love for a "Yankee". They were greatly surprised when he asked them to stay on and he even made an effort to improve their lot.

Evictions

Most of these settlers at this period were located along the river on the Broken Front concession with Beachville as the centre. Some of these settlers applied for deeds for their land but many never bothered. As late as 1835 settlers' families of long standing were evicted from their land by purchasers who had obtained the land from the Crown. As long as there was no deed, they were considered as squatters and could be evicted by anyone possessing the title.

It was no great problem to obtain a title or deed. Thomas Dexter who arrived here in 1787 made application in 1797 at Niagara-on-the-lake



Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;  
Limestone was an Early Industrial Factor - cont.

Evictions - cont.

where the executive council was in session to obtain a title to his property. Proof of his final declaration read: "I do hereby certify that on the seventeenth day of July, 1797 Thomas Dexter, 31 years of age, born in the province of Connecticut, North America, professing Christian religion and by trade a farmer appeared before me William Kennedy Smith. One of his Majesty's Justice of the Peace in and for the Home District, and took the oath of allegiance and signed the declaration. Signed W.K. Smith." He received his title.

UEL List

By 1796 there was a great influx of settlers. In order to obtain free or cheap they all swore glib allegiance to George readily boasted that America would soon take over Canada. For this reason steps were taken to register all who joined the British side before the end of the revolution in 1783. Those who had signed up and served with the British forces in what today would be called the militia were considered to be true Royalists. They were allowed to put UEL after their names. A complete list of the people who were allowed to be called United Empire Loyalists can be found in the Embro library. From this there were very few UEL families in Oxford County. Many who later came up from New Brunswick had no claim to the name. They either arrived on the British side after all fear of retaliation had passed or they had fled the country before the revolution had started.

It was under pressure of a chance invasion that the militia was formed in Upper Canada. Col. William Claus came to Oxford and formed two companies of militia in the Beachville area. Thomas Ingersoll was appointed captain. Most of the training was done by moonlight as most of the men were too busy homesteading. Firearms were almost non-existent at that time. It was a case of making use of what was available and poles and brooms became the arms of the early militia for training.

In 1833 the second wave of immigrants started to arrive in North Oxford. The town plot of Lord Simcoe's day had at last started to show signs of life after 40 years of lying dormant. About this time with Napoleonic

Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;  
Limestone Was an Early Industrial Factor - cont.

UEL List - cont.

wars over many British officers were leaving the army and navy. They were being offered land in Canada to settle on at a cheap rate. With them came much needed revenue as well as a class of British nobility, the likes of which had never been seen in any number west of York. These people were shrewd and on seeing many of the good farms along the river they took a desire for them. In many cases after searching the title they found that none existed. They would then immediately file a claim and thereby get a farm already set up in business. There was much unpleasantness. The older settlers who had hewed their farms out of the virgin forests regarded the palatial homes that the aristocracy built with a decidedly jaundiced eye. As a result they dubbed these gentlemen farmers "Codfish Settlers".

These "codfish settlers" were always ready to put on a display of pomp and ceremony as was indicated in a report of the visit of Lord Metcalfe. He was entertained by Mrs. East, as sister of Admiral Vansittart. The account reads: "We venture on the assertion that during his whole trip his Excellency has not met with a more cordial reception than he has had at Woodstock. It was really delightful to see in this distant land members of two distinguished families, the Metcalfes and the Vansittarts, sustaining the courteous dignity of English gentry and thus giving them the assurance that the democratic levelling spirit of this continent will not find support among us."

The other side of the story was that Lord Metcalfe had stopped off at Martin's Tavern for a rest and had taken the Ingersoll road into Woodstock instead of the Governor's Road as was planned. He missed the escort which was waiting for him and arrived at the court house unannounced with only three people to greet him. Such was life in early Woodstock. Two who settled on the north side of the river were Col. Alexander Light and Capt. Phillip Graham. Light settled a mile and half east of Beachville and Graham settled east of the Light place. From a diary we gain an intimate picture of North Oxford in the 1830's as they saw it.

Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;  
Limestone was an Early Industrial Factor - cont.

UEL List - cont.

On October 21, 1833, we find the following entry, "Walk to the village of Beachville about one and half miles from Hatch's (near Woodstock). Here we found a grist and saw mill and two whiskey distilleries, a small tavern and good stores. The road from the bridge at Cedar Creek runs principally along and near the south bank of the river Thames. It is one of the best roads I have seen in the province, along which an English carriage may be driven with safety. The county all the way from Hamilton to these parts abounds with apples and all kinds of fruits and vegetables. Messrs. Deeds and Donett accompanied me in the walk. We saw many wild fowl and shot some. Returned to dinner at 5:30 bringing with us sundry letters from Beachville and five quarts of good Brantford whiskey in a covered tin kettle, being the only capable vessel we could procure."

Different View

In 1835 Benjamin Wallace came up from the Maritimes to investigate the Crawford claim north of the river which had been left unattended since about 1800. In his diary we find a different opinion of the country than was offered by Graham and Light. He states that there were very few roads in the district. Many settlers made roads or trails across the country to reach high ground in order to get to Beachville for trading or milling. He also noted that Ingersoll was still only a small village with only a few houses.

Along the shores of the Thames there was found limestone. When heat was put to this stone it would turn to powder known as lime very good for plastering the houses of that period. Two types of limestone abounded, one which produced grey lime the other white. In the mid 1800's both types of lime were produced.

In later years white lime proved more popular and this field was further developed. It extends roughly from the road that runs north of Beachville to the west, while the grey lime field extends to the east of this road. Captain Graham states in his records that in 1833 lime was

Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;

Limestone Was an Early Industrial Factor - cont.

Different View - cont.

being burnt on his place and taken to Woodstock for the Anglican Church (Old St. Paul's). Prior to this many settlers had been burning lime along the river for their own use.

At first it was just a case of gathering stones from the river and making them ready for burning during the winter season. Later there were a few shallow pits dug but they were not popular. The river water would seep in and even with the aid of pumps which were hand operated it was not possible to keep all the water out. Some used the water wheel to run and the pumps. It was a little more successful. The water wheel would be turned by the current of the river and would run continuously leaving the manpower to get out the rock. In the winter much choice lumber was cut and drawn down to these kilns to burn the lime.

Remains Visible

Looking to the east from the bridge north of Beachville one can see the remains of some of these kilns. The one at Winlaw's mill is one of the best preserved. While there was no fortune to be made here it was a source of income which the settlers needed to supplement their scanty income from their homesteads. The job of burning lime during the winter must have been quite an ordeal as it was necessary to keep the fire going continuously 24 hours a day until the lime was cooked. To add to the misery of the job it was recorded in 1843 that 12 feet of snow lay on the level.

As Col. Alexander Light's family grew up they took an active part in the life of North Oxford. In 1845 while his son William Light was district councillor for North Oxford a bridge at the cost of 79 pounds, 5 shillings was put over the river at Beachville. It was built by A. Carroll of West Oxford. William became a lieutenant in the Oxford Militia during the Rebellion of 1837. By 1863 he was commanding officer of the Oxford Rifles.



Beachville Settlement 140 Years After First White Came;

Limestone Was An Early Industrial Factor - cont.

Remains Visible - cont.

During the railroad boom of the mid 1800's there was a never ending demand for three inch plank. To help supply this demand were two mills in North Oxford. One was located on the ground of the present CNR station at Beachville. This boom also aided many farmers financially, as laborers were at a premium. A man and a team was as important in those days as a bulldozer is today. After the railroad was finished there was a constant demand for fuel for the iron monsters of the road. There was also a demand for lumber and logs which the railroad took to the markets of the world.

In 1856 at the junction of the road to Embro and the Governor's Road the village of Wrightsville was laid out by Wright Farnsworth. He sold a dozen or so lots and the owners immediately hastened to resell them. That is the story of Wrightsville. A second such venture was started about this time by William Sommerville Bolton. He decided the railroad was the answer to a prayer and that fame and fortune was his at last. He bought a section of land on the north side of the river which extended up to the gore. He divided it into 426 lots. Having completed his plans he left for England to raise capital to promote this venture. The hand of fate was against him and he was drowned in Halifax harbor. In 1858 his wife sold lots 317 and 318 to the trustees of school section No. 2 North Oxford. This school stood near the point of the gore and was the extent of the progress made on his venture.

Today as one travels through this section of North Oxford there are many reminders of days when this area made its bid for fame and fortune. With its vast supply of limestone waiting the industry of tomorrow the day will come when it will become the promised land of which the early settlers dreamed.

Pioneer John Adams Left his Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist

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The history of East Nissouri is closely interwoven with West Nissouri, North Dorchester, North Oxford and West Zorra. From the time the township was first surveyed in 1820 by S. Parke until 1851 it formed part of Nissouri township of the London District. In 1851 the township was split at the seventh concession. The land east of the road was to be known as the township of East Nissouri and the county of Oxford. In 1820 a Mr. Davis was granted land in the township consisting of lots 21 and 28 on the eighth concession, lot 14 concession 10, lots 11, 18, 21 and 34 concession 12, lots 26 and 28 on concession 9, lots 7 and 17 on concession 11, lot 26 concession 13. The first lot sold by the government was lot 2 concession 11, and purchased by John Campbell in July 1834. The settlement of the township was rapid. By 1842 it had a population of 1460. Twenty years later the population was 3,484, an increase of 2,024.

The majority of the settlers were English, Irish or Scottish ancestry. Some of them came by way of United States. Others made their way west after migrating with the Scots of Zorra from Sutherlandshire. Much of East Nissouri land was originally held by British soldiers who were given land according to their rank and service. They had no desire to settle on it and sold it to the immigrants. Some of these soldiers became well-established business men through these transactions. There was also government land available. In his book "Sketches of Upper Canada" John Howison tells how an immigrant obtained land and his responsibilities.

Passadena

The name Passadena to most people immediately brings California to mind. On the eighth concession of Nissouri four miles north of Highway 2 there was located a corner store and post office plus an express depot that rivalled the Wells Fargo Express of the Wild West. This was Passadena.

Originally this corner was known as McMillan Corners in honor of Duncan McMillan who owned the land on three of the four corners. John Hogg owned

Pioneer John Adams Left His Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist - cont.

Passadena - cont.

the other corner. Hogg had purchased his land from the Canada Company at a cost of 332 pounds, 17 shillings, 6 pence. Later it was purchased by McMillan. On the original deeds of this property the spelling of Nissouri is such as to make one wonder where the name originated. It is spelled "Nijsouri". The Spanish spelling "female fox" is supposed to be the origin of the name Nissouri.

MacMillan separated an acre of land from the original farm. On this lot he built a set of buildings, close to the road, complete with a store. In a room attached to the house, he operated a post office. There was keen rivalry to have the post office and friends of a Mr. Galloway having got the approval from the government moved the complete post office over to -----?? of darkness.

Later it was moved over to the corner which had been purchased by Andrew Thompson. In 1908 the name was changed to Passadena after the community received permission from the government to do so. A stage coach line was operated with stops at Kintore, Passadena, Evelyn, Rebecca and London. This line operated winter and summer with Thompson being the best remembered driver. The stage was of the closed-in type and pulled by two horses. Thompson had two teams and would alternate them daily. In the wintertime runners were put on the stage.

School Site

The first school in this section was built on the west side of the townline on the farm of John Keene on Lot 5, concession 7. This was the usual type log school with the desks against the wall. Jane McKay and Mr. McKone were two of its teachers. McKone also held a night school for older students.

By 1864 better roads and buildings were beginning to appear and a new school became the subject of discussion. Much bickering as to the site took place. Some wanted it located at the job between the eighth and ninth concessions while others wanted it on lot five on the eighth concession. It was in the latter place the school was built. John Day, Jacob McNee and Tom Reavely were the trustees.

Pioneer John Adams Left his Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist - cont.

School Site - cont.

In order to build a school, money was borrowed from a Mr. McDermott who charged 24 percent interest. The white frame school had a shortlived mortgage. It is said that this is the reason for the high interest rate. McDermott knew that at this rate the trustees would see to it that the money was raised before the interest became greater than the principal. Rev. Lachlan Cameron held Sunday school for the students. Miss Deise of Ingersoll was one of the weekday teachers.

Goforth

It was at this school that Jonathon Goforth received his early education. Later he went to China where he served as a missionary for 47 years, returning home in 1935. A plaque in his honor is to be found in South Nissouri Presbyterian Church. He along with Rev. Leslie McKay did much to bring the Word of God to the people of the Far East. Miss Hotson of St. Marys who taught at the school, later also went to Formosa as a missionary. Dr. John McMullen, prior to becoming a doctor and practising in Thamesford and London also taught. The school is still the same frame as it was in 1864 but since has been veneered with brick. The school at Passadena, ceased to be a centre. The students are now taken to Kintore.

Churches

The first church service to be conducted in this part of the township was arranged by Mrs. Elizabeth Dickie who invited her former minister from Burford to come and preach to her new neighbors. The service was conducted in the log barn on the farm of her husband, William Dickie. In 1854 William McKeene gave the site for the church. All went well until 1870 when trouble arose between the different groups of Methodists attending. In 1871 the New Connection Methodists built the present church. When Mrs. Dickie died she was buried in a family plot. Mr. Dickie then donated the ground for a church cemetery. The first funeral in the Zion Cemetery was for a Mr. Gee.



Pioneer John Adams Left His Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist - cont.

Churches - cont.

A few rods east of where the Thames River crosses the sideroad at lot 5, concession 11, there was erected another school in East Nissouri. The first building on the site was erected in 1835. Prior to the building of this school the only source of education for this part of the township was over at the Cameron settlement located in the southwest corner. A Presbyterian minister acted as teacher in a private home. A second school was built on the same site in 1847 and later a frame school was built beside the log school. In 1862 John Adams, a man of influence, agitated for a school in the centre of the section where his land was located. After it was agreed to have the school moved, he donated an acre of land for the school site and contracted to build the school for \$900.00. To beautify the site he sent to England for trees which he planted around the schoolyard.

"The Castle"

John Adams was not a person to do things by halves. His father John Adams Sr. was killed in a grist mill accident. While John Jr. was growing up his mother rented their farm. One night when it was found the tenants were not going to pay their rent, the Adams, along with some of their neighbors, smoked the tenants out. In 1860 John Adams started to build a home for himself that was unlike anything ever seen in these parts and it was to become known as the "castle" due to its size. It was immense in proportion but a shining example of the handwork of that age. There were great iron fireplaces in each room and a massive winding staircase leading to the upper floor. It took Adam's brother-in-law George Baines, a carpenter, two years to do the trim on the house. The walls were of stone and a foot thick. The grounds around this castle were laid out as a park. When this work was completed a party, the likes of which had never been seen in Nissouri before, was held to celebrate the occassion.

Cheese Making

Adams was a man full of ideas. When he decided to open up a cheese factory he canvassed his neighbors to get them to ship their milk to him. He even offered to pay them a month in advance. Donald McArthur

Pioneer John Adams Left His Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist - cont.

Cheese Making - cont.

was one of the first to send milk. He made the cheese in the house and had a room over the kitchen for his help to relax in during the evening. Eventually in 1856 he built a cheese factory, a little north of his old home. He had a herd of 60 cows, the only herd beyond Ingersoll to have so many cows. He also offered his patrons metal pails as a bonus for shipping his milk to him as they were rather suspicious of letting their milk go to the factory. Adams overcame this fear and was able to establish a service and would pick up their milk twice a day. It was considered necessary to have fresh milk for cheese. No cheese was made in the winter.

Another venture undertaken by Adams was raising hogs on the whey from the factory. From this he conceived the idea of having a slaughter house. A floating slaughter house was built on the river. Adams also purchased pigs for slaughter from miles around. This was not as successful as the cheese making venture.

At one time when his method of curing went wrong, it is said he had a ten acre field covered with spoiled carcasses. Another venture was to grow 100 acres of potatoes but like the slaughter house his foresight was not the best and many acres were not harvested. Another year he grew 100 acres of corn. Adams also owned one of the first binders. This he purchased from the Harris firm of Brantford. It tied with wire. Tying with wire was not approved by his neighbors as they were afraid that the cows would get some of the wire in their stomach from eating straw.

Fall Fairs

On Feb. 11, 1857, John Adams helped form the East Nissouri Agricultural Society which met at Graves School (Kintore). For many years this society's annual fall fair was one of the better fairs in the country. In 1883 John Adams moved to Toronto where he operated a milk receiving station. He was the first to sell bottled milk in Ontario if not all of Canada. Even though many of his ventures failed, he was always successful in the dairy business.

Pioneer John Adams Left his Mark as Nissouri Farmer and Industrialist - cont.

Fall Fairs - cont.

When he went to Toronto Francis and George Walker purchased 200 of the 400 acres Adams owned and the factory. In 1893 George Walker owned the factory and later sold it to J. and B. Connelly. The plant burned while they owned it but the Connelly's rebuilt it and sold it to Kesters who eventually sold it to T.L. Gilbert. When Gilbert could not agree with his patrons, his patrons built the Homestead factory and the former plant passed out of existence.

Though John Adams' name has been forgotten by many and though his massive house has been removed, his name is perpetuated in the school he helped build. It remains "the Adams School", a proud memorial to the man who did so much for agriculture in Nissouri Township.

The problem of annexation is nothing new to the people of East Oxford. If one was to look at the early map of Woodstock, they would find that the land now occupied by the new YMCA was originally East Oxford. It was on this land that Zacharius Birtch first settled. On the west half of lot 18, concession one he built a log house about the year 1800. Having come from New York State in 1798 Birtch stopped over at Brantford and at the Horner settlement. His son Archibald took up lot 19. For some years after there was very little settlement in these parts. In 1816 Dr. Levi Perry purchased land after marrying Esther Birtch. Dr. Perry owned the land from the west side of Finkle St. to the Sweaburg Road and south past Cedar Creek. From "His House in the Valley" he not only practiced medicine but taught school, farmed and acted as legal advisor until the first lawyer arrived.

The farm between the Birtch and Perry farms was owned by Levi Babbit. In 1821 it was sold to Squire John Hatch. The Hatch homestead was at the corner of what is now Dundas and Victoria Streets. A son John Hatch was the second child born in Woodstock. The first was Hamilton Birtch.

Squires Hatch and Ingersoll sat as the magistrates for this district. Another early settler was William Gray who settled a few miles east on what was then a swamp of the worst type. He managed to clear and drain a large part of it Gray did extensive teaming. With two yoke of oxen and sleds they helped many of the settlers of the early 1800's move to their homesteads. Mr. Gray later became a large land owner and erected the first brick building in Woodstock, "The Royal Pavillion". He later became the third mayor of Woodstock.

In 1857 when Woodstock became a town, the limits of the corporation as they affected East Oxford were: along the water's edge of Clear Creek on the south side to the eastern limits of the road allowance between lot 21 East Oxford, concession one and the Gore between East and West Oxford. Thence southerly along the said easterly limits to the southerly limits of the road allowance between the first and second concession, then easterly along the said southerly limit to a point opposite the centre of lot 18, concession 1.



Railroad Sparked Eastwood, Muir Grew Beside Plank Road - cont.

By 1862 the land east of Woodstock was completely settled and the names of some of the land owners included Baigant, Ball, Carr, Daly, Davis, Ekins, Fabby, Fallow, Yates, Ferguson, Flood, Fredenberg, Goble, Haball, Holy, Hayward, Kipp, Lampman, Lazenby, Lewis, Lumis, McGivern, Mighton, Nelmes, Potter, Scott, Shaw, Shell, Stephenson, Finchnew, Upper and Whale. Many of the farms in East Oxford are still occupied by their descendants.

Eastwood

In 1862-63 Eastwood had become a thriving community on the Great Western Railway and was listed as a stopping place for trains. It was also listed as a post office as of 1855.

Eastwood had gained considerable fame as the centre of the Vansittart enterprises. These have pretty well disappeared from the ever changing panorama of Eastwood. One of the best preserved donations made by the Vansittarts is St. John's Anglican Church in the village.

Prior to the building of a church at Eastwood, Anglican families would travel to Woodstock where services were held twice on Sunday and once during the week. Eastwood grew so did its congregation and it was decided to hold services here. A rough cast building was erected to the east of the present church. It was quite common to see families arrive by oxcart. In 1839 the turnout was larger than could be accommodated and the question came up of a larger church. The land for the new church and for the rectory was donated by Henry Vansittart. The church was presented with a Melodian by the Vansittarts. The original building was a frame structure and had the box-type pews which were rented out to families at various prices according to the size. There were many aristocratic families attending church here during the days of hoop skirts including the T.C. Pattersons, the Broughtons and the Dunn Family along with the Vansittarts. When members of these families entered the church, the rustle of their silks and satins could be heard all over the church and caused all eyes to turn to see the latest in fashions from the old country.

At first services were held in conjunction with Beachville and were at 9:15 a.m. on alternate Sundays. Later the parish was connected with Huntingford. The first marriage took place on Feb. 8, 1857 when Thomas

Railroad Sparked Eastwood, Muir Grew Beside Plank Road - cont.

Eastwood - cont.

Hawkins and Mary Kearns were united. On November 9, 1856 Elizabeth Ann Thompson was the first to be baptized. In 1858 the first confirmation class was held. In 1893 the frame church was bricked over. While the building was being renovated, services were held in the village hall.

Wood Trade

There was from the time Vansittart started his lumbering business here an active trade in wood products and in the late 1800's there was a large Heading and Stave Factory operated by John Baird. The Eastwood mills which at one time were operated by Albert Burrows did a large business in preparing lumber. With keen interest in wood products and their desire to make cutting logs with a crosscut saw a little easier, James and Michael Overholt perfected a drag saw in 1855. This invention was later patented. Use of horse power saved much time and energy. Although the Overholt family settled in Blandford they were a very influential family in the life of Eastwood. Michael Overholt was born of Dutch parents who had fled the United States after the Revolutionary War and settled in the Niagara district. When he married at the age of 24 Overholt took his wife and a team of oxen and left for the west. After four days of travel they reached Blandford township on June 27, 1831. At that time there were few families in this district. These were scattered along the Governor's Road (Highway 2) and the Old Stage Road.

The Overholts were followers of the Methodist faith and their home was the stopping place for the saddlebag preachers in their travels from Paris to St. Marys. With a circuit this large, meetings were held about every three weeks. Service would be held in the house. The quarterly meetings would be held in one of the barns. It was not unusual for people to stay from Friday till Monday when the services were being held. This led to the formation of the Eastwood Methodist Congregation and the building of the church in 1866.

Railroad Sparked Eastwood, Muir Grew Beside Plank Road - cont.

Assessor

In public life, Michael Overholt served as the first assessor of Blandford. He took the first government census and later served in the council. He was instrumental in the opening up of many of the roads in the southern part of Blandford.

Through the years Eastwood has had its share of fame and fortune but it was not all as exciting as the days of Vansittarts. One of the horrors that fell on this village was the arrival of Benwell and Birchall and the leaving only Birchall. This was the Benwell Murder Case. The site where Benwell's body was found is still known as the Benwell swamp. This murder case was one of the most famous cases of modern times.

The other mention of ill-gotten fame was the famous swindler Cassie Chadwick who in a cool calm and collected way swindled many shrewd financiers out of more than one half million dollars but it was all in vain. Though she lived in the lap of luxury she was caught and convicted and shortly after died of a heart attack and lies in an unmarked grave.

On the brighter side, we find it was not all fame in this thriving community. It was 100 years ago that a man who was to become later the most popular merchant in Canada decided to choose a wife from this district. In 1861 Timothy Eaton met Margaret Beattie who was visiting in St. Marys. Miss Beattie had come from Irish stock who had settled in Blandford. Although she had been born in Toronto she had spent most of her early life in and around Blandford and Woodstock. They were married in 1862 and from that time on she was an important cog in the business wheels of the T. Eaton Co.

In the beginning Mrs. Eaton spent hours organizing and controlling the millinery department. Later when they moved to Toronto from St. Marys she was unofficially the welfare officer of the staff and no clerk was ever ill that she did not visit. With an eye to business she was instrumental in having many changes made in the women's departments. One of them was the provision of a mirror so that a woman could see the back of her hat as well as the front. To this notion Timothy Eaton could not agree until Maggie put her touch on it.

Railroad Sparked Eastwood, Muir Grew Beside Plank Road - cont.

Plank Road

When one leaves the dual highway at Eastwood and takes the highway to Burford they are entering a road that was an important link between the Woodstock and Burford area and was known as the Plank Road. It was originally used to overcome the big hills at Paris. It was almost an act of cruelty for a teamster to force a team up these hills and almost as bad to force a team to hold back a load going down these hills. Certainly it was not an act of good horsemanship.

The Plank Road was begun in 1842 under the supervision of Col. Gzowski, an engineer. His job was to provide a first class road graded up to a width of 32 feet. Robert C. Muir was given the contract for constructing the road from Burford to the Governor's Road intersection. After preliminary grading was completed of the roadbed to the width of 16 feet, it was covered with three inch pine planks resting on three by eight pine sleepers which were embedded in the ground to a depth of six inches. The planks were secured to the sleepers with six and seven inch spikes.

When this road was completed it was one of the best roads ever constructed up to this time and with the coming of the railroad still 10 years away it became the main commercial link between Hamilton, Toronto, London and Woodstock.

Two of the best known teamsters on this road were Foote and Rowland. At the time of the building of this road, the traffic was underestimated. The planks did not stand up and continued repairs had to be made until it was decided to start using gravel. As gravel took over from the plank it became the stone road.

In the period of prosperity that preceded the coming of the railroad, there were 12 hotels between Burford and Eastwood.

Muir

With all these hotels it seems hard to believe that there would be a community without a hotel. But Muir never allowed a hotel to operate in the vicinity. When one did try to start the property was quickly purchased by local folk.

This community was originally called Trimble Corners in honor of Charles Trimble and was settled largely by lowland Scots who were true to the Presbyterian faith. In 1852 services were held at the Block School in



Railroad Sparked Eastwood, Muir Grew Beside Plank Road - cont.

Burford township. They advised the members south of the Plank road to go to Norwich and north of the road to go to Princeton. This arrangement lasted until 1861 when 60 members applied for a place of worship at Trimble Corners. This edifice became known as St. Andrew's Church, East Oxford. Originally land was purchased at Cathcart but later it was sold and the present site was purchased in 1851 and the church was built by 1862 costing \$638.45. The pulpit which is still in use was made by John Virtue. The original building was frame and bricked over later. This congregation along with Norwich and Windham Centre was served by Rev. James Robertson, from 1869 - 74. He left for the west and fame as Superintendent of Western Missions. His biography Ralph Connor recorded in "The Life of James Robertson".

In 1880 the Diamond Cheese factory started by Borland and Manson also doubled as the community hall. All agreed that it smelled a little of cheese and whey but when the debating society met here to listen to "Flippy" Richardson, the local blacksmith defend his side against McKenzie ("by Jove sir") Muir, it would be filled to capacity.

The first school in this section was supported by the Muir and the Virtue families on lot 20 just north of the third concession of Burford. In 1867 the school was moved to its present site where it serves both Burford and East Oxford townships.

In 1896 with the need arising for a post office, it was found that the name Trimble Corners was already in use by another community. In appreciation of the work done by John Muir to secure the post office the name Muir was chosen, ahead of Diamondville and Trimble.

With the arrival of American immigrants in 1793 into the township of Oxford on the Thames, we find the name Ingersoll first mentioned.

~~Thomas~~ Ingersoll, who was an American, undertook the task of helping to further open up the township by supplying at least 40 settlers and to construct a road from Burford to the River Thames. The settlers were each to get 200 acres of land at a cost of sixpence per acre.

The Ingersoll family had its North American roots in the commonwealth of Massachusetts where Thomas Ingersoll was born in 1749. A man of high principles and strong beliefs he was a prominent member of the Whigs Party and fought on the side of the rebels as a major during the American Revolution. He genuinely believed that the colonies were quite justified in revolting against Britain but after peace was declared in 1783 he was equally aghast at the outrages perpetuated against the Loyalists by the victorious colonials.

In 1793 the government of Upper Canada received a petition signed by Rev. Gideon Bostwick, Thomas Ingersoll and a number of associates, all of Berkshire County, Mass., requesting the grant of a township in the province. In this document they agreed to bring in a sufficient number of settlers to settle the greater part of a township.

The administration was at that time in the habit of granting large areas of unsettled lands in Upper Canada to persons who would undertake to bring in settlers. Usually the agreement was that the Crown kept control of the property and assigned a proportionate number of acres to the prospective number of acres to the prospective settler and a bonus acreage to the promoter.

#### To Upper Canada

Accordingly, Ingersoll and family came to Upper Canada and settled in the Niagara District in 1793. He was assigned 80,000 acres in Oxford. As Mr. Bostwick died in 1793 and the associates backed out, Ingersoll was left on his own and was obliged to use his own money on the venture. He did manage to get the venture started. He arrived here in 1793 and pitched his tent on what is now Thames Street, Ingersoll, and proceeded to clear a farm.

### Tent in Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

In this venture of settling, he apparently ran into difficulties for in 1797 he sent a plea to the Executive Council asking for four or five months more to settle the township. The council did not see fit to grant his request and according to a strict policy, where an agreement was not fully carried out, relieved Ingersoll of his control of the land under his jurisdiction. The lots already settled were conformed and he was allowed twelve hundred acres for his troubles. Greatly disappointed by the failure of his project he moved in 1805 to a lot at the mouth of the Credit River where he lived until his death in 1812. While in Oxford County, Ingersoll not only administered his settlement scheme but acted as the local Justice of the Peace, administrator of oaths and commissioner of roads. He did construct the road from Burford to the River Thames, a distance of 30 miles. At his death, he left a widow and seven children, one of them being Laura Secord of the War of 1812 fame, also sons Charles and James, the latter being born in the Oxford homestead.

Charles Ingersoll, who was born in Massachusetts in 1791 was among the first to volunteer for service in the militia when the province was threatened with invasion in 1812. It is reported that he served as Quartermaster of Niagara Light Dragoons and later in the Provincial Dragoons as a lieutenant. This corps fought in actions at Fort George, Stoney Creek, Black Rock and Lundy's Lane.

In 1817 James Ingersoll returned to the place of his birth and reported that the farm was occupied by Ebenezer Case and that the fences and barn were in dilapidated condition but the log house was in good repair. After getting things in working order, James proceeded to start a sawmill in 1819 and later a gristmill with one pair of stones, also a store and ashery prior to the arrival of Charles in 1821.

### Made Magistrate

When Charles joined James at "Oxford" as Ingersoll was then known he was appointed the first postmaster in what is now Oxford County along with appointments as magistrate and commissioner at the court of requests

Tent in Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

Made Magistrate - cont.

along with Peter Teeple. In 1834 James was appointed registrar of the county, a surprise appointment as it was thought in all circles that Peter Lossing would receive it after the death of Homer Charles was one of the unfortunate victims of the cholera epidemic of 1832 and a memorative plaque records his memory in St. James Anglican Church. Between 1820-1835 seven farms were subdivided into village lots. They were taken from lots in the townships of North Oxford belonging to Richard Crotty and John Carnegie and from West Oxford belonging to Daniel Carroll, Gilbert Harris, James Harris, Elishor Hall, Sam Canfield and lots 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 owned by Charles and James Ingersoll. Such was the beginning of the village of Ingersoll which became an incorporated village on January 1, 1852 by an Act of Parliament.

During the next ten years the village grew beyond the fondest expectations and its population increased from 1,190 in '51 to 2,756 in '61. In its general aspect it greatly improved with the erection of a very superior class of public and private buildings including a handsome and commodious town hall and market house. There were also several fine large blocks of two and three story brick business houses, which would be a credit to any town at that time.

The law and medical professions were well represented. There was a weekly newspaper (the oldest in the county) and known as the Chronicle. It was issued on Tuesdays with the Gurnett Family being principal shareholders. The London and Hamilton road passed through the village. It was reached from all directions by good plank and gravel roads. From its eligible situation, its easy accessibility both by rail and roads, it afforded facilities for the transportation of goods. Ingersoll appeared to become the most important mart of business and commerce in the County.



Tent in Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

Industrial Trade

The staple business and industrial trade of the village and neighborhood was in wheat and sawn lumber. It was well supplied with manufacturing facilities having unlimited water power in the vicinity. Two grist and two flour mills were already making good use of this cheap form of power.

R.H. Carroll and J.R. Benson were doing an extensive export business with flour and the North Star Mill of J. Stewart had a large oatmeal trade. Besides these mills there was the Oxford Steam Flour Co. It also contained a steam sawmill, a fanning mill factory, sash, door and blind factory. Adam Oliver had a large contracting firm and also operated a planing mill and lumber business, employing 24 men with enough business, to make good use of a 30 h.p. engine.

Another large contracting firm was operated by John Christopher and Bros. also with 14 men on the payroll. There were two foundries, one operated by W. Eastwood who manufactured farm equipment with 30 employees and doing a \$25,000 business annually. J. and S. Noxon had the other foundry and also specialized in farm machinery (was later taken over by Massey Harris Co.) doing a \$12,000 business annually. There were also several carriage and wagon factories, furniture, pail and tub steam factories, a tannery, operated by Thomas Brown and a brewery. There were two banks, plus eight churches. The affairs of the village were controlled by a village council presided over by a reeve.

In the early days of Oxford all communities lived in fear of fires. A goodly number of the second rate buildings were of frame construction and were used for stabling or storing, purposes, an ideal spot for a fire to start. Such was the case in Ingersoll. On May 8, 1872 fire of unknown origin broke out in the stables of the Royal Exchange Hotel, which stood on the location of the old post office building. The cause of the fire was never discovered. The wind blew to the south east and so rapidly did the fire travel through the old frame buildings that when it had burned itself out it had destroyed nearly all the

Tent In Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

Fast Fire - cont.

buildings on both sides of Thames St. between Charles and King streets and most of Oxford street up to the market square where Bowman's Hotel was the last victim.

The fire travelled so fast and furious that panic and confusion seized everyone. Goods were removed from stores to supposed safety across the street, only to be moved again. Goods were damaged in moving. Some were removed by thieves ever ready to profit on the misfortune of others. Stores of bottled goods were an easy prey to many.

When it was realized that the situation was out of hand, the mayor wired for help to London and Woodstock. In response London sent its Phoenix Co. along with 20 men of its hook and ladder company as well as a company of volunteers. They were brought to Ingersoll on the Great Western Fire Engine. Woodstock made available a company of volunteers under Captain McKay but they were delayed by the late arrival of a train to transport them. Many citizens with fast horses drove over to the fire and rendered valuable service. When the Woodstock crew did arrive they were able to relieve men who had been fighting the fire from its beginning and were able to subdue the fire when it broke out a second time about three a.m.

The London Company entered the fight on arrival in the vicinity of the Mayor's Block and prevented the fire from entering the Smith Block and the buildings on King street. Without this assistance, the whole town could have been gutted as fire brands were carried three or four miles and it was necessary to watch all buildings.

The Ingersoll crew of which there <sup>were</sup> three, pumped and carried water all night during the fire in relays until they fell exhausted. It is said that by morning their arms and hands were so stiff they could not remove their own coats. The three companies were each provided with a hand pumper, a reel of hose and a club room where they met for instruction. One was located at the present CNR crossing on Thames St. A second was located at the market and the third was located at the rear of the Old King's Mill. Some of the men from these companies included John Frizell, Robert Leighton, Robert Munroe, John Lakey, Henry Snale, Phillip Mudge, John Bower, James McDonald, Edward Dixon and Chief Engineer Brady.

Tent in Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

Fast Fire - cont.

The real tragedy of this fire was that two men lost their lives while attempting to save other people's property. C.C. Payne lost his life while bringing stock out of R.H. Young's saddlery shop. He was told that it was not safe but continued his salvaging and with his arms full he stumbled and fell. It was impossible for anyone to reach him. John Omand was trapped by a falling wall in Fawks Jewellery Store.

Loss \$300,000

When the fire was finally subdued and inventory was taken the loss was approximately \$300,000. The area affected by the fire included: South of the Royal Exchange Hotel on Thames St. the residence of C.P. Hall and William Gallagher's Prince of Wales Hotel, and among other small frame buildings on both Thames and Oxford Sts; on the west side of Oxford St. north of Charles, the Daily House Stables, Chambers Hotel, the old Wesleyan Church building, R. McDonald's barn, and Badder and Delaney's carriage and wagon factory.

On Thames St. stood several new buildings, such as Vance's Bakery, the second storey of which was used as the Masonic Hall, George Perkins store, Browett and Barker hardware, the Niagara District Bank, J. and H. Little groceries. Alex Gordon, tailor, G.W. Walley, crockery and glassware, McCaughey and Walsh, barristers, The Chronicle office, a new building owned by J.S. Gurnett, J.F. Moore's cabinet show rooms, Byrne and McGolrick, saddlers, Mrs. Curtis, milliner, Mr. Miller, grocer, Miss Webster, dressmaker, G. Lewis, photographer, Mr. Curtis, shoemaker, a brick building occupied by Holcroft's grocery were lost in the flames.

On the east side of Thames those of H. Vogt, jeweller, T. St., buildings burned were F. Fawks, jeweller, G.J. Shrapnell, grocer, J. Hugil, photographer, Miss Patterson, dressmaker, S.W. McFarlane, dry goods, J.N. Elliott, grocer, Alex Reid, dry goods, J.G. Chowan and Co. hardware, F. A. Baker, photographer, T.H. Barraclough, boots and shoes, Holmes and Gillespie, dry goods, M. Tripp, drugs, Alex McKenzie, residence, James McNiven, dry goods, H. McNiven, residence, James McDonald, hats and caps, Alex Macauley, dry goods, R. F. Hunter, residence, John Gayfer,

Tent in Clearing Ingersoll's Start - cont.

Loss \$300,000 - cont.

drugs, D. White and Co. dry goods, O. R. Caldwell, drugs, Allan McLean, book shop, James McDonald, barrister.

On King St. Mrs. McIntyre's furniture factory together with a large number of stores and residences mostly of wood and built close together all burned to the east on both sides of the street up to Hall and Carroll streets.

The fire wiped out the homes or businesses of over 80 people. Many witnessed the work of nearly a lifetime fall prey to the flames. Many of their names are just a memory while others are having their names carried on by the second or third generations still doing business on the same street. The blackened ruins of yesterday have been replaced by bigger and better places of business and even though Ingersoll fell short of its pioneers expectations it is the hub of northwest Oxford, a town which any person would be glad to call his home town.



From the time that Thomas Ingersoll first laid eyes on Oxford on the Thames until his sons James and Charles returned, most of the settlement took place in and around Beachville. South of that community there came into existence, the township of West Oxford which has contributed as much to the pages of history of Oxford County as all the other townships.

It was in this township that the first Methodist meeting was reported in 1806 by Charles Askin as he rode from Sandwich to York. There is a record of a meeting being held in a log school on lot 13, concession 1, West Oxford in 1817, which was one of the first schools in the county. The story of the cheese industry is well enough known that little needs to be said about it.

In the story of West Oxford little known is the action that took place during the War of 1812. During the war years the townships of East, West and North Oxford all bore a certain amount of grief due to the mixed loyalties of their settlers. One of these settlers whose loyalty was doubted was a Mr. Martin.

This man ran an inn called Martin's Tavern. According to rumors, the establishment was equipped with secret panels and other conveniences useful for fleecing unsuspecting travellers. Being located on the military road between Niagara and Amherstburg it became one of the stopping places for supply trains taking the supplies to General Proctor at the border after the British fleet became bottled up at Amherstburg. Prior to this the British fleet under Captain Baulay had kept the American fleet bottled up at Presque Isle Harbor and supplies were transported from Port Dover to Amherstburg by boat.

#### Buried Treasure

It is reported that while one of these wagon trains stopped at Martin's Tavern, the guards were treated royally and soon became intoxicated. The train was then systematically looted and the boxes, some of which contained cash were refilled with rocks and the train went on its way. The loot from this train included Spanish coins, gold sovereigns, American 10 and 20 dollar gold pieces. This was never found but the

Raiders, Buried Coins Woven in Oxford Past - cont.

Buried Treasure - cont.

prosperity of a local family engendered suspicion among other local residents. When the head of the family died years later, he left a box of coins such as were supposed to have been on the supply train. There was an official investigation but nothing ever came of it. For years it was the pastime of the young fry and some of the older ones too to go and search for the buried treasure.

The long trip overland with supplies was the downfall of the British forces at Detroit. Within a year after capturing the fort from the Americans, Proctor and his men were forced to retire not only from Detroit but from all of Western Ontario. This allowed the Americans to overrun and plunder this section with little or no opposition.

The plundering in Oxford was done chiefly in spite. Two prominent citizens who after years of residing in Canada declared themselves on the side of the Americans. One of these Ebenezer Allan, the founder of Delaware, never accomplished much as a rebel, for he died shortly after he was jailed, for treason. Andrew Westbrook, a resident of Beachville area managed to escape. He took up with the Michigan Rangers and led a raiding party to his homestead. After burning the buildings he kidnapped several officers of the militia and made off taking his family with him. Among the officers taken was Sykes Tousley. It was often thought that this was the main reason for the first raid.

During the spring and summer of 1814 Westbrook practically came and went as he wished and destroyed as he would. The families whose buildings were destroyed were often forced out into the forests to escape being tortured. After the raiders left they would seek shelter with a loyal neighbor. The frequency of these raids, increased to a point that those whose buildings were not entered or destroyed found their loyalty to the British Crown was in doubt.

Westbrook was cagey. He rode a pinto horse which soon became well known and he would often make his prisoner ride this horse. Such was the case of Capt. John Carroll. A party pursuing Westbrook and his Rangers saw the horse and rider. They fired at the rider and later found that they had killed John Carroll. After the summer of 1814, little more was heard of the raiders of Oxford.

## Raiders, Buried Coins Woven in Oxford Past - cont.

### Rebellion

All went well in West Oxford until the Rebellion of 1837 and once more it was neighbor against neighbor. Col. A.W. Light of Beachville was put in command of the Oxford Militia. Col. Cornelius Cunningham was also of Beachville became the secret leader of the rebels. Cunningham was described as a shrewd and active man.

Feelings ran high and once again terror reigned. Homes and property were again destroyed. George Nicol saw his buildings go up in flames for the second time. They had been destroyed by Westbrook in 1814. The rebels' activities were short lived and they soon became hunted men. The militia also put in a rough time searching for the rebels. During the winter, frozen rations and wet blankets became the order of the day. In December 1837 some of the rebels who had escaped to the United States tried to invade Canada at Windsor. They were soon dispersed and later captured. Col. Cunningham who was among those captured was found to be badly wounded. He was taken to London for trial. It is reported that he was hanged on February 9, 1839. The place of his burial is unknown. Another who met a similar fate was one by the name of Hatch of Woodstock. Another rebel Robert Alway made good his escape to the United States but lost all his property. Later when amnesty was granted, he returned and became a member of parliament.

### Centreville

The land now occupied by Centreville was some of the land originally granted to Thomas Ingersoll. Prior to his coming the land was partially settled by squatters who never secured a title to their holdings. The land was eventually taken up by Robert Teeple in 1835 and as early as 1840 industries were starting up. This was not the first attempt at forming a settlement as in land deeds of this area, an old mill still standing is mentioned as a place from which to measure certain lots. It is not known if this is the mill which James Burdick erected in 1806 - 07. The plant was a combination grist and saw mill and 16 feet square. This mill was later sold to Andrew Westbrook who burned

Raiders, Buried Coins Woven in Oxford Past - cont.

Centreville - cont.

it to the ground. An old diary notes that in 1837 George Nicholls built a pond and grist mill along the Stage Road south of Centreville. The main part of the village was erected between the river and high ground to the south of the London and Hamilton Road, better known today as Highway 2. This high ground was commonly called Indian Hill as it was used at one time for an Indian burial ground. One grave uncovered on this spot contained a whole family. This was due to the fact that they died during the smallpox epidemic which killed off many of the Neutral Indians. For some time there was a stone with two clasped hands carved on it to mark the grave of Bill Injun. He had served as a scout for George Nicols during the war of 1812. He was later killed in a brawl in a cabin on the Stage Road. Indian relics are still to be found there.

By 1854 Centreville had the following industries: Carricks Tannery, Ayers Brickyard, Mossips Blacksmithy, Bain's Flour Mills, Hopkins Tannery and Waltons Blacksmith Shop. It rivalled the nearby communities of Ingersoll and Woodstock. The 1862 Oxford Gazetteer lists Centreville as having a tannery, flour mill, brickyard and two blacksmith shops and a population of 100 persons. It mentions that mail was received at Ingersoll.

Notorious Hotel

Near the end of the 1800's a hotel was in business at Centreville known as Drake's Hotel. The place had the reputation of being one of the rowdiest hotels in all Oxford. One night the hotel was burglarized. For over a week the community went on a spree. The hotel was to be sold by auction in 1894 but it was mysteriously burned two days prior to the sale.

The Hollylock store was located across from the hotel. The buildings used by the Williamson family for a grist and flour mill were later used by the Chemical Lime Co. for a lime dehydrator plant. There were several lime kilns located along the main road giving employment and enjoyment to many. On a cold winter's night it formed a good



Raiders, Buried Coins Woven in Oxford Past - cont.

Notorious Hotel - cont.

gathering place for the younger fellows and many a roast chicken was enjoyed at the expense of a neighbor who had chickens.

Over and beyond Indian Hill was to be found some of the great pine forest in Southern Ontario. This area became known as "The Pines". With the opening of the Ingersoll and Port Burwell Road the teaming of logs to the lake for shipment to the coast became a profitable occupation.

Peebles Corners

One of the lumbering communities which came into being and since has become a ghost town to such an extent that it has completely disappeared. Few of the residents realize that it even existed. The place was first known as Pine Grove Inn, and like many other lumbering towns with the coming of the saw mills came the families of the lumber crews. By 1871 there were enough people living there to call for a post office. The name was changed to Peebles Corners. Mail was brought from Woodstock daily by way of Sweaburg, Foldens and Peebles Corners. One of the best known mail contractors to carry the mail was Oliver Brown. Among the first to operate a store here was the Corry family who also looked after the postoffice. Later Palmers built a store and Fred Service operated it and the post office was moved to a house east of the corner of the sixth line of West Oxford and the Dereham Town Lines. Although there were many people there, in the immediate area could be found a brickyard about a mile north and west of the corner, two sawmills, to the east and a cheese factory. This section of the township was a little later than the Centreville area in being settled. Most crown deeds are dated about 1845. The main wave of settlers arrived with the lumbering trade which was some 15 to 20 years later. There was never a school but there was a church and a cemetery in Dereham.

Toppin Ghost

It was in this immediate area that the Toppin murder took place about a mile and a half from the corner. It became quite a story in the community that the house was haunted and nobody would live in it. Finally one night

Raiders, Buried Coins Woven in Oxford Past - cont.

Toppin Ghost - cont.

some men got together and burned the house. Those who watched the fire claimed the Toppin ghost was seen darting among the flames. With the burning of the house, the story died. Today very few people can recall the story.

One of the early settlers who walked up for Niagara arrive ----??? was Andrew Bodwell and chose a location on the town line between Dereham and West Oxford for his homestead. He staked his claim alongside a creek. Many believed it was not a good location but he persevered. When Bodwell had to carry his wheat to the mill, often to Brantford he would always say "well, it will be lighter coming back". He was among the first in the section to own a team of oxen.

Eventually, beside the stream, he was able to build a grist mill of his own and as dairying took over from lumbering, he started a cheese factory. He became owner of 1800 acres of land and during the Crimean War he was able to sell his wheat for \$3 to \$4 a bushel. With his successful venture behind him Bodwell proceeded to build a mansion which became known as "Block House". The house was built out of proportion and it is said that the ceilings were 14 feet high. Each room had its own fireplace which was of a size capable of heating an average house of that time. A porch was erected all around the outside and the main house was constructed entirely of stone. Although Bodwell did live in the house it was looked upon as his biggest mistake. The big house is still there long after the builder and his family have gone. The mill and cheese factory are no longer there but the cheesemaker's house still remains.

The township of Nissouri, north of lot 25 was chiefly settled between 1835 and 1845. Prior to this most of the land was held by discharged soldiers who did not live on their land and from places such as York with incoming immigrants.

The immigrants who came to Nissouri were Irish, Scotch and English. These people decided to come to Canada for two reasons.

Firstly, by 1800 all workable land was taken up and if a father was to provide for his sons, it meant that the original holding had to be subdivided. By the middle of the century, the holdings were so reduced in size that most farmers could barely support themselves during a good crop year. During the period between 1822 - 45 there were seven crop failures. With this sort of uncertainty, they began looking for new homes.

Secondly, they were called upon to contribute heavily to Poor Law Taxes which went to support laborers evicted from large estates. Often these laborers were living better than the small holders who were helping to support them. In Ireland in 1841 - 42 percent of the agricultural holdings were between one and five acres. Potatoes became a basic crop as one and one half acres could support an average family in an average year. The problem was what to do with potatoes if there was a surplus. They would not keep for a full year. Everyone was growing them and there was no market.

#### Mass Migration

Faced with these problems many decided to sell out and go to Canada and the United States. The idea was good but during this period of mass migration, cholera became a plague on the immigrant ships and many died. Also at this time, the Atlantic was experiencing one of its worst storm periods in maritime history and shipwrecks were far above normal. After these ordeals the settlers had undergone, roughing out a home in Nissouri was almost a relaxation.

To the north of Oxford there was a large tract of land owned by the Canada Company and known as the Huron Tract. Many of the same people settled up there and after trying to make a success on the Canada Company terms, many pulled up stakes and came down to buy privately owned land and by 1860 we find the township well established.

Dispute Over Road Split Nissouri in Earlier Days - cont.

Mass Migration - cont.

Prior to 1862 a school house was erected at lot 30, concession 12 and was known as McKims School with 182 pupils on the roll and an average attendance of 72.

These settlers were industrious and even though they were located in an inland township they were able to catch and salt 400 barrels of fish as well as selling 60 barrels of fresh fish. This was an unusual crop for Oxford and we find no other mention of any other township having such a crop.

W.H. Gregory was one of the earliest settlers in the northern part of the township. He had holdings of 450 acres of land and lived in Nissouri for 30 years. In that time he became a justice of the peace and a member of the local council. He, along with Dennis Horseman and Joll McCarthy formed the first township council after the Municipal Act was passed in 1851.

The council saw the need for a good gravel road through the township and passed a bylaw to have one leading from Thamesford to the townline of Blanshard. Many people opposed this move but the road was nearly complete before this council was defeated.

The contractor Ebenezer McCarty got into difficulties with the new council. He was bound by specifications to make a road and was to receive his pay as the work progressed. When it was found the road was not according to specifications, payment was stopped. The new council backed by the opposition to the road were determined to put a final stop to the project and employed engineers at a great expense. These authorities after examining the road, condemned it as badly done. Then the council forbade the contractor to do any work and refused to advance any more money. The contractor ignored the council and carried on his work and completed the agreement he had with the original council. When work was complete he sued the council in power. Then came the tug-of-war.

At the first hearing held in London over 100 witnesses were to be called. When the presiding judge saw this he refused to try the case by judge and jury. He appointed a judge for this special suit and ordered the case be held in Woodstock.



### Dispute over Road Split Nissouri in Earlier Days - cont.

#### Mass Migration - cont.

It was a long fight on both sides. Judgment was given in favor of the contractor, giving him full claim and the costs to be against the township. Prior to the case appearing in court, the contractor had offered to settle for \$1,000 less than his original contract. This threw a heavy debt on the township, doubling the cost of the road and caused heavy taxes for a good many years before the debentures were raised and the township was clear. Today the contractors are once more working on this road, preparing it for a hard surface and a Queen's highway at last.

Over at McKims much of the bitterness of the road was felt. W. H. Gregory and William McKim, both influential men, took opposing sides on the road question. Neither one would give an inch and as a result, William McKim withdrew his support from the local Methodist Church and joined with the Wesleyans. At that time this was a serious matter.

Prior to this dispute a Methodist Church was built across the road from the present school under the leadership of Thomas B. Brown, the Methodist minister from Brown's Corners. He was helped by Andrew McKim and Sylvester Rounds. This was also the location of Shrubsoles brickyard.

#### Ghost Towns

This part of the township at present has two ghost towns, Granthurst and Wildwood. The name Branthurst is still seen on highway signs but its location is known to few. The gravel hills are the only signs that are left. About these hills are two stores which have become famous through the years. These hills were known as the White Lily Hills and the Lily White Hills. The former because when the lilies were in bloom, the hillside would be covered with white flowers. The other is that a person by the name of Lily White lived here.

As the township was opening up, the need for a store became greater. The trek to Stratford or Ingersoll took more time away from the farm. Alex Grant opened a store on the corner of lot 25 concession 8 and was followed shortly after by a blacksmith shop on the opposite corner. The store was later run by Eli Day who eventually closed the store. In 1890 the post office was opened and Alex Grant, John Sheldon, George Hunt and Eli Day served as postmasters until the office closed in 1911. In the blacksmith shop Bill Kohn, Fred Hepburn and Arthur Napton looked after the needs of the local farmers who included such names as Thomas and William Richards, Martins, Greensons, Elliots, McQuillans, McClarens, Scotts and Muirs.

Dispute Over Road Split Nissouri in Earlier Days - cont.

Ghost Towns - cont.

South of the corner John McClaren started a sawmill and later sold out to Thomas Muir, a son of one of the famous Scottish weavers who had come to Dalhousie Township near Ottawa and later migrated to the county of Perth in and around Avonbank. The Muirs developed a prosperous mill which burned in the early 1890's. The mill was rebuilt and until 1908 had a large trade with the Richardson Dairy Supply Company at St. Marys, J.D. Moore Planing Mill, the Bain Wagon Works at Woodstock and the farm implement companies of Stratford. There being no railroad then between Woodstock and St. Marys all the lumber had to be teamed to St. Marys and if going beyond it would have to be loaded into box cars. In 1908 with the supply falling off, the sawmill was sold and moved to the Dorchester tile yard. There was a cheese factory located at the corner of lot 25, concession 10. It was started by the Murray Brothers in 1888 and James Gray was the maker. James McCabe also made cheese there. In 1892 W. J. Atkinson took over the factory and under his supervision 128 tons of cheese were turned out annually, almost double its previous output. The factory was leased to R.S. Box of the St. Marys Creamery and used as a skinning milk factory. The building was later moved away. In 1903 the farmers formed the Farmers' Union Factory and hired W.J. Atkinson as maker.

In 1910 David Brown opened a store and post office at the place where the railroad crosses the sideroad and for three years he was postmaster, the only postmaster ever to serve Uniondale.

Just east of the main corner stood a white brick church which was known as the Maple Grove Church. Of the Methodist Faith, it was served by saddlebag preachers who travelled from Norwich to St. Marys by way of Embro. On the 11th concession east of the village, there was located one of the first settlements in these parts. The deed goes back to 1826 when Cornelius Bartrand received a grant. On this location several houses were erected along with a blacksmith shop and a school. Miss Hannah Vining was the teacher. The name and fate of this community is unknown. Today the Gregory family cemetery is all that marks the spot. From time to time articles are plowed up when the fields are worked.

Dispute Over Road Split Nissouri in Earlier Days - cont.

Ghost Towns - cont.

On July 30, 1881 Rev. George Wilson preached to the members of the Baptist faith at Gravenhurst. In the next year Elder Vining of the Baptist circuit became the local preacher. Lack of enthusiasm caused it to close. In 1872 S.H. Mitchell of St. Marys noticed when he was returning from Ingersoll that the church doors were closed. He saw the need for a Sunday School which he started and as things progressed students from the Woodstock Baptist College served there. Today this is the Union Church of East Nissouri with Clarence Sawyer of Woodstock the minister.

In the near future the name Wildwood will become quite common through these parts. The Upper Thames Valley Conservation Authority is planning to build a dam and reservoir that will take in some 3,000 acres of land. Known as the Wildwood Dam, this project will take in land originally settled by Irish, Scotch and English settlers who either purchased their land from the Canada Company in Perth County or from soldiers and land dealers in Oxford in and around 1840.

The names McClarity, Lang, Mitchell, Hanes, Cooper, Eagan, Murphy, Durney, Flagherty are to be found on deeds taken up by the Thames Valley Authority. Actually there was never a community but in 1896 William Lang, the father of Judge Lang of St. Marys was able to get a post office located here and was appointed postmaster. This was on the Perth side of the road. In 1902 John Bolton was upon the Oxford side just south of the base line. It is of interest to note that Thomas Coward who had the original deed to the McClarity place but never lived there, to farm it, became famous as the Brantford Tinsmith Rhymmer and in 1884 he published a book "The Emigrant Mechanic and the Tales in Verse." After selling his place to McClarity he felt that he could not leave without a short poem. He put down several verses telling of the great timbers and flowing waters of Nissouri and wished the new owners well. John Bolton, a grandson of McClarity, has one of these books.

Through the passing of time, Wildwood, Granthurst have become a memory. Uniondale has taken over where they left off and is fast becoming the hub of Nissouri.



In 1790 Perrin Law began to survey the township of Norwich and Dereham but did not complete it. In 1799 William Hambly, a deputy surveyor living in Woodhouse township, undertook to complete the task. He chose a group of Indians for assistants from the Six Nations Reserve. There were no end of trouble to him, refusings to work when the flies were bad and then at harvest time they took off to bring in their harvest in the reserve. He also tells of spending some time at Thomas Ingersoll's palace and Joseph Canfield's and of having to make canoes to cross the Reynolds Creek in Dereham. These setbacks did not stop him and by the time the snow had come Norwich was laid out as a township with concessions and lines all divided into 200 acre lots. They were all marked with blazed trees and by placing stakes at the more important points.

The following year 1900 the government divided the township and granted holdings to 10 of its supporters and 19,000 acres for reserves and a few small holdings. Rev. Robert Addison of Niagara received 6,000 acres. His widow gave 160 acres to his cousin Robert Addison, and this was the beginning of the Addison name in the township which has lasted for over 150 years.

Given 15,000 Acres

William Wilcocks, the grandfather of Robert Baldwin, was given 15,000 acres which he mortgaged to Thomas Gray and 10 years later he received \$7,500 from Peter Lossing and Peter DeLong and paid off the mortgage. This started a long procession of settlers from Dutchess County, New York and the beginning of the Quaker movement here in Oxford. Adam Stover bought 3,000 acres for his sons Adam, Frederick and Michael and 500 acres for his daughter Mary McLees. The descendants of other members of his family remained in the United States and one of the descendants went on to become president of the United States, President Eisenhower. This Society of Friends were able to influence other Friends from all parts of the Colonies to join them.

They were not all members of the Society of Friends and we find that the Emighs, Dennises and Spragues were instrumental in starting the Baptist Church at Burgessville and Michael Stover gave land for a Methodist Church. The Irish also settled here at an early date with the McNallys settling on the sixth in the mid 1820's and also Thomas Carolan settled on Quaker St. The McNally later gave land for a Catholic Church now known as St. Peters. The Carolans were blacksmiths and before long had earned such a reputation that it was not unusual for a farmer to travel 10 to 20 miles to have them



Early Oxonians From Norwich Fought In '37 Rebellion And Fenian Raids - cont.  
Given 15,000 Acres - cont.

shoe a team in preference to a local smithy living only a couple of miles away. In the thirties there began a movement of settlers from the maritimes and from England. Some of these he Clares, Bresleys, Heywoods, Agars, Jaques were the foundation of the Anglican faith in the township.

First Meeting

The first meetings held in the township were held in 1816 when the town meeting was held. The first meeting held at CalebThompkins' hotel at Gommerah, later called Carolan's Corner. At these meetings the male settlers would gather to appoint the pathmaster, poundkeepers, assessors and tax collectors. All this was done by open vote. There were also courts held here and were presided over byJohn Woodrow, John G. Lossee, Solomon Lossing who were the first Commissioners appointed by the government constituting what was known as the Commissioners Court of Requests.

The first school was opened in 1812 and as the population increased so did the schools. The first schools were supported by each person paying a certain fee for each child attending, the usual fee being two shillings per month, but varied according to the number of students attending and the amount to be paid the teacher. The teachers received from eight to 15 pounds per quarter plus free room and board among the families. The school law passed in 1816 provided that the inhabitants of a township might assemble on June 1st each year for school purposes<sup>and</sup> as soon as twenty scholars could be obtained they could build a school house and obtain a teacher.

Norwich township took an active part in the Rebellion of 1837. On December 6, 1837 Dr. Duncombe MPP arrived here from Toronto stating that McKenzie had control of Toronto. He called a meeting and made a patriotic speech and asked for volunteers to the rebel cause. Inside of a week he had a force of 180 men and officers and left for the village of Scotland where they were reinforced by volunteers from the Long Point area. Their total strength was now 300. The following day Duncombe received word that McNab was marching on Scotland with 500 men. Duncombe decided to fall back to Norwich, and on reaching there the men all found something that required attention at home and the groups disbanded. When McNab arrived here and set up headquarters in the village they rounded up the rebels and they were sent to various prisons and arraigned on a charge of treason. Some of those who were charged were Dr. Cooke, John A. Tidey, Dr. Toren, Elias Snyder, Daniel and Paul Bedford, Stephen Smith, Gordon DeLong, John Dennis, Abraham Sackrider and Solomon Lossing. One after another they received their

Early Oxonians From Norwich Fought In '37 Rebellion And Fenian Raids - cont.  
First Meeting - cont.

pardon except Daniel Bedford. He was hanged at London on January 11, 1839. His body was buried in the Friends' cemetery.

John Tidey was lodged in the Hamilton jail and from his diary we quote his account of his stay there. "Discomfort, filth, vermin and bad food broke the health and morale of the prisoners. They are principally bad meat, potatoes and corn all cooked together in a large kettle outside in the yard". Petitions were sent in, wives interviewed members of the legislature taking long journeys, sometime walking, to do so. While they were absent from their homes, neighbors' wives would look after the children and finally they were released.

The Norwich boys were to the Front in the Fenian Raids of 1866 with the 22nd Battalion of the Oxford Rifles. At the time of the Fenian Raids, No. 6 Company was composed mostly of young boys of Norwich Township and had only been organized a couple of months. They were little acquainted with military training or the methods of warfare. The company was under the command of Capt. Nesbitt of Holbrook and Lieut. George Bleakley, Ensign M. Nexbitt, Sgt. Joseph A. Tidey and Colborne Pettit. When orders came, they were off in a couple of hours. The company took the train to Woodstock, then on to Paris and eventually to Port Colborne, where they saw seven dead Canadians who had been killed in the Battle of Ridgeway. The next day they went to Fort Erie, rode the train for eight miles then walked the rest of the 22 mile trip. They found very little to eat along the road as the Fenians had cleaned out everything. Their sleeping quarters were the tables and furnishings of a billiard parlor. As the Fenians had disappeared they took the train to London, via Hamilton, where they remained and did a couple of weeks of military training. Their eventual return home was the cause of much rejoicing and a special supper was prepared for them along with speeches and music that goes along with a military hero's return home.

Cheese Factory

In 1864 Harvey Farrington led the way for Canadian cheese factories which until recent years were to become one of the main industries of rural Oxford. He purchased the farm and residence of Gary V. DeLong and gave the contract for building a cheese factory to Hiram Van Valkenberg. Prior to coming here he had conducted a successful cheese factory in the New England States. Becoming dissatisfied there he made a trip to Canada in 1863. He was pleased with what he saw so he returned home and disposed of his business and moved here the following year.

Early Oxonians From Norwich Fought In '37 Rebellion And Fenian Raids - cont.

Cheese Factory - cont.

The factory was located one mile north and one mile west of Norwich village. In 1866 he erected the Burgessville factory and in 1867, the East Oxford and in 1867 the Richmond Factory in Blenheim. Henry Losee was also active in the cheese industry and was one of the first to show farmers what they could do with whey which was considered a nuisance to factories and a source of disease and filth. Henry Farrington was recently named to the Farmers Hall of Fame for the work he did for the cheese industry.

Another enterprising industry of the township was the lumbering business of W. F. Bowman. The Bowman sawmills covered an area of over two acres and here he made all types of lumber sash, doors, tanks, laths, shingles, cheese boxes and there is hardly a business in the township that was built between 1870 and 1900 that did not obtain its material here. In 1900 they were producing about 60,000 cheese boxes a year.

Tile Business

Along with the cheese and lumbering business there was also a well established tile yard operated by George Deller and Sons. George Deller originally set up his business at Haight's Corners and later at what was known as Close's yard on Quaker St. Here he built quite a little hamlet and it became known as Dellers Brick and Tile Works. The season for making tile extended from May until October during which time they specialized in making 3-18 inch tile and large barn brick. They developed special machines which speeded up the work and with the farmers doing more tile draining their tile were in constant demand.

Along with Dellers Brick and Tile Yard there was Irwin's Brick Yards. This yard was located at Norwich Junction about 1880 and it was soon recognized as the makers of a superior type of brick and it was not long before it was impossible to sell any other brick and just about 19 out of every 20 brick houses were made of Irwin's Brick and as the demand increased they stopped making tile and devoted all their time to making brick.

There are in North Norwich, like all townships in Oxford, ghost towns which had their hey-day in the late 1800's.

One of these is Holbrook and for many years it was known to possess the last of the general stores or country store. This store was originally started by Asa Whitfield and it contained everything needed in the home or farm at that time. Today just the building remains. It was here at Holbrook that the Nesbitt family settled in the 1840's. The mother of ex-president Hoover of the U.S.A. lived here at one time. Her family name

Early Oxonians From Norwich Fought In '37 Rebellion And Fenian Raids - cont.

Tile Business - cont.

was Minthorne. The late Judge Wallace of Woodstock also came from Holbrook. This hamlet was unable to boast of any great industry but it was from here that Martin Emigh along with J. G. Corless started the first rural telephone service in these parts. The Emigh family first came here about 1820. Another ghost town is Newark which was originally settled by the Holmes, Hillikers and Austins. Its main role in the life of the township was to be a centre to which farmers could come for supplies and with the coming of the good roads and faster transportation it was unable to keep pace.



In 1792 Dereham formed a portion of the Talbot District. In 1798 it became part of Oxford county being attached to West Oxford for township purposes. The first land granted in this township was by order in council to John and George Bull, the Hon. Robert Hamilton, Robert Addison, and to the Hon. Peter Russell.

It was not until 1834 the government decided on offering land for sale in this township; although as far back as 1825 we find the name of 16 residents with a total of 66 acres out of 63,722 under cultivation with five horses, 26 oxen, 22 cows, and 19 young cattle. In 1861 the population of Dereham had reaches 5,477 an increase of 1833 over the census of 1851.

The first township meeting was held in January of 1832 when Harvey Tillson was appointed clerk.

In the early days of this township, farming was not considered an important source of income. Lumbering was the main source of revenue due to the splendid stands of timber <sup>and</sup> in the southern portion of the township the Otter River formed a perfect highway to transport logs to the lakeshore for export purposes. Vast amounts of timber were sent from Dereham to the Atlantic seaboard for use in the making of Canada's famous fishing fleets of the 1800's. Masts made from Dereham lumber as well as other Oxford townships timber were to be found in ships visiting the main ports of call of the seven seas.

Not only did the Otter form the road out for timber but it also formed a source of power for sawmills so necessary to produce finished lumber. This product could be taken to the lake ports over the Ingersoll and Port Burwell plank road or inland on the return trip of the wagon trains which were drawing the produce of the country to Port Burwell, a very important port of call.

#### Call Of Iron

Dereham, being opened for settlers later than the townships to the south in Norfolk and Elgin County, was in a very favorable position. Many of the settlers found it easier to send their sons here than to buy land and go in debt in their own neighborhood. There were others who liked to see what the other side of the mountain looked like and with a few interesting stories coming back, many left the settled communities and went north to seek their fortune. One of these was George Tillson who, along with Hiram Caron and Joseph Van Norman, were operating a smelting works in the 1820's in what is now known as Normandale. They were using bog ore, a type of iron ore obtained by open face mining similar to gravel pits

Dereham Forge Now Prosperous Tobacco-Hub Town, Tillsonburg - cont.

Call of Iron - cont.

today. At one time they were employing 150 men. This ore was yielding about 33 percent iron.

Little is known of George Tillson except that he was born in Enfield, Massachusetts in 1782 and in 1822 immigrated to Upper Canada and joined Caron and VanNorman.

In 1825 Tillson withdrew from this enterprise and set his sights on Dereham Township. Apparently he had heard stories of a tract of land where bog ore could be found. His intention was to branch out on his own and compete with his former partners. He had made a trip along the Otter River the previous fall and was pleased with what he saw. There was only one drawback. If he wanted this land he would have to buy it on the open market as it had already been granted to Peter Russell who had disposed of it to the well known reformer Dr. W. W. Baldwin in 1800. In order to raise the necessary capital Tillson went into partnership with Benjamin VanNorman who had also an investment in the Normandale Smelting Works. They purchased lots 3, 4, and 5 of the twelfth concession of Dereham from Baldwin.

Forge Failed

In the spring of 1825 Tillson settled on his new property. Shanties were erected until permanent structures could be built. The iron ore he found prompted him to go ahead with his original ideas of a competitive iron works. VanNorman was in favor and a forge was erected after the stream had been dammed. A saw mill soon followed and community was in the making to become known as Dereham Forge. This venture was doomed for failure and despite Tillson's initiative he was unable to compete with the falling price of iron and the forge was forced to close.

These men were not to be beaten. They reorganized and decided that the location was an ideal spot and was already known to the recently arrived settlers. VanNorman in 1836 erected a grist mill to cater to the settlers while Tillson undertook to build roads to the nearby town of Ingersoll, Brantford and London. In 1837 the town plot was surveyed and a village was laid out by Jessie B. Ball.

The progress of the village was slow at first but the people settling recognized the great work being done by Tillson and decided he should be rewarded. They took steps to change the name from Dereham Forge to a name including Tillson. One of the names suggested was Tillsondale but on the

Dereham Forge Now Prosperous Tobacco-Hub Town, Tillsonburg - cont.

Forge Failed - cont.

suggestion of George Tillson, the name Tillsonburg was chosen. Due to an error the second "l" was left out. It was not until March 17, 1902 that this was corrected. This error appeared when the village was incorporated as a police village in 1865. The seal of the corporation still perpetuates this error.

By 1867 Tillsonburg was a flourishing village with a population of 700 and its chief industry had become lumbering. With facilities offered by the Otter for operating machinery and for rafting lumber and timber to Port Burwell. Tillsonburg enjoyed the largest trade in this branch of business of any other point in the county. Its general business consisted of a dozen general stores, several saw and grist mills, a planing mill, foundry, machine shop, sash, door and blind factory, pump factory, two washing machine factories, a shingle factory, a tannery and two turning shops. In the 1860's two different newspapers served the community, the Herald published by T. A. McNamara and the Observer published by W. S. Law.

Schools

In the village there was a good common school with three teachers instructing 160 pupils. The spiritual needs were looked after by churches of three denominations: the Wesleyan Methodists, New Connexion Mehtodists and Presbyterian.

A fire company was organized in 18 with a number 2 engine which was purchased at a cost of \$800. The firemen's hall was located on Baldwin St. The members of the crew included James Bain, captain; S. B. Carpenter, first lieut., W. Z. Watts, secretary, J. Thompson, treasurer, Robert Waller, second brakeman, Henry Waller, third brakeman.

It is of interest to note that in the early days of fire protection the companies were in reality a men's club. Its members had regular business meetings, elected officers, drew up a set of rules, levied fines for being late or absent, and for smoking or using foul language. If a fine went unpaid the guilty member was expelled from the company. At the same time they took a very active interest in their engine and equipment which was kept spotless and always ready. They had to learn the best speed to draw their engine so that they would not trip over each others heels and fall in a heap with the engine on top of them. They had to learn to operate the brakes in harmony to produce the maximum force and volume.



Dereham Forge Now Prosperous Tobacco-Hub Town, Tillsonburg - cont.

Schools - cont.

The brakes were operated in a seesaw manner to pump water through the hose onto the fire. The water was usually carried from a source in barrels on a separate wagon and pailed into a wooden tub which formed the main part of the engine. Along the sides were located the brakes. In towns where there were more than one company, competition was keen and quite often a bonus was given to the first at the scene of the fire.

Tillsonburg was a shining example of the manner in which George Tillson did things and through his continued efforts the village continued to grow and in 1872 it was incorporated as a town. By this time other members of the family were taking an active part in the Tillson enterprises. E. D. Tillson became the first mayor of the new town. George Tillson was not one to pamper his family and E. D. was educated in the village and later sent to the United States to further his education. While he was there he supported himself by doing odd jobs around the town where he attended school.

Broadway

When the survey for the village was laid out it covered approximately the same area it occupies today with the main section along the river. Broadway was the main street. There was considerable criticism about the width of Broadway. Many of the townfolk thought that a street as wide as that was quite unnecessary. Today people look with pride at this main street.

When an outbreak of typhoid hit the community the Tillsons lost members of their family as did many of the other families. The cause was impure drinking water. Steps were taken to prevent a further outbreak. A three inch pipe was laid from the Tillson farm to Dr. Joy's house and on to Alvin Merrills and over a few years when over a quaway. The water supply on the Tillson farm was obtained by laying large tile in the strata between the clay and sand at a depth of about seven feet and the line which supplied at the beginning 12 outlets was served with a small Gould's pump. After a few years when over a quarter of the population was being supplied this pump had to be replaced by larger units. Today this same system, though much improved, is still in use.

The first school in Dereham Forge was a log school and later Luke's Tannery stood on the same location. Later a frame school was built at the foot of Vienna Hill. As far as the students were concerned this was ideal as the stream flowing nearby was made a great place to spend their outdoor



Dereham Forge Now Prosperous Tobacco-Hub Town, Tillsonburg - cont.

Broadway - cont.

time. Margaret Cohoe and Sarah Jane Livingstone were two of its teachers. This site did not suit the senior members of the community as they thought a growing community needed a central school. The site chosen was the location of the M. D. Crooker house. In 1842 Christina VanNorman was hired as teacher but she would not teach. In a survey she would teach. In a survey of possible students, only 22 could be found until Joseph Weeks, who lived beyond the town limits, agreed to send his three children in to town to school. Other teachers who taught included D. D. Carder, Launcelot Waller, Mr. Withers, Mr. Lattimer, Mary Ann Livingstone, Charlotte Bodwell, John Crooker.

One of the early doctors to serve the community was Dr. Carder of Otterville who was a Thompsonian practitioner using native cures and remedies. He treated families for five dollars a year. Though his remedies were not the best he had a fair practice and his patients spoke well of him.

Railroad

By 1871 there was a demand for a railway to serve this part of the province along the lake shore as the railroad was replacing the boats in speed and convenience. The Air Line Railroad was built in conjunction with the Michigan Central Railroad. It not only served the lakeshore area, but made a more direct line through from Detroit to Buffalo. It later became the Canada Southern.

George Tillson was busily engaged in road building which contributed to his death on March 15, 1864. He contracted a cold while surveying a road to Courtland and he died from its complications.

The Tillson family was actively engaged in many industries of the town which included a pea splitting factory, many lumber mills which cut four million feet annually, oatmeal mill, brickyard and many lesser businesses. With the coming of the railroads they built a spur line of one mile in length to allow these factories easy access to the facilities offered by the M.C.R.

It was through the keen foresight of George Tillson which has been inherited by his sons and their sons that has made Tillsonburg the town that it is today and indeed a credit to their name and to Oxford County.

In looking over the names of the townships of Oxford, most of them have a link with the homeland of the first settlers of the township concerned. But the name Zorra can claim no ties with the English, Scotch, Irish or Americans or even the Germans who were among the first settlers. Some will say that this name comes from the Bible, in Judges XII 1-2 - Zorah, the birthplace of Samson. This might fit very well as Zorra has been the birthplace of at least one tower of strength in Rev. George McKay of Formosa who was born and raised in Zorra. Others claim that the name Zorra is Spanish.

An early governor of Canada, Sir P. Maitland from 1818-1828, saw service in Spain under Wellington. It is presumed that he would have some say in naming new townships and he may have compared the country to a female fox which is what the name means in Spanish. If this is the case I wonder if the governor ever visited the township as there is nothing in her broad acres that in any way suggested that it was at anytime as deceiving as a female fox. Or was he referring to a Zoril which is an animal of Africa which belongs to the musteline family of mammals which include weasels, badgers, otters, mink and skunk -- all of which were undoubtedly seen by the early surveyors. What is your opinion?

#### Zorra History

The history of Zorra is not as old as other parts of Oxford as the survey team did not start working until 1820 and in the first assessment when Zorra, Nissouri and West Oxford were still one unit there was one taxable abode in Zorra and that belonged to Alexander McGregor. The first deed recorded was for Lot 12, Concession 15 which was owned by Stratten Rowell who had 200 acres. This deed was recorded June 11, 1822 to Edwin Secord -- no doubt some relation to the Secords found in the Lakeside and St. Marys area and a relative of the Ingersoll family. He never lived there.

Not much is known of the early settlers who settled away from the communities of Innerkip and Strathallen, but in Shenstone's Gazzetteer of 1852, Huntingford is mentioned and Huntingford we find the "Farmer House" which was at that time considered the best house in the county. This property was obtained from the Crown in 1832 and consisted of 400 acres on Lot 14, and 15 of Concession 12 of Zorra.

It was purchased by Phillip Shadwick who sold it to Arthur Farmer in the early 1850's. The house was built shortly after this. Farmer was a man of wealth and no expense was spared. The main house was of brick and some

Craigowan Golf Clubhouse Was First Zorra Mansion - cont.

Zorra History - cont.

are of the opinion that the bricks were brought up from Hamilton, by team. The roof, which is still on the house, now known as "Craigowan" is of metal construction and was brought from England. A large hall opened into the sitting room panelled in birdseye maple. The banquet size dining room is done in walnut. The main part of the house is still in its original form while the servant's quarters, the kitchens and laundry, along with a large glassed-in veranda have been taken down. Upstairs were six large bedrooms and a dressing room off the master bedroom.

The panelled curved staircase in the old country style extends upward from the main hall. There was a form of communication used to summon the maids and butlers similar to that still found in English mansions. You would pull a cord which would vibrate a spring with a bell on it in the kitchen. Farmer never enjoyed the fruits of his labors for long as he sold out to John Dunlop about 1859, reportedly due to financial difficulties. Dunlop retained it until his death in 1901. He made some improvements but preferred the southern states to this mansion during the winter months.

Church Site

Prior to the coming of the Farmer family, an English vicar sent his gardener, Joseph Turner, out to Canada to purchase land on which to settle his son, Henry Huntingford, as a farmer. Turner chose lots 12, 13 and 14, Concession 11 of Zorra as his choice and Thomas Huntingford purchased the land on November 18, 1833 -- 600 acres in all. Henry Huntingford arrived and a cabin was erected. After three years of pioneering, he returned to England and brought his bride out.

In the early fifties, he also built a fine home later known as the Donaldson home. Thomas Huntingford set aside one acre of lot 14 as a site for a church and with funds raised by himself in England had a frame church built in 1839. Service was conducted here first by Rev. William Betteridge of Woodstock who on alternate Sundays would conduct service at Eastwood. In 1844 the youngest son of Thomas Huntingford conducted service here and he conducted the first recorded marriage here between Adam Shadwick and Ester Martin on July 1, 1844. He stayed for one and a half years tending to his flock of 40 parishioners.

In 1836 Frederick D. Fauquier came to Canada from England and purchased land at lot 16, concession 11. Edward Huntingford on his arrival saw all the



Craigowan Golf Clubhouse Was First Zorra Mansion - cont.

Church Site - cont.

qualities of a minister in this lad of 19 and persuaded him to study for the ministry. In October 1845 Bishop Strachan ordained him, appointing him missionary to Zorra. He remained here for 28 years as minister. He did not forsake his farm and in 1852 at the local fair had the prize winning grade cow and the best pen of sheep. He is credited with having the first daffodils and tulips seen in these parts. Besides his parish and his farm he was one of the first school trustees at the Dunlop School. In 1873 he was appointed Bishop of Algoma.

The school now known as Dunlop school or school seciton 16 East Zorra was originally located at Huntingford churchyard. The log structure was erected of logs in 1844 with 62 on the roll. It also served as a sunday school and a church hall. This was the only school for 30 years when the new school was built on the site of the present school (1874). The last church meeting was held here in 1885. The first teacher at the log school was Thomas Cross. A second school open at Strathallen in 1855 and for some years there was a controversy as to the boundaries for the schools which was finally settled by arbitration. Today the Strathallan school has been replaced at Hickson while the Dunlop school still carries on.

First School

In 1847 Abraham Dolson deeded the southwest part of lot 6, concession 11 for a school. The first school was frame and due to the fact that there was a toll gate erected at this corner it became known as Toll-gate School. The frame school was burned and it was replaced by a brick building. A new school was erected in 1905 and in 1906 a wind storm removed the roof of the new school and damage the building extensively.

In 1835 Mrs. Lillian Rose began a day school and a sunday school in her home on lot 7, concession 10 and in so doing she became the first woman teacher in Zorra. There being no school here Mrs. Rose undertook to teach her children as she worked in the kitchen. Her neighbors persuaded her to teach theirs also. No one had any money but they sent contribution to her table to make up for that which she did not have time to do. They also made a bee for such chores as the early blanket washing, soap making and wood was always available for her fireplace.

The Sunday school was more largely attended as the parents and the older members of the family also attended. The Sunday school was in Gaelic, the tongue of their homeland. Most of these settlers in this part of Zorra were from Scotland. The day teaching was done in English as Mrs. Rose claimed that even though Gaelic was the language here and French was the



Craigowan Golf Clubhouse Was First Zorra Mansion - cont.

First School - cont.

the language in Lower Canada, English would become the national language and therefore discouraged the use of Gaelic in her school room.

In 1843 Squire Harrington gave a frame house for a school on lot 11, concession 10 after the Rose family had moved over to concession 3 and Hugh Fraser took over the teaching duties.

In the early days of Zorra one of the most influential men was John Harrington, commonly called Squire Harrington. Squire Harrington came from Vermont, U.S.A. in 1844 and took up land now known as Willow Lake Park. The original grant was for 200 acres. The squire was a very public man spirited man and held many political positions including warden of the county in 1860. In local enterprises, a woollen mill was operated on the farm. It was run by an artificial lake supplying the water which was the forerunner of the present lake at the park. At the time that the village of Springfield was looking for a name for its post office, Francis Hincks, the one-time prime minister suggested that the name of Harrington be used in the honor of Squire Harrington for the work he had done in the county.

With the coming of the Canada Company and the opening of the Queens Bush country, steps were taken to open a road connecting Woodstock with Stratford and **Goderich**.

The route through Oxford was laid out along the 12th line of Zorra and was known as the Woodstock and Huron Gravel Road in 1849. In order to make the road self-supporting tollgates were erected and a fee was charged to all who used it. There was a toll gate erected at the corner now occupied by the toll gate School. Seven cents was the fee charged for the passage of a buggy drawn by a single horse. With this being the main road it was not long before post office began to appear. The South Zorra post office was opened at Huntingford in 1852 and the Strathallen offices was opened in 1865.

Agricultural School

In 1893 steps were taken to form an agricultural school in Zorra. Charles B. Young, an English gentleman, conceived the idea of a school of agriculture where young men from England could come to Canada and study farming as it was done in Canada before starting up on their own. In April, 1895, Squire Young purchased lot 6, concession 13 of East Zorra and placed Allan Young, his cousin, as first superintendent. Later an addition was added to the

Craigowan Golf Clubhouse Was First Zorra Mansion - cont.

Agricultural School - cont.

house and up to twenty students could be accommodated. For some time it was a worthwhile endeavor, but following the war of 1914-18 interest started to fall off and it was closed. At present it is owned by Mr. Fay Chong, one of the few Oriental farmers in Oxford.

In 1889 while James Anderson, the reeve of East Zorra was Warden of the county, a move was started to purchase a county farm known in those days as a House of Refuge. After much discussion, it was agreed in 1891 to advertise for land. The stipulations were that it was not to be more than two miles from a railroad. Fifty nine offers were recieved and on the 14th ballot, the farm of J. Virtue was accepted, it being lot 3, concession 10 of Zorra. The price being \$60 per acre for 100 acres including a frame house and barn. Cuthbertson and Fowler were given the contract to prepare plans for a home to accommodate 100 inmates at a cost of \$15,000 and Thomas McClay of Woodstock received the building contract. His tender being the lowest at \$11,997.

There were 21 applications for manager and matron. One applicant had a petition containing 422 names including a member of parliament recommending him for the position. He did not get the job. Mr. and Mrs. Robert McDonald were appointed manager and matron on January 1, 1893. The appointment coming in the 11th ballot of the county council. Mrs. McDonald died on January 27, 1893. The positions were then filled by Mr. and Mrs. Oliver J. Clark in March, 1893.

On March 13, 1893, the home was ready to receive residents and Mr. James Leek was the first to be admitted. The total cost of the undertaking was \$28,500. Since its opening there have been over 1,300 admitted to the Home.

Although the Zorras made many contributions to the defence of Canada, one of her most publicized fetes was that Zorra had the only casualty in Oxford County during the Fenian Raids. Malcolm McKenzie, a resident of East Zorra was attending the University of Toronto. Here he joined the Canadian Army. With the Raiders invading Canada he was under the command of Lt. Col. Booker who was ordered to engage the enemy and drive them from Canadian soil. The Fenian Force was reported at 800 strong and were encamped at Ridgway near Fort Erie. The opposing forces met on June 2, 1866. The total casualty list of Canadians numbered in Ridgway with remembered in Ridgway with a plaque which is placed in the Ridgway Memorial Church.

To honor her fallen hero, Oxford County started a fund to raise a memorial for McKenzie and in 1868 a 15 foot memorial was erected in the Presbyterian

Craigowan Golf Clubhouse Was First Zorra Mansion - cont.

Agricultural School - cont.

cemetary at Woodstock in his honor. Steps are being taken to restore this monument and have a historical folder published in order to familiarize the present population of another hero of Oxford of yesterday.

When Governor Simcoe was making that historical trip from Niagara to Detroit in 1796, he came upon a site that appealed to him. He decided then that a town should rise on the site. It was for the next 40 years commonly called the "Town Plot". He had a fondness for using place names in England for names of newly created areas of Canada. Using the name Oxford - on - the - Thames for this area he decided that the name for the Town Plot as Woodstock as that was the name of the county seat of Oxfordshire, England. When settlement began in earnest in 1832 it was with people of British stock and they were quite satisfied with the name.

The original town site consisted of the land north of Dundas, west of Riddell, and bounded by the Thames River and the second concession of Blandford.

By 1800 Zacharias Burtch had cleared the first land now occupied by the city and in 1805 the parliament of Upper Canada granted Burtch a deed for lot 18, concession 1 of East Oxford.

In 1808 Burtch along with Peter Teeple, Simon Maybe, Deborah Sales, Abigail Burtch and Elizabeth Scott were granted permission to form a Baptist Church and by 1809 they formed a church of their own. In 1812 L. H. Perry married the daughter of Zacharias Burtch for the first wedding.

#### Drew Arrives

During the first 30 years of the 19th century, progress was slow and the Town Plot laid dormant. In 1832 Captain Drew, a naval captain, arrived as an advance party for Admiral Henry VanSittart and made arrangements for the coming of the VanSittart party in 1834. Their settlement was not on the original town site, but to the east and centered around what is now Old St. Paul's Anglican Church. In 1833 a plot of five acres was granted to the Bishop of Quebec, Capt. Drew and Major Barwick, to be used as a church and cemetery. This plot was bounded by what are now Light, Graham and Dundas Streets. This spot was never used for its original purpose. Five acres was also set aside for a country fairgrounds, which was used for such for many years.

Woodstock became a distinctive English settlement and a centre of aristocracy, much to the displeasure of settlers in the surrounding areas. The early citizens of the town were families with long years of service to the British crown and following the Napoleonic Wars many officers resigned



Woodstock's Street Names Recall Napoleonic, Penninsular Wars - cont.

Drew Arrives - cont.

their commissions to take up land with Admiral VanSittart.

To this day we still find strong ties with the mother country so it is with little wonder that we find many of the streets of Woodstock bearing names of these early settlers.

Named By Simcoe

Dundas street was undoubtedly the first street named and was named by Governor Simcoe. This was to be part of his inland defence route -- there-fore was made chiefly by his regiment known as the Queen's Rangers. It was name after Hon. Henry Dundas who was British secretary of state.

Drew street is named after Capt. Andrew Drew. After seeing over 25 years in the British Navy he retired and was sent here by land. In 1837 Drew was senior naval officer in Canada and was selected to command a detachment of men who were given orders to destroy the steamer "Caroline" which was carrying provisions for the rebels under McKenzie. The vessel was destroyed. Due to continued threats on his life, Drew was forced to leave Canada.

While here he made his home at the corner of Sydenham and Rathbourne streets. This house was built by Nelson Bendish, a nephew of Lord Nelson. This also accounts for Nelson street. It was named after Nelson Bendish.

Money contributed and collected through Admiral Henry VanSittart who sent out to Canada for the erection of a church and the living was offered to Rev. William Bettridge with the pledge of one hundred pounds a year and one hundred acres of cleared land. Bettridge began life in the British army and during the Peninsular Wars was an aide - de - camp to the Duke of Wellington. He was present at the celebrated ball given by the Duchess of Richmond in Brussels before the Battle of Waterloo. It is said that Bettridge met his wife, Mary Hounsfield, in Paris when the allied armies were there. Abandoning his military career, he took his degree at Cambridge University and was ordained in 1824. In 1824 he took charge of St. Paul's Church (now Old St. Paul's).

The name of this dignified and eloquent rector is not found in our street names, yet Lawrason and Hounsfield can be traced back to this family.

Mrs. Belle Lawrason was a daughter of Canon Bettridge and Mary Hounsfield was the maiden name of his wife.

The last interment in St. Paul's Cemetery was that of Canon Bettridge in 1879.

Woodstock's Street Names Recall Napoleonic, Penninsular Wars - cont.

Named By Simcoe - cont.

Beale street derives its name from Major E. Beale who held a commission in the second regiment. He received the appointment of major on April 28, 1838.

Darius E. Riddle was a brother - in - law of Admiral VanSittart but the street that bears his name has been converted into Riddell.

East of Riddell's Street we find an Edward, a Mary, a Grace and a George street. These streets were named after the children of Thos. J. Cottle, an early resident who lived at Altadore. It is interesting to know that a horticultural society was formed in Woodstock on April 2, 1852, and its first exhibition was held at Altadore. An orange tree and an Aloe tree that were shown by Mrs. East, Admiral VanSittart's sister, attracted great attention. Then, too, it was at Altadore that the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII was entertained in 1860. The Cottles were from the West Indies.

Captain Graham

Another man who played no small part in the early history of the town was Captain Phillip Graham. In 1837 he was the treasurer of a committee authorized to raise 3,000 pounds for the erection of a court house. The building stood on the site of the present court house and was torn down and the present beautiful building erected on the original site.

Light street owes its name to Col. Alexander Whalley Light of the Royal Engineers. Col. Light resided at Lights Carie about three miles west of the town. Col Light's name was honorably mentioned in the Rebellion of 1837. He was one of the first men to suggest the building of the Great North Western Railway which was opened in 1853.

Col. R. A. Hunter took a keen interest in the educational problems of the growing town and was instrumental in having a grammar school erected in 1848. This school was built at the corner of Graham and Hunter streets. The following advertisement for this school appeared in the Sentinel-Review of Sept. 20, 1867:

"Classes for instruction in bookkeeping mensuration, drawing and mapping will be opened next week under the superintendence of Mr. Byrne, the assistant master, also trigonometry and surveying. Mr. B---- has had two years' experience as a teacher of drawing and mathematics; also ten years' training under R. A. Gary Esq., for the County of Dublin. George Stachan, Head Master."

Woodstock's Street Names Recall Napoleonic, Penninsular Wars - contn.

Captain Graham - cont.

Buller street perpetuates the name of Major Edward Buller, an officer in the 3rd Oxford Regiment, whose name was mentioned along with that of Drew and Light in the Rebellion of '37.

Since 1886 there has been an Ingersoll Ave. which carries the name of Col. Ingersoll, the first Registrar of Oxford County. Previous to that year the street extending east from the Thames River to VanSittart street was known as Barwick street, no doubt named after Major Hugh Barwick, county treasurer, who came to Woodstock, and the continuation of this street from VanSittart street to Riddell street was known as St. Marys Street.

It would be difficult to find a more beautiful street than VanSittart Avenue with its lovely homes, well kept lawns, wide boulevards and the double row of stately maples. It is indeed a fitting memorial to Vice Admiral Henry Vansittart, who has always and will always be known as the man who made Woodstock. Henry VanSittart was born at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire in 1779. He entered the British Navy as midshipman in 1791 and served through the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In 1830 he was promoted to rear admiral and in 1841 to vice admiral.

Came To Canada

The VanSittart family came to Canada in 1834. The trip to Woodstock was sadly interrupted for the wife of the admiral became seriously ill and passed away at Saratoga on July 2, 1834. William Grey claimed the honor of moving this family here during that summer. Sleds drawn by two yoke of oxen were used in making the trip through the practically unbroken roads from Niagara Falls. After the completion of the family tomb at St. Paul's, the body of Mrs. VanSittart was brought here on Dec. 5, 1834.

By the naming of Admiral street and VanSittart Avenue, we have perpetuated the name of this noble family not only in Woodstock, but in Canada.

The Right Honorable Nicholas VanSittart, Baron Bexley, son of Henry VanSittart, Governor of Bengal was a cousin of Admiral VanSittart and thus we account for a Bexley street.

In Niagara Falls there is a Delatre street and perhaps we may draw upon our imagination and think our Delatre street was named after the same man. In 1831 the land given to the Harbor and Dock Company of Niagara Falls was surveyed and the streets named after the officials connected with the company. Col. Delatre was the president of the company. From 1832 he lived at Lundy's Lane until a year previous to his sudden death on the steamer from

Woodstock's Street Names Recall Napoleonic, Penninsular Wars - cont.

Came To Canada - cont.

Niagara to Toronto. His home, known as Delatre Lodge, was at the corner of Victoria and Front Streets. He is buried at Lundy's Lane. I have previously stated that Admiral VanSittart's wife died at Saratoga and I feel sure that Colonel Delatre, full of old world sympathy and hospitality, had been most kind to the bereaved family, so perhaps that is why the name of Delatre was suggested for one of the streets.

(Mr. William's article on Woodstock street names will continue next Saturday).



Oxford Street, like Oxford County, takes its name from Oxford the capital of Oxfordshire, an inland county of England which can be traced back to the time of Alfred the Great who established schools of literature there. The city coat of arms show an ox crossing a ford.

#### Name Streets

Winnett street was opened in 1844 and was probably named after James Winnet who was a colonel of the 4th Regiment Oxford Militia, whose appointment was made in 1838.

Yeo street was in existence and named in 1836. It may have been named after James Yeo who served on Lake Ontario in the War of 1812. The great general under whom these early citizens served was not forgotten, for we have a Duke as well as a Wellington street.

The loyalty and love of these men to their motherland is most suitably expressed in the naming of certain other streets. Woodstock has a King street, a Queen, a Princess, a Victoria and an Albert, an Adelaide and even a Kent St. These all bespeak of royalty.

York, afterwards Toronto, was in honor of Prince Frederick, Duke of York. Other settlements used this name and we have a York street. Yet this street might derive its name from the Archbishop of York for there is every reason to believe that Canterbury street here as well as in other Ontario cities was so called after the Archbishop of Canterbury who was the first Anglican Archbishop to visit Canada.

The reign of Queen Victoria left its imprint for there is a Melbourne street Lord Melbourne, you remember, was Victoria's first prime minister.

Russel street is not as well known nor yet as important as Lord John Russell whose name it bears. It was Lord Russell who in 1839 introduced into the British Parliament a bill for the union of the Canadas. Upper and Lower Peel street suggests Sir Robert Peel who abolished the Corn Laws.

In looking over the city directory the names of several governors-general may be found, Simcoe, Sydenham, Metcalfe, Cathcart, Elgin, and Dufferin. Colonel John Graves Simcoe was governor in 1792. Lord Sydenham in 1838 and he was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe, who arrived in Canada in 1842. After two years in office he resigned on account of ill health and was followed by Cathcart, a lieutenant general in the British army. In 1847 Lord Elgin was appointed governor-general.

Ties to Crown, Crimean War Reflected in Name Selections - cont.

Governor's Names

Perhaps the most popular governor was Lord Dufferin. The streets bearing these names are scattered and the growth of the city can be traced by the date of the naming of these streets. This plan of perpetuating the names of the governors-general should not have been neglected and we should now have a Lorne, Lawnsdowne, a Stanley, Aberdeen, Minto Grey Connaught, Devonshire, Byng and a Willingdon and others.

Henry and John Finkle, father and uncle of H.J. Finkle, former postmaster, owned large grist mills on the present Mill Street. The name of Finkle will be kept fresh in our memories by these streets, Finkle and Mill.

In 1845 the first judge in this district was appointed, David Shank McQueen and that fact is recorded by the naming of McQueen street. Broadway was for many years known as Bishop Street probably after Henry Bishop who was a resident of Woodstock in 1836. Brock street recalls the War of 1812 for it was at Queenstown that General Sir Isaac Brock lost his life. The home of the late Dr. Levi Perry has the distinction of being the oldest house in Woodstock. It was built in 1827 and is situated to the south of the street that bears his name.

Main seems rather an unimportant street, but in the early days it was one of the busy streets of the town. The south side of it was built up with warehouses and it was here that the grain was bought and shipped by rail. Woodstock had some reputation as a grain market in those days. One of the outstanding grain brokers was Thomas Phelan and we have a Phelan st. In 1856 Market street was opened as an accommodation to the inhabitants that they might have easier access to the market.

Reeve Street was opened in 1814 that there might be a direct street from Dundas Street to the depot of the Great Western railway.

Recalls Disaster

Dover and Railway streets are sad reminders of an enterprise, the building of the Port Dover Railway that was a financial disaster to many prominent citizens years ago.

Wilson street recalls the name of William Wilson, the father of J.L. Wilson. Mr. Wilson was a member of the first town council in 1851 and had the distinction of polling the greatest number of votes at that election. He was mayor in 1862 and 1863.

Ties to Crown, Crimean War Reflected in Name Selections - cont.

Recalls Disaster - cont.

The trustees of the Literary Institute were desirous of extending their property northward across Walter Street so a bylaw was passed giving consent to open a street to the north, but running parallel with Walter Street, and that new street was called College Avenue.

Just why such an obscure street should be known as Fyfe Avenue is lamentable, but its proximity to the Canadian Literary Institute, of which Rev. R.A. Fyfe was the first principal, must have been the reason. This seat of learning, better known to most of us as the Baptist College, was opened in 1860 with its enrolment of 200 pupils, one third of whom had the ministry in view.

Chapel and Burtch are significant names, for in 1836 a Baptist chapel was built on the corner of Dundas and Chapel on land donated by Deacon Archibald Burtch. This chapel was sold to St. Paul's Church after the erection of the First Baptist Church on Adelaide street, and the building moved across the street. Later it was destroyed by fire.

Other prominent Baptist names are drawn to our attention by the discovery of a Teeple, a Hatch and a Pavey street. Henry and Walter Streets are also named after the sons of Archibald Burtch.

Until 1868 Norwich avenue was known as Oxford street. A bylaw was passed in that year changing the name to Norwich avenue because the road led to Norwich, a village as old as Woodstock. The second post office in Oxford county was established at Norwich, Ingersoll claiming the first.

Cronyn street was a part of the Clergy Reserves and bears the name of Bishop Cronyn of the London district.

Political Link

An interesting bit of political news concerns Hincks street. Sir Francis Hincks was the first representative of Oxford in 1840. At that election the polling booth was at the home of James Murray, a blacksmith. The polls were open from Monday until Saturday and 1,165 voters were polled.

The candidates were Sir Francis Hincks, editor of the Examiner, a sturdy Reform paper, and Peter Carrol, a surveyor of West Oxford. Hincks was elected by a majority of 31.

Ties to Crown, Crimean War Reflected in Name Selections - cont.

Political Link - cont.

To the Peers family we owe the names of Anne and Maude Streets, after the wife and daughter of the late John Peers. Young was the maiden name of his first wife.

George Laycock was the publisher of the Western Progress, a newspaper first published on November 14, 1851. Isabelle and Bee streets derive their names from Isabelle and Beatrice, his two daughters.

The southwest corner of the city, known to us as the Gore, has an interesting history. In the years following the Crimean War, Woodstock enjoyed a real estate boom. This portion of the town was surveyed and named by Colonel A.W. Light and many of the streets are named after battles and generals of the war.

The battle of Waterloo was one of the turning points in the world's history and we find a Waterloo Street but Duke and Wellington are not near.

Raglan recalls the name of Fitzroy James Henry Raglan, an English baron who was commander in chief with the rank of field marshal during the war. He fought at the battle of Alma and there is an Alma street.

General Canrobert was a famous French commander who also figured prominently at the battle of Alma.

John Thomas Brundell Cardinal entered the British army in 1824. Family influence and wealth procured for him rapid promotion and during the Crimean War he was appointed Brigadier in command of the Light Brigade. It was Cardigan who led the famous six hundred in the death charge at Balaclava October 25, 1854.

Sir George Cathcart was killed at the battle of Inkerman, November 5, 1854. With a Waterloo, a Duke, a Wellington, a Raglan, an Alma, also a Canrobert, a Cardigan and a Cathcart street we have in these streets names a short story of the Crimean War.

Let us hope that the city will see fit to honor more citizens of Woodstock by naming streets after them to follow the pattern that has gone before.



"Town Plot" Developed as Highly Industrial Centre

Woodstock - the county town of Oxford. We often wonder if Governor Simcoe realized that from his choice of a town plot in 1793 would grow a city that today is called home to over 20,000 people. Governor Simcoe chose the town site when he was travelling through what is now Western Ontario. He had two reasons for his trip - the first to lay out a road that could be used as a military road and contact between Niagara and Windsor (Amherstburg). Also, he was not satisfied with Niagara as the proper site for a capital. Woodstock town plot was one of the spots considered but he eventually picked London and named it Georgina or Thames. Eventually York (Toronto) was selected. Woodstock offered many possibilities for a capital but Simcoe was anxious to see what the Thames river had to offer in natural fortifications and was it navigable further west for boats of that early day. Win or lose he definitely decided that this spot should be a townsite.

The first settlers recorded here were the families of Babbit, Luddington and Burtch and to Burtch goes the credit of having the first log house within the limits of the present city. It was located on lot 18 concession 1 East Oxford now the site of the YMCA. Such was the beginning of the county town.

Progress was slow at the turn of the century with only a few scattered settlers in this area. Most of the early settlers preferred to stay on the main road of that day which is now known as the Old Stage Road. Those who did settle here were chiefly of the Baptist faith and by 1809 they had formed a church of their own but to attend this church some had to come from as far away as Beachville and this was not unusual in those days. In 1812 a marriage was performed here when a daughter of Zacharias Burtch married Dr. L.H. Perry. Perry a graduate of Williams College in the U.S.A. Acted as counsellor and advisor to the early settlers and when it came to educating the young he was one of the first teachers.

Military Men Arrive

In 1832 the first sign of new life in the town plot was seen when a party of retired military officers arrived. They were looking for a desirable spot to form a community suitable for aristocratic families from England.

"Town Plot" Developed as Highly Industrial Centre - cont.

Military Men Arrive - cont.

One of these men Captain Drew of the Royal Navy had been commissioned by Admiral Henry Vansittart to select the site. All things were presumed satisfactory and in 1834 Vansittart arrived complete with a sailing boat that was to be assembled here and sailed on the River Thames. It is reported that when he found that he could not do this he would not settle here but instead chose a site five miles east of the town site, where he built his home. Even though he did not live here his influence was felt in the new community. These people being of aristocratic stock who had royal blood in their veins were strong followers of the Anglican faith. One of Captain Drew's first undertakings here was to build a brick church on one of the lots with money subscribed by Vansittart and others in England. There is a legend that Drew, who was married late in life, was presented about two o'clock one morning by his wife with a child. He was so delighted that he yoked up a team of oxen and went back to a hill in the north of his property and drew down a large stone and placed it on the lot designated for the church and at 4 a.m. from the top of -- rock called out "I give this land as a thankoffering for a house of God and this stone for the first in its foundation". This stone lays under the present tower.

The bricks for the erection of the church building were made on lot 16, concession 1 East Oxford. It was first used on June 29, 1834, after a rather troublesome period of construction which would rival many of our present labor disputes. After it was opened another dispute arose between Drew and Rev. William Betteridge, the rector, over financial matters and Drew refused to surrender the key. Members of the congregation built a frame church and used it for their services until the differences were settled. The rector got the key and Drew got free rental of a pew in the northeast corner of the church. The frame building was used as a school house and was placed on the grounds of the brick church. Since 1834 there has only been one break in the regularity of services held here. The break lasted for only a few months in 1879.

"Town Plot" Developed as Highly Industrial Centre - cont.

Community Grows

As the community grew it spread westward from the site of the Anglican church and the lots sold were first surveyed in 1834 on streets bearing the names of Vansittart, Drew, Light, Hunter and Graham as well as others in that area.

In 1837 on April 24 a public meeting was held for the purpose of considering the property for erecting a jail and courthouse as it had been declared that Oxford could become a separate district when a jail and courthouse were erected at Woodstock. On Nov. 11, 1839, the buildings were declared ready and on December 23, 1839 the district of Oxford became a reality. The first case was tried on April 20, 1840 before Judge Arnold.

During the early days of Woodstock the community was more or less a suburb of Beachville and it was necessary for the English gentry to go there for many of their requirements including their mail. This situation did not help to create good relations between the two communities. In 1838 a post office was opened in Woodstock on Huron street where mail was received tri-weekly until 1844 when daily mail was inaugurated. The early mail was brought by horse and rider from Brantford by way of the Stage Road. In 1836 brick buildings began to appear and replaced the frame structures of earlier years. The grammar school was established in 1843. The school was under the charge of George Strachan and a thorough classical, mathematical and higher English education could be acquired here. It was located on the corner of Hunter and Graham streets. On June 1, 1851 Woodstock officially became a town. The first election was held the same year with Hugh Richardson, William Wilson, Alex Green, Valentine Hall and Andrew Smith forming the first council. Richardson was appointed reeve. James Kintrea was clerk and Thomas Scott, treasurer. In 1853 the town hall was built. The Great Western Railway entered the town and the same year to be followed in 1875 by the Port Dover Railroad and in 1880 the Credit Valley Railroad (CPR).

In 1840 the first newspaper was established and known as the Oxford Herald. In 1842 the Monarch appeared and lasted till 1847. Newspapers were short lived in those days. Between 1848 and 1854 we find the Oxford Star and the British American attempting to gain public favor. In 1854 the Sentinel, forerunner of the Sentinel-Review came into being.



"Town Plot" Developed as Highly Industrial Centre - cont.

Superior Flour

In the early days of Woodstock manufacturing was not the main source of income. Woodstock was a centre famous for her grain markets with the buying and selling of wheat forming the principal business of the place. Main street was the centre of this trade. In 1856 Easton and Wood erected a five story mill at a cost of \$40,000 and its superior brand of flour found ready buyers as far away as New York. It had a capacity of 250 barrels a day. On Dundas street, Henry Frizelle had another flourishing flour mill capable of 100 barrels a day. Clarke and Co. had a mill capable of 50 barrels a day. With this trade barrels were very much in demand and Thomas J. Clark had a large barrel and stave factory.

Being in the heart of an agriculture area, Woodstock was always the centre for farm implements. As early as 1842 the Woodstock Iron Works manufactured threshing machines, plows and cultivators as well as stoves and sheet metal products. Its annual output in the 1860's reached \$30,000, employed 18 men and had a 10 h.p. engine in operation. The Vulcan Iron Foundry was another large industry employing up to 24 men. It melted up to 300 tons of iron per year. Another industry worth mentioning was the Patent Medicine factory which manufactured \$50,000 worth of patent medicines annually. Robert Stark was proprietor.

On the London to Hamilton Road just out of town there was located in the mid 1800's what was declared to be the best oil refinery in the county. Operated by J. Charles, James Kintrea and William Spencer it turned out 400 barrels of refined oil a week.

In 1860 David Richards had a soap factory. In 1855 the Bickertons established one of the foremost saddlery and harness businesses in Ontario. In 1869 came the Karn Organ and Piano Co.; 1875 the Whitelawfoundry, 1882 Bain Wagon Co. and 1893 saw the start of the Woodstock Wind Motor Co. In 1899 the Woodstock Cereal Co. manufactured all kinds of cereal specializing in rolled oats, split peas and pot barley. The Woodstock Wagon Co. was formed in 1885, Thomas Organ and Piano Factory 1896, James Stewart Co., in 1892. Along with these, D. Penman and Son had a woollen factory just south of the Great Western Railroad station. John H. Brown had a flax mill and rope factory in the west end in 1887 and employed 40 hands. The Woodstock Brewery was in the east end. Joseph Close had a candle factory here in 1854.



"Town Plot" Developed as Highly Industrial Centre - cont.

Superior Flour - cont.

Up until 1880 water for domestic purposes was drawn from private wells. There were some serious outbreaks of typhoid fever as the city gained in population, also an ever increasing fire hazard.

James Hay was a public-spirited manufacturer who experimented with larger water supplies close to Main Street creek and built some machinery to protect his own plant in case of fire. He operated a large furniture factory. He also arranged to supply a portion of the uptown section of the town with water from a water main installed for street sprinkling purposes. Up until that time water for sprinkling had been stored in large tanks on some of the street corners.

The new idea was favorably received by the town council who in 1880 made an agreement with Mr. Hay to supply water under the new system with an option of buying him out within 10 years at a price of \$25,000. The enterprise proving successful, other citizens got the idea of operating a waterworks system for the town under the private ownership plan.

The plant was bought by the town in 1885 for \$25,150.00. The following year Woodstock's first water committee was appointed by the town council and the foundation of the present system laid. In those years they had to develop the desire for pure drinking water from sources other than wells, and not just for the fire hazard when it could be drawn from a creek. They looked around for a suitable source and the first set of springs was purchased in the third concession of East Oxford, followed by the purchase of the Thornton spring on the Sweaburg road. By obtaining a 40 year debenture issue for \$105,000 the money was used to erect the present plant at the southern end of Victoria street and to purchase more springs, and to extend such mains as were necessary.

The Oxford Rifles (or now the 3rd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment) is one of the senior and most distinguished regiments of the Militia of Canada. Formerly known as the 22nd Regiment, its name indicates it was the 22nd regiment of militia to be organized in the dominion. The Oxford Militia, as it was originally known, was organized in 1798 and in 1863 became known as the 22nd Regiment, the Oxford Rifles. The village of Burford was the first militia in Oxford under Col. William Claus.

In the war of 1812-14 the Oxford Militia was called out for active service and took part in the capture of Fort Detroit, the engagement at Fort Erie and Lundy's Lane and the fight at Malcolm's Mills against a party of American raiders. At Nanticoke Creek on Nov. 13, 1813 they won their first battle honors.

During the history of the regiment prior to the first world war of 1914 three calls were made on it for service. The first occasion being on December, 1864 when 1 Company (Woodstock) and 3 Company (Beachville) were called out and became 1 and 2 Companies of the Eastern Battalion for frontier service at La Prairie, Quebec. At the time there was fear of Fenians crossing from the United States. Major Hugh Richardson was in charge of the Woodstock company. Lt. Col. John B. Taylor, officer commanding the Oxford Rifles was O.C. of the Eastern Battalion as this composite unit was known.

The second call was in November, 1865, when a company under Capt. H.B. Beard was sent to Sarnia for frontier duty. Lt. Col. Taylor also was O.C. of this composite regiment. While there Col. Taylor was made Deputy Assistant Adjutant General for the Volunteer Corps placed on service in the western district. Major Hugh Richardson took over the Oxford Rifles and commanded the composite regiment at Sarnia.

At the time of the Fenian Raid in March 1866, the Oxford Rifles were again called out but saw no action. On June 1, 1866 two companies were called out. It is said that within three quarters of an hour after the first call, the Woodstock company paraded in full marching order. On June 8 Captain McCleneghan's company was authorized as the Woodstock Infantry Company and proceeded to London. In the meantime the

Oxford Militia Served with Honor From 1798 - cont.

the companies ordered out on June 1, had been sent to the Niagara frontier. Although they did not engage in the skirmish at Ridgeway they did take 65 Fenians as prisoners. In the meantime McCleneghan's company was sent to Sandwich on the Essex frontier.

Whiskey Riots

In 1868 there occurred the only case in the county of Oxford in which the militia was called out in aid of a civil power, William Grey was mayor of Woodstock. Twenty NCO's and men under Capt. Beard were required to disperse a crowd which had collected and threatened two "whisky detectives". This was known as the "whisky riots."

Capt. McCleneghan in 1871 was a member of the Canadian rifle team that competed at Wimbledon, England. Lt. Col. Skinner of North Oxford organized and commanded the team. In 1864 the 1st Company (Woodstock) of the Oxford Rifles won 2nd, 3rd and 4th prizes for efficiency.

On August 14, 1863, Lt. Col. W.S. Light was placed in command of the regiment but died shortly after. His funeral, held with full military honors, was one of the most impressive that Woodstock had seen. A cortege of about two miles in length followed the bier.

In the records of 1870 onwards the names of well known Woodstock citizens make constant appearances. They include M.M. Nesbitt (1871); D.M. Perry (1870); Thomas Cowan and major H.B. Beard (1875); Alfred Servos Ball (1880); James C. Hegler (1881); James Sutherland, later minister of public works (1885); Frederick O. Burgess was appointed second lieutenant in 1895 and later became lieutenant-colonel commanding the 71st Battallion CEF, a member of parliament and later minister of national defence.

In 1906 the regiment was again re-organized as a city corps and the unit centred in Woodstock. A notable fact was that the retiring staff officers were all in possession of long service medals.

Grey's Horse

No article on Oxford Militia would be complete without the mention of the Grey's Horse, a cavalry regiment that was organized in 1908 with Woodstock as its headquarters. Following the war of 1914 - 18 it was transferred to Wingham and Col. the Hon. D.M. Sutherland is honorary colonel of this regiment. It was organized by Lt. Col. W.M. Davis and a squadron of Woodstock was under J.M. Ross with D.M. Sutherland second in command. Among other officers were James Pullen and James Bastedo of Sweaburg.



Oxford Militia Served with Honor from 1798 - cont.

Grey's Horse - cont.

In the early history of Woodstock one is led to believe that it was an Anglican town and that the other denominations did not fare too well here. This is not so as in the Gazetteers one will find mention of a Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Church functioning here.

Presbyterians

In 1834 the first gathering of Presbyterians took place at Dundas Cottage, the home of David White. From this meeting developed the present congregations of the Presbyterian and United Churches of Woodstock. Their growth was slow. Meetings were held at different homes and occasionally services were taken by Rev. George Murray at Blenheim or Rev. Donald McKenzie of Embro. In March of 1837 they were strong enough to hold a meeting and a church of their own. Sir Francis Bond Head, Governor of Upper Canada granted them a site on Graham street, for a church. In 1838 Rev. A. Gale of Hamilton organized the first congregation. The same year a joint call was sent to Rev. Daniel Allan of Fortrose, Ross-shire, Scotland, to serve Stratford and Woodstock and for two years conducted services two Sundays at each church per month, travelling back and forth on horseback. He conducted his service in Gaelic but owing to ill health had to give up the Woodstock charge.

After the erection of Goodwin's schoolhouse in 1839 on Dundas Street east, the congregation met there until St. Andrews Church was built in 1842 on Graham street, south of the Bell Telephone building. But not for long, as in 1844 the disruption of the Presbyterian Church took place and the property remained with the Church of Scotland. The majority were in favor of the Free Church so once again services were held in Goodwin's schoolhouse and in the Wesleyan Chapel.

In 1848 plans were made for the erection of the first Knox Church. W.C. McLeod offered a lot on Perry street and White and Dixon were the contractors. It was erected at a cost of 970 pounds. Of this 200 pounds were raised by the women of the congregation. Services were first conducted in the new building in 1849 in the basement. It was 1850 before the building was completed. The bell was the gift of Mr. McLeod. It not



Oxford Militia Served with Honor From 1798 - cont.

Presbyterians - cont.

only served as a call to worship but also as town bell, fire bell and curfew. Also in 1849 a plot of four acres was obtained through a grant of Lord Elgin to be used as Presbyterian burying ground. It was known as Park Lot 4. By 1852 there were 52 families on the roll with 106 names on the communicants roll. The services at this time were being conducted in English. Some wanted the Gaelic service and in 1852 they organized Chalmers Church and obtained Rev. Duncan McDermid to conduct the services.

In 183?? the United Presbyterians built a small church known as Erskine Church on Lot 2 on the west side of Finkle street with a membership of 14 and Rev. Archibald Cross was the first minister. In 1869 they united with Knox Church. By 1856 Knox Church found it necessary to add galleries three pews deep to the north, south and east sides of the church. In 1861 the residence of Judge D.S. McQueen was obtained for a manse. In 1865 St. Andrews Church became absorbed by the remaining Presbyterian churches and the "Auld Kirk" as it was familiarly known was sold.

In the 80's there was friction in the congregations over the changing of the service. In 1885 some of the members of Chalmers withdrew and formed the Congregational Church. Services were held in the old Court House until the beautiful stone edifice on Light Street was built in 1886. Rev. William Cuthbertson was the first pastor.

In 1897 the old Knox Church was deserted and the Knox Church of today was opened and today is the only Presbyterian Church in Woodstock.

One of the outstanding ministers was Rev. W.T. McMullen who arrived in 1860 and was active here until 1907. During this time he had served as moderator of the General Assembly in 1888 and in 1889 Knox College conferred on him the Decree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1931 Dr. McMullen passed away in his 103rd year after spending 65 years in Woodstock.

Salvation Army

Another congregation that has left its mark on Woodstock is the Salvation Army. At one time the Army was told to leave Woodstock. It refused to do so and a few short weeks later was made welcome here by the same man. In January, 1884, Dickie Jones "Happy Bob" Hetherington and Pilgrim Huction arrived in Woodstock from Ingersoll at the Old Mill corner

Oxford Militia Served with Honor from 1798 - cont.

Salvation Army - cont.

(Dundas Street west) and marched up Dundas street singing. A crowd followed. The first meeting was held at the market square. The Mayor, John Grant, was approached for permission to use the town hall. He told them to leave and not return as they were not wanted in town. The group did come back the following Saturday and rented an old building owned by a Mr. Brown.

At the Sunday afternoon meeting the mayor and council were all present. Due to the large attendance they were not recognized. In the course of the service prayers were offered for the mayor and council that they might have a change of heart and allow the Salvation Army to use the town hall. The following Saturday the Salvation Army reappeared in town. A police officer informed them that the mayor wished to see them. When the band appeared the mayor asked if they recalled being told to stay out of Woodstock. When he was given his answer Mayor Grant told them they could use the town hall. Asked what brought the change of mind, he replied, "Why not when you prayed for us."

Later the Army obtained a building on Reeve street until the Primitive Methodist church on Graham street became available. It was on this site that the present citadel now stands. One of its active members was Sid Coppins who is still living. He served as bandmaster.

While the electrical era in Ontario began with the development of Hydro power under the leadership of Adam Beck, later Sir Adam, it is interesting to recall that Woodstock was a pioneer in the use of electricity and also in the work of organizing the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. It is 55 years this year since this city signed the agreement for Hydro power.

Today everyone takes electricity for granted. It is part of the people's life, accepted as being as much a necessity as the air and the sun. Yet at the beginning of this century electricity was still an infant in swaddling clothes and remained so for many ----??? too much to develop it. The answer was co-operative power development on a public ownership basis. A few far-sighted municipalities saw the light and joined. Woodstock was

Oxford Militia Served With Honor from 1798 - cont.

Salvation Army - cont.

one of the first seven and as a result today this city boasts of a plant that is paid for and a power rate both for domestic and commercial users that is as ----? any in this country and lower than most here or in other countries.

While the start of this was hydro power there is more to the story than that. There had to be human agencies to see that the power was used properly; that people were made conscious of the possibilities of it and that the people's property was honestly administered. Woodstock was fortunate in having public-spirited men to carry on that work.

The use of electric power in Woodstock dates back to the 80's when the first municipal electricity was made in the then Water Works at the corner of Main and Mill streets, supplying power to a very limited number of business places in the uptown district. The plant continued operating until the present waterworks plant was built. In 1891 the plant was acquired by the firm of Patrick and Powerll, who also owned and operated the Woodstock Gas Company located on Young street. In the same year a new building was erected adjoining the---plant and the following --- the machinery was moved ---- this new building. From time to time new features were added to bring the building and equipment up to the highest possible standard.

J.G. Archibald became associated with the electrical branch of the business for Patrick and Powerll in 1891, building the electrical plant on Young St. He left shortly after to accept a position in British Columbia. Woodstock became a city in 1901 and the same year on March 1, the city purchased the electric lighting plant and moved the equipment into the new part of the building of the present waterworks plant, Mr. Archibald returning as manager at that time. The venture was successful and when the Public Utilities Act became law the part of the public utilities of Woodstock and water and light came under the operation of a Public Utility Commission.

In 1906 when the hydro movement started Woodstock's Commission had the vision to see the great possibilities of the move and joined in wholeheartedly in the movement. A survey was made in 1907. An agreement to take power was signed May 18, 1908, and in 1910 Hydro power became a reality in this city.



Two important events happened in Woodstock in the course of two years which stirred the whole community. The first was the great railway accident at St. George, a station on the Grand Trunk Railroad near Brantford in 1880. The other was the murder trial of 1891.

The Woodstock town council had arranged to meet the Provincial government in Toronto and boarded the St. Louis Express, one of the fastest trains on the Grand Trunk Railway, about 5 p.m. All went well and many passengers went to the diner for supper. As the train was passing over the high suspension bridge at St. George, the engineer William Blackwell saw that something was wrong. Splinters were thrown and the drive wheel tire on the south side of the locomotive gave way. This caused the connecting rods to break, spreading the tracks and causing the needle beams of the bridge to be crowded together.

The engine made the run of eighty yards to safety along with a baggage car and smoker. A passenger car was not so fortunate and was catapulted through the air to the frozen ground seventy feet below. The pullman coach remained on the track but the diner suffered the same fate as the passenger coach only that it landed nose first into the creek.

When the plunge occurred the cooking range swept through the dining area of the diner, taking tables, seats and people with it, besides spilling fire and boiling water over its victims.

Mayor D.W. Kam of Woodstock was in this coach sitting opposite Dr. Swan. The mayor claimed that the car made three complete turns. Dr. Swan was killed, while Mayor Kam was left a cripple for a considerable period of time. The casualties included ex-mayor A.W. Francis, Councillors, J.L. Peers and Dr. Swan from Woodstock along with eight others. The injured included Mayor D.W. Kam, Daniel Peacock, J. Martin, R.W. Knight and George Forbes. All but George Forbes was a member of the town council. This alone left Woodstock in a difficult situation on civic affairs. Ex-mayor Francis was the editor of the local newspaper.

#### Relief Train

Among the first to arrive from Woodstock at the scene of the disaster was Rev. J.C. Farthing, newly-appointed rector of St. Paul's Church. He went down on the relief train and found that the hotel at St. George had been made into a temporary hospital and help was sent from Brantford and Hamilton. Woodstock



A Train Wreck, A Murder Famed in City's History - cont.

Relief Train - cont.

had little to offer in aid at that time. Mr. Farthing remained at the scene and returned with the bodies on a special car. There was a public funeral and each victim's church held service at the same hour. -----?? up for one funeral procession as the two main cemeteries adjoined each other. There was a period of deep mourning throughout the community.

The second event was one of the greatest murder trials held in these parts, if not in all of Canada at that time. The first that Woodstock was to see of the murderer was when he arrived in Woodstock and called himself Lord Somerset. His real name was Reginald Birchall. He remained for some time and returned to England. While he was in Canada he found that a large number of cultured Englishmen were being sent to Canada as "farm pupils". That is, their parents were paying substantial sums in order that their sons might learn to be farmers. Some did well while others farmers abused the lads, but all in all the farm pupil movement assumed considerable importance.

When Birchall returned to Canada he brought with him Frank Benwell and Douglas Pelly to work as farm pupils on his farm. But Birchall had no farm.

One morning Birchall took Benwell with him on the pretense of seeing the farm where he would be staying. That evening Birchall returned to Niagara where the three had rooms in a hotel. He reported to Pelly that Benwell was so delighted with the farm that he had decided to stay. The same evening he wrote a letter to Benwell's father saying that all was going well and if Col. Benwell would send out \$5,000 at once, the deal would be complete and that his son would learn farming and share in the profits.

Found Body

While this was going on at Niagara, two woodcutters had found a body in the Blenheim swamp, not far from Eastwood and all signs of identification had been removed. It looked like a perfect crime only that a cigar case was found in the swamp clearly marked "Benwell". When Pelly read this he went to Birchall and the two went to Princeton and identified the body. After some questioning Birchall was arrested and brought to Woodstock where he was recognized as "Lord Somerset".

At his trial B.B. Osler, one of Canada's great criminal lawyers prosecuted and

A Train Wreck, A Murder Famed in City's History - cont.

Found Body - cont.

G.T. Blackstock acted as leading counsel for Birchall assisted by Isadore Hellmuth.

During the trial Woodstock was taxed to its limits to provide accomodation for reporters and the curious. The trial lasted several days and as the new courthouse was not complete it was held in the town hall. The courtroom was set up and a telegraph office was also provided. Every word of the trial was sent direct to England.

Mr. Blackstock once admitted to friends that he could not believe Birchall as he continually sent them on wild errands for an alibi and each time it was supposed to be the truth, but proved otherwise. Yet the day that Blackstock adressed the jury, he spoke for four and a half hours. Mr. Osler's address to the jury condemning Birchall is still considered one of the greatest ever delivered. Birchall was found guilty.

The Rev. W.H. Wade of Old St. Paul's was with the condemned man up to his execution and when he heard that Birchall claimed he was innocent he refused to give him a Christian burial. Rev. Wade was offered a large sum of money to tell what Birchall had confided in him but he refused.

As for Douglas Pelly, who made an important witness at the trial and who narrowly missed the same fate, he returned to England and later became a missionary to Africa.

A Dry Town?

In 1889 the Scott Act was in force in Woodstock. It was a local option liquor act which enabled a municipality to introduce prohibition or repeal it by popular vote. Accordingly the town was supposed to be dry but at that time local hotels advertised that they had obtained a bartender from Chicago. This was rather strange for a dry town that only sold soft drinks over their bar.

Not only could liquor be purchased over the bar it was common knowledge that on two blocks of the main street there were 20 places where liquor could be purchased including a drug store, boot store and dry goods store. Such was life on the main street in the gay 90's.

Woodstock was not only the centre of a large farming area but also the hub of a manufacturing area. Therefore there were many young men living in board-in houses. Every fall there would be an epidemic of typhoid fever and the nearest hospital was at Brantford - there was not a trained nurse in town.

A Train Wreck, A Murder Famed in City's History - cont.

A Dry Town? - cont.

The typhoid was caused mainly by impure drinking water so the first step was to get rid of the present system which they did and the Hays system took over. But for those who had fought for the water this was only the beginning. The issue now was for a hospital as both were considered essential in a town of nine thousand people. Among the active workers we find Dr. A.B. Welford, Malcolm Douglas, the manager of a local trust company, Dr. Sinclair, Dr. Park and Rev. J. C. Farthing.

When things were looking pretty black for a hospital in Woodstock a Mrs. Warwick of Toronto offered land (free of charge) for it as a thankoffering as she and her husband had made their money in Woodstock, and she wished to show her appreciation.

#### First Hospital

The first hospital was a 30-bed building with a small operating room. The first committee formed consisted of Hon. James Sutherland MP, J.D. Patterson, John White, D.W. Kam, T.H. Parker, Malcolm Douglas and George Eden. The first lady superintendent was Miss Falconer. As the hospital became popular with the people that is, more people preferred the hospital to staying at home which was previously the case, additions were necessary and when an addition was put on, J.D. Patterson asked permission to take whole top floor of the new wing and at his own expense completely equipped it with the most up-to-date surgical equipment that money could buy. Such was the beginning of the Woodstock General Hospital.

During the ministry of Rev. Mr. Sweatman at Old St. Paul's it was decided to abandon the plans for building a second church in the west end of town. The east end people decided to build a centrally located church and close the old edifice. An act of the Legislature had been passed legalizing the local status of the parish. The new church was to be the parish church. The new church was opened in 1879.

In the meantime a house was purchased at the west end and renovated. It was known as All Saints Sunday School from -----?? Saints Church has grown. After the completion of the new church "New St. Paul's " parochial difficulties arose and the old church was reopened by a section of the parish. This section took legal action to set aside the Act of Legislature and lost the case.

A Train Wreck, A Murder Famed in City's History - cont.

First Hospital - cont.

Ever since, services have been held in both churches. This caused the congregation of the new church to become divided, some blaming the rector for allowing the old church to reopen while others supported him. As a result the rector was given a year's leave of absence and at the end of the year he was to resign. The whole reason for this rift is very well explained in "Recollections" by Rt. Rev. J.C. Farthing which is obtainable at the Public Library.

When it came to looking after the poor and unfortunate there was no accomodation for them within the city. Consequently when a case did come to the attention of the town fathers, the only action left for them was to have the party charged with vagrancy and lodged in the county jail. The keepers there were lenient and these star boarders as they often were called were given the run of the jail in that they were not confined to a cell. If one of these unfortunate died the local ministers would arrange for a proper burial. Often they would secure some of the younger fellows employed at a local bank to act as pall-bearers. The ministers themselves were often the only visitors that they would have and this disturbed the ministers. They carried out a long battle with the aid of the local press until the county coucil finally agreed to build the county home in Woodstock.

As a result the unfortunate received a new lease on life instead of a life sentence in jail.



As one looks at rural Oxford today, the question comes up, what happened to all the little communities that were so prominent at the turn of the century. These hamlets met their doom the day that rural mail took over from the village post office. From the mid 1800s to 1910 the government had no thought of setting up door to door delivery for those people living beyond the city limits. But knowing that these people would be good for votes, the government decided that they would do them a great favor by making it possible for them to receive mail without going all the way to town. The logical place was at the local store or a place they would have reason to go frequently. The only stipulation was that the post office had to have a name. What better opportunity ever existed to honor a well-to-do framer or even to bring a touch of the old land into the new? So therefore we had names like Cassel, Golspie, and Culloden reappearing among the German, Scotch and English while Granthurst, Bennington and Hussey honored early settlers.

One day a notice appeared in the Bentley, Mich. post office which attracted the attention of George Wilcox. This sign simply asked for tenders to deliver mail in this backwoods area to the individual settlers and be paid by Uncle Sam for doing it. This was nothing new in the U.S.A. as it had been kicked around from about 1890 when Edwin Shriver of Maryland started to advocate it. By 1902 Mortimer Whitehead received an appropriation of \$60,000,000 to get it started. In 1905 it was reaching up into the peninsula of Michigan which had been a virgin forest a few short years before.

#### To Michigan

Wilcox had gone to Michigan to 1902 to try to do like his grandfather had done years before - to go homesteading. His grandfather had left a good home in York and came up to Norwich to take up some cheap land. Likewise he went to Michigan to take up land and set his son up farming. At first his son did not go for the idea but he eventually decided to try it and on his first summer there had his leg smashed and it had to be amputated. In order to help him, Wilcox decided to stay on. The leg accident was a misfortune for his son but to the rural residents of Canada it was a blessing.

After the rural mail started in Bentley, Wilcox became more and more convinced that this was the ideal thing for rural communities. In 1915 his son was well established with 160 acres and a wooden leg that George Wilcox left for his farm in Springford which had until this time been rented.

Rural Mail Delivery for Canadians Born in Mind of Geo. Wilcox of Oxford - cont.

To Michigan - cont.

Whether he was anxious to get back to his farm or to get busy at this idea of his we do not know. But we do know that in December 1905 there appeared in the Woodstock, Ingersoll, Tillsonburg and Hamilton papers, along with many others, a letter to the editor from George Wilcox, the first of a great many that he wrote. He undertook to tell the people of the great advantage rural mail was and if the U.S.A. could afford it, why couldn't they here in Canada? He wasn't the first to advocate this but it had been squashed before and was to be squashed again on the grounds that it cost too much. In fact Sir William Mulock referred to it as Uncle Sam's White Elephant.

Wilcox knew the soft spots and right away he argued that if city people could get theirs delivered why not equal rights for the rural people? He also stated that if the farmer was to get a living out of the land in order to pay taxes to allow the city people this privilege they should consider how much he could save if they didn't have to go for the mail.

#### Editors Back Idea

The editors of the papers readily supported the idea for they foresaw that if it was possible to get daily mail to the farmer, circulation would increase. In the next few months, Wilcox kept the public well informed of what was going on in the battle. The treasury of Ottawa announced a surplus of \$12 million for the year and Wilcox immediately stated that this surplus alone could bring rural mail to any farmer in Eastern Canada for five years at no extra cost. As the farmers helped accumulate this surplus he argued, surely they were obliged to help spend it.

With the cost being the big drawback, Wilcox figured out that in order to get mail daily the farmers of Oxford would have to travel 180,000 miles a week if it was a four-mile trip and nine million miles a year. At five cents a mile it would cost the farmers \$450,000 and he claimed that the rate was too low as no farmer could afford to take the time off to travel 24 miles a week for \$1.20 and spread in over six days. Quoting prices from the U.S. department he said it would cost them 65 cents a family if mail delivery was established.

As time rolled on the snowflake became a snowball and in March of 1907 Schell wrote Wilcox and told him that Postmaster General William Mulock had made an investigation into rural mail but it was not considered practical due to the

Rural Mail Delivery For Canadians Born in Mind of Geo. Wilcox of Oxford - cont.

Editors back Idea - cont.

cost. But a debate followed and it took five feet six inches of column space to record the fact in the newspapers. Outside of the Postmaster General, no one opposed rural mail.

Turning Point

With an election coming up Wilcox got into high gear and this was the turning point in his battle Parliamentary Conservative opposition member Robert Borden warmed up to the question and when he spoke in Woodstock in Sept. 1907 it had become a plank in his platform.

By August 28, 1908 Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux had replaced Mulock and in a speech at Inverness he announced that he hoped the time, would soon come when every farmer would receive rural mail delivery. This was the first step that the Laurier government had taken and it soon became one of their platform planks and proved to be a winning choice. Success was in sight and on October 10, 1908 the first route was established between Hamilton and Ancaster with 37 stops. And so the idea that George Wilcox conceived in the post office at Bentley, Mich. grew like a snowball gained momentum and public favor.

While this was good for the county as a whole it was the beginning of the end for the small community and the general store, the place where the history of Oxford was retold to every rising generation, and today it is lost as the story tellers of old have gone to their reward and taken our history with them. That is progress and a thing we must all face, but let us strive to keep what history we do have alive for the coming generation.



East Oxford Municipal Affairs Took Shape After 1849: The Railroad Stopped  
at Curries - page 11

The townships of North, West and East Oxford, are three distinct municipalities however the history of all is interwoven. Up to 1820 all three were one township, and with Zorra and Nissouri were assessed as one. In that year the whole population numbered only 719 souls.

Prior to 1793 when proclamation of Governor Simcoe offered inducements to well disposed settlers from the United States, Thomas Ingersoll, in company with the Rev. Gideon Bostwick and others, made application for a tract of land. They offered to comply with the terms stipulated by the government, namely in return for a township to provide 40 settlers, whose families would become permanent residents. Upon this assurance and in answer to the petition of Mr. Ingersoll, an order in council was passed, dated Navy Hall, March 23, 1793, giving to Mr. Ingersoll and his associates a tract of land of about 64,000 acres.

Mr. Ingersoll for himself and others was to select the land. With his friend Brant, the Chief of the Six Nation Indians, assisted by a posse of experienced hunters, Ingersoll explored the unoccupied lands west of the Grand River. Acting on his own judgment and at the instigation of his Indian friends, he chose that section which now comprises the three Oxfords. Having located his land, Mr. Ingersoll returned to his native town, Great Barrington. He visited New York soon after, and through the aid of friends was placed in a position to carry out his design of establishing a settlement.

Two years later Mr. Ingersoll, with his family, returned to Canada. As there was no road west of Ancaster he decided to stop at Queenstown. After spending two years on the frontier, Ingersoll pushed his way westward. After great hardships he reached the spot selected by his Indian friends as the most suitable spot for his camp, a spot now on Thames St. Ingersoll.

Having so far carried out his purpose, Ingersoll set to work vigorously to clear a spot of land on which to erect a house, and with his own hands felled the first tree that marked the presence of the white man. For years the trunk of that huge basswood was an object of curiosity, and its great size applied much of the material that composed the rustic home of the courageous pioneer.



East Oxford Municipal Affairs Took Shape After 1849: The Railroad

Stopped at Curries - cont.

Not Rewarded

But Mr. Ingersoll and his friends were not permitted to see their great endeavors rewarded as they had a right to expect. At the seat of Government, then York, there were persons who looked with jealous eyes on the efforts of others and the American settlers came in for a large share of notice. The removal from this country at that juncture, of Governor Simcoe enabled the York influence with his successor to prevail, and the original allotment was withdrawn from Mr. Ingersoll and his little band.

Great efforts were made by Mr. Ingersoll to induce the Government to keep faith, but unable to afford to take his grievances to England, he was forced to accept such terms as the authorities imposed.

The injustice of the Government, in this as in other cases, produced much dissatisfaction. Mr. Ingersoll, although not a U.E. Loyalist, was strongly attached to the British Crown; and however disappointed, never wavered in his determination. The wrongs inflicted on the settlement turned many into doubtful supporters of the Provincial Government.

By 1822 East Oxford had one school, presumably, at Vandecar, where David Canfield was hired as the teacher for the fee of two bushels of wheat per scholar for every three-month period along with fuel and lodgings.

The first meeting of the residents of East Oxford for municipal purposes was held at the home of James Dorman at the west half of lot 9, concession 4 on January 1, 1849. William Burgess was appointed councillor, Henry Peers, township clerk, Thomas Holdsworth, assessor, James McCallum, tax collector, Dr. Levi H. Perry, the son-in-law of Zachariah Burtch, was one of the first overseers of highways. His division is described as from the west townline to "the rising sun" which is presumed to have been a tavern.

In the area of Curries among the early families, we find the names Start, Watt, Pearce, Lund, Gracey and Rice. There was an attempt at settling this area in the early 1800's but there does not seem to have been any permanent settlers until the 1840s when these families took up land.

On lot 16, concession ? the family of Herman Dodge attempted to set up a farm on a very large scale, including an oversize house complete with a horse barn

East Oxford Municipal Affairs Took Shape After 1849: The Railroad  
Stopped at Curries - cont.

Not Rewarded - cont.

and carriage house. The cost of the buildings were more than Dodge could afford and he was forced to sell to an aristocrat English family by the name of Pickthall. This family became acquainted with Lord Somerset (Birchall of the Birchall-Benwell murder trial) and it was not unusual to see these aristocrats riding with the hounds to a fox chase. They were real playboys of their day.

After the trial Dodge became alarmed, signed his property over to his wife and left for Mexico. The house has now been removed from the landscape when it mysteriously burned and the sight of the Pickthall family and their four horse carriage is only a memory.

In 1855 the trustees of the East Oxford Congregation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada purchased a lot from John Watt for the purpose of erecting a church for the sum of 7 pounds 10 shillings. It was to be known as Zion, and in 1861 the burying ground was purchased.

The year that the first school was erected is not known but in 1893 a new school was built and W.D. Smith purchased the old building and moved it a mile south to his lot where he operated a blacksmith shop. Here he raised it on a wall and increased -----?? paint and woodworking shop.

In the early 1870s a move got underway to link the Queen's Bush Counties with the lake by means of a railraod. The section of the line running from Port Dover to Stratford passed through East Oxford and crossed the Norwich road at what was then the Curry farm. Because of this crossing, the name of the community changed from Zion to Curries Crossing. The railroad which became --? the \_\_ opened a station here but it was always possible to board the train by raising the arm of the semaphore sign.

Served 42 Years

Mail was delivered by the train as a catch post stop with W.D. Smith, the postmaster. He served in this capacity from 1878 to 1920. Along with the post office and blacksmith shop, a series of freight sheds and an apple evaporator was erected and dried apples were exported to all parts of the world.

On the west side of the road and at the main corner inside the gate of the Rice property the Patrons of Industry had a small store where they sold sugar

East Oxford Municipal Affairs Took Shape After 1849: The Railroad

Stopped at Curries - cont.

Served 42 Years - cont.

coal oil and a few of the other necessities of life in a rural area. The Patrons of Industry later became known as the Grange Society.

After the store ceased to function, Mr. Rice desired to keep the building but others thought it would serve a better purpose down at the railroad and moved it there. Rice moved it back, as he had paid off a lien against the building. Not to be outdone, the men at Smith's Blacksmith shop took up a collection and obtained the building, which was once more taken to the railroad with the sign "Curries Resurrected" painted on the side. It later became a tool shed on the Smith property. Later W.D. Smith purchased a frame house and moved it to the crossing where one portion of the living room was partitioned off for a waiting room.

The last signs of the railroad disappeared in 1936 when the tracks were removed. Since there was no more railway crossing the name of the community became officially known to the postal authorities as Curries.

Another active group here in the late 1800s was known as the Ancient Order of United Workmen. When it was decided to build a new church building in 1891 they purchased the old one and converted it into a hall that they located just east of the church. The building of the new church was a major event in the life of the community as it has continued to be ever since. The life of the township centered around the Oxford Centre Circuit which was formed in 1874. Prior to that from 1855-67 Zion (Curries) was served from Woodstock and from 1868 - 74 it was on the Oxford Circuit. In 1874 Zion (Curries), Salem (Oxford Centre) Wesley (Vandecar), Bethel (Blandford) and Oriel were made a two-man circuit with the superintendent living at Oxford Centre and the junior minister living at Curries.



One can scarcely think of the past and the early days of Oxford without thinking of Embro. When you speak with old timers in the county they will usually have something to tell you about Embro and the Scots of Zorra. What is <sup>it</sup> that makes Embro a little different from other communities? Is it the ties to early days and its relation to early agricultural progress in Oxford or is it the fact that so many recall it for some personal pleasure derived there? Perhaps it is because of some of its sons who have gone into the world and made a name for themselves. Be what it may, the fact remains that Embro is different.

The name itself will often leave the stranger with a question. Where else can you find the name Embro except here in Zorra and what about Zorra? What do they stand for? First off the name Embro is a touch of Gaelic and is the short form for Edinburgh but if you put Edinburgh in place of Embro, half the glory of the name is gone. As for Zorra, well that is a touchy one because even though its people are proud of the name, few like to think of the meaning commonly used; that is Spanish for a female fox. What is more sly or cunning than a female fox? A version that fits the name to the township is that it comes from the Bible in Judges XIII 2, as the birthplace of Samson. The Zorras have been the birthplace for a great many towers of strength in all walks of life. Using this version we could say that this township is the centre of a tower of strength in Oxford County.

#### Hard Maple Wall

This is quite true when we look at her past history and her present as well. In the beginning men like the Codys, Coukes, Youngs were men who wanted to improve their lots in life and were willing to take a chance. By plain hard work these Pennsylvania Dutch settlers made a home for themselves and when the McKays arrived they were not welcomed with a red carpet of honor but instead they were met with a solid wall of hard maple that tried the best you had to offer in strength if you were to hew a home out of the wilderness. True, others had to do likewise in other parts of Oxford, but in other parts it was often pine or such like and not maple growing on gravel which even today will make a chain saw grunt and groan. Ask the man who has tried it. When it came to bringing out other settlers, the McKays did not look to the



In Zorra They Vote for "Geo. Brown" - cont.

Hard Maple Wall - cont.

cities of Scotland but went out to the open county of Sutherlandshire, where it had been a case of the survival of the fittest since the beginning of time. These were the type of people who were needed in the new land. In the new settlement the spiritual life of the settlers was an act to behold. They were determined to carry on in true Gaelic tradition even though they had no minister. After they did obtain a minister they did not confine him to Embro and Zorra but allowed him to spread the gospel to the far ends of the province of the day. Truly another pillar of strength to all he came in contact with.

Why was it that these early settlers were very much in demand on the Paris Plains at harvest time? They were among the best obtainable and on many occasions they were able to show up the Indians in feats of endurance in the grain fields. Such were the people who chose Embro and the Zorras for their home.

Political Quirk

It was back in 1858 that Embro was incorporated as a village with John Short, a miller, as its first reeve. when it came to politics Embro and the Zorras were different from the rest of theriding. It is surprising how many times that the vote ----? tives carried the country for the first three elections. E.W. Nesbitt, also of Woodstock, carried the riding in 1928-1911?? while all around in or which ?? elected a Liberal or Reform candidate, as they were once called. This is to the best of my knowledge a record which no other township can claim.

At Confederation the Zorras were not required to cast a vote, as Thomas Oliver went in by acclamation and in 1874 he was re-elected by a 1,200 majority and by almost the same majority in 1878. James Sutherland of Woodstock followed Oliver as the Liberal candidate and for six successive elections carried the North Oxford riding, even though the Conservatives carried the riding in 1928-1911 ?? while all around in the ridings of East Elgin, Brant, South Perth, East Middlesex and South Waterloo, Conservatives supporters of R.L. Borden were elected. The county continued to elect Liberal members until 1925, when D.M. Sutherland became first Conservative representative since Confederation. Zorra did not concern itself with public issues and voted two to one against Sutherland, giving his opponent Dr. Sinclair, a majority in the township of 491 votes. In the election of

In Zorra they Vote for "Geo. Brown" - cont.

Political Quirk - cont.

1925 D.M. Sutherland was opposed by Hugh Allan of Drumbo and the Liberal candidate was elected by 372. In Zorra Allan received a majority of 427. In the 1930 campaign we find former political opponents on the same platform for the same party.

E.W. Nesbitt, who as a Liberal candidate, had defeated D.M. Sutherland in the wartime election of 1917 took to the Conservative platform to support Sutherland. Nesbitt had joined the Union Government which was in power during the war as a Liberal but at the end of the war had turned Conservative. He took to the support of Sutherland who he described as a "personal friend." This combination carried the riding but failed to turn Zorra, where Allan polled a majority. By 1935 the trend was against the Bennett government, so Zorra had no need to change her ways and elected A.S. Rennie, who now was to represent the new Oxford riding. In 1940 Zorra remained true to her faith and Rennie was given a majority in the township of 316. The 1945 vote saw three candidates in the field with the Conservative, Kenneth Daniels, being elected. Once again West Zorra went to the aid of Mr. Rennie with a township majority of 235. Strange to say, the CCF received 38 votes in Zorra. In 1949 Clark Murray took the seat for the Liberals with West Zorra casting 588 Liberal votes, 266 more than those cast for the other candidates.

Brown for Zorra

Why did Zorra do this? It is simply that Zorra's political faith was built around George Brown, who became the rock of Zorra and no matter what political issue was presented it did not stir Zorra.

Brown published the Presbyterian paper, the Banner, (forerunner of the Globe) in 1843 and supported the Reform Party, later called the Liberal party. The Scots of Zorra found themselves in tune with the views put forth by Brown in church and politics and other matters which he continued to put forth in the Globe from 1844 onwards.

During many of Brown's political campaigns he always found time to come to Zorra, to speak on behalf of the party, for the reason that it was his opinion that this township turned the tide in all north riding contests in Oxford. At the time of the death of George Brown, who was assassinated in Toronto,

In Zorra They Vote For "George Brown" - cont.

Brown for Zorra - cont.

the county council paid flowery tribute to the statesman. As W.E. Elliott put it it must have been moved by the reeve of West Zorra.

In Quebec there was a popular saying for years after the death of Laurier that Quebec was still voting for Laurier. In Zorra for nearly a century they have been voting for George Brown. In other parts of the country a big issue is made when the township changes her ways at an election. When the trend did finally turn and Wallace Nesbitt took the township for the Conservatives, this event was overshadowed by the large majority he had received in ??????

With coming of spring, the thoughts of many of the older residents turn to the possibilities of there being a flood. This year being a winter of snow and cold weather more severe than usual, the flood question became a popular subject. The river Thames and its tributaries have gone on rampage in the spring as far back as man can remember. In Oxford we have been fortunate that as a rule there has been very little loss of life. One spring flood claimed five lives in Ingersoll in 1887 when the King's Dam burst.

The King's Dam held back a body of water covering almost 20 acres. It was located in the southwest section of Ingersoll, just south of Scott's Mill on King St. W. The dam broke shortly before seven a.m. on Monday April 4, 1887. With the dam a portion of the mill building, a frame terrace consisting of four dwellings and hundreds of cords of cordwood were lost. Two of the bodies of the five dead were not found for several days after the water subsided.

The construction of the dam was such that the water was held back on the northerly side by high and solid banks of earth while in the central space were located the breastworks of timber. The operation of the machinery was by an iron flume. The conveyance of the water was through a large circular tube. The whole structure was about 29 years old at the time and had little repair work done. At times water would break through and some mention was made that it needed some repairs, if it was to stand the spring freshet. Nothing was done about it.

#### Destruction

When the dam broke it appeared as if it had been lifted bodily from its footings and fell with a roar like some enraged monster suddenly turned loose. The first obstacle encountered was about 500 cord of wood carried in its path of destruction. Next came the mill and the brick engine house collapsed like a paper bag.

The terrace, although frame and just a single storey would have stood the strain better than the engine house but with 500 cord of wood joining the fray it never stood a chance. The building ended up broken main stream where one part into two parts carried into the ---? was completely demolished and the other was thrown up on the CPR right-of-way.



Five Lives Were Lost in Paraging Floods - cont.

Destruction - cont.

Those living in the terrace included John Bowman along with his wife and three children also his aged father; John McLean and his 18 year old son; Alex Laird along with his wife and infant child.

When the terrace was carried away John Bowman was in bed as he had been ill and his wife had just settled down after caring for her husband. She seized the youngest child, got on board a bureau on which they remained afloat until it was struck by some debris and capsized. The child was thrown into the water by the impact and was lost. Mrs. Bowman though seriously injured was rescued and remained in critical condition for some time. The elder Bowman was carried downstream in his bed and part of the terrace until rescued none the worse for the experience. The younger Bowman and the other children made good their escape with no ill effects.

Narrow Escape

John McLean had a narrow escape. His son was up when the dam broke and called to his father to get out of the house which he did. The boy went to get a pet rabbit. He was not seen alive again. His body was found among some of the cord wood.

Alex Laird, his wife and child were all thrown into the water. He was drowned instantly. The other two managed to cling to some debris and rode out the main force of the flood for about an eighth of a mile when they were swept to the shore. Mrs. Laird tried to make the safety of the shore, the child slipped from her grasp and disappeared from sight.

When things were back to normal it was found that over 500 yards of the CPR rightofway had disappeared. A work crew of 75 men were on the scene in short order and inside of a day traffic was back normal along the line.

The town was shocked when it learned of the tragedy which <sup>was</sup> over before most people knew had happened so quickly it was about it.-----??? Further destruction was avoided when the extra thick sheet of ice on the dam simply settled in the bottom rather than break up and join the race.

Bursting of dams during high water in the spring was not unusual. In 1870 in Ingersoll three other dams gave way creating much property damage but there was no loss of life.

While Woodstock was not the location for the first school in Oxford it is fairly certain that residents of the area, now known as Woodstock sent their children to the school near Beachville or, as other schools were opened, attended them.

By 1839 there were enough students in the confines of the "town plot" that a school could be successfully operated. The Goodwin school on Dundas Street East was opened in 1839 with Mr. Goodwin the teacher. It also served as a meeting place for early Presbyterians of the town. This was made possible through the generous contributions of R.R. Hunter, R. Riddell, Henry Bishop, Levi H. Perry, Thomas Love, John Greig, H. Vansittart, Mrs. East, James Gibson, Col. Light, John Harrison, Elizabeth Nellies, John Hatch, Joseph Peers, William Danby, H. BAIN, George Elliott, Thomas Cheer, Walter Jones, J. Lockhart and James White who contributed \$1.58 or more. In 1852 the East End school was built at Princess and Beale St. and the West End School was located at Delatre and Hunter St. There were four teachers hired for each school and accommodation was estimated for 600 pupils.

By 1857 plans were underway for the building of a college in the town under the supervision of the Baptists of Canada. By 1860 the first classes were held at the Canadian Literary Institute but fire destroyed the college in 1861. The old Woodstock hotel was turned over to the college for a school. By 1862 the school was rebuilt. The name was changed to Woodstock College in 1882. This was the first co-educational college in Canada.

The opening of the Moulton College for Girls had made it necessary to close the ladies department in 1888. The establishing of McMaster University further reduced the college and it continued as a prep school until 1914 when enrolment fell off badly.

In 1926 the Woodstock College officially closed and remained closed for two years when it was leased by the Trinity College of Port Hope until 1930. The same year the buildings were purchased by a Roman Catholic order known as the Redemptionist Fathers and operated until October 1958. It was later torn down and the 30 acres became a fond memory to many who had walked the tree shaded walks and spent many pleasant hours in its numerous buildings.

East End Goodwin School Was City's First in 1839 - cont.

Today on these same grounds there is another school being erected to teach the rising generation a worthwhile vocation. This May will see the opening of the College Avenue Secondary School on the same site.

Central School

In 1879 a school was located in the centre of the town and is still known as Central School. In the original "Town Plot" land was laid out for municipal buildings which included a jail, courthouse, fairgrounds and a church. The court house and jail occupy their original sites. The fairgrounds are now Victoria Park. The people did not prefer to build a church on the site offered and received permission to sell the property to the school trustees for a public school. It was purchased for \$2000 in 1876. In 1879 a school was started and completed in 1880 at a cost of \$13,500. Over the years little has changed in the original building's outward appearance except that the bell tower and ornamental fence around the roof have been removed. The original school consisted of four classes on the main floor and four on the second floor.

In 1923 the size of the school was doubled and the eight-room addition was erected behind the old structure. The commercial section of the Collegiate was located here after this addition was completed until the new collegiate was completed.

From 1880-1937 all subjects were taught by one teacher. In 1937 science classes were started and usually much time was spent on agriculture. 1941 saw the start of shop and home economics. 1945 saw the big change in the introduction of the rotary system.

Fire has its part in the history of Central School. Christmas morning 1942 saw a fire start in the wiring above the boiler room which burned out the central hall and adjoining rooms to the extent of \$30,000 damage. Lost in the fire was a set of stuffed birds valued at \$2,000. Sixteen days later the school re-opened with half the classes attending 8:45 - 12:45 while the others attended from 1 - 5 p.m.

1949 was the year of the last major change in the structure of the school when \$68,000 was spent to install a gym and auditorium and shop room. This addition was officially opened Jan. 17, 1951.

By 1898 there were five public schools which were then called after their street location and had the following staff: Central, S. Nethercott, principal, W. J. Chave, Miss L. E. Cummings, Miss Mary Gardner, Miss Annie Lund, Miss M. A. Frizelle, Miss Alice White, Miss Mary Topping.



East End Goodwin School Was City's First In 1839 - cont.

Central School - cont.

Delatre St. School: D. McAlpine, principal, Mrs. K. F. Ross, Miss Mary Pyper, Miss Ethel Peers, Miss E. Gardner, Miss T. W. McIntosh.

Broadway: William Munro, principal, Misses C. J. Topping, Annie Wilson, Carrie Holtby.

Beale St.: Angus Cameron, principal, Misses Annie McLaughlin, Alice Shaver, Maud Paddon, Mary Newton, Marion Cheyne, Florence Dickson and Mrs. C. H. Haddock.

Chapel St.: Misses J. J. Whitelaw, Nettie Clarkson, J. Carryer, May Rose. Teacher of Music, George N. Crooker.

In 1900 the first of two separate schools was built and was known as St. Marys School. Fifty-four years later St. Rita's School became the second separate school.

Broadway and Southside schools now serve the south side of the city and are located on Broadway and Albert Sts. The present Broadway school being erected in 1912 and the Southside school was opened in 1957 to relieve crowding at Broadway.

Chapel and Eastdale schools serve the southeast corner of the town while the central section is served by Victoria and Princess schools. Princess School replacing the east end school in 1906. The old Central school has been elevated to a senior public school and has undergone many changes since 1888. The D. M. Sutherland school in the east end also is a Senior Public School.

#### Secondary Schools

1843 saw the beginning of secondary school education when the Woodstock Grammar School was opened at the corner of Graham and Hunter street. The first teacher was Mr. Summerville who was succeeded by Mr. Strachan. He was paid \$75 for six months, but remained for 25 years. The original receipt for \$75 may still be seen in the office of the principal at the Collegiate Institute.

In 1884 the Grammar school was closed and the collegiate institute was opened at the corner of Hunter and Riddell St. The original school was of white brick and capable of accommodating 300 students with large high ceiling classrooms. The school contained a belfry which was topped by a weather vane. The grounds were fenced by a low, ornamental iron fence.

The laboratory was considered to be one of the best in the province in a school serv???? town of this size and was equipped with the very latest equipment for a scientific course of the high school program.

The aim of the school was to give such a thorough English, classical



East End Goodwin School Was City's First In 1839 - cont.

Secondary Schools - cont.

or scientific education to pupils as would fit them for active duty pertaining to agriculture, commercial or professional pursuits. Classes were formed for all grades of departmental examinations and for matriculation pass and honors. While every effort was made to have students successful at their exams full attention was given to that section of students who desired that type of education that would best fit them for their desired trade or profession.

The policy of the board was to obtain the very best in teachers and their success is noted in the large number of pupils who have gone forth to make a name for themselves and bring honor to the home town. Since its beginning the Collegiate Institute has been in the front rank of institutes in the country. Some of its early teachers who helped make this possible were: D. H. Hunter, A. D. Griffin, T. H. Lennox, Miss Carrie Fair, C. S. Kerr, A. Stevenson and E. C. Srigley.

Within the living memory of many of the readers great changes have taken place in our public schools as the following statistics will show:

Attendance: 1925, 1,256; 1930, 1,387; 1950, 1,711; 1960, 3,210.

At Central School in 1932 the classes contained between 39 and 48 pupils with 11 teachers for 448 students.

In 1962 classes averaged 35 students with 14 teachers for 370 students.

Teachers' salaries, 1941, min. \$850; max. \$2,400; 1951, min. \$1,800; max. \$4,300; 1962, min. \$3,700, max. \$9,100.

Teachers employed, 1932, 33; 1942, 40; 1952, 58; 1962, 110.

The location and topography of Woodstock lend themselves to making it an attractive residential centre. Though the situation is high, Woodstock is really located in a valley or basin which is entered at the north by the Thames River and from the south by Cedar Creek while the two, united flow through the valley to the west. On the south easterly rim of this basin the first house was erected. In choosing this site for his home in the bush. Daniel Burtch displayed the vision of a seer as this spot for years was the high spot of the community and all the surrounding countryside could be viewed from here.

From this point and running along the same ridge and sloping grade to the northwest were elected many of the first good houses that were later built by country gentlemen who chose Woodstock as their home in Canada, and became prominently identified with life and interests of Woodstock and Oxford County. Among the builders of homes on this site we find the names of Dr. Blaquiens, Capt. Drew, Old St. Paul's rectory of Canon Bettridge, the Mills, Cottles, Fauquiens and Alexanders to mention a few.

#### Fine Old Homes

At that time the main part of Woodstock was located in the east end. The first brick house was built in 1836 and was located to the west of the old rectory. It was followed by a second in 1837 which was built by George Elliott. George Gray built the first three storey building which was a hotel known as the Royal Pavillion. It was built in front of the court house in West Woodstock in 1844 at a cost of 500 pounds (\$1500 today). From that time on there was an ever increasing number of homes being built. Many of them were architectural masterpieces and can still be seen as one travels along Vansittart or in the area between Graham and Oxford St., Dundas and Ingersoll Ave., in the east end on Wilson St. or its immediate vicinity as well as the area around Old St. Paul's Church. Of course some of these stand out such as the old T.L. Wilson home on Vansittart Ave. and Alex Watson's home. An example of the excellent workmanship is displayed on Wilson Street at the old D.W. Kam home. A wing on the north side of this house was removed in one piece and placed on a foundation on the south side to form a separate house without any ill effects. Considering the size of this wing very few would even considering the task today especially if it was going to involve a 20th century home.

It was not unusual in those days as walls were often three bricks thick

## City's Early Residential Area Began in East End about 1836 - cont.

### Fine Old Homes - cont.

and the foundation floor would often rest on 2" x 12" timbers which would run the full length of the structure in one piece. Today it would be considered a waste of time, money and material to put this type of lumber in a house and a wall this thick is almost unheard of. In days gone by these homes were a mark of social prominence and class distinction which the passing of the years has erased. These homes were all surrounded by a fair acreage and necessitated the use of a gardner and handyman to keep the property up to the Joneses.

Since then however great strides have been made in the number and character of Woodstock's homes. In its early days the style was not always modern or attractive but in recent years the trend has been to smaller and more modern dwellings and the location has been more tasteful with parts of the town being made residential and others set aside for industry.

### Streets Named

One of the first sections set aside for a residential area was in the north-east section and became known as the Huron Park Development project. The property known as the Tobbin farm was purchased and in 1947 during the term of Mayor Charles Burston, the first sod was turned. When this area was laid out it was planned to have the homes built in such a way as not to obstruct the view of its neighbor as is found on Alexander. When it came to naming the streets the people behind the project realized that Old London had a soft spot in the hearts of many just returning from the wars. It was decided to rename Knights Road to Knightsbridge Road, a familiar name in S. Kensington. From this street one can find any amount of names that recall streets over there such as Grosvenor, Earls court, Brompton, Sloane, Cromwell, Berwick, Belgrave, Warwick, Wilton, Kensington to name a few. All streets were not so named as Mayor Bernadette Smith named Jubilee, Vimy Pl. Others were named for members of their family as Brenda Crescent is named after the daughter of R.G. Thompson.

As new sections of this residential area were opened new streets had to be named.

The contractors did the old pattern and named them in honor of outstanding

City's Early Residential Area Began in East End about 1836 - cont.

Street Names - cont.

citizens such as Dent street after Thomas Dent, MLA; McKenzie after Mayor Edward McKenzie; Hayball for Mayor Charles Hayball, Lee to honor Arthur Lee, the former town clerk; George Miller remembered by Miller Street, West street is named after a former Mayor, Parkinson is to remember a noted family. Along with local names we find names of world figures such as Field Marshall Alexander remembered with Alexander and Winston Churchill with Churchill Place to name but a few. Other streets have taken on colorful names such as Orchard, Briarhill, Heather, Edgewood which all go to make a new area more appealing.

Looking over the present trend we find that Woodstock appears to be in its second cycle of progressive expansion. The original town was in the east end and the first cycle of expansion carried it to the west and now we find it returning to the east. This time the city is expanding in an orderly fashion and the old idea of class distinction has completely disappeared.



If James P. Ball, a surveyor in the early days of Tillsonburg had carried out his wishes the present day residents would not be enjoying the 100 ft. roadway of Broadway's business thoroughfare which is one of the widest main streets in Ontario today.

When Mr. Ball made his survey in 1836 he declared that this wide a roadway was cruel and a waste of good land. It was probably quite an ordeal to cross from one side to the other during the spring thaws and especially after a rain.

Nevertheless, George Tillson the town's founder, was firm on his stand and today the citizens have reason to be proud of his foresight which could anticipate future needs. At the time of his survey Ball was assisted by George Tilson and W. Fawcett. It was no easy matter as they not only had a heavy virgin undergrowth but were continually molested by bears which upset their routine.

After the survey was complete the first lot sold on Broadway was the lot later owned by Harry Ostrander. The price paid was a box of 12 axes made in Tillsonburg which retailed at \$2 each at that time. Across the street where the Royal Hotel later stood another lot was sold for \$10. The first three frame houses erected in the village were those of Levitt, Darrow and VanNorman, C.D. Inglesly organized a school during the winter of 1835-36 for the study of sacred music. Among his pupils were George and Edwin Tillson, William Darrow, H.P. Crossett and A. Turner.

All the settlement was at first below the hill "Town Hill" as visions of a town on this site. The land on Bloomer Street was more valuable than any other property. Benjamin VanNorman started his first store on this street. It was managed by Lewis Leonard. In 1836 VanNorman built his first grist mill and the first road was cut through to Talbot street. Then George Tillson engineered roads in all directions from five to 15 miles out in order to encourage settlers to come to Dereham Forge instead of over to the Talbot settlement.

#### Dentistry

Anyone needing a tooth pulled secured the services of William Darrow, a blacksmith who was an expert with lancet and turnkey. The patient would sit on the floor with his head held tightly between the operator's knees

Streets of Tillsonburg Tell of Stormy Political History - cont.

Dentistry- cont.

while the keys were adjusted, then usually with one turn the tooth would be removed.

In 1872 when Tillsonburg was incorporated as a town a mistake was made which today is still on record. The name "Tillsonburg" was spelled with only one "l" when the bill of incorporation was being drafted. When it was discovered the people were in arms as the error was considered a personal insult to the Tillson family. In 1902 the citizens of the town petitioned the Ontario Legislature to correct the spelling which they did. The official town seal, however, has still only one "l".

The street names of Tillsonburg have no favourites in politics. When in 1872 they began to name streets, Tillsonburg which only about twice gave a Liberal a majority, saw fit to honor many of the Reform leaders by naming streets after them. Mackenzie, a short street running off Harvey, bears the name of the best known leader of the Rebellion of '37. Rolph is named after Dr. John Rolph who practised medicine in Toronto. He was an ardent supporter of the rebellion and helped to draw up the plans for the rebellion. But for him, the rebellion might have lasted longer and been more severe. Some think that he got cold feet and changed the date of the attack. This split the chances of success in half as Mackenzie's followers were not sure of the time or place of meeting and therefore the forces were disorganized. Rolph also was interested in the education facilities of the day. On Rolph street was located the public school. Bloomer street developed from Bloomery forge operated by George Tillson. This forge was originally called Dereham Forge. Wolf, Bear and Venisson Streets were given the names of animals by Mr. Tillson due to his love for hunting.

Arrests

It is interesting to note that during the rebellion, feeling was high in Tillsonburg over Mackenzie's attempt to capture Toronto. George Tillson and others were arrested and taken to Simcoe for questioning as it was reported that they had equipment at the forge with which to make ammunition.

## Streets of Tillsonburg Tell of Stormy Political History - cont.

### Arrests - cont.

Tillson admitted having such equipment but claimed that he was an ardent hunter and preferred his own make of bullets. Eventually all were released.

Bidwell street is named after Marshall Bidwell who was a close friend of Dr. Rolph. He did not agree to open rebellion but gave what assistance he could. He was later expatriated and never did return to Canada. Baldwin street is in honor of Robert Baldwin one of the most famous of the Reformers. Baldwin was a member of the Church of England and his family belonged to the Family Compact yet for years he worked for Responsible Government so that he became known so strongly that he became known as the man with one idea.

Ridout street was named for Col. George Ridout who was a judge in the Dist. of Niagara. He was dismissed from office by Sir Francis Bond Head whom many historians claim caused the rebellion by his stubbornness and lack of knowledge on how to govern a colony.

Durham and Elgin streets recall that Lord Durham's daughter married Lord Elgin. Durham's report has often been called the Magna Charter of Canada. Lord Elgin came as Governor-General to try and out this report and recommendations.

Ligar Avenue received its name at a later date to commemorate a public figure, James Young who later became Baron Lisgar and Governor General of Canada in 1868. Brock Street, of course, is after Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of the War of 1812.

### Election Row

In Tillsonburg they took their elections seriously in 1858. The two contestants for South Oxford in 1858 were Stephen Richards and Dr. Connor. The election was held in September but on May 1 enough interest had been stirred up that when Dr. Connor's followers were holding a rally in Tillsonburg with Hon. M.H. Foley as speakers, that during the course of the meeting a party of Richardites entered the hall and ordered Mr. Foley to stop speaking, which of course, he refused to do and continued his address. He had not proceeded for long before he was hit with an egg. Shortly after this, Barney French, the leader of the intruding Richardites, approached the platform and demanded to be heard. Someone suggested that if Mr. Foley would not agree to this he should be removed by force. The rowdies



## Streets of Tillsonburg Tell of Stormy Political History - cont.

### Election Row - cont.

made for the platform and bedlam broke loose. In the course of the melee a portion of the floor broke through letting between 30 and 50 persons fall 24 feet to the floor below. This ended the melee and when the victims were removed it was found that a Mr. Hopkins was dead with about 20 others injured, some seriously, including Mr. Foley.

This feud between Dr. Connor and Richards had been brewing for some time. Richards, a lawyer from Woodstock, claimed that J.S. Garrett, editor and publisher of the Ingersoll Chronicle had been paid in cash to support Dr. Connor in his bid for a seat in the Legislative Assembly. In answer to this, Garrett published an editorial which denounced Richards for his ungentlemanly action. Following this, Richards secured the help of a group of men headed by Barney French in an attempt to intimidate the voters into supporting him. The feeling reached fever pitch. It was found necessary to close the bars during the days of voting which helped prevent further bloodshed.

When the result of the election was announced Dr. Connor was declared the winner. He proceeded immediately for Ingersoll. As he neared Mount Elgin he was met with the sight of a huge bonfire. The supporters had put a barrell of tar at the top of a 30 foot pole and set it afire in celebration.

### Disastrous Fire

On June 1, 1902, Tillsonburg suffered its greatest fire loss up to that time when the entire block surrounded by Broadway, Brock, Harvey and Ridout streets was turned into a pile of rubble within a few hours. The whole of the town was threatened. The weather had been hot, dry and sultry for some time and the demand on the town's water had taxed the supply to its limit. The fire was discovered in the Buckerrough Blacksmith shop. John Darrow who had a machine shop and foundry in an adjoining building that had once been used as a stage barn where horses were kept for the Ingersoll and Port Burwell stage, found the blaze first. The blacksmith shop was in the building that was once used for a roller skating rink at the corner of Brock and Harvey streets.



Streets of Tillsonburg Tell of Stormy Political History - cont.

Disastrous Fire - cont.

Mr. Darrow took a horse and buggy and rode two blocks north to ring the fire bell. So rapidly did the fire spread that by the time he returned his own shop was completely engulfed in flames. The firemen arrived with the horse-drawn hose truck. When the water was turned on the pressure was so low that the water would not reach across the sidewalk. Then the boilers were fired at the Tillson Waterworks Co. on Hyman street which provided auxiliary fire protection.

Telegrams were sent to Simcoe, Aylmer and Ingersoll for help. Fire companies arrived on special trains only to find that the hose connections were all different and could not be used. Fire swept through the stores all along the east side of Broadway. The heat was so great it cracked the store windows on the other side of the street. Many were attracted to the town by the smoke and everyone pitched in to help. Women supplied sandwiches and coffee. Whiskey was cheap and plentiful. The workers had their spirits revived with whiskey brought in kegs on wheel barrows.

A high east wind carried burning debris three blocks west to Washington Grand Avenue where four homes were destroyed. One farmer who had been helping to fight the fire arrived home to find his large dairy barn destroyed by burning debris from the town blaze. He was Fred Sanders who lived three miles west of the town on the eleventh concession of Dereham township.

Among the business places destroyed were: The Buckerough Blacksmith Shop, Darrow Foundry, Hobbs Hardware, Nevell Harness Shop, Clark's Clothing Store, Carpenter's Funeral Parlor, McFarlane's Barber Shop, Weston Tire Shop. The offices of Dr. Sinclair and R.R. Brady, the E.J. House Livery, Ferros Tin Shop, Garnett's Novelty Shop, Parker's Butcher Shop and several homes on Harvey street.

If J.P. Ball had been able to lay out Broadway the way that he wanted to this fire could have wiped out the whole town in a very short time. Today the town is not faced with the problem of not being able to use the neighboring fire fighters equipment as all connections are the same today in all communities of Oxford thanks to the mutual aid agreement.

On July 16, 1792 Governor Simcoe issued a proclamation dividing Upper Canada into 19 counties. The two counties whose boundaries affected present day Oxford were York and Norfolk. Norfolk took in the southern portion, while the townships of Blenheim and Blandford became part of York, which included land as far east as present-day Toronto. This area was part of the Home District.

In 1798 Oxford, Norfolk and Middlesex became the London District. It was during this period that we find Thomas Horner and party arriving on the scene. In answer to Simcoe's offer of a township of land. They arrived in 1793 the first time and were considered to be the first to stop at Blenheim with the intention of making a home there. Watson, who was the leader of the party, had no intentions of coming back, but Horner was pleased with what he saw. He had set his mind on forming a settlement. To accomodate them, Simcoe ordered the first three concessions to be surveyed. Horner returned and on the banks of the Horner Creek set up an establishment which was the first settlement in Blenheim.

As the trend of settlement spread westward. Blenheim settled fairly rapidly. By 1846 it had a population of 1,772. One of the families that made up this number was the family of Enos Wolverton, who was born in New York State and migrated to Canada West with his parents, who settled along the Governors Road east of present-day Princeton in 1826. There he remained until 1834, when he married and took his American bride to a small clearing on the second concession. From there he worked out at road building and the income enabled him to move to a larger farm on the 5th concession. During the time the Wolvertons lived there the family was increased by seven.

#### Founded Warsaw

In 1844 Wolverton acquired 200 acres of Crown Land on the 8th concession. As he cleared the land which was traversed by the Nith River, he had visions of a village forming there. It was on the banks of the river that Enos Wolverton centred his activities. He built a home and shortly after a sawmill, to be followed by a grist mill and then a flour mill. As these were the key points in attracting other settlers. Wolverton soon had the makings of a village.

Wolverton Hall's Three-Floor Stairway 2 Yrs. Abuilding - cont.

Founded Warsaw - cont.

In order to accomodate these people he sold 115 acres of land, keeping 85 acres for his home and industries. The village of Warsaw was laid out in 1848. Wolverton was an ardent Baptist and was ordained by the Free Commission Baptists in 1832. Among the other Baptists who followed him to Warsaw were the families of Dawson, Burnett, Curry, Maynard, Stockton, Corbett, Chesney, Fleming, Frostick, Hersee, Morton, Patten, Page, Player, Troup, Risdén, Stewart, Racknor, Wood, Welsh and Young. During the 1850's Wolverton prospered as did all who worked with him. It being quite in order for the local squire to have a large home, it was decided to erect Wolverton Hall. Along about this time the name was changed to Wolverton as like so many other places, it had a name already chosen by another community. In order to have a post office it was necessary to choose another name. What better name than Wolverton? On Sept. 6, 1851 Enos Wolverton became the first postmaster. Mail arrived three times a week from Ayr. The community having attained the status of a post village, an official survey of the village plot was made by Thomas Alchin in 1851. Prior to this a school had been started on the site of the present school. When it was decided to build a new and larger school the farmers and the village residents began to bicker over a site. The farmers thought it should be at the corner; others preferred the present site. Finally a meeting was called. After a vote was taken the farmers thought they had won and decided to go home but a second vote was held, which chose the site they preferred. September of this year will see this school close, in favor of a central school area, a trend which is sweeping the country and closing the little red school houses.

Church Cost \$600

The Baptist Church which was erected in 1862 at a cost of \$600 plus many hours of volunteer labor. In May 1857, the members of the Riverside Baptist Church in the Wolverton District formed a congregation and continued to operate until 26 of their members were given permission to start a church in Wolverton. In 1862 the frame church was erected. The lumber was cut at Curry's mill. The property was given by David C. Curry and his wife, Hannah. G.N. Curry, Enos Wolverton and G.W. Dawson were the first trustees.



Wolverton Hall's Three-Floor Stairway 2 Mrs. Abuilding - cont.

Church cost \$600 - cont.

The first pastor was Rev. Theopolis Booker. There was a Methodist Church near where the cider mill was located. Along with these there was a small following of the Church of England, families who immigrated from Devon. They did much to promote fruit farming here. A sprinkling of Scotch also settled here, many coming from Ayrshire and originally settling at Ayr. The village continued to grow. Around the park area developed a fairly prosperous business section. A Mrs. Abbott operated a dressmaking and millinery shop. C. Alex had a tailor shop, B.W. Rawtinlumer was blacksmith, John Meggs operated Meggs Hotel, J. Frostick had the boot and shoe shop, J.H. Hunt was the butcher. James Lavery dealt in dry goods and groceries and Alonzo Wolverton had a "full line" of hardware.

As long as the name of Wolverton remains the family name Wolverton will be cherished. Enos Wolverton was a restless man. After seeing his ambitions realized in the 1850's he left Wolverton and moved to Walsingham in Norfolk county to operate a steam sawmill, renting Wolverton Hall which he had built with pride. At one time there were five families living within its walls. In 1856 his wife died. In 1858 the country was plunged into an economic crash and Wolverton's loss was enormous, putting him on the verge of bankruptcy. In 1861 the family returned to Wolverton Hall. But Enos did not tarry long here and he went to U.S. in 1866, where he stayed for 20 years. He returned to the Hall in the late 1880's at the age of 75. Being too old for further travels, he took to studying the stars which had always been one of his hobbies, having built an observatory on the roof of Wolverton Hall when it was built. It was under his direction in his observatory that some of the best "Maps of the Heavens" were made that were known at that time.

When his span of life ran out in 1893 he took his place with other members of his family in the family plot in the Wolverton cemetery. This plot is still to be seen, surrounded by an ornamental, iron fence. Within the confines of the fence there lies a soldier of the U.S. Civil War who was killed in action; after the war was over his brother brought his body home. In all, four of the five sons went to fight for the cause of freedom but only two returned. Lieut. Alonzo Wolverton continued to make his home there



## Wolverton Hall's Three-Floor Stairway 2 Yrs. Abuilding - cont.

Church cost \$600 - cont.

after his discharge from the Union Army in 1865. It was he who carried on the Wolverton tradition until the fire of 1922 and his death in 1925. During that time he did just about everything possible in the village. He served as postmaster from 1869-71 and again from 1881-1924 and was also a store keeper and the owner of the flour mill. His younger brother became an outstanding figure in the field of education. Dr. Newton Wolverton served as principal of Woodstock College from 1881 - 1886.

### Hall Still Stands

All that remains today is Wolverton Hall, a symbol of days gone by. Wolverton House, as it is often called is of Georgian architecture, and rises a full three stories high. The observatory no longer serves as a place of vantage to study the heavens. It was removed when it was found to be unsafe. This rectangular home contains 14 spacious rooms, which are overlooked by a broad domer gable which crowns the front with a fan-shaped window under its peak. An entrance of typical Georgian design, recessed against the weather, is centrally located between pairs of case-ment windows and leads into a wide hall, where one is met by a picture of perfection. It is here where one views the finished product of many hours of planning and labor. The circular staircase seen in this house was built for Enos Wolverton in the 1850's, before he went to Walsingham. It was necessary for him to get a millwright at Paris to do the job, as he was considered to be one of the best available. It was built to the specifications laid down by the owner. There is not one nail used in the entire staircase. The curves and bends were all steamed into shape and are held with wooden pegs. This masterpiece of woodworking spirals up for three stories and makes a complete turn at each flight. When one is told that it took two years to complete you wonder how it could be done at that time when only hand tools were used. The patience of the builder must have been tried many times over. It is a pity that his name could not be placed with this sample of his work.

The floors of the house are in keeping with the beauty of the staircase. The dining room is done in red pine, with the boards being a full 12" wide. They show no signs of wear, thanks to their present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Hieder who have done much to restore the house to its original beauty.

Wolverton Hall's Three-Floor Stairway 2 Yrs. Abuilding - cont.

Hall Still Stands - cont.

We are told that originally there were fireplaces in most of the rooms but over the years they have been closed off to make way for a more modern way of heating.

Yes, if the old house could tell its tale it would be an outstanding one; one that has seen the village through its heyday, when close to 250 people called it home; along with fires and storms that left their mark on the face of the village, which took people from here to other places only to come back for re-unions and centennials to recall days gone by.

To the stranger passing this way one is almost led to believe that this is the land of Rip VanWinkle if it were not for the modern dress of the people and the automobile. It is indeed a picture to behold this community that has not only weathered the storms of nature but has held out against the trend to modernise just to keep up with the neighbors.

Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-leggedy Beasties That Go "Whump" in

The Night - Page 19

Come all you young fellows with hearts brave and true  
And I'll spin you some yarns  
That to you may be new.

If by chance your grandparents came to Zorra to dwell, these stories they know only too well. When these people left the Highlands behind them they left little else. One of the most treasured things they carried which required little space were the traditions of the homeland and they were strong believers in the occult and the dreadful. The ghost stories told in Zorra do not deal with ghosts in Scotland but those here in Zorra. It's no wonder that Zorra is called the "land of the brave and the free". You had to be brave to venture out alone on a country road when the November moon was high for fear of meeting one of the many ghosts who were as free as the wind to travel where they pleased.

Yes, often have the older residents of Zorra sat by the pot-bellied stove with mouth and eyes open and knees knocking. With cold chills, running up and down their spine as they listened to their grandparents spin tales of witches and ghosts, or to hear of other creatures of the night which have given Zorra folk lore that will equal the best. To this day there are people living who will vouch for more than I am about to relate. As they are in the evening of life, I feel that the yarns should be retold here so that these weird stories, myths and legends of the early days will not disappear as has much of our early folk lore.

Gourlay's Ghost

As all good Scots loved a wee deoch (Gaelic for drink) I should first tell you about the Ghost of Robert Gourlay.

There were four brothers all unmarried who, though kind and generous, were all lovers of the bottle. When under the power of the drink they were even beyond the ordinary drunkards and were a disgrace to themselves and a terror to their neighbors. When they would fight among themselves their yells and screams would make blood run cold. But come the Sabbath and they were changed men. As regular as daylight follows the dark they would drive the five miles to Embro every Sunday morning to attend Kirk and with a stolid stare broken only by snuff taken they sat through the service.

Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties that go "Whump"

In the Night - cont.

Gourlay's Ghost - cont.

Before entering they would have a wee one as the road was dusty. As soon as the service was over they would once again start in where they left off a few hours before. When they did finally leave for home it was not safe for man nor beast to be in their way. The cry would precede them "Clear the way". A look down the road would tell that the Gourlays were homeward bound. This is the setting for our first story.

One evening late in the summer the boys having stayed a little longer than usual were on their way home. One of them, Robert by name, was sitting at the back of the wagon with his feet dangling. The road led through a marshy place where the track was very rough. The sun had disappeared down behind the trees and it was fast getting dark. The dust tickled Robert's throat as he took out his black bottle and was in the act of taking a swig when suddenly the wagon gave a jolt and the drunken man fell out of the wagon. He was a big man and his fall upon a projecting root broke his neck. Death was instantaneous.

The other brothers, feeling no pain, failed to miss Robert and continued to drive home and eventually went to bed quite unconcerned. The following day some of the neighbors found Robert still clutching his bottle which had been broken leaving only the neck of the vessel in his possession. For the next 20 years, it was said that a strange form was seen from time to time moving to and fro along the sideroad where Gourlay had died. The figure was not more than four feet high, very stout with little or no neck, the head set closely upon the shoulders drooping forward onto the chest. The eyes glared like two balls of fire, the mouth would be partly opened and the tongue hanging out. It was a gruesome sight. When it spoke, the voice was low and sepulchral resembling somewhat the gurgling of a distant streamlet. Whenever the ghost appeared, the dogs would howl piteously, while cattle and horses would kick up their heels and high tail for the far end of the field.

The spectre uttered many groans, moans and uncanny sounds that stirred the hair on their scalps of listeners. The only sound that could be understood was the one word "doech" (Gaelic for drink) uttered with a



Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties That Go "Whump"

In the Night - cont.

Gourlay's Ghost - cont.

hoarse gurgling tone. Whether this word was meant to indicate the cause of ruin or the present thirst of the spirit was never known. For years men returning from the village at dusk would see the awful form waving backwards and forwards holding onto the neck of the broken bottle and amid the hollow moans and sullen groans uttering ruefully the ominous word "deoch".

Some 20 years after Gourlay's death on a dark, stormy night an elder of the church met the ghost. The good man at once took out his Bible, opening it and held it between the ghost and himself. Then for the first time, the ghost made full and distinct utterances. It related with deep contrition the history of the past and added: "This is the last time I shall appear on earth for tonight I would have died had I not been killed 20 years ago on this spot through deoch". From that day to this the ghost of Robert Gourlay was seen no more.

Witch of the Swamp

All the stories were not the result of drink. The next yarn tells about Jean Gordon, the witch of the big swamp.

In an old log shanty located at the edge of one of the many swamps found in Zorra Jean Gordon lived. Her only companion was a big black cat, which was said to be an evil spirit incarnate. Jean herself was a perfect example of a witch being toothless, nearly bent double and wizened up. She had not been troubled with comb or wash basin since infancy which was long, long ago. She was given credit with having the power to transform herself into a cat, dog, ape, bat, owl or even a frog. She could inflict rheumatism, headache or toothache on any who crossed her. She could put the cows dry and prevent the butter coming in the churn, the bread from rising and soap from forming; even the death of a calf would be credited to her. Those to whom she spoke understood very little as her Gaelic was poor and she spoke rapidly. Some even thought that there was a touch of Hebrew in her tongue.

Jean seldom left her lonely home by day. Come the twilight time and she came to life and could be seen out in the shadows around the edge of the

Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties that go

"Whump" in the Night - cont.

Witch of the Swamp - cont.

swamp. On stormy nights she was in her glory calling down chimneys with her screechy voice or to scream and whistle at rattling windows. Her face was often seen peering in at frightened children as they sat round the fireplace on a stormy night. More than once she was seen to rise from her shanty on a broom and sweep storm clouds out of the sky by the light of the silvery moon.

On the farm of Alex Macdonald there was a great elm tree with bare and decayed branches. Jean, when she was an owl, used to perch high up on this tree. It was in this tree that she met her fate, as the story goes. She had transformed herself into a great black raven and was uttering cries as weird and creepy that it made Tom Ferguson shudder in fear as he looked up at the tree while on his way home from an afternoon of hunting. He took a shot at the bird. The bird, or evil spirit took to flight and circled around the hunter uttering a blood curdling call. Three times he fired with the same result. Then he concluded that this was no ordinary creature but Jean Gordon up to her tricks again. Wasting three shots annoyed him. He remembered that evil could not withstand silver. He had no silver bullet so he took a silver sixpence from his pocket and rammed it down the barrel with a piece of cloth and uttered a silent prayer. He fired, the bird fell with the sixpence in its right side. At that same moment Jean Gordon in her shanty at the other side of the swamp a mile away got up from her spinning wheel, gasped and fell on her right side dead.

Fiery Phantom

Today the scene of our next story is marked by a culvert near the dead end of the road running out of Embro. It is the story of the Phantom with fire in its head. The origin of the story goes back to Indian times. It was presumed that at a time when the Indians occupied Zorra one of their members had been murdered at this spring. The ghost of the dead warrior kept a silent vigil here so that no others would use the water sacred to his memory.

The Phantom stood about five feet high. From the top of his head there

Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties That Go

"Whump" in the Night - cont.

issued a pale white light from where his scalp had been removed. The light was so bright a man could tell the time in its light if he would linger long enough. Just below the flame there appeared two eyeballs, luminous and immovable and a great gaping mouth.

It never was any trouble to get a person to vouch for this story. For some time the road was deserted from dusk to dawn as many a horse had shied at the sight of this phantom and many a buggy was wrecked and remained in the ditch till the owner had regained his nerve.

Sandy Dunbar was a godly man of great courage and strength. He determined to confront the ghost whatever the consequences might be. So one night, taking as his neighbors told him, his life in his hands, he went forth on his wierd mission of investigation.

Some half dozen brave young highlanders went with him armed with knives and sticks. They accompanied him to within 500 yards of the dreaded spot. From there it was up to Sandy to proceed alone.

Sure enough, there the Phantom was as big as usual and just as gruesome. The sight of it made sweat ooze from every pore. Sandy being a brave man had made the boast that he never turned his back on a foe, man or devil. So after praying for his wife and children and especially for himself in his present trying position he called to the ghost demanding who or what he wanted. There was no response. Taking a tighter hold on his hickory club he advanced a little further and challenged the ghost again. A little closer and another challenge but still no response but those eyes were looking right through him and some of his brave supporters claimed that they could see those eyes staring right through Sandy.

Cautiously Sandy approached the ghost always ready to defend himself. When he was near enough to put his hand out. Every inch of his body shook and at last he came into contact with the ghost.

It was the old spruce stump that stood beside the creek. The light at the top was the mycelium of the fungus which it is well known develops on the decaying wood of the spruce and some other kinds of woods under certain climatic conditions and shines at night with a pale soft phosphorence.

It is commonly called fox fire or wolf fire. What appeared as the eyes and mouth were only spots where the bark had fallen off and the uncovered surface reflecting the light from above formed a crude resemblance of a human face.



Ghoulies, Chaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties that go "Whump"

In the Night - cont.

Singing Spirits

This same fox fire gave use to a great many of the stories that have spread the length and breadth of the county.

Zorra also had singing spirits. At the home of one of Zorra early settlers about one o'clock each morning could be heard the delightful singing coming towards the house. It would stop when the voice reached the door and all would be quiet. The settler's wife's sister came up to Zorra to spend some time. As they sat one evening and the hour was growing late, the singing commenced. The young woman got up eager to see what voice it was and she saw a young man approaching. At the door he turned, stopped singing and left. She described the man but such a person was one unknown in those parts. On a trip to Woodstock she met the man face to face and passed on by.

Shortly after this she was struck with a fever and died. It was customary in those days to have a local carpenter make a coffin for the deceased but no local carpenter would this time. The settler went to Woodstock and the first carpenter he approached agreed to have his helper do the job. The helper suited the description of the man described by the woman as the possessor of the voice in the night on the one seen on the street of Woodstock. Ghosts, what are they? Whence do they come?

There is the story told by some of the older folk of the town that they were returning from a village dance along the route travelled by a funeral procession that afternoon. This was also the locality frequented by one of the other ghosts.

As they were merrily wending their way home, the party in the lead suddenly let out a most awful scream. There was something in the ditch ahead letting out with some awful sounds resembling human snores. One of the braver lads picked up a fence rail and proceeded to investigate. When he got fairly close a form leaped out of the ditch and ran off down the road. It turned out to be **only** a horse that had got out on the roadside and decided to rest in the ditch.



Ghoulies, Ghaisties and Long-Leggedy Beasties that go  
"Whump" in the Night - cont.

Singing Spirits - cont.

There is also the story of the boy who went to get some chewing tobacco unknown to his family and when returning home passed a cemetery. A huge white creature stood up behind one of the tombstones and bawled. The boy never stopped to look back but ran for home sure he had seen a ghost. It turned out to be a white steer that had got loose.

Today in this age of automobiles and electricity we are not so likely to be taken by these stories as were our ancestors. However, let us not be hasty in condemning these people for their superstitious folk lore. After all, life was what they made it and by all reports they enjoyed life to its uttermost.

Highlands of Oxford Rich in Story, Beauty - cont.

Golspie - cont.

be found snapping turtles that are used for turtle soup. This is one of the few places where they are found in Oxford, some reaching 30 inches in diameter. By turning right at the road opposite the old Methodist cemetery they can often be seen at the bridge (not a good road). You are now entering Embro, the home of the Zorra Highland Games. Each year people gather here to celebrate an old Scottish tradition that goes back beyond memory. Originally the main feature was the marching of the clans in a show of strength by number. Today the main feature of the Embro Games is the massed bands. Highland dancing has always been part of the games and here the dancing starts early in the morning and goes through to long after sundown. Embro is noted for more than its games so take time out to see the village. Outside of a few modern improvements, the buildings are still the same. The big church will celebrate its centennial on June 30 and behind the church the Matheson house, the home of Hon. Dr. D.M. Sutherland is another beauty spot. The town also boasts of many antique automobiles so don't be alarmed if something rather unusual approaches you on the road.

Embro Pond

After viewing the main part of the village take the main road out, under the railroad bridge to the North Embro Mill, an old mill still in business but not with water power. The dam went out a few years ago. It was here that hydro was first generated for the village. The cairn on your right is for the tug-of-war team of the 1890's who won a world's championship at Chicago in 1893. If you are interested in cemeteries you will find this one interesting. At the first corner you will note the sign "Embro Pond". Turn left and about one-half mile you will see the Upper Thames Valley Conservation Authority pond and re-forestation area. A good spot to stretch your legs, also for turning the car around and returning to the corner turn left.

This country is fairly flat, you are not in the highlands yet. At the next corner the house on the right was once a hotel. The Zorra township council met here for many years. Highland Park School on the right is the senior public school of Zorra. On the farm across the road was where the first binder in Zorra was used in 1874. It cut a three foot swath and tied with wire. At Brooksdale not much of the old place remains but the church, and the clergy reserve farm still owned by the

Highlands of Oxford Rich in Story, Beauty - cont.

Embro Pond - cont.

church. At Brooksdale we notice the land becoming more rolling. As we approach the fine stone house on your right which is the home of W.S. Munro of show horse fame. The cement block structure on your left was to be a mushroom plant. Notice the type of fence post as you near the corner. They were the latest in fencing about 75 years ago. The schoolhouse at the corner is over the century mark. The Scots were great stone masons and their handiwork has stood the years well. Many fine stone houses will be seen through the Zorras and Nissouri and seldom are two alike.

As we approach Fairview Corner we see a large red brick house on the left. The story is told that it was built by a staunch German during the First World War as a home for the Kaiser Wilhelm when he would visit Canada after victory. The old blacksmith shop on the Perth, the north side of the road is all that remains of the industry of Fairview. After turning left at the end take the gravel road into the Zorra Highlands. From here you will see for miles the hills and dales that know no county line. There is good fishing here. At the second road on your left turn. No wonder the Scots thought of home. Note the use they made of stones and the way they are piled in places. Drive slow as its hilly country and there is much to see. Notice the fine yard of Alvin Morris. Turn right at stop sign and proceed into Harrington. The church on your right Ralph Connor attended when his father preached there. That is a mink farm on your left. The Harrington Pond is on your left also the old mill and dam, a nice spot for a picnic and a look around.

Wildwood

As you leave Harrington notice the stone school. You are now in Wildwood country. Travel over to the third corner (12th of Nissouri) and turn right. This will all be part of the lake formed by the dam. Turn left at the town line and proceed to the next corner. Turn left here (11th concession). Note the different type of stone used in the building on your right. This is limestone- quite common in the St. Marys area. The stone house on your left was Wildwood post office.

Highlands of Oxford Rich in Story, Beauty - cont.

Wildwood - cont.

Did you see one of the wooden silos on your left? Turn right at the stop sign to Uniondale, the home of cheese for pizza pie. Proceed straight through Uniondale. The smoke up ahead on your right is St. Marys.

You are now approaching Mennonite country and you will notice the unusual number of horses and buggies in theyards. At the second road (concession 8) turn left. The Lily White Hills are on your right. The home of Rev. Thomas Brown of EARly Nissouri history. His first church is to be found at Brown's Corners. The centennial of this church is to be celebrated on June 30. Turn left here for Medina and continue on the pavement to Lakeside. The microwave relay tower is located on the highest land in Nissouri 1200 feet above sea level. Here is located one of the few remaining active blacksmiths still working at his trade. There are many things to be seen. Turn right at the main corner for the lake. The church hall on the left was once the Lakeside railroad station until a few short years ago. The Ingersoll family was responsible for the building of this community. The Neutral Indians also camped here. Here is the lake known by many names. It is a lake supposedly fed by an underground river and has no inlet or outlet. Picnic tables are available. It is a fine spot for boating and swimming. The cottages on the far side are private property. Follow the road around the lake and swamp to the first corner (stone house on either side of the road.) Turn left here and proceed to Highway 19 two roads over. Turn left. Note the large fine houses. The new barns and house on the right replaces those destroyed by the tornado 10 years ago. The lumber business on the left is the Kintore Box factory which originally made cheese boxes but changed to lumber with the drop in demand for cheese boxes. Turn right and proceed three miles to the seventh concession (notice the Cobble hills on your left). Turn left and onto the Ski-Hi Winter resort - Oxfords winter sports area. As we leave here and continue south notice that the farm buildings are changing and more barns are seen without stabling beneath them.



Highlands of Oxford Rich in Story, Beauty - cont.

Memorial Gardens

No trip into these parts would be complete without a visit to the Pioneer Memorial Gardens which appear on the right opposite the Zion United Church. Visit the garden area at far end of the seventh line cemetery, note the memorials to pioneer families and to all pioneers of Nissouri. On to Highway 2 and turn left. Those are turkey pens on your left. Home of Dr. O.C. Powers is opposite the Oxford County sign. Good display of rail fences is on your right. Note the sky light on the barn as you enter Thamesford. Turn off and visit this fast growing village where the old and the new blend well together.

After seeing the dam and the old mill take the Governor's Road for Woodstock. This road was laid out by Gov. Simcoe as a route from Niagara to Windsor as an inland route in case of war with the United States. Much personal pride is taken in the upkeep of the buildings along this road. At Rayside we have a road leading to Ingersoll. Then the Canada Cement Plant comes into view. The cement monument indicates a 1000 day accident free period.

After passing The Cement Plant take second turn to your right, bear left at the Rural Hydro office and left at the first corner at the foot of the hill. This is Beachville. The same buildings once served as Blacksmith shops. Take this road out past the old cement plant that never operated. Many of Vansittart's party settled along this road. Follow it out to the Governor's road at the new Memorial Gardens. Turn right and see the farmer's round (or hexagon) barn of North Oxford. As we approach the city we see the farm of F.E. Ellis on the right - a frequent contributor to farm papers and on our left the home of William Illbury. This was the first manse of the Presbyterian minister of Woodstock. -----  
cross the bridge we enter Woodstock again. Proceed up Dundas St. to the city hall. (Distance 72 miles, time approximately three and a half hours less stops).

Lowlands of Dereham Once Grew Giants of the Forest - cont.

For our trip this week number four in the series, we are going to visit the township of Dereham. This is one of the larger townships and much of the early history of the southern section of Oxford county is found within its boundaries.

The township itself contains a lot of lowland and was at one time covered with a forest of giant pines whose timbers were to be found in every shipyard on the great lakes and the Atlantic seaboard.

You noticed some sandy land in our first trip and clay loam on our second trip along with the gravel bottom ridges on the third trip.

On this trip you will find a lot of very black land and a very loose texture. It is commonly known as black muck. In wet weather it is like a sponge and holds an enormous amount of water partially due to the hard pan bottom which is below a lot of it. When it does dry out and the wind blows it rivals blow sand for travelling. It is often necessary to turn the car headlights on when travelling through black muck country at a time of dry weather and high winds. This land is used for greenhouse work and such like. In places that have a large fibre content they have been known to catch fire and burn for years below the ground and are very treacherous to man and beast.

As we leave our starting point, the Woodstock City hall, we pass to the rear and turn right onto Simcoe street at the Oxford Hotel, one of Woodstock's fine landmarks for almost a century. The fire hall and arena can be seen on your right. The new building on Brock Street is the home of The Sentinel-Review. Did you notice the fine homes of the middle-class people at the turn of the century on both sides of the street.?

At the bottom of the hill we turn left. This land on your right may be the site of the proposed new hotel for Woodstock. The factory at present serves as a ware house for York Knitting Mills.

Cedar Creek

At the caution light you will notice a fine old building on your right and it is in this neighborhood that spring floods swell, the years that Cedar Creek overflows. On up the hill where the new and the old blend well together. Those interested in antiques will find what they are looking for along here. To visit the home of our member of the provincial

Lowlands of Dereham Once Grew Giants of the Forest - cont.

Cedar Creek - cont.

legislature turn up Bower Hill on your right at the city limits. Continuing out Mill street we get a fine view of the countryside which we can continue to enjoy as we turn onto Highway 401 going towards Ingersoll. On 401 highway we have a chance to see the new service stations and information centres that were installed last year - a welcomed rest for the weary traveller.

After passing the station on your side of the road we notice a farm on the road running parallel to the highway. That home was built by Simon Mabee in 1803. We will see more of it next week.

As we approach Highway 19 we prepare to leave 401 and head towards Tilsonburg. The large house and well kept grounds is the old Harris place of big cheese fame. Travelling south we pass the Harris street cemetery and the resting place of the family of Amy Semple McPherson. Many of the founders of Oxford lie at rest here.

Hagles Corners

You will also see some of Oxford's many smaller industries along this highway. At the third corner on your left (Lorne Sheltons), you turn left. This was once known as Hagles Corners. Travelling along this road we recall many of the stories told of the old lumbering days and of Andrew Bodwell whose large home on the right is all that remains to his memory. The view along this road is excellent and reminds one of the training areas of England during World War II.

At the third road on your left we come to Peebles Corners which was once known as Pine Grove due to the large amount of pine growing here. Did you see the guinea hens at the farm of Frank Wiseman, one of the largest flocks in Oxford and the noisiest.

It was up in the fields to your left that the Topping house once stood. It was here that the Topping murder was committed and where the Topping ghost was reported until the place was burned down.

At the next road on your right at the end of the big bush turn right and proceed over to the milk plant and turn right again. If the weather is dry you will see irrigation sprinklers in action.

Lowlands of Dereham Once Grew Giants of the Forest - cont.

Hagles Corners - cont.

Notice the school dated 1874 still complete with bell in the tower and on to Salford, the birthplace of Amie Semple McPherson. Though she has been gone for some time most of the oldtimers recall her visit here. When ready to leave, turn left at the Baptist Church which is one road over the highway. Now you are in the lowlands of Dereham. Notice the deep drainage ditches and black muck in places. Turn left at the pavement for Mount Elgin. This community is steeped in history. Notice the cattle pens at the railroad tracks and the fast disappearing hand pump by the station. At Highway 19 turn right when you are ready to leave and see the historic old Baptist Church built in 1859. Travel along the highway to the second turn on your right (gasoline station).

Dereham Centre

Proceed to Dereham Centre noticing the fine large homes and the fine example of snake rail fencing. Dereham Centre is the township seat with its office on your right at the corner. Notice the fine old church built by the Wesleyan Methodists in 1892. The school dates back to 1870. Turn left through more low country and left at stop sign for Ostrander and Highway 19 again. Proceed to the right here for Tillsonburg. Note more small industries and into tobacco country, the crop that made Tillsonburg famous and brought it from a community of struggling sand farmers to a prosperous town of wealthy tobacco farmers.

It is impossible to list all that there is to see and do here but be sure to visit Lake Lisgar and the park. If you have a picnic lunch along, there is no better place to enjoy it. Watch for signs on your left before you get down town. Try the spring water at the hill just left on Broadway on Highway 3, the stopping place for thousands each summer.

When you have enjoyed what the town has to offer, retrace your steps to the town limits, going north on Highway 19 and turn left for Delmar. There is quite a bit of building along this road and many fine homes. Notice the tobacco growing and the fields of rye. Through Delmar at the jog in the road and on to Brownsville. Did you notice the sign that the Women's Institute erected as you enter the village? Brownsville has long been famous for its tile and brick industry so don't fail to see it. Turn left at the main corner for the tile yard.



Lowlands of Dereham Once Grew Giants of the Forest - cont.

Culloden

After seeing the village return to main corner and turn right for Culloden on the Culloden road. This was a Welsh settlement originally and its name means "Back of the swamp" in Gaelic, a fitting name for its location. First settlers were associated with the Talbot settlement where many Welsh settlers came upon arriving in this country. Once a thriving centre but now just a quiet county village worthy of your visit.

Turn left at the main corner and proceed to the dead end and turn right two roads to the stop sign turning right on the country road past the old swimming hole at the gravel pit. Reaching the stop sign turn left into Verschoyle. The store on your left was once a hotel. In the days of saw-mills and lumberjacks this place boomed on a Saturday night when boxing matches were popular. Later it rivalled Mount Elgin and Culloden in the making of cheese and still is quite a dairy farming centre with much of the milk going to the larger plants at Ingersoll and Tillsonburg. You will notice that this part of Dereham is hillier and more rolling than the rest and is quite picturesque. Note the farm homes nestling in among some of the hills.

Dawendine

As we once again approach Highway 401 we see "Dawendine" the home of P.M. Dewan, the minister of agriculture for Ontario in the Hepburn government. Take the highway back to Woodstock, this time taking a look at the county from a different angle and see much that you failed to see before. At the caution light at Mill and Main streets turn right and see the Purina Mills, and the Oxford Farmers' Co-operative. Turn left at the corner and notice the Senior Citizens' Centre on the right. Now you are back at the town hall. Trip number five which will be the last one of the trips in this series will appear next week and will deal with the historical country around Beachville, Ingersoll, Banner, Foldens and Sweaburg. Today's trip covered approx. 74 miles and takes about three and a half hours plus time for sightseeing.

On this, our final trip of the series we will be travelling into some of the most historic sections of Oxford county. The trip will take us through the edge of the famous "Pines area" at Sweaburg and Foldens along with the area of the big cheese.

In the area of Foldens to Beachville and Ingersoll we travel in an area that is about the oldest settled in the county as well as one of the most historical interest. It contains the first school, the first church, and part of the Stage Road. There was considerable action here during the War of 1812-14. Of course, there is much to see in Ingersoll as it was here the Ingersoll family settled and later returned. Through their initiative the land between Ingersoll and St. Marys was opened up. Ingersoll was responsible for the town of St. Marys as well as the village of Lakeside. In the area of Banner is in one of the latest additions to Oxford as this area was not annexed until 1852.

From our starting point at the city hall we circle to the rear and go past the YWCA and the site of the new federal building to Reeve street, turning right and proceeding to Main street then left and bear right over the railroad bridge. At the foot of the hill we pass one of Woodstock's major industries and from there proceed to the park.

Southside Park is the centre of much activity during the summer months with a camping area available for travellers. It is located on the left as is the Waterworks plant. Drive out by way of the fountain and turn right as you leave the park area. Southside school appears on your right. Make two turns and you will be on Mill street. Follow this road out south to Highway 401. Keep left on the Sweaburg Road and you will pass the department of Highway's yards. The road is very winding and will take you past the springs which supply water for Woodstock. There is a great amount of reforestration here.

#### Sweaburg

Sweaburg was named after a port on the Gulf of Finland which was distinguished during the Crimean War. It was originally called Floodtown after the builder of the first sawmill here. The house next to the store once served as a hotel. Visit the school and the interesting cairn located here.

Limestone Valley Area Rich in Oxford County's History - cont.

Sweaburg - cont.

At Sunny Corrals, many will recall the Christmas Pageant put on here each year. Mr. Pullen has many interesting antiques of days gone by. Continue down the road to Foldens, another of Oxford's early settlements. Turn right at the school. The factory on your left is the ice plant which does a big business supplying ice to the people of Oxford. As you approach the jog in the road bear to the left and cross over 401 continuing on to the first corner beyond.

First School

What is now a residence was the site of perhaps the first school in the county. More history was created here on this 100 acres than any other spot outside a community in Oxford. Note the grove of trees behind the house. This is the family cemetery of Simon Maybee. In the stone house, Simon Maybee, Peter Teeple and Zacharius Burtch formed the first Baptist congregation. Take a close look at the inscription above the door of the house. This is one of the oldest houses in the county. Drive down the road to the first turn (it is concealed so don't pass the turkey farm). After turning right follow this road to the church and cemetery. This church was mentioned by Askin when he rode from Sandwich to Niagara in 1806. If you like to read tombstones, there are some interesting ones here. Note the age of some of the oldtimers and the number of wives some had. An interesting house is at the next corner. Retrace your route to the corner and turn right by the turkey farm. Following this road, you will see the plaque marking the Big Cheese. One of the many cheese factories involved in making this cheese was located down the lane. Farmers would use this lane to avoid a tollgate located on the main road. At the main road (highway 19) turn right for Ingersoll. There is much to be seen here so just drive around. The hospital site was the home of the inventor of the Noxon Binder. The Anglican Church contains many interesting plaques including one to the Ingersolls. As you leave by way of highway 2 there is a plaque at the dairy near the railroad. After crossing the tracks turn left at Victoria St. This will take you out on to the area settled by the Irish. Many of them came to work on the railroad, stayed and settled here. The large house among the trees was owned by Rev. H. Revell, the second rector of St. James in Ingersoll and of the Old Anglican Church at Banner. This church has now disappeared. The cemetery at the crossing contains the remains of some of the first councillors

Limestone Valley Area Rich in Oxford County's History - cont.

First School - cont.

of North Oxford. This church served an area well into Middlesex and up to St. Andrew's (Thamesford).

Driving on we come to Banner (Spearmans Corners) where we turn right and view the Thames River as it wends its way through the countryside. The thriving community on the right is Thamesford. Turn right at Highway 2 and if you did not visit Thamesford before, do so now.

Methodist Camp

As you leave this thriving village stay on Highway 2 and view the site on your left which is the free Methodist camp where large camp meetings are held each year. Drive carefully as the road is winding. If you care to stop and rest there are numerous roadside tables along the highway.

At Dickson Corners notice the memorial at the community hall and watch for the log cabin on your left. This is the home of Oxford's woodcarver. This road leads back to Ingersoll and you turn right at the Roman Catholic Church and left at the first stop light.

You are now heading for the Limestone Valley. Note the large pieces of limestone that were removed as the river was straightened.

The high ground on your right was known as Indian Hill due to Indian legends, but all this part of the country is full of legends from Indians to that of buried treasures and riders of the night. The open face stone quarries are among the largest. Products from here find their way to the iron working centres of both Canada and the United States. Take time to drive in and get a close look at the size of the workings. Watch for red flags. They indicate blasting going on. You will notice a different type of stone work along here as the field stone gives way to the limestone.

After passing through Centreville, we approach Beachville, the cradle of Oxford. This is the oldest community and has the longest main street. Here you will notice the old town hall on the corner. The house on the opposite corner once served as a hotel and had 6 stage coaches at least stop there daily. If you turn at the old mill and follow the road to the



Limestone Valley Area Rich in Oxford County's History - cont.

Methodist Camp - cont.

left it will take you by the old lime kiln and the modern milk processing plant. This mill is run by water power and worthy of a visit. After visiting Beachville make your way towards Woodstock following the line of the Ingersoll, Beachville and Woodstock street railway. Its promoters created a large park and picnic area along the river. Follow the road back into Woodstock and up to the City Hall. Distances 60 miles time 2½ hours plus time for sightseeing.

This completes the tours of Oxford. We hope that those who have taken them have seen a little more of our county. Those who have not taken them will find time for them during the summer to take one or more of the trips. There is a lot to see in Oxford if we take time to look for it. Happy motoring and please drive carefully.

Embro: To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the official opening of the first church at Brown's Corners of East Nissouri Township special services will be held on Sunday June 30 at 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. At the morning service Rev. S.E. Stevenson and Rev. R.T. Burgess will conduct the service. In the evening Rev. G. Butt and R.J. Wheeler will have charge of the service.

In the mid 1850's a log school was built at Brown's Corners. This was also used for religious services. In a diary kept Elisha Harris Brown from January 29, 1860 to March of the same year records the following preachers taking services here at the school. John McKim, Rev. T.B. Brown, Rev. S. Ryerson (not a relative of Egerton Ryerson), Brother Lince, a Baptist and John McAinsh. They also had a fair number of Protracted meetings conducted by visiting ministers. Today they would be called Evangelistic meetings.

The people who attended these religious gatherings at the school were mostly members of the Methodist Episcopal Church of which the Rev. Thomas B. Brown was the leading figure in these parts. They became members of the London circuit and at an early date was connected in circuit with the M.E. church of St. Marys. Other centres in the circuit included Cherry Grove, McKims, Thorndale, White Church at Hugh Davis' corner. Later Kintore and the Townline church joined the circuit.

The Good Templers, a society to promote temperance was formed here at Browns and the families which supported this society formed the nucleus of the congregation and it was decided to made plans to build a church building in 1862 but was not completed until 1863.

Five sons of T.B. Brown were living at this time in the neighborhood. With their help and that of their friends funds and materials were collected.

The church was built of white brick with a stone foundation on southeast corner, the site of the present church. The land was given by John Uren, a nephew of T.B. Brown. The church faced the north. Like other Methodist churches of its time it had few architectural pretensions. It did represent the toll and sacrifice of its members. A willow tree near its entrance for a time lent a touch of grace. In the beginning there was no porch,

Two District Churches to Observe Centennial - cont.

later a commodious white frame structure was added. From its east door a platform extended to the driveway, which made access to the church easier for those who drove. It improved the appearance of the Church and protected the entrance from cold winds.

On entering the church in the winter months, one was confronted with a large box stove, from which emerged a pipe which with a few ramifications led to two long pipes reaching to the chimney at the front of the church. These were removed during the summer months to be cleaned and restored in the autumn, a proceeding which must have done much to inculcate the virtues of patience and endurance to the men who undertook this job.

Ranged around and facing the stove were three straight backed pews on which the folk sat in winter to warm themselves before going to their regular pew, a move which at times would have gladly been delayed. The pews were painted a drab gray with a brown trim. A slanting board attached to the front of the pew to which was fastened a narrow strip of wood made a precarious shelf for hymn book and Bible. Up the centre of the church were rows of seats which had on either side an aisle from which shorter rows of pews extended to the outside walls.

In the southeast corner a low platform ran part way across the front of the church. This was covered with a red carpet.

In the east end were the choir seats and the organ. The latter requiring considerable muscular energy to produce a response. Few of the stops functioned. A few responded with noise not unlike subterranean thunder throwing the organist into a state of panic. In the centre stood the pulpit flanked by two cane-bottomed chairs and in front of it the communion table covered with a red cloth and enclosed by an altar rail.

Where the platform ended a rear door led into a small plot of ground. To the right of this door was a small cupboard and desk used by the secretary of the Sunday School for his books and papers.

Brackets for kerosene lamps were fastened to the side walls and two lamps were suspended by chains from the centre. Tall kerosene lamps were used for the pulpit and the organ. Below plastered walls, dark brown wainscoting gave a finished touch. The windows were of gothic style with the frosted pane of glass to subdue the light.

Two District Churches to Observe Centennial - cont.

The walls were unadorned except at Christmas time when boughs of evergreen were used to decorate the church. On one memorable occasion in the late eighteen eighties, the young people who may have been inspired by a new school teacher who volunteered to assist them in their Christmas decorations attempted a more elaborate display. Under the teacher's guidance an imposing arch of evergreen was erected across the front wall over the pulpit. Skilful hands of one of the lads, Russell Uren, formed letters with twigs, spelling the word Immanuel. These were placed in the greenery and the drab little church was transformed. It may have been that its removal was not an easy matter for it was left untouched until the spring when through an open window a bird flew in and proceeded to build a nest. Not wishing the interior of the Church to be converted into a bird sanctuary, it was reluctantly taken down.

This incident always recalled the verse in the Psalm, "Yea, the sparrow has found her an house, and a swallow a nest where she may lay her young, even thy altar O Lord of Hosts".

A feature common to other churches of that time was its seating arrangement. The girls and women sat on the east side and the men and boys on the west. Large families occupied the centre seats and the sides.

In the southeast angle of the church an old-fashioned clock occupied a space for many years. The original idea of having one was presumably to encourage the Sunday School pupils to be on time. History doesn't record whether it succeeded, but it seems unlikely as it was mute for many years. It may be that its presence, ticking away the minutes embarrassed the minister who may have observed that his congregation seemed more intent on its movement than on his sermon.

In the gable, at the front of the church was a marble tablet with the inscription, "Methodist Episcopal Church 1863".

This church continued to serve until the turn of the century at which time the congregation had increased and the building became too small. The old building was torn down and the present one erected with the cornerstone being laid on the 24th of May, 1905.

The first church shed was a frame one and was built on the northwest corner, and was open to the south side. This shed was not only provided shelter for the horses and vehicles of folk who drove to church but during the week served as a gymnasium and playground for the school children. Flocks of sheep which at that time roamed at large on the roads cropping the grass which grew on the roadsides found shelter from the chill of the nights in the old shed.



Later, ground was given by John Uren for another shed which stood at the rear of the church. At it was nearer, this shed was more convenient for those who drove to church.

Like many country churches, Brown's Church contributed much to the social and cultural life of the community as well as the spiritual. At Christmas time the Sunday School had its Christmas tree and entertainment for the children. This performance always delighted the audience though one was always conscious of a degree of anxiety on the part of parents and so little pride.

Projects for making money were still largely the province of the Ladies Aid and their ingenuity in this field was only limited by their strength. Social gatherings were popular. At times these were held in the homes. Simple refreshments were served and local talent provided the entertainment. A small fee was charged. The affairs helped to develop a community spirit. Strawberry festivals were more ambitious. Held in the orchards of farm homes or on the school grounds, these were well attended. Outside talent was engaged for the entertainment. The choir of the Methodist Church in St. Marys on more than one occasion gave delightful programs. Such affairs established friendly relations between town and country folk.

#### Ministers Who Served At Brown's Church

##### Very Early

Rev. Seth Ryerson, Rev. A. N. Terwilliger.

##### Pre Union (1884)

Rev. C. Loundsbury (presiding Elder and who preached the Rev. T. B. Brown's funeral service), Rev. B. C. Moore, Rev. Fairchild.

##### Presiding Elders

Rev. Emerson Bristol (in 1893) he preached Mrs. T. B. Brown's funeral service), Rev. Gardiner.

##### After Union (1884)

Rev. H. E. Hill, Rev. David Rogers, Rev. R. J. Husband - 1890, Rev. Thomas Sabine - 1893, Rev. I. B. Aylesworth, Rev. John Hart, Rev. Stephen Knott - 1897, Rev. Rufus S. Wilson - 1902-1904, Rev. Joseph Hibbert - 1904-1907, Rev. John Osterhout - 1907, Rev. Thibodeau, Rev. Chester McRoberts - 1913, Rev. Thomas Allen - 1924, Rev. William Conway - 1920, Rev. Gordon Butt.

United Church 1925

Rev. Eric Anderson - 1925, Rev. Roy Johnson BA, BD - 1925-1929, Rev. Harry Royle - 1929-1933, Rev. A. E. Mann - 1933-1935, Rev. H. E. Livingstone - 1935-1939, Rev. W. E. Gill, BA - 1939-1941, Rev. Chester ?enson - 1941-1944, Rev. Chester McRoberts - 1944-1945, (Retired) Rev. Harold Bolingbroke, BA, BD - 1945-1947, Rev. J. R. Wheeler, BA - 1947-1949, Rev. C. A. Fornataro, BA - 1949-1951, Rev. R. T. Burgess MA - 1951-1961, Rev. E. B. Morden, BA, BD - 1961.

In 1882 Local Preachers

T. B. Brown, Sr., Samuel Thomas, R. McGuffin, John G. McLeod, John McAinsh, John Brown, James Uren.

At A Later Date

James Darling, Bartholomew Presley.

James Ingersoll, First White Child of Oxford, A True Founding Father - cont.

James to Farm - cont.

Colonel of the Second Oxford Militia until his death. He was elected member of parliament in 1824 - 29 and 1830.

In 1832 an epidemic of cholera swept through Western Ontario. Charles Ingersoll was stricken and became one of the victims of this dreaded disease. He died Aug. 8, 1832. In his will Charles Ingersoll definitely gave the name Ingersoll to the community that was fast materializing around his father's farm. He gave the name in honor of his father.

His half-sister, Laura Secord, did not fare so well. After the war of 1812 her husband was given a pension and made collector of customs at Chippawa. He lived until 1841 and with his death his pension stopped, leaving her to seek a livelihood for 27 years. In 1860 when the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) visited Canada he learned of her plight and presented her with a check for 100 pounds. She died on October 17, 1868 at the age of 93. She is buried at Lundy's Lane.

Important Role

James Ingersoll, who was the youngest male member of the family perhaps played the most important part in their role of pioneers of Western Ontario. From the day of his birth he was destined to fame as he was claimed as the first white child born in Oxford. He was also the only member of the Thomas Ingersoll family to be born there. At the outbreak of the War of 1812 he was still only a lad but he had a good understanding of the different Indian dialects and rendered honorable service as interpreter and counsellor of the Indians. This friendship lasted all through his lifetime. Members of the Six Nations Tribe were often his guests both at Ingersoll and Woodstock. He was still in his teens when Charles purchased the place of his birth and sent James there to look after it. On arriving he found the place in ruins.

He at once set to work to make improvements. The first step was a sawmill which he put into operation April 14, 1819. With the mill in operation he started to build a new home to be known down through the years as the Ingersoll House. The following year he started the building for a grist mill which was equipped with one set of milling stones. He also laid out a store, distillery and an ashery. In 1822 at the age of 21 he began the business of storekeeper. In his new vocation he attained a considerable measure of success.

James was well on his way to becoming a prosperous citizen when he was

Important Role - cont.

appointed registrar of Oxford County in 1834. The appointment came as a surprise and under rather unusual circumstances. Two of his friends Col. Asking and John Harris were in Toronto at the time of Col. Herner, the previous registrar's death. While there they met with Hon. J. B. Robinson, Hon. James Crooks and Hon. William H. Merritt and Sir James Colborne. Sir James stated he would like some assistance in the appointing of a new registrar as several of his friends had already approached him for the position and now he found himself in an embarrassing position. To this request his colleagues replied that the proper man for the position was James Ingersoll, due to his family's record and his own personal war and business reputation. They were not sure if he would give up his business for the position. Askin was asked to approach him on the subject. After much consideration Ingersoll accepted, thus saving Sir Colborne's position with his friends. The office was to be kept in Ingersoll but in 1848 it was moved to Woodstock.

Many Posts

Before moving to Woodstock he played an active part in the formation of Ingersoll. After his brother's death in 1832 he became postmaster, also a magistrate and for a few years was agent for the Gore Bank. As magistrate he was called upon to perform marriages among other function. His office was a centre of official duties and influence. He usually acted as returning officer of elections and was the storm centre of many political upheavals. He served as a major during the rebellion of 1837. Later he was appointed Lietu. Col of the militia for the South Riding of Oxford. In 1848 he married Catherine McNab. He died on Aug. 9, 1886.

Although not the one to whom the honor goes, James Ingersoll was the member of the Ingersoll family who inaugurated the settlement of St. Marys.

In 1841 the township of Blanshard was surveyed for the Canada Co. In the fall Thomas Mercer Jones, a Canada Company Commissioner came from York to attend an advertised land sale. He came by way of Beachville with L. Cruttenden who became the first white man to see the townsite. He later



James Ingersoll, First White Child of Oxford, A True Founding Father - cont.

Many Posts - cont.

became a resident. At the sale James Ingersoll bought the land on the east side of the River Thames while his brother Thomas bought the land on the west side. The Canada Land Company presented them with a subsidy of \$3,000 with which to build a grist and sawmill. These were built on the east side of the river. The lots purchased were lots 17-18 concession 17-18 of Blanshard township. This is the area now occupied by the Town of St. Mary.

First Tree

Thomas Ingersoll was put in charge of the work. He at once moved some workmen onto the site. In Sept. 1841 Thomas felled the first tree on the site and in the township. He made a clearing and erected a log cabin. Work progressed rapidly with timber taken out during the fall of 1841 and the sawmill was erected and put into operation. The grist mill was started the following spring and completed in the spring of 1843.

Though not an Ingersoll, Mr. Cruttenden was a resident of Oxford who also played an important part in the growth of Little Falls as St. Marys was then known.

In 1842 Cruttenden moved to St. Marys to reside permanently. He opened a small store as a branch of his store at Beachville which still was in his name. John Ingersoll, son of Thomas Ingersoll had already opened the first store at the corner of Water and Queen Sts. The nearest post office was Beachville. Cruttenden made arrangements to have mail left at his Beachville store and brought to Little Falls with his supplies. He later became town clerk. He also erected the first hotel and it was located on the south side of Queen St. in 1843.

Along with a grist and sawmill Thomas Ingersoll donated land for the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches. It was in the log cabin of Thomas Ingersoll that a Methodist minister named Evans of London conducted the first church service and preached the first sermon in the town of St. Marys.

Thomas was assisted in his work at St. Mary by the younger brother Samuel. Thomas died at St. Marys in 1847. Samuel remained until his death in 1861.

Lakeside

James Ingersoll was also interested in the formation of Lakeside in East Nissouri. His brother-in-law Mr. Carroll married Appy, the third child of Major Thomas Ingersoll by his third marriage. He took up land near the site of the present village. James was not long in seeing the potential

James Ingersoll, First White Child of Oxford, A True Founding Father -cont.

Lakeside - cont.

of a spot such as this and purchased 300 acres in 1835. This was his first venture outside of his native Ingersoll. It was not until 1842 that a public building was erected. That building served as the local school. During the years that followed the village took shape. Squire Ingersoll sold off some of his land to Charles Mitchell but did retain the land now occupied by the village. For many years his name continued to appear on the deeds as mortgagee and other such documents. In 1859 Ingersoll saw the need of a brick yard. He brought Charles Shrubsole over from Buffalo. The yard was opened on the site of the Anglican church. A grist and sawmill were also established here. In 1861 he gave land for the erection of an Anglican Church which will be celebrating its centennial this fall.

Since those eventful days of the 1800's many honors have been bestowed on the name of Ingersoll to show the results of their initiative. One member of a family often excelled in his field, but not so with the Ingersolls where all the sons carried on the work which their father had been deprived of doing. This family rates with the names of Talbot, Dunlop, Galt and even Simcoe when it comes to people who made Western Ontario what it is today.

Among the individual pioneers who made Oxford we find a group in the Norwich, Otterville area who can hardly be classed as individuals. They were a group of people who through their religious faith banded themselves together to form a section of the Society of Friends or Quakers as they are commonly called. While they were not all members, many attended the meetings as it was the only church in the area.

It was at a meeting of the Friends in Prince Edward County, Ontario that Peter Lossing and Peter DeLong first heard of the possibility of buying cheap land west of York and Niagara in a section of the country just being opened up for settlement. Seeing that their people were not satisfied with their lot following the American Revolution due to the high taxes, Lossing had little trouble getting 50 families to take up the 14,000 acres. Peter DeLong, whose family had come from France and were of the aristocratic stock who had prospered in Dutchess County was able to supply the financial assistance.

The original party consisted of Peter Lossing's family with a stepson William Hulet along with Sears Mott, Lossing had 5 children. Mott had six. They arrived in Canada in 1810. Sears Mott and family came by way of the Hudson River to Albany and crossed over at Niagara. They waited at Burford for the Lossing party who came by way of the St. Lawrence and York to close the deal with William Wilcocks and Thomas Gray. The latter held the mortgage of the William Wilcocks.

#### Famous Race

After the parties were reunited at Burford the male members of the family went on to stake their claims. As they neared their land, Bevan Lossing and Reuben Mott, the two youngest members of the party raced to see who would be the first white boy in the township. They both claimed a victory. Lossing took up lot 8 concession 3 while Mott took a reserve lot on lot 9 concession 4 although his original purchase was lot 13-14 concession 4.

The following year (1811) DeLong, Cornwells and Barnes arrived to be followed by Stovers, Lancasters, Snyders, Youngs, Hunts, Sackriders, Woodrows, Corbins, Emighs, Gellams, Barkers, Nichols, Dennises, Tompkins, Hillikers, Siples, Strenghams, Holms, Dunkins, Palmers, Haight, Losees, Suttons,

Plain People Whose Influence Shaped the Norwich Townships -cont.

Famous Race - cont.

Peckham, Griffins and Cohoes. With the arrival of these settlers in 1810-1812 into a new country there was laid the foundation for a community whose residents can trace their families back for over 150 years on the same location.

These settlers, contrary to a popular belief, were not forced to flee to Canada after the American Revolution. The ones who left the American Colonies under such conditions were members of the Quaker faith who had been disowned by the Quakers for taking an active part in the war, which is strictly against their beliefs. Many of these outcasts came to Canada as Loyalists.

Norwich Friends

In 1812 there were enough members of the Society of Friends in the Norwich area that they applied for permission to hold a meeting for worship at the house of Joseph Lancaster. This permission was granted by the Pelham Quarter which controlled all meeting west of York.

The man who was responsible for the formation of the society was George Fox who in 1647 turned from organized religion to direct personal relationship with God through the "inward light" of Christ. The first London yearly meeting was held in 1671 after many years of persecution and punishment. They were called "Quakers" due to the fact that they trembled with emotion at their meetings. When they migrated to the U.S. They were persecuted in the New England States eventually finding a haven in Rhode Island. In 1862 William Penn established a colony for them in Pennsylvania. They didn't regard their movement as a new form of religion but rather the return to the apostolic primitive Christianity.

The nature of their "infractions of discipline" gives one an insight on the ways of life in our early community. In the 1800's there was little to be had in line of amusements. Therefore those that were available were often of the rough and boisterous nature. For example, chivaree while in some cases were quite jovial while others got out of hand and often the results were drastic. Any form, of a chivaree was frowned on as was the idea of shooting a gun off at New Year's. Other more common diversions included



Plain People Whose Influence Shaped the Norwich Townships - cont.

Norwich Friends - cont.

included profane language and drinking to excess, racing horses and fighting. These would usually lead to a member being disowned. Acts unbecoming of a member such as playing cards, dancing, or allowing music and dancing in one's home would lead to one being called upon to express sorrow for doing such and if they persisted in such merriment it usually ended in being disowned. Among the Society of Friends the time for merriment was at the Yearly, Quarterly or Monthly meetings when members would gather from all parts of the Quarter.

At a meeting of the Friends the meeting would start in silence with all waiting to hear the Divine Voice speak to them. After long periods of silence some person might have a vocal message which they would deliver thereby for the moment becoming the mouthpiece of the spirit. The Society of Friends was fundamentally an experiment in lay religion. They had no ordained ministers but if a man so felt that he was chosen to be a minister he could apply for the position which would be thoroughly discussed at the yearly meeting. If the members present agreed then he would become a minister, receiving no pay or remuneration from the Society.

There was no formal closing or benediction at the end of a meeting. Instead when the elders and ministers were satisfied it was time to close a meeting they would shake hands. When this happened the congregation would do likewise and the silence would be broken by friendly chatter. During the meeting the ministers and elders would occupy the high seats at the front facing the people. The men would occupy one side while the women occupied the other side of the meeting house.

Along the line of their religious service their form of marriage was another of their distinctive Quaker customs. George Fox from the beginning claimed marriage was God's ordinance not man's. Therefore it was not necessary to be married by a third person. Instead if a man and woman agreed to marry they performed the marriage ceremony at a special meeting to be witnessed by the members. First a notice of the intention of marriage had to be sent from the Preparative Meeting

Plain People Whose Influence Shaped the Norwich Townships - cont.

Norwich Friends - cont.

to the Monthly meeting. The couple would appear at this meeting to state their intention of marriage. Then a committee would be appointed by the Men's meeting and by the Women's meeting to investigate to see if all was in order and parental consent had been given on both sides. A report would be made at the next meeting and time and date of the marriage announced if all was in order.

At the actual wedding the groom would take the bride's hand and declare that he take this woman for his wife and promised through divine assistance to be faithful unto death. The bride repeated the vow also. After the signing of the certificate by all present they were officially married. During the days of the Family Compact when it was necessary to be married by a minister of the state, church or magistrate had little or no effect on the quakers. It also meant that very few of the younger folks married out of the church. If one did marry outside of the church or were married by a priest they were automatically disowned. This was in effect until 1859 when this was no longer enforced by the Quakers.

In every day life on the street the Society of Friends were far different than the other denominations which gradually came into Norwich. They were believers in plainness in dress and address. This part of their faith was so important to them that it was continually brought before them at quarterly meetings. The use of plain language which meant using "thee" or "thou" rather than the plural form "you" in addressing one person dated back to the 1600's when a superior was spoken to. The singular was used when speaking to an equal or inferior.

Originally simplicity in dress was all that was required but eventually uniformity in plain dress was insisted upon. Their dress was something similar to the Amish of today but not as severe. They insisted on a coat without collar or lapels. The women wore a bonnet of a specified style, long dark dress and a black shawl. The headgear of the men folk was similar to to the round hats of the Amish today. During the era when plain speak and dress were in force it stimulated the group consciousness of the Society as a peculiar people and tended to develop among its

Plain People Whole Influence Shared the Norwich Townships - cont.

Norwich Friends - cont.

members a deeper sense of loyalty and devotion. Even today you will still hear plain talk in a Quaker family when they are conversing with each other. Some of the older Conservative Friends still adhere to the simple dress also. There has been left for all to see a lasting example of their plainness of the Quakers. That is in their cemetery on Quaker street. Here you will find no large elaborate tombstones the likes of which are in other old cemeteries. They believed in simple markers sometimes a field stone with name or initials of deceased carved on its face would serve as tombstone. Some were simply wood plaques but they have disappeared. The ones that are still to be seen are of a low simple type and contain no unnecessary carvings.

When these people were left to themselves no great deal of attention was paid to their being different from the rest of the settlers. But at certain times they were called upon to perform certain duties and make certain vows the same as any other Canadians. It was here that they proved to be of a strong determination to abide by their beliefs. The one outstanding was the taking of oaths. They refused to take an oath in court for the simple reason that they believed a person should always tell the truth no matter the outcome. If a Quaker was charged for any reason he could almost automatically be convicted as he would not take the oath. Often they would end up in prison for long terms. By the time the Society of Friends were settled in Norwich this had been modified and they were permitted to make a solemn affirmation or declaration in place of an oath. Therefore, they were allowed to take public offices and were allowed to give evidence at court or serve on a jury.

During the war of 1812 the Quakers, Mennonites and Tunkers all claimed exemption from military service due to their religious beliefs. In lieu of this they were forced to pay a sum of money. Robert Gourlay, in his report of 1817 claimed that they were able to stay home and reap high prices for their crops while others were forced to leave their crops and draw very little pay for their service in the army. This was not correct for while they did not leave home and fight they were subject to the same treatment as other settlers. Many of them had teams confiscated for the army along with other articles that were required. Any

Plain People Whose Influence Shaped the Norwich Townships - cont.

Norwich Friends - cont.

extra benefits they derived from high prices was usually quickly neutralized by the amount of taxes they had to pay for being a conscientious objector.

The reason that the community did thrive was chiefly due to the initiative of its people. They were used to hardships and believed in helping each other. It was for this reason that for a great many years Norwich was considered as one of the most prosperous communities in Canada West.

The group of pioneers that formed the original colony at Norwich were not men like the Ingersoll's or Horner who took to the field of politics and public office to serve other people. Instead these people centred their activities within the confines of their township of Norwich (North and South) and developed it to a state of near perfection. After achieving their goal this made it possible for their descendants to go forth into the world and bring fame and honor to the homes of their people. Through their belief that a woman was equal to man it was possible for them to be honored by having the first woman doctor in Canada. Dr. Emily Stowe was granted a licence to practice in 1880.

While the names of many of our earlier pioneers are only to be found in history books, the names of these men and women of Norwich are to be found among those who helped blaze the trail in many fields of achievement that were unknown to our forefathers and through these achievements they kept the names of these pioneers fresh in our minds. From little acorns came the mighty oak and so it is from a group of plain people have come many of Oxford's distinguished citizens.



James A. Calder the North riding voted for the UFO candidate. D.M. Ross at the by-election of 1921 to break the liberal stronghold on the riding with a majority of 1,306 votes. The following year it was repeated with Ross winning the election again. In the meantime William H. Chambers carried the South riding for the Conservative over his UFO and Liberal opponents. The by-election of 1922 was the first opportunity women had to vote in a provincial election.

In the election of Dec. 1, 1926 the issue before the public was government control of the sale of liquor as opposed to the Temperance Act. The people decided to try government control after 10 years of prohibition by giving the Conservative party a landslide victory. In Oxford D. M. Ross campaigning under the Progressive banner defeated his Conservative neighbor Robert H. Marshall. The South supported M.E. Scott of Progressive Liberals over William Chambers. Conservative with a clear cut majority in every municipality but Ingersoll. The rural vote turned out stronger than urban vote with 78 per cent casting ballots in South Oxford.

When the votes were counted following the October 30, 1929 election it was reported that Premier Howard Ferguson again was "in peril of a pair of wet feet for lack of a pair of Oxfords". In the north D.M. Ross still held the seat for the Liberal Progressive Party by defeating Mayor J.W. Sales of Woodstock. Meanwhile ex-warden Robert A. Baxter defeated conservative James Pullin in the South riding.

#### One Riding

1933 saw many changes in provincial politics. Major move was the re-distribution of seats. Oxford was reduced to a single riding. That year saw the birth of Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF).

Mitchell F. Hepburn became leader of the Liberal party.

The 1934 election was a battle royal with the whole of the county except Blenheim in one riding. P.M. Dewan carried the Liberal banner while John W. Sales once again carried the Conservative banner. The CCF was represented by Samuel Innes of Otterville. Dewan carried all but Tillsonburg and Woodstock while Ingersoll went Dewan. There was a 75 per cent turnout in Ontario at the polls with Mitchell Hepburn

Ministers Represented Oxford - cont.

One Riding - cont.

taking the Liberal party into office after an absence of 29 years. The Liberals held 65 seats to the Conservatives 17 and others eight.

1937 saw Earl Rowe leading the Conservative party in an unsuccessful attempt to unseat the Liberals. The issue of the day was public school support against R.C. support and the usual temperance issue.

It was a real fight in Oxford with Thomas R. Dent challenging Mr. Dewan while W.M. McArthur a former Woodstock mayor was on the independent ticket. Mr. Dewan had a larger majority than in 1934. Following his election he was appointed minister of agriculture, a post which he held until defeated in 1943. He was Oxford's first cabinet minister since 1883.

1943 saw a rather unusual election as far as the Liberals were concerned. For the first time in history they were neither the party in power nor the opposition. After two brilliant campaigns they went down to defeat at the hands of both the Conservatives and CCF taking only 14 seats

Lt. Col. George Dr. led the Conservatives to victory while E.B. Joliffe led the CCF. In Oxford it was Thomas Dent in the South and Dewan in Zorra, Embro and Tavistock with 58 per cent voting. Samuel Innes gave Mr. Dewan a run polling 4,319 to Dewan's 5,748. Dent received 7,207.

The 1943 election saw little change with Dent again carrying Oxford; Ed McKenzie, former mayor of Woodstock ran for Liberals. Capt. F. Coburn, the CCF. The closest race was in Embro where Dent received 114 votes to McKenzie's 115. Coburn received 12. After the service vote was counted Dent had a plurality of 3,408.

The 1948 balloting saw little change with Dent being returned over Fred Lowes, Liberal and William Goodwin, CCF. The CCF continued to show strength. They defeated Premier Drew in his riding.

In 1951 at the outset it looked like a good local fight with ex-warden Robert Rudy challenging Thomas Dent with William Elsey running CCF. The Conservatives had a new leader in Leslie Frost. Walter Thomson was leading the Liberal party. When the votes were counted Dent still held a majority of 196 votes. Tavistock had supported Rudy royally giving him 529 votes to Dent's 89 and Elsey's 16.

Ministers Represented Oxford - cont.

One Riding - cont.

June 9, 1955 saw the end of the Dent era in Oxford. The chief contestants were blood relations and both were out for victory. Dent was opposed by Gordon Innes and L. Watts carried the CCF banner. When the election smoke clouds cleared Innes had won a decisive victory. It was a close race in Ingersoll and Norwich with Dent getting 1,290 to Innes; 1,288 and 372-373 in Norwich. Watts never was a threat at any time.

In the 1959 election Thomas R. Dent son of the previous member tried to retake the seat for the PC but in spite of a good fight lost out by 216 votes. Charles Neve ran CCF. Gordon Innes being returned to hold the office for his second term.

## Stone That was Burned Began A Major Industry - cont.

Among the pioneers who made Oxford what it is today, we not only find individuals but groups of people many of them unknown to us who through their efforts left us an industry as a living monument. Such is the case today with the lime quarries at Beachville. This is without a doubt the oldest industry to operate continuously in Oxford.

When the first settlers arrived prior to 1800 they discovered that by burning their brush they caused the rock to break under the heat and through continued fires it would pulverize and made good chinking material for filling in the gaps between the logs.

It is known that several buildings in the Beachville area were made with limestone and plastered with lime but the first recorded use is recorded in the diary of Capt. Phillip Graham, a retired British naval officer who had received a grant of land halfway between Beachville and Woodstock on the north side of the Thames River. When he arrived he found two squatters on his land. He allowed them to remain. One by the name of Mr. Mattison seemed to have had considerable experience in burning lime. The lime used in the building of Capt. Drew's Church, (Old St. Paul's) was burned here by Mattison.

Later Capt. Graham suggested that permanent kilns be erected for lime making. These would operate on a percentage basis. The only objection that Graham had was that no attempt was made to make use of the fine stand of timber on the land other than for burning lime. He thought that some of the timber could be saved for building purposes. With this proof we find that this has been an industry in the Beachville area for over 130 years.

### From River Bed

At first it was not necessary to quarry this rock as it was more convenient to simply remove the stones from the river bed during the low water period of the summer or by simply gathering the surface stones. About the only tools needed were picks, crow bars and sledge hammers. Later it was necessary to go to digging out the rock but it was only possible to take the layer off near the surface as the river would flood the area once they went below the river level. It was then the wheel barrow was added to the list of equipment used. This conveyance was used to move the top soil and to take the lime stone to a central point for burning. About this time a five foot face was considered a quarry.



Stone That Was Burned Began a Major Industry - cont.

From River Bed - cont.

Eventually somebody introduced the water wheel run by the river current. This wheel was connected to two wood or iron pumps and for 24 hours a day from early spring until freeze-up the squeak of the water wheel would penetrate the stillness of the night. With these improved methods it was possible to stock pile the rock for winter burning. With the invention of the gas engine in the 1880's the quarrying went deeper and the horse and wagon came into use to be followed by the derrick. The derrick was a ponderous affair raised on trestles which were supported on a platform on wheels which ran on a track. From each side protruded a beam. These were supported by tall wooden horses which kept the whole structure from tipping over when the arm swung back and forth with its load. About this time explosives were introduced. When a blast was set off the derrick would be pulled out of the way by means of a cable. Men still loaded the rock but instead of in wagons it was loaded into iron bucket scoops, which were swung up by the derrick and dumped into waiting cars on the railway siding. Hand cars were also used. They ran along the track in the pit and were propelled by man or horsepower to the side of the pit. Later a small engine attached to draw them out of the pit. Later a small engine was used in the pit.

Downing Firm

It was just prior to this, in 1888, that John Downing formed the Beachville White Lime Co. and operations were started at a location now owned by the Gypsum Alabastine Co. At the same time another company of Cole and Hacker were operating the Grey Lime Stone Co. Strange as it may seem there is a definite line in Beachville where the grey and the white lime stone separate. This line is at the road which runs north past the post office and railroad station. Through the years there was no difference in the quality of the finished lime but the white lime seemed to appeal to the public and eventually the demand for grey lime grew less and less. Today no grey lime is made.

The first permanent kilns were called set kilns and were made of stone lined with brick. They stood about ten feet high and were six feet across the inside. To make the lime, a fire would be set and the stone piled

Stone That was Burned Began a Major Industry - cont.

in on top. The fire would be kept going for about seven days. Then the ashes would be cleaned out. As the lime cooled it would drop down and be raked out. Two to three hundred bushels of lime was considered a good week's work. During this time it was necessary to keep the fires going 24 hours a day. Vagabonds would often be found at the kiln once the weather started to get cool at night in search of a warm place to spend the night. The nightman enjoyed the company and as these travellers lived off the land they quite often supplied the makings of a fine midnight snack with a chicken, they had picked up on the road. It was told that quite often the meal supplied to the nightman often turned out to be one of his own flock.

By 1860 kilns were to be found all up and down the river. In Beachville alone there were 12 kilns at one time. The whole area was about seven miles long with the village in about the centre. As methods of quarrying the rock improved so did the method of burning. The old set kiln gradually was replaced. Next used was a steel kiln, also lined with brick about 24 feet high and 12 feet across the inside. It had four arches. The fire would be built in the arches and limestone piled on top. These kilns speeded up the process. Drawn off twice a day, they were capable of about nine ton a day. These kilns were rather risky in use in that while men were taking off one lot of lime another lot would be unloaded into the kiln. Only the heat causing the rock to expand caused the lime to form a bridge and not fall on the workers below. The usual amount of stone to be put in one of these kilns was between 35-40 tons.

Naturally, with this increase in capacity the demand for fuel also increased. It is no little wonder that this area around Beachville was among the first to be denuded of its trees. Winter always saw a slack time at the kilns but those who wanted work could always find it either in the bush or teaming wood to the kiln for the summer operation. By 1865 the people of London were complaining bitterly about the high cost of firewood. They were forced to compete with the lime kilns. The modern kilns are operated by coal or natural gas. The gas type are drawn about every two hours and produce about 75 ton or more a day.

## Stone That was Burned Began A Major Industry - cont.

### Blasting - cont.

Once that it was found necessary to go deeper for the stone it became necessary to blast the rock and drilling was added to the growing list of operations. Early drilling was done by hand. One man would sit on a keg and hold the drill while a second man would strike it with a sledge hammer. At each stroke of the sledge the first man would turn the drill. About an hour and a half was required to drill three foot hole.

Next came the steam drill. With its 120 pounds pressure this drill could drill the first two feet in two minutes. After that it slowed down going to a depth of 12 feet. It was capable of about ten 12 foot holes a day. With the coming of the modern electric drill it was a usual thing to drill two five and a half inch holes 50 feet deep twice a day. When it came to blasting in the early days at Beachville it was a job which held much pride. The first holes were fired with gunpowder similar to the old muzzle loading rifles only that a fuse was necessary. The pride of the blaster either increased or disappeared according to his skill in setting a good charge and having enough fuse to allow him to get clear before it ignited the gun powder. If the fuse was too short he would often be helped the final distance by the force of the explosion sometimes with ill effects.

Nitro-glycerine came into use in 1866 when Alfred Noble of Sweden improved the invention of Sobero 1846. But due to the large number of accidents it was outlawed in several countries in 1869. This led to the development of nitro compounds of which dynamite was one. Dynamite replaced the gunpowder and electric charges made blasting safer than with the match-fired fuses.

### Quarry Sold

The limestone industry continued under the ownership of the Beachville White Lime Co. until 1929 when it was announced that Mr. Downing had sold the west half of the quarry to the North American Cyanamid Co. and the east half to the Gypsum and Alabastine Co. This was the turning point for the lime industry. Gypsum and Alabastine continued to burn lime for building purposes. The big change was at the west quarry The Cyanamid Co. was interested in using this limestone for agricultural purposes originally.

In 1907 the world was supposedly saved from starvation, which according to scientists was possible at the rate of increase in population exceeded

Stone That was Burned Began a Major Industry - cont.

Quarry Sold - cont.

the earth's ability to produce enough food. The solution was found by Dr. Frank A. German, scientist, who is still living. His process was known as the Frank-Caro process, was the fixing atmospheric nitrogen in calcium carbide to form a new compound, calcium cyanamid. The Cyanamid idea then was a bold one of applying a synthetic fertilizer to depleted farmlands to replace dwindling natural supplies of plant food.

This original idea was not only successful in itself it sprouted a whole complex of new products, a dazzling family tree of useful chemicals. Synthesis was the key to this newworld of chemistry wherein now began to build molecular structures which had never before existed.

This field developed rapidly and by 1929 the Cyanamid Company turned its eyes from Niagara towards Beachville for a source of high quality calcium carbonate to meet the demand which increased from 5,000 tons of calcium cyanamide to 50,000 tons per year.

Not only was this product employed in agriculture but it was found that it was possible to use calcium carbide for the extraction of gold and silver from the ore in 1915. The limestone Capt. Graham found being burned on the banks of the Thames in 1833 has helped realize the pioneers Capt. Graham, Mattison, Downing, Cole, Hacker and all the others who were willing to work long hours with only a small remuneration for their labours. Today as one travels the road from Beachville to Ingersoll and sees the three large plants processing the limestone for building , -----?? for the steel mills of Hamilton and see the quarries covering over 30 acres 70 feet deep, among the largest of their kind, one may swell with pride. The men who made this possible were pioneers in a field all of their own.



An Oxford hamlet church which had its earliest days tinged with glamour, zeal and excitement, will on Sunday, September 30th hold special services to mark its one hundredth anniversary. Christ Anglican Church at Lakeside, a charming little structure, built in the Old English Gothic style, was constructed in 1863, with the cornerstone laid in June of that year. For the anniversary services on Sunday, it is expected that many former members of the congregation will be present to hear special speakers, and to recall memories of the past.

At the 11 a.m. service, the speaker will be the Rev. J.D. Gilmour, B.A.L. Th., a former rector and now rector of the Church of St. Thomas, Hamilton, while in the evening a former student-in-charge of Christ Church, the Rev. G.G. Russell, BA, BD, now rector of St. James Church, St. Marys, will deliver the sermon.

Present rector of the church is the Rev. J.A. Catling, L.Th., RD.

Following both services refreshments will be served to those present by ladies of the church organizations.

Began in 1859

It was in 1859 that the Rev. William Brookman was commissioned as a missionary to Thamesford, Dorchester, Delaware and surrounding districts. After forming a congregation in Thamesford in 1861 and in St. George's Church, Thorndale, and Grace Church, Nissouri, in 1862 he turned his attention to the village of Lakeside. A meeting was held on October 6, 1862, and it was decided to build a Church.

It is interesting to note that James Ingersoll, a brother of the famed Laura Secord, donated one acre of land and lumber for floors, while others donated timber and posts for the fence, and about 46 cash contributions, of which the highest was \$120 were made.

Construction was begun in 1863, the corner-stone being laid in June of that year.

Mr. Brookman left in 1863 to become Secretary of the Western Ontario Bible Society. He was succeeded by Rev. Samuel Belcher, who came with his wife and family from India, where he had been engaged in missionary work. Mr. Belcher took up residence in the rectory at Thamesford. In March of 1864, Christ Church, Lakeside, was dedicated and the first vestry meeting was

Lakeside Church is Observing Centennial - cont.

Began in 1859 - cont.

held on April 2, 1854. Robert Armstrong was appointed rector's warden and Mr. Sharpe, people's warden. The first delegate to Synod, Robert Armstrong, was appointed in 1864.

Mr. Belcher resigned in 1870 to become rector of Pt. St. Charles, Montreal, where he was later made a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral.

In 1870 the Rev. William Daunt, MA, came to Thamesford as rector of Thamesford, Lakeside, Thorndale and Evelyn. His ten years' incumbency was most successful. In 1880 the Parish was divided and Mr. Daunt moved to Thorndale.

His successor was Rev. William Minter Seaborn, whose ministry was rather brief since he accepted a call to St. Matthew's Church, London, in 1883. The 1884 report showed the total number of parents and children as 120, with an average Sunday School attendance of 40.

Replaced Father

Rolf Seaborn, a lay reader at Pelee Island, was invited by the Wardens to accept the charge left vacant by his father. Mr. Seaborn received his ordination in September 1884 and was then formally inducted as rector of Lakeside and Thamesford Churches. In 1888 Mr. Seaborn left to take charge of the parish of Thorndale.

The Rev. T.H. Brown, a graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford, and a man of great energy and enthusiasm, succeeded him as rector in 1888 but left in 1892 to become rector of Christ Church, Delaware. He was succeeded by Rev. William Stout, whose stay in the parish was unfortunately very brief. In 1894 Mr. Stout was followed by Rev. J.A. Bloodsworth, who remained until 1899.

In November 1899, Rev. Mr. Bloodsworth was succeeded by Rev. T.G.A. Wright, BA. It was during his incumbency that a new rectory was built at Thamesford across from the Thamesford Church, entirely by a subscription list to which Lakeside contributed the sum of \$500.

In 1903 Lakeside and Thamesford were divided and D.E. Cameron was sent to take charge of the Lakeside parish. He was not ordained and at the time of his arrival was pursuing his studies at Huron College. During

Lakeside Church is Observing Centennial - cont.

Replaced Father - cont.

his incumbency a rectory was built in Lakeside. His successor was W.H. Moore, who also did splendid work in the parish but left in 1909 shortly after receiving his deacon's orders.

Rev. J. W. Jones then came to Christ Church and with a true gift for organization, gathered the ladies of the congregation together to form the Ladies' Parish Guild in 1910. Mrs. F.G. Seaton was elected president, Mrs. William Kirk, vice-president, Mrs. H.G. Gleason, secretary, and Miss C. McKonkey, treasurer. The name was later changed to Ladies' Guild and this organization continued to serve faithfully and well throughout the years up to the present time.

From the time Mr. Jones left the parish in 1911 until 1913, Rev. A.A. Shipway was rector. He was an untiring worker and under him the Church made splendid progress. The choir which had formerly been unvested, was his particular interest and they were now provided with caps and gowns.

Mr. Shipway left the parish in 1913 to enter the American Episcopal Church and was followed by the Rev. J.H. McLeod. This was at the beginning of the Great War 1914-1918 and the residents of Lakeside were buying their first automobiles. Rev. Mr. McLeod retired to London after being bereaved by the death of Mrs. McLeod.

Organized AYPA

The Rev. G.T. Goodhand then came to Lakeside and in 1916 organized the AYPA. This organization served successfully for several years.

From 1917 until 1920 Rev. F. G. Richard had charge of the parish, at which time it was again joined with Thamesford. Then followed Rev. W.D. Davis, L.Th. 1920-25; Rev. H.J. Johnson, MA 1925-32; Rev. R.S. Skinner 1932-36; Rev. J.D. Gilmour, BA, LTh., 1936-38; and Rev. S.W. Simple, BA, 1938-47.

Of the men who served from 1920 to 1947, Rev. W.D. Davis, Rev. H.J. Johnson and Rev. R.S. Skinner are now retired; Rev. J.D. Gilmour is presently rector of St. Thomas' Church, Hamilton; and Rev. S.W. Semple is now chaplain at the Ontario Hospital, St. Thomas.

Lakeside Church is Observing Centennial - cont.

Organized AYPAs - cont.

In 1948 Lakeside was separated from Thamesford and became linked up with St. James Church, St. Marys, under the Rev. G.P. Parsons, who ministered faithfully for two years. At this time Lakeside was again added to the parish of Thamesford and Crumlin under the Rev. J.G. Lethbridge, who had been rector of the two point parish for a short period prior to this. Under his leadership the parish became self-supporting. After a brief stay, Mr. Lethbridge resigned to become Anglican chaplain at Westminster Hospital, London, Ontario.

His successor was the Rev. A.D. Munro, who arrived from Scotland in 1951 to become rector and remained until 1953. He was succeeded in 1954 by the Rev. R.W. Rowles and it was during his incumbency that the rectory in Thamesford was sold and a new one built on Stanley Street North. Rev. R.D. Ostle, who came to Canada from the United States, succeeded him but resigned in 1958 to return to the United States. During his short incumbency the Lakeside CPR station was purchased and moved to the Church grounds to be used as a parish hall.

The present rector, Rev. J.A. Catling, formerly rector of the Parish of Markdale, succeeded Rev. Mr. Ostle in December of 1958. The Church was re-decorated in 1961 and in the Fall of 1962 the Quebec heaters, which had been used in the church for many years, were replaced with oil heaters.

Many changes have taken place in the community over the period of one hundred years but Christ Church has, throughout these years of change, reflected its Christian influence.



When Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876 little did he realize that he was creating a device that would become as much a part of our daily lives nor develop into such a widespread use. As much of the work was done in Brantford and the first line was between Brantford and Paris it was to be expected that Woodstock and Oxford county would receive some benefit from the invention.

The same year some experimental work was done in Woodstock using Great North Western Telegraph lines. This was only the beginning. In 1880 Woodstock became a part of the Bell system. In 1883 the city was connected with Hamilton and London on a direct line with connections at St. George, Paris, Ingersoll and Thamesford. In 1889 the service had become a full time service with new subscribers signing up at a rate that it was no longer possible for the switchboard operators to remember the call numbers from memory. Such was the birth of the telephone in Woodstock.

Throughout the country it was a little more adventurous. As progress was made, having one's name in the telephone directory was quite a boost to the parties concerned in the business world.

#### Plattsville

Plattsville was perhaps the first community outside Woodstock to receive telephone connections with the outside world. Unfortunately the name of the person responsible for the event has not been kept. He was a minister who had seen the good from this device at Cayuga. When he moved to Plattsville he advocated that a growing community needed the telephone. In 1885 the line to Berlin (Kitchener), New Hamburg and Baden was completed. The following year a line from New Hamburg to Plattsville brought the telephone to town. In 1886 Plattsville appeared in the Western Ontario directory, listing its hours of service from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, 2-4 p.m. on Sundays, 10-12 and 2-4 p.m. on holidays. The two names listed as subscribers were Snider, and Steckle who were millers. Two others were Veitch and Neal druggists who also acted as agent for the company. In 1891 a call from Plattsville to Toronto cost 25 cents over the tollphone at the drug store. Plattsville not having a rail connection except by way of Bright was considered a good location for an exchange

Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

Plattsville - cont.

to be set up as early as 1898. This was not done. In 1902 R. McKie, a manufacturer of high grade buggies and fancy road wagons whose rubber tires were a specialty, wrote to the head office of the Bell Company and stated that he was anxious to have a phone installed. He also claimed several others would be pleased to have it installed if there were connections with the Bright station. This was providing the price was right. He was told if he could get 10 subscribers who were willing to pay \$20 a year for a 3 year contract and pay a bonus of \$100 to help defray cost of material, an exchange could be set up. Furthermore there would be a toll charge of 10 cents a call for non-subscribers between Plattsville and Bright.

By 1903 the line was installed with a complete quota of ten telephones. By the following year there were 12 subscribers. All were equipped with long distance magneto Wall telephone sets which replaced the original Blake set. In 1905 the financial report states that rental amounted to \$224, and tolls \$482. Mr. Curry, the local manager, received 20 per cent commission plus 10 per cent tolls and rentals from Bright which was a sub office.

Tavistock

In 1889 a line was extended to Tavistock and an agency opened in the store of F. Krug. In 1891 it was reported that ----- were seven instruments in ----- . By 1900 there were -----in 1902 Mr. Krug had a -----magneto wall -----installed. In reply to -----received at the head -----of service on a -----afternoon. Mr. -----his son usuall-----on Sunday but was away this particular Sunday. But there was an employee living a few doors away who would oblige at any hour if contacted. He also stated that in the last six months there had been only eight outgoing calls and one incoming call. This office did not operate on holidays.

Slowly but surely the people became telephone conscious with 24 phones in use in 1909. By 1910 the revenue amounted to \$440 for rentals and \$1,124 for tolls. Mr. Krug received 20 per cent commission. All was not well in Tavistock. In late 1910 a group of citizens

Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

Tavistock - cont.

petitioned the Company to remove the exchange to a more accomodating location. It was located in a general store which they thought was too public and would not supply night service. As a result of this the exchange was moved across the road to the drugstore of John Lemp, the larger type switchboard was installed and night service was supplied. Mr. Lemp was paid 1/12 of the rental fees to compensate for the longer hours.

These reports are typical of many municipalities of Oxford at that time. The parent company was careful to watch the financial picture of each exchange. A good example was at Princeton when in 1903 it noticed a drop of \$85.10 in revenue. This was due to the fact that the only subscriber A.L. Misener had moved away therefore his toll calls were no longer made. He was a cattle drover and made frequent calls to Toronto and Hamilton.

East Oxford

The more colorful side of the early telephone is with the rural lines. It is claimed that the pioneer telephone company of East Oxford was perhaps the first rural telephone line in Oxford. This was a family affair. Thomas Preston Hart who lived on lot 16 concession one of East Oxford bought a pair of telephones which allowed him to communicate with his father-in-law William J. Perrets, who lived on the same lot but nearer the road. The lines were run along the fence. Insulators were broken bottles. This line went into use in April 1902. On May 30 he installed a telephone for Bert Travers, his wife's brother who lived on lot 16 concession 3. The following December his family came onto the party line with John Hart, a brother of Thomas Hart, living at lot 19, concession 3, having a phone installed.

Members of the township council were not as farsighted as Thomas Hart. When he applied for permission to put poles along the side of the road to string the wire on they refused him permission. Therefore, he built his line across the fields. In April of 1903 Thomas Hart installed a switchboard. Mrs. Hattie Blow on lot 18 concession 3 joined the select few of subscribers. The first poles with cross arms appeared in the



Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

East Oxford - cont.

the Thomas Hart lane in May of that year. Calra Hart, lot 19 concession 3, Henry Hart, lot 19, concession 2 and William Hart lot 17 concession 3 all had telephones installed between June and December of 1903.

This proved to be ideal setup with a single exception. Subscribers could not call into Woodstock or receive return calls. Thomas Hart was too good a manager to be stopped by a refusal to connect his system to the Woodstock line. James Isbister who lived on lot 19 concession 2 provided him with the answer. Mr. Isbister operated an ice business in Woodstock and therefore was entitled to a phone even though he did live beyond the city limits. Mr. Hart approached Mr. Isbister and an arrangement was worked out that the Isbisters would have a phone installed on the Hart line and through this phone they would relay any messages either way. The financial statements of this company are not available but it is known that Thomas Hart and his sons built the lines and Mr. Hart bought all needed supplies. Each new subscriber was required to pay his own expenses.

In May 1905 a Telephone Association was formed and became known as the Pioneer Telephone Co. In 1906 service was started with Woodstock. This lasted until 1928 when the Bell Company purchased the Pioneer Company outright.

East Zorra

Edward M. Johnston a cheesemaker and manager of the East Zorra and Blandford Cheese Factory was along with Dr. Alex N. Hotson and Dr. John G. Hossack the principal parties who could see a great future for the telephone in Innerkip. They were supported in their views by John Begg and George Dolson, two local storekeepers. The group approached Bell Company at Woodstock in 1905 with a view of opening a toll booth at Innerkip. To do this the Bell required a \$200 donation which was raised by donations. A toll booth was opened in the butcher shop of Daniel Blackmore. His daughter acted as operator.

This set up did not meet with Mr. Johnson's approval as it was not always convenient to go to the toll phone to call Ingersoll, the centre of the cheese shipping market. He wanted a phone at the factory. He was in a good position to stir up interest in a rural telephone for he could meet the farmers as they had their milk weighed in. As a result of his efforts a meeting was called during the winter of 1906



Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

East Zorra - cont.

at the COF hall for the purpose of considering the advisability of constructing a rural telephone line. The meeting agreed that it was a good move. The company was organized with Dr. J.G. Hossack as president. The price per share was set at \$10. In April 1906 the first meeting of the stockholders was held. It was decided to incorporate as a co-operative association using name East Zorra Telephone Association with capital stock set at \$20,000 consisting of 200 shares at \$10 each with a limit of ten shares per person. Later the limit was raised to 50. In May 1906 the shareholders decided to change the name to The Innerkip Rural Telephone Association Ltd.

The first line built went to the East Zorra and Blandford Cheese Co. by way of the 17th line. This was personally laid out by Drs. J.G. Hossack and Alex N. Hotson, Louis and J.P. Kaufman who operated a flour-ishing lumber business at Cassel requested service. The line was continued across the 16th line and north to Cassel. At the end of one year service it was reported that ten miles of line had been built with 31 paying telephones. The cost exclusive of the telephones was between \$80 and \$90 a mile. Keen interest was shown by residents along the 16th line.

By the end of 1907 there were nearly 45 miles of line in service with 111 telephone in operation divided among ten separate lines. Line 1 served Innerkip business sections, line 2 went across the mill sideroad to the 16th line then north on the 16th line. Line 3 was north of Hebron on 16th line, 4 was on 12 and 13th concession of Blandford east of Cassel. Line 5 went to Bright. Line 6 served concession 17 of East Zorra, seven took in Innerkip north and the 7th line of Blandford. Line 8 was the 15th concession of East Zorra. Line 9 was the 12th concession of East Zorra south of Huntingford and line 10 was north from Huntingford. When the annual meeting of 1908 was called, interest was sweeping the county like wildfire for rural telephone service. Representatives were present to request that service be extended to such places as Bright, Maplewood and Drumbo. The idea of connecting with other rural lines was also discussed as other companies had organized since the formation of this company.

Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

East Zorra - cont.

A new problem confronted the Innerkip Association in 1910. Having sold most of their available stock, should they raise the necessary funds to carry on the work by increasing their capital stock for sale or by becoming a joint stock company under the Companies Act with power to borrow money. In April 1911 it was decided to become a company. That year they borrowed on notes the sum of \$6,850.

The Innerkip Co. was in favor of free daytime exchange with other neighboring companies. They made agreements for this with the Princeton-Drumbo Co. in May 1911, North Easthope in Dec. 1911 also the West Zorra Co. in December 1911. The rate at this time was raised from \$10 to \$12. The free daytime exchange did not last. By 1914 the agreements were all cancelled with some asking a five cent rate while others wanted a flat rate set up. This company continued to operate until 1947 when it amalgamated with the Princeton Drumbo Telephone company to form the Oxford Telephone Company.

In 1906 the people of Blenheim township were anxious to obtain some of the benefits of rural telephone service. They formed their company during the winter of 1907 and elected Fred J. Daniel as president. They obtained the service of Daniel Blackmore who had constructed the first lines for the Innerkip company. Their lines served the area of Plattsville, Drumbo, Richwood, Canning, Creditville and Vandecar. At the annual meeting of 1911 it was reported that 470 telephones were installed. The fee was \$17 for private line a year and \$12 for party lines in 1907. This was raised to \$15 and \$20 in 1908. A \$1 rebate was given for prompt payment.

Wages are always of interest. In 1920 the girl operators received \$27 per month with a \$3 bonus if satisfactory. Work hours were nine hours a day one week and six hours the following week and every fourth Sunday. In 1922 the salary was changed to 18 cents a hour for a 50 hour week. The linemen's assistant received \$75 a month in 1922.

Following the amalgamation of these two companies steps were taken to purchase three small independent rural companies, the Spring Creek Company, Pinehurst Company and the Ingleside Company.

Arrangements were completed for the first two in 1949 and for Ingleside in 1951.

Oxford's Rural Telephoning Used Fences, Broken Bottles - cont.

East Zorra - cont.

This new company adopted the policy of giving its customers the best service available. In 1948 they changed the Drumbo circuit over to the dial system to become the first rural dial exchange in Ontario. It is also one of the few rural companies not absorbed by the larger Bell Telephone Company.

In an earlier article on this page, a contributor quoted the remarks of Mrs. Jameson about the residence of Admiral Vansittart near Woodstock. Another traveller, less famous than the wife of the chancellor of Upper Canada, was an English clergyman who visited and described the Oxford region shortly after Mrs. Jameson had been there.

Unable to get a good appointment in England this cleric decided to leave the old country. For years he had been reading every book that he could find on life in Canada. He had read of settlers like Colonel Talbot who had obtained enormous tracts of wilderness land for a few pounds. Perhaps, he thought he could acquire here an estate of a thousand acres and thus become a landed gentleman. Since he also "ardently longed to see an iceberg and the Falls of Niagara", he decided to better his fortunes and to satisfy his curiosity by making a journey to this country in 1846.

Before he left England he looked up anyone who could give him some information about Canada. He met a man who had lived in Western Ontario for many years and he asked him, "What is the most desirable part of Canada for a gentleman settler to go to?" The man promptly answered, "Woodstock, in Canada West". "But", asked the clergyman, "shall one be going much away from society in such a neighborhood?" "You will be going into "society"!" the other replied.

So, in his travels about this peninsula from Sarnia to Hamilton, and from Georgian Bay to Long Point, the minister made it a special point to investigate Woodstock where he found, he said "one of the most select little societies in all Upper Canada".

Three years after he visited this part of Canada West, he settled down and taking the penname of "A Pioneer of the Wilderness" he published his notes in England. They filled two volumes and are called "The Emigrant Churchman".

The book tells something of the origin of that polite sector of Western Ontario which centred about Woodstock. Thus, he introduces the founder of the gay little world: "Admiral Vansittart, first cousin to Lord Bexley, determined several years ago on settling in Canada, and requested



a Captain Drew to look out a suitable "situation" for him and provide all things fitting against his arrival.

The captain recommended Woodstock, and the admiral on emigrating, determined, being possessed of ample means (45,000 pounds), to surround himself with an extensive estate. Accordingly he bought up farm after farm in addition to his original purchase; the proprietors, when they became aware of his fancy, making him, as may well be supposed, pay pretty well for his purchase.

But, determined to have a compact property, he at length, by dovetailing in every direction wherever a piece of land intervened between any two of his former purchases, succeeded in surrounding himself with an ample domain, which he enclosed in a plank fence, extending for several miles. His house he built in a rambling fashion, adding a wing here and a wing there, till he succeeded in erecting a perfect wilderness of a place.

Since the old gentleman's death, unfortunately getting into decay, as his heirs do not care to keep it up, though one of his sons still resides there; but the presence of the old gentleman and of Captain Drew's family, gave a tone to the locality which has kept up, and continues to increase. Family after family of the highest respectability came out and settled in the same neighborhood, until now 80 or 90 people can be got together, at any time, of as refined manners as any whom one could meet in what would be called extremely good society at home.

Being a minister, naturally the writer was interested in meeting his fellow-clerics. He looked up and admired the rector of Old St. Paul's Church in Woodstock, whom he calls Mr. Bottridge, surely a mistake for Bettridge. He writes of him: "Mr. Bottridge is just the man for the place: having formerly been in the army, he has seen much of what is called the world, while at the same time he is a respected and useful clergyman. He bears also a high reputation for pulpit eloquence; and is moreover a most decided lover of hospitality, as he keeps almost open house; in fact the parsonage used to be called by his friends "The Mitre Tavern"; and presents in his own family an agreeable centre of harmony and Christian friendliness to the happy and estimable society by which he is surrounded.

He left a delightful position at Southampton, where between his church and his pupils he was realizing 1,000 pounds a year, at the earnest request of his friend the admiral, to the very great deterioration of his worldly circumstances; which is more than everyone would have done.

In saying the final word about Woodstock, the churchman added, "From what ---have said of this neighborhood, it cannot be sup---- that I should rec-  
ARTICLE ENDS HERE.

The telephone history of Southampton, in many respects, is as fascinating as the shades of the Bluewater Country in which the town is situated. Originally called Saugeen, Southampton had been incorporated as a village some 18 years before the telephone was invented.

During 1876 it is quite possible that Southampton citizens heard with wonderment about Alexander Bell's successful experiments with his "talking box". It was also in that year that Bell conducted his famous experiment to see if his telephone could operate over long distance. Bell transmitted his voice and musical sounds from Brantford to Paris on Aug. 10, 1876, over wires of the Dominion Telegraph Company.

It was four years after this historic experiment that the Bell Telephone Company of Canada was incorporated - on April 29, 1880. By December of that year the Bell company issued a report that it owned and operated more than 2,000 miles of wire and were serving about 2,000 customers in Ontario and Quebec.

Southampton, like most of the smaller towns in Ontario, did not have telephone exchange service until after it had long distance telephone service. In 1881, Bell began the construction of long distance lines to link the towns and villages.

A long distance line from Walkerton was planned, suggested, and approved in early 1886. In June of that year, an official of the Bell company visited Southampton and apparently found little interest in the "talking box" for he wrote "little or no business in Southampton".

During the period 1886 to 1890 several towns in the vicinity of Southampton were linked by long distance lines and, in 1890, Southampton was connected with Port Elgin and Paisley. At Paisley, this line connected with lines extending to Toronto, Windsor and Quebec City.

At this point in its history Southampton was on the map, keeping pace with the progress of communications.

The first directory in the Bell's historical department to list Southampton as a company office was published in 1891.

"Central Office - High Street" - announced the diminutive volume. Office hours were from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays; 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays; 10 a.m. to 12 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. holidays. W. Graham was named the company's local manager and the subscribers numbered exactly two, one being the local

Telephone History of Southampton Mirrors Growth of Area Towns - cont.

manager. They were listed thus: Blecher & Co., Bankers Albert St.; Graham, W. Beacon Printing Office, High St.

W. Graham, who published The Beacon, a weekly newspaper, had undertaken the telephone agency. There was a small switchboard and a telephone set for the convenience of those wishing to call the only other subscriber, the bank, or to place a long distance call.

During 1894 a long distance line was constructed from Tara to Port Elgin giving Southampton more direct connection by telephone with Hepqorth, Wiarton, Owen Sound and numerous other centres.

Extended service brought results. An additional 14 names were contained in the December, 1894, directory. A larger switchboard was installed that year to provide local and long distance service and Irwin Rusk, a local hardware merchant, was appointed the Bell company's local manager. There was little or no change in Southampton's local telephone exchange between 1892 and 1902, the number of subscribers fluctuating between 12 and 15 and Irwin Rusk remaining as local manager.

In 1902, two changes came to the Southampton telephone exchange. Mrs. Isabella Franklin was appointed local manager and the directory, for the first time, listed telephone numbers.

Two years later, in 1904, J. B. Filsinger was placed in charge and the number of long distance phones rose to four. The Bank of Hamilton, Bowman and Zinkan and both Knechtel factories had obtained new sets.

Mr. Filsinger's tenure of office was not too long, however. In the latter part of 1904 he was succeeded by Robert McVittie, who was to remain in charge of Southampton's telephone affairs for more than three decades. Chief operators over that time were Miss Ruby Hunt, Miss Jean Boundy, Miss Irene Ferguson and Miss Helene Murray.

A prominent man in the community Mr. McVittie in addition to his telephone duties served terms as mayor and reeve of Southampton and in 1923 was warden of Bruce County. As were two of his predecessors, Mr. Rusk and Mrs. Franklin, he was engaged in the hardware business. In the pioneer days a well respected local storekeeper was a fine man to handle the telephone business, since he knew the townspeople and was used to business transactions.

Telephone History of Southampton Mirrors Growth of Area Towns - cont.

Out of his commission he employed an operator and as business increased, a night operator.

As the number of subscribers increased, additional help was required. But when there was little telephone traffic often the local manager assisted by a clerk or one of his family, attended to the calls quite satisfactorily between other duties.

In the early days of the telephone in Southampton, the office was in the store of the manager. Later Mr. McVittie transferred the office to the building now occupied by Logans men's wear store. In December 1948, the office was moved to a new building on Grosvenor Street and last June, with the introduction of dial service the equipment was housed in the new telephone building on Albert Street.



In John McCrae, soldier, physician and author of the immortal poem, "In Flanders' Fields," Canadians possess a fellow countryman they remember annually with affection and pride. This is true because John McCrae just happened to be the kind of man people put their confidence in and instinctively liked for himself.

Shy, kind, conscientious, idealistic, responsible, determined and humble, McCrae was the last person who would have believed he would one day be annually remembered for words Canadians can never forget.

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae, C.A.M.C.: B.A., M.D., M.R.C.P. (London), was born in Guelph, on Nov. 30, 1872. He died in France on Jan. 28, 1918. But during the 46 years he lived, he had served in two wars, in the South African war as a lieutenant in the R.C.F.A. and in the First World War as a surgeon with the First Brigade, C.E.F., 1914-1915, and in charge of Medical Division No. 3, Canadian General Hospital, 1915-1918.

McCrae's father, Lt.-Col. David McCrae was born in Kintail, Rosshire, the home of Clan "MacRa". David came to Canada at the age of four and during his lifetime had considerable influence in the agricultural, industrial and military life of Ontario, as well as Guelph. This atmosphere couldn't help but wield an important influence in determining young John's character and career.

A life-long friend of John McCrae's, H.O. Howitt, of Guelph, wrote a vivid description of "Jack McCrae as he was to me". He described him as "tall, boyish, hair inclined to be wavy and fair, striking, sparkling eyes".

"He wore clothing that was not considered fashionable- generally rough grey with considerable black mixed with it. His coats were cut shorter than those the average person wore. They were not particularly well tailored and seldom were his trousers pressed. I cannot remember him ever wearing other than black high shoes when in town. He never wore any jewelry, unless one would consider jewelry, his silver watch chain and the silver seal that dangled from it. His watch was also silver, and if I remember correctly, it was a hunting case and wound with a key. He often wore a polka-dot neck-tie; generally his collar was of a wired type."

He Wrote the Words Canadians can Never Forget - cont.

McCrae enlisted in the South African war not because he enjoyed soldiering, but because his sense of duty would allow no other alternative. When he was able to return to Canada, McCrae plunged into the study and practice of medicine. Success and honor marked his medical career.

Then in 1914 came war again. Those close to McCrae knew something was preying on his mind. He told them finally that from South Africa he knew all that war means. He had no illusions about it. Now, at his age, he would prefer to continue the practice of medicine in Montreal. But, he said, he felt it was his duty to enlist with the Canadian forces. To a sister he wrote, "Out on the awful old trail again. And with very mixed feelings but some determination".

It was this rigid sense of duty that dictated the course McCrae's life was to follow, both in civilian and military life. And because he never would compromise with his conscience, he was able to appreciate more keenly the fine things of life. He loved animals and children, the great outdoors and the companionship of friends.

Sir Andrew Macphail wrote of his friend: "Through all his life, and through all his letters, dogs and children followed him as shadows follow men. To walk in the streets with him was a slow procession. Every dog, every child one met must be spoken to, and each made answer."

A sense of duty and a sense of beauty - these were McCrae's guide-posts. Awaiting the arrival of new batches of wounded from Flanders' fields, McCrae wrote to his mother: "Yesterday, in the press of bad smells, I got a whiff of a hedgerow in bloom." This was the man who, having aged years within a few weeks, scrawled the words of his immortal poem on a sheet of foolscap paper which he stuffed in a pocket as he turned to tend the dying. These words became the crowning testament to the greatness of the man.

It is for these things John McCrae is annually remembered. His memory adds stature to the thousands of wounded who, like this man, gave their lives hoping to make a better world.

No matter where one travels in Oxford county it will be found that there is an unlimited reservoir of stories that have been retold by the older members of the families to the younger generations. It will also be apparent with each telling, the story becomes a little more colourful as the younger members must be impressed.

At the turn of the century, this bear story was still quite vivid and fresh in the minds of many residents of this recently created city. Even at that time, the story was supposedly over seventy years old.

It all began with the area of what is now the Presbyterian cemetery, about the year 1835, when Sam Sliver was gathering sap from the fine stand of maple trees which stood at this spot.

Mr. Sliver was a new arrival in this country having come the previous spring from the Old Country. He had spent a good part of the previous summer preparing sap troughs made from basswood, on the prospect that he might raise extra money by selling maple sugar. He had become associated with Samuel Clement and Captain O'Brien. The latter had a log cabin on the site now occupied by the home of Col. Burgess.

"In the spring of 1835 we commenced tapping the trees and our spiles being made of cedar", wrote Mr. Sliver. "We fixed our camp on the land now occupied by the cemetery. We borrowed kettles, barrels and tubs where we could, and were in fine shape for turning out a good supply of either maple sugar or syrup. To draw sap to the camp, we used a yoke of oxen hitched to a home built sled upon which we set two barrels from each of which one end had been removed. The work went well and we were preparing to sugar-off. One of us remained in camp at all times to tend the fires and watch the boiling sap. I had been on duty one night and early in the morning had a fine kettle of syrup done to a turn. I let the fire go down and set the kettle to cool, placing it a short distance from a red-painted barrel which was usually used for holding sap but at the time was useless as the bung had come out. I then settled things in camp so that I could have an hour' sleep.

Turning the empty red barrel over on its side, I crawled partly into it for shelter.

I dozed for some time but was made broadly awake by feeling something



Big B'ar Provided Motive Power in Man's Wild Ride - cont.

nuzzle my feet. Looking out I saw a HUGE bear prodding his snout about, evidently in an investigating mood. I felt uncomfortable but realized that the best plan was to lay still. A dead man could not have been more still than I was while that bear was taking liberties with my footwear. I guess he reckoned that I was not of much value to him as he soon moved off towards the cooling syrup. Now bears, as you know, are very fond of sweet tasting things. Yes, here was something that really did interest him and he promptly stuck his snout into the hot syrup that had not been off that fire very long. I could view him through the bung hole in the barrel. It surprised him for he jerked his snout out and backed square against the barrel I was in, shoving his tail through the bunk hole and almost hitting me in the eye. He waited a moment or two and then made a second attack on the syrup. In the meantime I had made up my mind that if the tail came through the bung hole again I would seize it and hang on thus making the bear my prisoner in a manner never heard of before. I had hardly made the decision, when slam-bang, he came against the barrel for the second time. The tail this time came through even farther than before so it was no trouble for me to get a good hold on it with both hands. Then the fun began. Did you ever hold a bear by the tail when the tail was through a bung hole of a barrel: if you have never I don't know how I can explain it to you other than to tell you just what did happen.

The bear became ruffled! First the burn on his snout and now his tail caught in the barrel. In short order he became as mad as any bear I ever came in contact with (there were a lot of bears around here at that time). He was getting it at both ends and he did not intend to stand it for long. After he emitted an angry grunt. I heard a clawing on the red barrel but this did no good as the barrel was made of oak staves with four good iron hoops at each end and a head two inches thick. I felt quite secure as long as I held onto the bear's tail. The barrel had been made by Thomas Dunn, a carpenter who had come to Woodstock in 1834 and had taken up a three-acre plot near the centre of which is now occupied by the CPR station. His log house stood almost directly north of St. Mary's School. We had borrowed the barrel from him and were to return it in good order when the syrup making was over, together with a



Big B'ar Provided Motive Power in Man's Wild Ride - cont.

gallon of syrup and a pancake of sugar for its use.

The bear continued his grunting and clawing for a minute or two and then took off like a scared rabbit dragging the barrel with him over the snow until he came to a certain tree which he immediately attempted to climb, I suppose he thought that this would free his tail from the barrel and he could go back and deal with that syrup that burned his snout. The try was all in vain as I had decided to hold on till death did us part. After finding that this was of no avail he gave up and got back down from the tree and took off down that slope that now leads to the railroad track and headed right for what is now the CPR station. Away we went, helter-skelter, bumpety-bump. Over hillock and logs through brush and slush, the barrel banging against trees and stumps, with me inside more determined than ever to hold on till the crack of doom if necessary. The bear galloped through the timber that was thick and heavy where the old Thomas organ works once stood, on to a point a little south of the station site. Here the bear decided on a southerly course which took him and I and the barrel a little south of Sargeant Egan's log house and directly opposite Thos. Dunns house. Here we were seen by young Peter Dunn who immediately called out the rest of the family by yelling at the top of his voice, "Father, Mother, look at the big dog with a tin can to his tail". The family was all out in a moment. Abe Donson, another old settler, accompanied them. The latter was all excited the moment that he saw us and yelled out "It's a bar, it's a bar, a thunderin' big bar! Whar's a gun?" "Bloody wars an' that's my barrel," cried Mr. Dunn. "Run, run, James and get Sgt. Egan".

"Sgt. Egan was a man of parts in the neighbourhood having been a soldier in one of his majesties regiments before coming to Woodstock. He knew better than any one else how to use fire arms. This at least was the thought that passed through Thomas Dunn's mind when he saw his perfectly good red barrel high tailing it across country, securely attached to a bear's rump. By the time that Sgt. Egan was able to catch up with the bear and I, we had covered considerable ground and had reached a spot (where the former John White store now Walkers; far from the syrup site.) The

Big Bear Provided Motive Power in Man's Wild Ride - Cont.

hue and cry was general and the chase began in earnest. In crossing the Hatch farm (which was bounded on the north by what is now Dundas street outside the town plot), the red barrel became wedged between a fallen log and a tree a little southeast of the site of the present town hall. All efforts of the bear failed to move it and I held on with a grip of iron. Here Sgt. Egan and party overtook us and discovered that the barrel was occupied. Of course, they did not know that it was me inside, until afterwards, but they did realize that there was a man in the barrel and this called for some special strategy on the part of Sgt. Egan as he did not want to hit me when he fired his musket which was loaded with ball. Just as he fired the bear jerked the end of the barrel into range and the shot smashed it into splinters. Two or three of them hit me and caused me no little pain. Mr. Dunn who saw his barrel being ruined with the shot, let out an awful bellow "Oh my barrel, bloody wars, you have finished my barrel". He was more concerned with the fate of the barrel than he was of me.

With the blowing out of the end I did not lose my grip, but the bear was able to loosen the barrel from the tree and log and off we went again at a pace faster than ever. I was beginning to fear that the bear would get away after all but I determined to stick with it to the bitter end and hope that the pursuers would be able to intercept and kill the brute before he killed me.

In our travels we crossed a stony piece of ground and it was then that the staves began to loosen. Presently the barrel hit a stone that was several inches above the snow and promptly several of the staves separated company with the barrel and I.. From then on the staves fell off one by one until I was left with just the stave with the bung hole in it. The bear was making terrific time and soon reached the Vansittart property. The trees went by me as such a rate that they looked like a picket fence.

At last the trusty oak could stand the strain no longer and parted company right at the bung hole. This put me up against a tree and I lost my grip on the bear's tail. The beast let out a grunt of triumph and rattled away out of sight, never to set eyes on this part of the country again. As for me, well as I said I was stunned when I hit the tree and lost my hold or I might still be travelling with the bear. When Sgt. Egan and Mr. Dunn came on the scene, the latter had an armful of staves that he had retrieved along the way. I was sitting beside the tree with nothing but the

Big B'ar Provided Motive Power in Man's Wild Ride - cont.

bung hole of the barrel to show that such a fierce race had been run.  
But as I said then and I say again I'll never forget that bear."

One of the most frequently requested stories has been for one on the meaning or the origin for many of the place names in Oxford county.

In beginning a new series, I feel that this would be a good time for such an article. When one looks at the map of Oxford he will find a wide variation of names, some of them going back to the days of the Indians; others reminding us of great men and battles in days of yore, while still others were taken from the field of literature. Some are of English origin, others Scotch or Welsh, while we even find some that still cause disputes as to whether they are Spanish or are of Biblical origin.

But first let us take a look at the name Canada as it has an interesting origin. Many historians believe that the word was originally part of the Iroquois tongue. This is due to the fact that Jacques Cartier arrived in this land and decided to explore inland, he obtained Indian guides from the Gaspe area. They told him that the great river that he was entering was divided into three parts: the Saguenay territory to the south, the Kanada territory extending to Hochelaga, and the third extending beyond Hochelaga. The Name Kanada was used by the guides to describe the territory where there were clusters of cabins, a section where the natives had built a type of permanent home.

If the Iroquois version is correct, therein lies a mystery. Early records show that the Algonquins occupied all the land from Lake Ontario to the Atlantic. The Algonquin version for this work is Odanah which means settlement. Could it be that our spelling is a combination of the two words? It is known that these tribes at one time lived together along the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Another version of how Canada got its name gives credit to the Spanish. Early Spanish explorers ventured up the coast as far north as the great river and went in search of gold. Their labours were in vain and it is claimed that they named this part of their world Acanada aca which means "Nothing here". How wrong they have been proven!

For Ontario there is little doubt as to how this province received its name.

#### Iroquois Again

Iroquois are again given credit for this name as they called that body of



Antiquity Shrouds Origin of Many Oxford Names - cont.

Iroquois Again - cont.

water Kanadario, which we now call Lake Ontario. The phrase means sparkling or beautiful waters.

When the name Oxford is mentioned most people connect it with England and Oxford University, which is quite right. The original name for Oxford, England, was Ouse no ford as there was a ford through the river Ouse at this point. Later it was changed to Oxna ford and from that to Oxford. The city was in existence at the time of Alfred the Great. The last meeting of Parliament was held here in 1681 under King Charles II.

Strange as it may seem the naming of Norwich has nothing to do with Oxford, England, as this name was applied to the township of Norwich when it still was a part of Norfolk county. The name Norwich was adopted after the metropolis of Norwich, in Norfolk, England. The name comes from Norda Viscus or the Northern Ville. In 1348 nearly 58,000 people died of the plague in that city. A good many of them were Flemish weavers.

Dereham also takes its name from the county of Norfolk. At Dereham, England, a church dedicated to Saint Nicholas belonged to a nunnery founded by Withburga natural daughter of Arma a king of East Anglia. It was later destroyed by the Danes.

As for Blenheim township, this name is one of the most famous in English history. After the Duke of Marlborough defeated the French and Bavarians at Blenheim, in Bavaria, Aug. 13, 1704, the country was so proud of him that the government voted half a million pounds for the purpose of erecting a palace for the duke and his descendants. The entrance to Blenheim from Woodstock, England, is through a Triumph Arch built on the Corinthian order. It was constructed under the direction of Sarah the Duchess of Marlborough. Blandford took its name from the second title of the Duke of Marlborough, that of Marquis of Blandford. The name originally came from an English town in Dorsetshire on the banks of the river Storu. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Incidentally one of the Marquis of Blandford, born Sept. 18, 1897, was at one time considered to be the youngest millionaire in the world.

Thence to Zorra

Zorra is one of the names that could have come from the Spanish or from the

## Antiquity Shrouds Origin of Many Oxford Names - cont.

### Thence to Zorra - cont.

Bible. The Spanish term for a female fox, a strumpet, or a sly one, is often given as Zorra, but ever since the days when the Zorra tug-of-war team defeated the famed Humbolts at Chicago, the one thing to folks of that area. This was to effect that Zorra was the translation taken to mean Zorrah, the birthplace of Samson, as is found in the book of Judges 12:2. Historians believe that the name was given by Sir Peugrine Maitland, who had a fondness for Spanish names. He also named Lobo township in Middlesex County.

Thinking of Zorra always leads to Embro. This is the only place in the world where one finds the name spelled in this way. The proper and full name for the village is Edinborough, Embro being the short form. It is supposed that the early Scots had not the time to tell their wives they were going to Edinborough or they would have thought that they were "gang awa" hame to Scotland". Credit for the Embro tag goes to D. Matheson first postmaster in the village. It was originally Zorra.

Ingersoll was first known as Oxford and it was not until after the return of the younger members of the Ingersoll family, that anyone ever thought of changing it. When the sons of Thomas Ingersoll returned and made a name for themselves, and James Ingersoll became postmaster and registrar, it was decided to honor the family by changing the name from Oxford to Ingersoll.

Tillsonburg is one of the place names in Oxford that has had two spellings. When the settlement of Dereham Forge decided to change its name to honor its founder, the official version was spelled with one "l". It was not until after the turn of the century that move was made to correct the spelling. The misspelling of the name made no difference to George Tillson, who under severe handicaps, even to being jailed as a rebel suspect, went on to make his town the thriving southern town of the county.

### Oldest In County

While it is the youngest of our villages Beachville is also the oldest of county communities. Its origin cannot be stated accurately as we find that Carrol was here before records were kept. A Mr. Beach also had a mill here so long ago that even the oldest inhabitants can not tell the location

Antiquity Shrouds Origin of Many Oxford Names - cont.

of the mill. It was from this miller that the community took its name and through the passing of time no one has ever tried to change it.

Otterville, as the name implies, was the home of the otter and as the settlers arrived it was given a series of names, each connected with the otter. Even the river was named and still is known as the Otter River. There were two other names attached to the village, Otter Creek Mills and later Otter village. The western edge of the community at one time was known as Erbtown, after Samuel Erb, who owned both a saw and woolen mill there.

Of course, there is little doubt how Burgessville received its name. It was named after Edward Burgess who settled there in 1844 and served as postmaster for 30 years.

It was similar with Plattsville, which was named after Samuel Platt, who erected the first mill there on Nith River or Smith Creek.

Strange as it may seem the only name that preserves that of the first settler, is that given to a creek. Horners Creek is so named after Thomas Horner, and it was on this creek that he built the first mill in Oxford.

Other places bearing the names of prominent pioneers include Harrington West, originally called Springfield named in honor of Squire Harrington by Francis Hinks. Harrington served as warden of the county and was active in political affairs for many years. He is buried in the Harrington cemetery. Youngsville was named after Gabriel Youngs, who settled this area from north of Embro to Brooksdale. The latter name incidentally, vividly describes its location to a t. Eastwood was named for a lady, a Mrs. East, sister of Admiral Vansittart. Some claim it was so named because when he was not satisfied with the location of his home at Woodstock, he moved to the woods east of the site. Hence Eastwood. Oliver was named after one of Oxford's statesmen by the residents of the community for his efforts to obtain a postoffice for the area. His full name was Thomas Oliver. Vandecar, Muir and Curries also carry well known family names.

Antiquity Shrouds Origin of Many Oxford Names - cont.

Oldest in County - cont.

Golspie is named after a town in Scotland from where many of the early settlers came. Originally it was called Ellmstead. The name of Culloden always stirs up controversy. If you are a Scot, you will claim that it was named after the battle of Culloden Moor, if you are Welsh (and there are many Welsh families settled here) you will claim that it is Welsh and means "back of the swamp". Take your choice. But I will go along with the Welsh version as I think that fits the location perfectly.

Sweaburg is a name that was adopted in honor of a city on the Gulf of Finland, which was forced to undergo a severe bombardment during the Crimean war. The original name for the community was Floodtown, later changed to Sweaborg, and finally to Sweaburg. Salford has had many names including Manchester but like so many other places when they received a post office, it was found that an older community had been using this name before. At a meeting to decide upon a name a woman suggested Salford, as she just received a letter from Salford, England. Banner was originally called Spearman's Corners, in honor of its founder, but he thought that this was too long a name to ask anybody to put on a letter so at a public meeting the name adopted was Banner, as this was the banner section of Ontario.

Originally Thamesford went under the name of St. Andrews. Undoubtedly most of the settlers were Scotsmen, but when it came to picking a name for a post office they chose Thamesford, as it was possible to ford the Thames river at that point. Mount Elgin was called Dereham Heights until Lord Elgin, the queen's representative passed that way and stopped. So pleased were the people that they renamed their village in his honor. Bright was chosen for the community name by George Baird, after an English statesman, John Bright.

From the German

Cassell is a name of German origin, being spelled Kassel, from a town located in West Germany. In 1567 it was the capital of Hesse Kassel province, in 1897 til 1913. It is located on the Fluda Rand and is the centre of heavy manufacturing such as locomotives. It was the centre of



Antiquity Shrouds Origin of Many Oxford Names - cont.

From the German - cont.

heavy bombing during the Second World War. One does not wonder why this name was chosen when they realize that this city was the capital of Hesse Nassau province in 1866 and it was from here that most of the early German families came to Oxford. Springford was first called Springbrook, Zenda is a name well remembered for its garden parties and strange to say, the name went on to become part of a Broadway play, and later a movie. The first choice for a name was Bowell, after the prime minister. This name was turned down, so at a meeting, the name Zenda from the novel "The Prisoner of Zenda" was chosen. When this play became a Broadway success all the residents that could be spared went to New York to see the performance as guests of the producer and theatre.

This is the first of several excerpts from the memoirs of Albert E. Pott, former Woodstock resident now living in Los Angeles, recalling his experiences here. The excerpts have been provided by Arthur Williams through the generosity of two of Mr. Pott's cousins, Miss M.M. Huffman and Mrs. S.L. Krompart, 291 Drew St.

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Editor's note: Mr. Pott was the son of a local grocer who operated a store on Dundas Street at Beale Street, the site of a dairy now. His paternal grandfather was a jeweler who at one time served on city council. His maternal grandfather was William Lawson, operator of a bakery and store on Dundas Street Victoria and Wellington Streets. Mr. Pott moved from Woodstock just prior to World War I.

When persons reach the retirement years, which it seems have been set by the social security act at 65, and have in a manner of speaking taken their seat in the rocking chair on the front porch, to view the passing parade of everyday life, it gives them time for retrospection.

They now have time to recall events that have occurred in the years behind them. Perhaps they will be able to recollect more vividly memories of their adolescent years.

These years stand out as the Good Old Years, when life to a certain extent was a new and glorious experience. There was the vigor of youth and the wonders of the world unfolding before them. In recollecting these events will come mental pictures of those who shared these years of youth with them along with the place where it all happened. That place will always be remembered as the Old Home Town.

Let us just sit back on the rocking chair on the front porch and travel together down memory lane to that place which we called our home town and recall those good old days once more.

#### Town Hall Recalled

Let's start with the town hall. In recent months much has been said about tearing down this building. This is nothing new. I can recall several times when some ambitious young souls clamored for the destruction of the old building in the name of progress. So you see it has lived a sort of charmed life.

At time little attention was given to its upkeep. Many times the paint peeled from the woodwork and council in those days, paid little attention to keeping the grounds picturesque.

Trip Through Time in Woodstock - cont.

Town Hall Recalled - cont.

The square in front of the town hall was just a dusty place for farmers to tether their horses while their wives went shopping. Once there was a small drinking fountain put there, but if I remember correctly, a runaway team hit it and it was never replaced. Today I suppose that I would hardly recognize the old girl now that she has been made a national institution and the dusty old square has now been landscaped.

Jail in Basement

My recollections of the place are that it was rather dilapidated: the steps leading to the front entrance were rickety planks. Under the steps was the entrance to the town lock-up. Down in the cellar were a row of rusty cages that were called cells. There was no ventilation and it was a dark dismal hole lit by a flickering gas lamp.

Down there also was stored the coal and the furnaces that heated the various rooms with large hot air pipes. There was only one redeeming feature - it was always warm in the winter and cool in the summer. All in all, it was a good spot for the drunks to sleep off their jags and the hobos to accept a night's lodgings with the rats as their roommates. At the rear of the buildings was the fire hall. Here the one man fire department, along with his horse and fire wagon stood ready to answer any fire alarm. The one horse that I remember was Farmer, a big brown steed that gave all he had when it came to answering an alarm. He was hitched to a two-wheel cart with a big drum in the space between the wheels around which was wrapped a few lengths of hose.

Fires Exciting

I recall as a small boy all the excitement whenever there was a fire. At that time there was no telephone, no fire alarm system. At the east end of town was a wooden tower. There was a similar tower and bell in the west end. When a fire broke out the idea was to get to the tower as fast as possible yelling "Fire, Fire" at the top of your lungs as you ran.

Reaching the tower you pulled the bell cord. Of course, if the fire was in the centre of town you ran for the fire hall. Farmer would be hitched, and with driver Kenny in driver's seat the wild dash to the fire would begin with all the children, dogs and most other citizens joining in the procession.

Trip Through Time In Woodstock - cont.

Fires Exciting - cont.

There were fire hydrants located at street corners, but if the fire was more than a few lengths off Dundas, a bucket brigade would have to be formed. Draped on the side of the wagon were a number of leather buckets for the bucket brigade.

There was, as you can see, a limit to this fire fighting and if the blaze got out of hand there was little left to do but try to salvage as much as possible. Usually they were piled up on the far side of the street supposedly out of harms way.

Paint Store Burns

The most spectacular fire I recall was at Howell and Sons, paints and wall-paper. It was a two-storey building where the Post Office now stands. The family lived over the store. Talk about fireworks, this was it.

At the time there was a brisk wind and sparks were carried high into the air. The fire was fed by the paints and oils and the building was destroyed as was another frame building facing onto the market.

A row of vacant lots saved the Fury and Thompson's grocery which were about the closest other buildings. The protection we enjoy against such disasters today through insurance was not available then.

Auctions Popular

On the lot at the rear of the town hall, Pete Irving conducted an auction sale every Saturday morning and this was an event that the whole town turned out for. Hundreds of eager bidders crowded around the platform. Pete was witty and was able to keep the buyers amused all the time.

There were the municipal offices where young men brought their blushing sweethearts. Yes that was the time when women still blushed, to take out a marriage license. Later they would come back to register the birth of their offspring and as the years rolled by those same offspring would come to register the passing on of their parents.

The rickety front steps to the front entrance led into the vestibule. There was the door to the council chambers. On my last visit to the town hall I went up those steps to take a look around. The door to the council chambers was open so I entered and looked around, all was silent - there were the old chairs arranged in a crescent pattern with desks in front of them.



## Trip Through Time In Woodstock - cont.

### Train Disaster

In retrospect I recalled some of the men that had sat in those chairs. It seemed to me that their ghosts lingered there. White, Hay, Butler, Pott and many others.

I recalled when the council members sat there and passed a resolution that they go to Toronto on town business. Then they passed a motion to adjourn. That was the last motion some of the council ever passed. A few days later they were to meet with disaster at St. George in a train wreck. Those that escaped were sitting in the smoker compartment which did not crash into a gully.

It was a sorrowful day for Woodstock when they held a mass funeral for the victims. This was all vividly recalled as I quietly closed the council door behind me.

I made my way up the stairs to the auditorium that I had known so well. It was not called by such a fancy name in the old days. A pleasant young lady met me at the door and asked if she could show me around when I found that it had been changed into a museum.

I followed her as she showed me relics of the past. It is too bad so many of these perished. Even today we do not think to preserve objects and pictures of buildings being demolished.

### Historic Setting

We went up those few steps through a door, out into the stage where there was a display of some kind of figures recording history. But, my mind was more interested in forming mental pictures of history that had been made in this room. Standing there on that old wooden floor that had felt the footprints of so many great personalities I recalled events that I had attended there.

From that stage all the greats of the Canadian political world of many eras had poured out their theories of government from before and after Sir John A. Macdonald. I recalled listening to Sir Wilfred Laurier, the handsome white plumed orator, as he was called, make a political oration. Those walls with the long windows had resounded to the voices of such divas as Nellie Melba, Marcella Sembrick and many others. Many times the

## Trip Through Time In Woodstock - cont.

### Historic Setting - cont.

old Scottish play written by Ian Maclaren "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush" was enacted on this stage. It somewhat of a favourite of the Scottish members of the population. All the famous minstrel shows of that era performed in this hall.

### Top Attractions

Chauncey Alcott sang his big hit "A Flower from My Mother's Grave", as he lay on the old stage floor alongside an improvised grave, graveyard scenery painted on the drop curtains behind him. Many times professional and amateur theatrical companies performed in Gilbert and Sullivan operas. On a curtain was shown the first moving picture ever shown in Woodstock. As I recall it was mostly the picture of an approaching train and some scenery taken at the seashore as the waves dashed against the rocks. They were crude but wonderful in that era.

One night I recall hearing, with my parents, the human voice in the form of a talking machine. It was so dim and faint that the audience in sections had to leave their seats and stand around a table on which the machine was being operated. Also, we had the popular magic lantern slides shown there. The big hall often was the scene of gaiety as the town elite danced. I can recall when we of the lesser bracket of society danced to the popular tunes of the day. The old floor had become so rough that a great heavy canvas covering was tacked over it to keep the dancers from tripping. Yes, the old hall has seen some gaiety and entertainment in all its branches.

### Murder Trial

There on that old stage, too, one of the real life dramas was enacted when a jury of 12 men sat and listened to evidence that proved to them conclusively that the handsome young man sitting before them in the prisoner's seat was a criminal who had engineered a diabolical scheme to murder a fellow man to obtain money.

They heard the gowned judge, as he sat there on the stage, command the young man to stand up and then said "Reginald Birchall, you will be taken out of here to the county jail where you will be hanged by the neck until you are dead and may God have mercy on your soul".

So, the old town hall stands today as a national historical shrine, protected from destructive ideas just because she has for more than 100 years well and rightly carried out her duties as a municipal hall used for government purposes. She has locked in her heart other great memories. Long may the old lady stand in the square.

This is the second excerpt from the memoirs of Albert E. Pott, former Woodstock resident now living in Los Angeles, recalling his days here.

Before the advent of the automobile the horse-drawn vehicle had been the reliable method of travel, then later came the bicycle. It filled the need for economical personal transportation and created new sport - bicycle racing.

Harry Gustin had the finest livery stable in Woodstock, located a few doors north of the Oxford Hotel. His horses were the finest and his carriages the latest models. Mr. Gustin, each fall, established a record of having the first sleigh on the street, as soon as the first snow fall had covered the ground.

A few doors down from Gustin's, Fred Martin had a bicycle shop with sales, rentals and repairs. He had the local agency for perhaps the most popular bicycle on the market at the time, the Cleveland Flyer, manufactured in and imported from Cleveland, O.

#### Bike Factory Started

In the 1890's a company of local investors was formed and the old ice storage building in the south side of town was converted into a factory to manufacture bicycles. Soon the Woodstock, as it was called, came on the market but it turned out to be an unsuccessful venture. I doubt if there is one of the thousand or two that were manufactured still in existence.

Now, when it comes to power-propelled vehicles, if that little horseless carriage that Henry Ford was seen driving around the streets in Detroit could be at all classed as an automobile, then I can state with authority who was the first person to drive an automobile down the main street of Woodstock.

Sid Coppins was the man. He operated a plumbing shop in the west end and was what might be termed a man with advanced ideas.

Anything new mechanical fascinated him. Whether he built the car or imported it, I really cannot say, but anyway he created a sensation when he drove that little buckboard about town.

Gas Buggies Make Debut; 4-Day Trip From Detroit - cont.

Bike Factory Started - cont.

Mr. Coppins must have been a man with advanced ideas to even be in the plumbing business in that era. The old pump in the backyard supplied all the water you needed if you pumped hard enough. The little outhouse in the far corner of the backyard fulfilled its purpose and neither ever got out of order or stopped up.

As to who owned the first conventional gasoline-propelled vehicle driven in Woodstock could only be conjecture on my part, but I do recall owners of two cars among the very first to arrive in town.

One was owned by Dr. Sinclair, but he did not operate it himself. His brother-in-law, Mr. Brown drove the doctor's car. I knew Mr. Brown personally but cannot recall ever hearing his given name. To everyone he was known as Hummy Brown.

The other car was owned and driven by Fred Sutherland., an adventuresome young man who went to the Ford factory in Detroit and bought the car and drove it back to Woodstock.

First Car Ride

I remember this car and Mr. Sutherland well, as it was the first automobile I ever rode in. It all happened one day when I was on my way home from school and stopped to watch Mr. Sutherland drive past. Mr. Sutherland said "Do you want to take a ride, kid?"

Did I want to take a ride, such a foolish question. I got in and away we went down Dundas Street. After we passed Kam's Organ factory it was an uphill climb and Mr. Sutherland had to shift the foot pedal to put the car into low gear. But we made it and went as far as the Boyle home known as the firs.

Meets Old Friends

A few years ago, Ben Parker, who at one time was the mayor of Woodstock and an old school chum of mine, was wintering in California. He was staying at the California Club in Los Angeles. One evening I dropped in to see him and renew our friendship. As we recalled events and personalities of our boyhood years the phone rang and I heard Mr. Parker say "Sure send him up."

In a few minutes he opened the door and greeted an elderly gentleman. Then he turned to me and said, "You remember Fred Sutherland who had the bicycle repair shop in Woodstock."



Gas Buggies Make Debut; 4-Day Trip From Detroit - cont.

Meets Old Friends - cont

"It was the man who gave me my first ride in an auto many years ago. There were many persons and events of those early days that we recalled, but the most fascinating story was the one Mr. Sutherland told regarding that trip he made from the Ford plant to Woodstock.

At that time in the 1890's the surmised distance from Detroit via the highway was about 100 miles. That was in the era before the invention of speedometers. Today with superhighways, and with the modern cars the trip can be covered in a few hours.

But that trip Mr. Sutherland made took four days. Here is his story in part as far as I can recall. He went to the Ford plant and paid \$800 cash for the car, a substantial amount of money in those days.

He was assigned an instructor to teach him to drive and he soon was travelling around the streets of Detroit. After two days' instruction he drove with his instructor down to the ferry dock, on to a boat where the instructor shook his hand, bid him good bye and goodluck. When he arrived in Windsor, he cranked the engine and drove off the gangplank, met the customs, paid \$80 duty and found the road out of the city.

There were no laws governing car travel, but there were certain ordinances governing steam-powered vehicles which covered autos.

Ten miles an hour was the speed limit, which was not too bad. But in the ordinance was a provision that any power driven vehicle must come to a halt and the engine stopped when there was a horse-drawn vehicle approaching. So you see Mr. Sutherland could not proceed any great distance at one time without stopping the engine. Then, of course, he had to get out and crank the engine at each stop to get going once more. He found he could make better time during the very early morning hours when there was little traffic.

He had two 50 gallon drums of gasoline and was assured that he could get additional supplies at Chatham and London. Gasoline in those days was an inexpensive byproduct of kerosene and before it could be used in an automobile it had to be strained through a chamois skin to remove dirt and water. It was a slow drop-by-drop process.

The cars were not built for speed; the engines were built to get you from one place to another with little thought given in construction to how long it would take. They were what one might term simplicity in action, so the trip was slow.

Gas Buggies Make Debut; 4-Day Trip From Detroit - cont.

Meets Old Friends - cont.

Mr. Sutherland carried four spare tires, and as he had been in the bicycle repair business, fixing flats was common to him. Repair equipment consisted of a screw driver; a pair of pliers; wrench; a small hammer, and of course, the tire pump.

Another obstacle encountered were signs posted at small bridges prohibiting powered vehicles.

This was no obstacle to steam-powered vehicles as they just plowed through the stream. But the auto had to be towed through in most cases because of the mud, so this meant hiring a nearby farmer to bring his team and tow the car through the stream. Finally he drove into Woodstock, so this a first-hand glimpse of automobile travel in the 1890's.

### Woodstock Becomes City; Thousands at Observance

Youth is ever looking forward to that period in life when they can say "Today I am a man". In later years they may look back on that period and wished it had not passed so quickly, they were carefree years like the young colt rollicking in the meadow before the guiding bit had been put in its mouth.

So it is with pleasant small towns, their citizens are ambitious for them to grow into large cities, then they also forfeit a pleasant way of life for the turmoil of the city, all bonds of friendship are broken as one hardly gets to know their next door neighbor.

Well that was the way it was with my old home town. Its citizens wanted it to grow up to become a city, so a careful census was taken and by counting carefully the population they found out they had the required 10,000 residents that made it possible for them to make application to the provincial government and have the town declared a city.

In those years a reunion was held each summer when the citizens compiled a list of all the friends and relatives that had left for other fields of endeavour and invitations were sent out to them to revisit the old town. Well, this reunion was to be an extra special affair the old grads were invited to see the town exalted to the position of cityhood, and they came in thousands.

At high noon on Dominion Day 1901, the mayor standing on the steps of the old town hall read the declaration declaring Woodstock to be a city. A great cheer went up and the town band, augmented by many visiting musicians, played "Should old acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind".

The celebration lasted one whole week and business in most forms was suspended, the factories closed down. You could term it a week of riotous living.

Each afternoon, the women's society of each denomination gave a free picnic in Victoria Park; each night there was a band concert from the park's bandstand. There were class reunions. Factories gave parties to the employees that had at one time worked for them.

A panorama photo was taken of thousands on the grounds of the high school. I wonder if one of those pictures exist today. It was published in a brochure that had a photo of every prominent merchant standing in front of his place of business.

Woodstock Becomes City; Thousands at Observance - cont.

The festivities wound up on the Sunday. Every pew was filled in every church at the morning service. Some of the churches had five or six ministers on their platforms that had been previous pastors there. The afternoon was given over to remembrance of those who had passed on as relatives and friends visited the graves of those who had died. All week the 60 piece band of the Scottish Highlander Regiment of Hamilton, which had been brought in as a special attraction, gave concerts and on this Sunday they joined the Woodstock band on Vansittart Avenue where the two large cemeteries meet and as thousands stood with bared heads played "Nearer My God to Thee", one of the most impressive sights I have ever witnessed.



## History of Famous Natives Recalled

On two farms a few miles from Woodstock two babies were born, who in later years were destined to gain considerable fame.

Aimee Semple McPherson's name is known to many of us. She was born on a farm near Thamesford. Her mother was a religious minded person who wore the blue bonnet of the Salvation Army and preached the gospel from the street corners of many of the nearby towns.

Little Aimee was raised in a very religious atmosphere. She attended the collegiate institute in Woodstock, then went to a bible school. It was here she met a fellow bible student Robert Semple, and in time they were married. Fulfilling the dreams of most ardent students of theology they were sent by a missionary society to work in China.

### Tragedy Strikes

A daughter was born and was named Roberta Semple, then tragedy struck. Robert Semple contracted fever and died, so the young widow and her infant daughter returned to the old home.

But, in her darkest hour destiny seemingly was mapping out a route that was to take her to the summit of her chosen profession, perhaps that tragedy that had happened to her in that far-off land created within her a mature way of thought. Suddenly she found herself endowed with a sort of magnetic personality, handsome features and a gift of oratory.

It is not my intent here to try to relate the story of the life of Aimee Semple McPherson. The events and episodes have been many, they made sensational headlines in the press of many countries, but I will give a few personal observations for it might be said she was a neighbor of mine here in Los Angeles for nearly two decades.

### Filled Auditorium

A few blocks from my Los Angeles home stands the Angeles Temple. During those years that she was a living symbol of evangelism, Angeles Temple was one of the show places. The sightseeing buses detoured off Sunset Boulevard to show tourists the cathedral that Aimee built.

At each service the great auditorium was always filled. To tourists and others who never attended church somehow Aimee attracted them to the services. Her method of preaching might be termed showmanship and I venture to say that had she chosen the theatre she would have become a great star.

## History of Famous Natives Recalled - cont.

The temple is across the street from a picturesque city park with a large lake used for boating, Echo Lake Park. Today it has but the recollections of its past glory for it seems that when the heart of its founder stopped something within the heart of the great temple died as well. Today the temple is operated by her son, Ralph McPherson, son of her divorced husband. It has lost its lustre, the sightseeing buses no longer detour from their trips to Hollywood, and the younger generation simply ask who was she. Fame is an ever fleeting thing.

### Sees Dedication

In 1926 when the temple was under construction many evenings I strolled down to the park. At that time I knew little of Aimee McPherson, but I was at the dedication services not by invitation nor even by inclination. It all happened on Sunday morning. At that time I owned a 1922 model Dodge, with a collapsible top. Some of you will remember that you got out and put the top up when it began to rain and when the storm passed you got out and put it down again. Well, this Sunday it was not the top that was giving trouble but the carburetor. After much effort and cranking finally I got the car started and took it out for a trial spin so to speak. It ran alright until I got in front of Angeles Temple and it began to sputter. I had just time to pull over to the curb opposite the temple when the car gave a couple of dying exhausts and stopped. People began to arrive and soon there were thousands standing in the street in front of the temple and in the park opposite. Soon my car was filled with uninvited passengers, but it was all right with me. I was not going anyplace anyway.

A large platform had been erected alongside the temple and the temple band took their seats and gave a short band concert. Then on the stroke of noon amid a fanfare of trumpets, Aimee Semple McPherson made a dramatic entrance and related her version of the creation of Angeles Temple. Then there was another fanfare and the doors were thrown open and the throng entered the large cathedral. Once more I was left to myself to diagnose the seat of the trouble with the car.

### Attends Services

Many years after that, an old school chum of mine, Ben Parker, was spending the winter in California. He, like other tourists, wanted to visit the temple. One Sunday night we went early and secured seats in the front row of the balcony. This I had heard was the best place to observe the services. The organ was softly playing as the choir took seats on a

History of Famous Natives Recalled - cont.

Attends Services - cont.

platform behind the rostrum. The crowds were coming in and there was that tense feeling in the air such as one experiences when the curtain is about to go up for the first act of the play.

From above spotlights of soft pastel shades cast their beams down on the pulpit. Suddenly there was a burst of applause. Everyone stood up as the lady appeared on the long ramp leading down from the balcony to the rostrum. A spotlight followed her as she, with slow-measured tread, made her way to the pulpit flashing to all that famous smile.

Her golden hair was made up in the latest style, high on her head. She wore a tight-fitting gown that enhanced her figure. No actress ever made a more spectacular entrance onto the stage. For 10 or more minutes the applause continued all the time she stood there bowing in a queenly manner.

She spoke with a certain sultry huskiness that gave her added feminine attraction, then she laid the bouquet of red roses she was carrying aside and dropped all visible display and began in earnest to preach.

The other little girl mentioned at the beginning of this story was Cassie Bagley, daughter of hard working parents who had a farm near Eastwood. Notoriety was also to come to her in her later years, but in a different manner.

Cassie Bagley grew to maidenhood in the environment of a village school girl. Her beauty developed and she was perhaps the most popular girl in the neighborhood. A brilliant scholar, she had ambitions. A lifetime on the farm would not be hers if she could find a way to get away from it. In those days girls were limited to only a few fields of employment and to get away from the village would require either money or influential friends. Cassie had neither, but the glamour of big cities beckoned her to come.

#### Talent for Finance

When she was 18 years, many young farmers of the neighborhood looked her way, but she paid no attention to their moves to courtship. Then to make an impression one young swain showed her a bankbook with his life savings entered in it.

Here she first showed her talent for high finance. Immediately they became engaged and she persuaded the boy to draw the money out of the bank and buy her an engagement ring - the biggest diamond that the money would buy. They went together to the city to purchase it. The boy was living in a dream world, but it was soon to be shattered, for one day when he went to call, Cassie's parents were distressed. Their daughter had packed her few belongings and was gone - none knew where or why.

#### Makes Headlines

Cassie's parents feared for the worst as did the neighbors - the little lamb going out to meet the wolves. They need not have worried, as in this instance it was to be "little red riding hood" who was to scalp the wolves in their own den.

For a long period no one heard any news of Cassie, and it was feared that she had fallen into the way of brothels. Then one day Cassie Bagley made the headlines of all the nation's newspapers. She was now, and had been for some time, Mrs. Cassie Chadwick, wife of a prominent Cleveland Ohio doctor, and moved in the elite society of that city. The little village girl had gone a long way since the day she pawned her engagement ring to finance her trip to the city. No one in Cleveland knew anything of her humble background, but they were soon to find out - and at steep cost.



Ambitions Beckoned Cassie to City, Fame, Misfortune - cont.

Makes Headlines - cont.

The marriage of Cassie to the prominent Cleveland physician, Dr. Chadwick, had been a most impressive social event.

When she had become well established in Cleveland, Cassie singled out the wife of a prominent banker as her best friend, and on an occasion when they were having cocktails, Cassie under promise of secrecy, divulged a far from factual background to her friend. She confided Mrs. Chadwick was the illegitimate daughter of Andrew Carnegie.

At that particular time the "little Scot giant", as he was called, ruled the financial world. On a word from him, stocks rose or dropped on the stock exchange. He was a modern Midas, in that it seemed everything that he touched turned into gold. He attracted so much unwanted attention that he became a recluse in his huge mansion on the outskirts of Pittsburg and no one was allowed past his secretaries. He gave no interviews to any one. He was making so much money (it was in loving terms, with a post-script saying that he had invested the money that she had sent him and that he now had the returns from the investment and he would either re-invest it, or send the amount to Cassie.)

Sceptical of the entire story the banker told his wife to forget it, but promised her that he would make no mention of it to anyone else.

A few days later Mrs. Chadwick dropped into the banker's office and confided to him that she had a considerable amount of money that she wanted to invest saying a very close friend had made some successful investments for her. The banker drew her out trying to have her identify that friend. But Cassie would only say a "friend high in the world of finance", but she added that she had more than \$100,000 at her disposal, and it was her desire to open a mortgage and loan company which would attract small borrowers. She inquired as to what procedure would she have to go through to set up such a company. The banker began to think perhaps this woman had the key to the door that opens the way to Carnegie's financial realm, so he promised Mrs. Chadwick that he would keep secret all that she had told him.

Reveal Secret

The banker persuaded his wife to get all the information that she could from

Ambitions Beckoned Cassie to City, Fame, Misfortune - cont.

Reveal Secret - cont.

her friend, Mrs. Chadwick, and this she did. She was shown a check for \$100,000, and signed by Andrew Carnegie, Then the banker had his wife suggest to Mrs. Chadwick that she reveal her secret to the banker under strict secrecy, but Cassie refused and said that her "little daddy" would cut her off if she divulged the secret indiscretions of his younger years. Finally, however, she did confide her secret to the banker. But he was sceptical, and said as much to Mrs. Chadwick. He told her he must have positive proof. So Mrs. Chadwick agreed to have the banker meet Carnegie. The banker and his wife took the train to Pittsburg and the next day Mrs. Chadwick joined them in a hotel room. Later Mrs. Chadwick and the banker took a taxicab to the Carnegie mansion. The banker sat in the taxi and watched as Mrs. Chadwick went up the long walk to the front entrance. It had been agreed that if Carnegie was willing to meet the banker, Mrs. Chadwick would beckon him to come in. He saw her ring the door bell, and the door opened, and there was conversation held. Then the door was closed, leaving Mrs. Chadwick standing outside. In a few minutes the door opened again and there further conversation between the lady and an unseen person inside the door and finally Mrs. Chadwick entered the house.

Visit Carnegie Home

The banker was sitting on the edge of the seat expecting momentarily to be summoned in to meet the great Andrew Carnegie, but 15 or 20 minutes passed before the door opened once more, and Mrs. Chadwick stepped out on the porch. For some minutes she stood there engaged in conversation with the unseen person inside the door, then, with apparent display of good feelings Mrs. Chadwick came down the walk and entered the taxi. As soon as she was seated she put her fingers to her lips and pointed to the taxi driver as much as to say wait until we reach the hotel, but she was all smiles, and the banker received the impression that everything had gone well.

When they had reached the hotel room where the banker's wife awaited them, Mrs. Chadwick related her story of just what had happened. Carnegie's secretary had answered the door and had recognized Mrs. Chadwick from

Ambitions Beckoned Cassie to City, Fame, Misfortune - cont.

Visit Carnegie Home - cont.

previous visits. He said that he would inquire if Mr. Carnegie would see her, and that was when she was left standing outside the closed door. In a few minutes he returned and said that Mr. Carnegie would see her, but she found her father in a very ugly mood. He upbraided her for coming without first consulting him by mail, but she went on to say that finally she smoothed things over and they talked of future investments. There came a long distance telephone call from New York, so her father had hurriedly kissed her and went to answer the phone. "So you see", she said to the banker, "I was in no position to even suggest that he meet you."

From all standpoints therefore, it seemed the Pittsburg had been a success, but the banker and his wife were again pledged to secrecy.

Establish Firm

Sometime later the Cleveland Loan Company came into existence, with Cassie Chadwick as president, with a manager and a small staff. The banker was the only one to know that the new president was depositing in the funds of the new organization a cheque for \$100,000 which bore the magic signature of Andrew Carnegie. The Cleveland financier drew funds from the bank of which he was manager and deposited them with the new company and persuaded other bankers to do likewise. Soon all were receiving the big dividend checks as returns on their investments. The banker perhaps thought, "Carnegie sure knows all the financial workings", and so it went on, more and more money pouring into the new loan company and the dividends going higher and higher.

Then the bubble burst. One of the investors demanded a statement of the company financial affairs and the state had to step in and examine the books of the loan company.

Dundas street was a gravel roadway. Each day during summer months Kenny would hitch Farmer, the fire department's horse, to a tank wagon and go up and down the street sprinkling water to lay the dust. Now that the old town had put on city airs the main street must be paved.

A concrete pavement would be too expensive and asphalt had not come into general use. Cedar logs from a few inches in diameter to great round ones were shipped in and these were all cut into 10 inch lengths and stood side by side on a bed of sand.

#### Cedar Roadway

Cedar is a very soft wood and soon the heavy teams wore ruts in the pavement and it was seen that the experiment with this cheap paving was going to cost money. The ruts were bad enough, but with the heavy rains in the fall the wood swelled and the pavement heaved.

A crew had to work all the time to repair the damage. The frost froze the pavement over, and, covered with a layer of snow, the sleds slid along smoothly. But people said "wait until the spring thaws set in", and they were right. The pavement was much like a giant washboard and council had the whole pavement torn up and replaced by concrete.

Perhaps the only redeeming feature to the whole experiment was the fact that citizens stocked up with firewood for the next winter.

Long before this I recall when the sidewalks on Dundas street were 1 foot planks nailed by heavy spikes to sleepers below. One employee of the town had no other job than to go up and down with a sledge hammer driving down the heads of spikes as they were forced up by wear and other causes.

Side streets were equipped with 4 foot wide wooden sidewalks. Usually the residents went out with a hammer and knocked down any spikes, but on the whole it was always safest to step high.

In the decade of the 1890's, the police force consisted of Police Chief Wills and two patrolmen. The police station, if one could call it that, was the small room in the tower of the entrance to the market building.

It was a law abiding community and I cannot recall a so-called major crime being committed within the town's limits.

Chief Wills sat at his roll top desk. Whether there was a telephone I do



Dundas Paved, Lights Dimmed, Town Police Had Fewer Duties - cont.

Cedar Roadway - cont.

not know, as there were very few telephones in Woodstock then. The telephone office was in the block east of the post office and there was one telephone operator on duty during the day and early evening hours.

Town Unguarded

When Chief Wills locked up the office at 6 o'clock on week day nights, he, along with the two constables called it a day from then until 8 o'clock the next morning. It could truthfully be said that the town was unguarded. At 10 minutes from midnight the operator of the town's electric light plant pulled the main switch then replaced it. That was the signal that in 10 minutes power would be cut off until the following evening. This gave residents time to light oil lamps or hurriedly get undressed for bed. But, at that hour there were few citizens awake. Everyone went to bed early.

There was what could be termed a strong arm of the law on guard during the long hours of the night. He was known to all, as the night watchman. Marsh Anderson was a heavy-built colored man, highly respected by all. He was employed by merchants of the central business district to patrol the district.

Each night he went on duty at 9 o'clock, winter and summer, snow or rain. He was, as I say, a very heavily built man and moved slowly. Around his rotund waist he wore a wide belt on the front of which was attached a bullseye lantern. These lamps were the forerunners of modern-day flashlights, about the size of a pint jar.

They had a cone-shaped top with vents, and burned alcohol. The lens was shaped much like a bull's eye and there was a small shutter that could be shifted to turn the light on or off. They were effective in throwing a ray of light for some little distance.

Watchman Patrol

Each night at nine, Marsh as he was affectionately called, began his patrol. He tried each door of each establishment to see they were properly locked. He carried the keys to most of the business places so if there was a necessity he could enter to investigate.

Dundas Paved, Lights Dimmed, Town Police Had Fewer Duties - cont.

Watchman Patrol - cont.

As he moved slowly along Dundas Street in his methodical manner there followed a few feet behind him what might be termed his shadow, a great dane which answered to Seeker. The dog would stand as Marsh tried each door then move along behind him paying no attention to any distractions whatsoever. This was the nightly parade up the street.

At the rear of the stores were lanes and a similar patrol would be made down these. At each gate in the fence, Marsh would open it and Seeker would make the rounds. Occasions when he would give the alarm with a low growl, Marsh would turn on his lantern. There were always large packing boxes piled up in these enclosures and one of these made a comfortable place to sleep for some hobo passing through the town.

In those days there were men always wandering about the country, seeking farm work. They were in so sense criminals and were not treated as such. When Seeker flushed a highway traveler, Marsh would march him off to the lock-up in the cellar of the town hall. They say it was quite a sight to witness one of these parades -- Marsh, the culprit, and Seeker bringing up the rear. The next morning the man was told to be on his way.

Lots Of Work

There always was lots of work for the two officers. Serving legal papers, taking prisoners to the county jail and acting as dog-catcher, were duties of the police force. This was all leg duty as there were no patrol cars or even bicycles in those days.

There is one case I recall: There was a hardworking hod carrier (about the hardest job any man could tackle, putting a hod full of bricks and carrying them up ladders all day long.) Sometimes on pay days he would drop into the saloon and hoist a few drinks, and when he arrived home a quarrel would start.

With his wife and eight children to feed ever so little deducted from the pay envelope affected the family budget. The wife was a husky-built female and the quarrel sometimes would get beyond words and neighbors would dispatch one of their children to get the police.

Dundas Paved, Lights Dimmed, Town Police Had Fewer Duties - cont.

Lots Of Work - cont.

Well, some time would elapse between the beginning of the fight and the arrival of the officer. It was likely that the whole family would be settled down eating supper. If by chance the fight continued until the officer arrived the husband was jailed.

The next morning he would appear before the magistrate on a charge of disturbing the peace, but this got to be such a regular occurrence the magistrate sentenced the husband to jail. These short sentences caused a new problem. They were like a holiday, a quiet bed away from the scolding voice of his wife, the noise of eight children and three good meals each day.

Family Cared For

There was no organized charity but the women of the church auxiliary provided meals for the husband's family and they ate better than usual. The wife had little cooking to do. The husband was peacefully in jail and the law had created a sort of problem for itself.

There were other cases that occupied the police. The owner of a corner grocery sold one of his customers a loaf of bread via the back door on a Sunday morning and a neighbor reported him and he was convicted of breaking the Sunday selling law.

A delivery horse chewed the bark off the tree in front of a house while the delivery boy was delivering bread to the next house.

A woman complained she purchased a pound of butter for 20-cents from a farmer huckster and when she got it home it weighed only 15 ounces.

A horse slipped its halter one night and got into a cabbage patch. The owner of the patch asked for damages.

The magistrate was a tall, dignified person, and held court in a small room above police station. The few cases that came before him seldom required much of his time so he had time to practice law as a sideline.

Before 1900 news of the outside world came to the town over telegraph wires and copies were relayed to the local newspaper.

But, when a dispatch came through that was of national interest a bulletin was hung in the window of the telegraph office. The office was located a block west of the market square.

One day a lady came into the store operated by my father and said something of importance must have happened as there was a crowd in front of the telegraph office. My mother sent me up to see what the dispatch was about. I could not get near the window so I asked a man what it was all about. He said that the Duke of Clarence had died. He was the eldest son of the then Prince of Wales, grandson of Queen Victoria.

#### Victoria Firm

Perhaps the lives of royalty demonstrate the truth of the adage, "There is a destiny that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may" their lineage is so easily traced. If that Duke had lived to become king few would ever have heard of such royal personages as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Queen Elizabeth or Princess Margaret.

During the reign of Queen Victoria she not only ruled with a firm hand the British Empire but the lives of the royal family as well. Perhaps her favourite grandchild was Princess Mary, so Victoria saw to it that she became betrothed to Clarence who was in line for the throne. Clarence's untimely death altered these plans.

Now Victoria deemed that Princess Mary become betrothed to George, Clarence's younger brother, now in line for the throne. Later the couple ascended the throne as King George V and Queen Mary.

#### Duke Visits

As the Duke and Duchess of York they visited Woodstock while on a tour of the Dominion.

On occasions like this, my old hometown was so small it was only a whistle stop on the royal tour. The royal train was scheduled to arrive at 3 p.m. and depart at 3:30 p.m. so it was apparent if the citizens of the town wanted to see the royal couple they had to be at the station.

A platform was built beside the station platform with the red station leading to it from where the royal coach would stop.



Royal Visit, Hotels, Murder Spectacles in City's History - cont.

Duke Visits - cont.

Gathered on the platform were the town dignitaries, the men in their formal dress and high silk hats and the ladies in their best evening gowns.

All the box cars had been shunted out of the railway yard to make room for the thousands of spectators that lined both sides of the tracks.

Big Moment

Then the big moment arrived as the train steamed into the station yard with the royal ensign flying. There was the usual cheering and the 22nd regiment stood at attention while the band played God Save the King. What took place on the platform I do not know. I was standing on the bridge some distance away but the half hour passed quickly and the engine stood there panting as if eager to get on to the next stop. The ordeal of a tour like this tries the strength of a strong man but on that trip the duke was a sick man.

Well, the royal train had just disappeared down the track when there was a flash of lightning and a peal of thunder and the rain came down in torrents. Only the few that were able to crowd into the small station were saved from getting drenched.

The Hotels

In the 1890's there were 12 hotels in the town, a rather large quota for a town of some 7,000 population. But, there was a reason for this as the provincial government under the law could only issue liquor licenses to applicants that had room and eating facilities.

The hotels were scattered in all sections of the town. This provided really more boarding accommodations than there were available patrons. Many rooms, although the law required them to be furnished, were empty the year around and if the proprietor and his family ate in the dining room that fulfilled the meaning of the law.

There were but two of these hotels that catered to the transient trade. They were the O'Neill house and the Buckingham Hotel. All the others could be termed boarding houses. The established rates for rooms was \$2 a week and \$5.50 for a meal ticket.

## Royal Visit, Hotels, Murder Spectacles in City's History - cont.

### Boarding Houses

There were two legitimate boarding houses, one operated by Mrs. Charles Worth on Riddell Street where clerks who worked in nearby stores and banks lived.

The other was the more pretentious boarding house of Mrs. McKay on Delatre Street. What recalls Mrs. McKay's palce to my mind is that one summer Lord and Lady Somerset were paying guests there.

Lord Somerset was a dashing young Englishman who dressed in the latest London fashion with top grey hat, spats, black kid gloves and the like. Lady Somerset set the styles for the feminine members of the town's elite society.

### Lord, Lady Here

His lordship always drove a rented surrey with the horses hitched tandem, one ahead of the other. When he drove down the street the outfit attracted much attention. Lord Somerset sat in the driver's seat, which was elevated above the seat beside it, top grey hat, holding a long buggy whip with a red ribbon tied on it. The lady carried a very small umbrella with a long handle.

The Somersets were very much sought after by members of the upper class and were entertained in many homes.

The lady returned to England alone. The man was denied that privilege. Today his remains are in an unmarked grave just inside the grim walls of the old county jail yard. If there was a marker it would read "Reginald Birchall."

### Murder Case

The story of the Birchall-Benwell murder case reads more like fiction than reality and has been written many times by many persons. The trial focused the eyes of the whole world on what was happening in that auditorium of the old town hall.

At 5 p.m. when the court recessed the square in front of the town hall would be filled with spectators to get a glimpse of Birchall as he came down the steps and entered the open carriage that was waiting to convey him back to the county jail.

He was never handcuffed but was escorted by county Jailer James Forbes. Always, Birchall wore that carefree manner. He seemed to enjoy the sensations that he caused. Standing in the carriage he would doff his hat to

Royal Visit, Hotels, Murder Spectacles in City's History - cont.

Murder Case - cont.

the crowd that opened a lane for the carriage to drive through. I recall this well as on one or two occasions my father took me up to the square to see the show.

It was a cold November day when Birchall walked up the steps to the scaffold where the official hangman stood ready to pull the lever that would send him into eternity. He was just as debonair then, it was said, as any other time.

When Forbes went to his cell to escort him to the scaffold it is said that there were tears in Forbes eyes and Birchall patted him on the shoulder and said "come on Jim, let's get it over with".

Tears Shed

Many a female that day in the town dropped a tear, perhaps a tear of regret that one who had so much to offer to life had squandered it in such a sordid manner.

Today, if you wish, you can climb those same old steps Birchall trod the many times during his trial and visit the auditorium where the great drama unfolded. You will see in the show case a letter written by a heart-broken fair lady to the town's merchants appealing to him for aid in behalf of the one she loved and believed innocent of the crime he was being convicted of.

This is another in a series of excerpts from the memoirs of former Woodstonian, Albert Pott, now living in Los Angeles.

Until the early nineties all professional theatrical performances were given in the upstairs auditorium of the town hall. Then the Grand Opera House was opened a few doors west of Light Street on Dundas. I recall some of the well-known thespians of that era who performed there. I understand that today the theatre is operated as a moving picture house. There was Richard Mansfield, the Shakespearean actor; DeWolf Hopper; Eddie Foy; Marie Dressler; Elsa Janis; Marie Cahill; Dustin Farnum and Bill Hart in the Virginian; Henrietta Crossman, Jane Cowel, among the many who performed there.

There were the Marks Brothers, a small stock company composed of seven brothers and some of their wives who made two week stands playing dramas such as "East Lynne" and "The Two Orphans" and alternating the performances with slap stick comedy shows.

#### Blackstone Here

Each season Anna Eva Fay, the mentalist as she was billed, baffled audiences as she did feats of mind reading, answering questions from the persons in the audience who whispered their messages to an attendant that passed through the audience.

Blackstone, the great magician, performed mystifying acts on the stage and at noon each day would find a key hidden in one of the stores by a mental process of having one of the citizens of the town, who knew where the object was hidden, direct him mentally to it by holding his hand while he was blindfolded.

Then there were the hypnotists who put volunteers from the audience through all kinds of stunts. A chum of mine who stuttered badly allowed himself to be hypnotized. While under the influence of the hypnotist, he made a long speech without ever once stuttering. But, the stammering returned, when the experiment was over.

#### Klondike Magic

In 1898 the most magic word in the language was Klondike, the year of the gold rush to the Yukon territory. A lawyer named Warren Totten purchased



Actors, Circus, Burlesque Brought Laughter, Thrills - cont.

Klondike Magic - cont.

the Grand Opera House and renamed it The Klondike Opera House.

The first moving picture theatre was opened in a store building just west of the former Sentinel-Review office on Dundas Street. The man who operated it was named Hogg. The show lasted one hour and the admittance fee was 10 cents. Half the show was short comedies without any plot, and the other half was illustrated songs where pictures that corresponded with the song were flashed on the screen with the words at the bottom.

There was always a piano player who accompanied both the moving pictures and the illustrated slides. It was a sort of songfest in which the audience joined the piano player in singing the lyrics.

Amateur performances of minstrel shows and light operas were very popular at that time: Gilbert & Sullivan's "Mikado", "pirates of Penzance" and "Pinafore", among the most popular.

Burlesque Furor

Once each season the Black Crook Burlesque troupe came to town, and there was always much consternation among the church groups every time these performances were put on. To really understand the situation it must be realized that what is known as the Victorian era was very much in existence. Any display of the female form above the ankle was considered a sin.

Prim ladies put small weights in the bottom hems of their skirts as protection against sudden gusts of winds that might raise the skirt. To the eye of the roving male, the female figure was taboo. Even young girls wore dresses that touched the ground so the young male had to form only mental pictures of what the female form really looked like.

But, when the Black Crook Company came to town, many got their first view of the female form.

In those days plumpness in a female was considered a virtue and not an unpleasing thing. The girls in the burlesque company at these performances wore more clothes than do the young maidens in the streets today. True, they displayed their forms but they were encased in cotton tights.

Strip tease as we know it today or any other such vulgar displays, were unthought of. The girls, and many of them looked as if they may have been

Actors, Circus, Burlesque Brought Laughter, Thrills - cont.

Burlesque Furor - cont.

grandmothers, merely went through marching forms as the orchestra played John Phillip Sousa's marches. There were comedians dressed much like the circus clowns but on the whole the show was not ribald.

On one engagement by the Black Crock Company quite a furor was created. The show was billed to play at the local opera house the first three days of the week. The bill poster arrived in town late on Saturday night and pasted show bills on the billboards. As the good people of the town walked to Sunday morning services there were these life-sized posters of the burlesque queens staring at them.

In every church the preacher denounced the shameful display which indirectly gave the show added advertising. A delegation from one church right after the Sunday service hunted up the police chief and he in turn hunted up the bill poster and made him paste old newspapers over the offensive posters. Perhaps the most exciting day of the whole year was circus day. Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey shows played the town once each year. It was excitement from early dawn when the show began to unload down at the railway yards until it was reloaded again and the train steamed out of town. The Woodstock Amateur Athletic Association put on a track meet every May 24 which attracted the finest of the nation's athletes to compete in the various sports.

Hockey, of course, was the great winter sport and Woodstock had many fine teams always up in the competition for the championship.

North and South Norwich Townships played an important part in the rebellion of 1837 when William Lyon Mackenzie and his followers tried to upset the government of the day, commonly called the Family Compact.

Today in the Friends burying ground on Quaker Street in North Norwich is a stone to mark the resting place of one of six men who died on the gallows at London for his part in the rebellion.

It is the grave of Daniel Bedford.

According to the stone, he died Feb. 11, 1839, but according to the records of the hangings he died Jan. 11, 1839.

When the revolt failed in Oxford many of the rebels including their leader Dr. Charles Duncombe escaped to the U.S.A. It is reported that Duncombe dressed as a woman and traveled on a load of hay.

#### Met In Detroit

These "Patriots" gathered at Detroit and in early December once more tried to free Canada from the bonds of the Compact. Once again their attempt proved unsuccessful and 40 of the invaders were captured through the action of the Essex County Militia.

The court martial that followed found all but one man guilty. The death sentence was handed out to each of the guilty persons. The men who tried the prisoners did not take into consideration that these men were fighting for a cause of justice. They were only aware that these men entered the colony of the queen with intentions to overthrow the government of the colony.

#### Reduced Sentence

The sentence for such action was death.

Lieut. Gov. Sir George Arthur later reduced the sentence to all but six of the rebels. These men were lodged in the London jail.

The scaffold was erected in the square of the old courthouse on Ridout Street. The first man to be hanged was Hiram Benjamin Lynn. He had acted as adjutant of the raiding party and had been wounded at Windsor. He was helped to the scaffold by the sherriff. Being an American he was one who rightfully could be called an invader.

The next prisoner to be hanged was Capt. Daniel Davis Bedford. He was hanged four days after Lynn.

Norwich Area Played Role in Mackenzie Rebellion - cont.

Reduced Sentence - cont.

The sheriff read the death sentence to Bedford on Friday Jan. 11 between eight and nine o'clock.

A short service was conducted for the condemned man. He was led to the scaffold where he died without a struggle.

Buried in Norwich

Upon being pronounced dead, his body was released to his friends who conveyed it to Norwich for burial. Why the body was released for burial in a spot other than the jail court yard was never understood.

The return of the body of Daniel Bedford must have been a trying time for his friends, as the regular militia kept a lookout for any signs of sympathy for the rebels, and did not hesitate to jail suspects.

It is without a doubt that for sometime after he was buried in the plot of the Society of Friends Cemetery he was considered a martyr. While he was not the only Oxfordonian to be hanged at this time, his grave is the only one at Norwich.

Cornelius Cunningham, another American, but who had been a wagon maker at Beachville, along with a Mr. Hatch of Woodstock, also suffered the same fate as Bedford.

At the time it seemed that these men died in vain, but it was through their action that the British government realized something was wrong. The result was our present form of government.



Pioneer County Bore Three Names

On Christmas Day, 1829, Sebastian Fryfogle became first settler in South Easthope township of Perth County and from this early settlement grew the community of Tavistock. To facilitate settlement, the Canada Company, (which had control of the area known as Perth) had erected several huts along what was known as the Goderich Road, where travellers could obtain rest and entertainment. To induce the keeping of these places a bonus of 40 pounds was offered to any person who would open and keep a house of entertainment for six months.

Mr. Fryfogle was born in the Swiss Canton of Berne and emigrated to America in 1806. Settling in Pennsylvania for several years he came to Canada in 1827 and met Van Egmond while residing in Waterloo. When he heard of the offer made by the Canada Company he applied for the right to operate one of these houses and considered the 40 pounds good pay for his labor. He died in 1873 and during his lifetime he served as district councillor, reeve of Easthope township, warden of Perth, captain of the militia and also as magistrate.

Tavistock was founded by Henry Eckstein in 1848. Mr. Eckstein, having moved from Fryfogle's Sebastopol where he settled in 1845. He erected a house on what is now the triangle formed by Hope and Woodstock Streets. The Grand Trunk Railroad used his building for a store. He named his village Frieberg after his home in Germany. During the Crimean War the people of the area were so interested in the struggle of Inkerman that they decided to rename it in its honor. It continued to be known as Inkerman until the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad was built and a post office was opened in 1857 when the present name of Tavistock was adopted after a town of the same name in England. In 1850 Eckstein erected a brick hotel on the site opposite his former building. The spot was a bog hole and it was a major building feat when they finally had enough fill to support the foundation timbers. Henry Scaeffler in 1858 built a dwelling on Hope Street. Another to settle here was Antoine Gluecklick. John M. Holmes opened a blacksmith shop while M. Bellinger was a harnessmaker. August Beckberger and Duncan Stewart also settled here.

German Immigrant First Tavistock Settler in 1848 - cont.

Arrival of Railway

With the arrival of the railroad, Tavistock made great progress, with several large blocks springing up and streets and sidewalks extending in all directions. As the town grew, so did its business section which contained three general stores, a hardware, two tin shops, three confectioners, two jewellers, a drug store, bakeries, grocery store, boot and shoe store and three hotels. Most of the settlers were of German origin, some coming from Schlesweig-Holstein in Northern Germany by way of Waterloo and Hamburg area of Waterloo County. Dr. Pruss, the first doctor came right from Hamburg, Germany. For quite some time all church notices and bulletins were printed in German as were the Bible and other books that were used. All homes had the familiar book-like calendar hanging by the clock. Many of these old German articles are owned by Ernest C. Peihl of Tavistock who still carries on a business in the shop his grandfather started up shortly after getting married in the 1850's.

In 1869 a planing mill and furniture factory was started, employing three hands. Messrs Kalbfleisch and Schaeffer were two of these. Later it had grown to the point where it hired 30 hands and occupied a three-storey building. In 1885 Kalbfleisch, took over the business along with the saw-mill where cheese and butter boxes were made Schaeffer opened up another planing mill which he later sold.

John Kalbfleisch turned to the wholesale and retail manufacture of furniture, sash, doors, builder supplies along with the cheese and butter boxes. Specializing in sawing, matching and planing. His factory was located on the west side of north Woodstock street and employed over 40 men the year round. There were large showrooms in connection with the mill and all grades of furniture from the cheapest to the finest for every room of the house could be found there. Today much of it can still be found in homes now prized as heirlooms. Mr. Kalbfleisch also conducted an undertaking establishment.

First Woollen Mill

The woollen mill was first established by Mr. Preston in 1868 who sold out in 1869 to John Steinman and John Gerhardt. Steinman sold out to Gerhardt and then in 1877 sold the business to Field and Hetherington and Field later bought out Hetherinton, and employed four men. This business had continued to grow and it<sup>is</sup> today one of Tavistock's oldest industries. At the turn of the century it was operated by a 115 horse power engine which was also used as motive power for the dynamos which supplied the town with electricity.

German Immigrant First Tavistock Settler in 1848 - cont.

First Woollen Mill - cont.

In 1868 a barrel and stave factory was opened by John Zimmerman employing seven hands. John Zimmerman came to this county from Germany at the age of 15 and was one of the pioneer settlers in this district. He assisted in building the first road through Blenheim township and had the contract for the first Baptist Church in East Zorra. By the turn of the century the firm was operated by two sons of J. Zimmerman and operated with a capacity of ten thousand feet daily, the heading mill five thousand and the cooper shop four thousand feet daily. They employed 25 hands and specialized in flour and apple barrels which were kiln dried. With the supply of local timber falling off the Zimmermans purchased three extensive timber limits in new Ontario. They also operated a sawmill at Nottawa on the Pretty River seven miles from Collingwood. The mill had a capacity from 12 to 15 thousand feet of lumber and thirty thousand staves.

In 1886 the Tavistock Milling Company was formed and a mill erected with a capacity of 125 barrels. It was destroyed by fire in 1893. The building was rebuilt, five stories high, with a capacity of 200 barrels and was among the largest mills in Western Ontario. At the turn of the century it was known as the Etna Roller Mills and operated around the clock employing 20 men. It was operated by A. F. Ratz. Under his management it won a reputation for producing the finest brands of flour in Ontario. The mill property was then valued at \$50,000.

The planing mill bought by Adam Schaefer was later known as the Tavistock building and furniture company. They not only manufactured and sold furniture but did a complete lumbering business even to building under contract, homes and establishments all over Perth and Oxford counties. H. W. Kalbfleisch who took over the management of the business which employed 20 to 30 men was personally responsible for the undertaking department which boasted of the most modern equipment and one of the finest establishments of its nature in Western Ontario.

First Dairy School

The first dairy school in Ontario was operated at Tavistock under the guidance of Messrs Ballantyne and Bell who operated a cheese and butter factory here. Ballantyne was the chief maker and cheese was made from May 1 to November 1 each year. For the rest of the year butter would be made. A. T. Bell was in charge of the selling and other such details. They paid for the milk



German Immigrant First Tavistock Settler in 1848 - cont.

First Dairy School - cont.

they purchased according to the percentage of fat as shown by the Babcock test in milk adding two per cent to the reading for cheese. They kept the whey and fed it to the hogs which they kept. During the first three terms of the Dairy School at Guelph Mr. Bell acted as cheese instructor during the winter months. Having started in this business about 1870 he was considered to be an authority on the subject of cheese and butter.

On Sept. 26, 1895 the first newspaper was published in Tavistock. It was known as the Gazette. The editor and proprietor was J. W. Green. F. H. Leslie purchased the business in 1900.

Along with these industries there were also the other business places along the main street. There were several other manufacturing firms which included a cidemill operated by a M. Schmidt; a brick yard owned by F. Entrickend and C. Haunke had a broom factory. V. Stock and A. Appel operated a flax mill which hired 50 to 100 employees in the summer and about 20 during the winter. They manufactured from 25 to 50 tons of live flax besides upholstering tow, both fine and coarse. This industry was twice destroyed by fire. Any description of Tavistock would be incomplete without reference to some of its outstanding citizens of yesterday.

Valentine Stock was born in East Zorra about 1853 and was a life long resident in this area. He attended normal school at Toronto graduating in 1897. After teaching for six years one of them as a principal of Tavistock Public School he resigned and entered the mercantile field in Tavistock and was quite successful. He filled various public positions and was elected to the Legislature in 1892.

The longest established store, and the one which did more business in Tavistock than any other shop was that of Fred Krug. His store was a veritable ark where the customer could find anything from a pin to an anchor. Fred Krug was born in Gartaw Province of Hanover, Germany, in 1843. His family settled in Berlin (Kitchener). After attending school there he entered the newspaper field in the office of the "Baumfrund" in Waterloo, a German newspaper, where he went through an old fashioned apprenticeship under Jacob Teuscher. It was part of his duties to deliver the paper on horseback through all kinds of weather and all types of roads. He claimed that this helped develop his physique and business senses that helped him in later years. He left this field in 1960 and came to Inkerman (Tavistock) to accept



German Immigrant First Tavistock Settler in 1848 - cont.

First Dairy School - cont.

a position as clerk in the store of Jacob Wagner. Ten years later he started in business for himself. In 1872 he went into partnership with Adam Folk which lasted until 1885 when Mr. Krug took over the entire business. This business continued to grow until it was employing over 20 hands. It contained the most complete line of merchandise under one roof this side of Toronto. He did all his buying for cash which he claimed allowed him to sell for less. He would buy sugar in three car lots and coffee was purchased right from the growers in Rio de Janeiro.

Named Postmaster

In 1885 he was appointed postmaster and built a large business block which still stands and extends from the Bank of Commerce to the main corner. He was always active in the affairs of the town.

If one was to visit Tavistock today they would find in the drug store a store resembling as near as possible the drug store that their grandfathers knew. The store still carries the name of Lemp. It was John Lemp who first started this business after receiving high honors at the College of Pharmacy at Toronto and further training in Chicago Ill. where he passed at the head of his class. After going into business for himself he developed a line of products which were well received by the general public which included Lemp's Conditioning Powders, Pine, Lemp's Baking Powder, M. H. Tonic Bitters and Menthol.

In 1892 M. M. Staebler established a jewellery business here that was to become one of the leading business places of this area. Along with the usual line of watches, clock and jewellery he developed a reputation as an authority on diamonds and precious stones. Along with this he operated an optical department and was the possessor of one of the first aptometer and other special instruments for scientific testing and correcting the errors of infection in the sight.

Today we do not think of the community of Burford and its surrounding territory as being part of Oxford County. From the time Lieut. Governor Simcoe first camped on the site of Burford in February 1793 until the formation of Brant County in 1852 this area was the oldest section of firstly, the western district later known as the London District and later the Brock District and finally Oxford County.

The townships of Burford and Oakland were withdrawn from Oxford by an Act of Parliament of August 2, 1851 in the territorial divisions of Upper Canada for judicial, municipal and other purposes. This act took effect on January 1, 1852. By the same act Oxford was Granted part of Dorchester township which was annexed to North Oxford Township.

The first township blocked out west of the Indian County (Six Nations Reserve) and south of Simcoe's military road was called Burford. The name was taken from a town in Oxfordshire whose history extends back to the days of the Saxons.

During the summer of 1794 Augustus Jones surveyed the lines for the seventh and eighth concessions while a large work party of the Queen's Rangers were felling trees, levelling ground and filling ravines so there would be a road for the first settlers to follow. This (Dundas street) was the first road and was named in honor of Sir Henry Dundas, Secretary of State for the Colonies at that time and was completed as far as the Grand River at that time. As a result settlers were able to take up land along these concessions and the Governors Road line with some degree of certainty as to the lots they would receive. There was also some settlement in the southeast corner of the township as it was easily reached from the landing on the Grand River.

Boats were able to navigate up the river for 40 or 50 miles.

John Stegman completed the survey of the township in 1798. The population at that time numbered about 100. The deeds for which some had waited several years were at last issued.

For many years settlement was at a very slow rate and the development of the township at even a slower rate due to the fact that the Executive Council after the departure of Governor Simcoe made larger grants of land to their members and friends as well as setting aside large tracts for clergy reserves and Crown lands. This blocked off from settlement thousands of acres of desirable lands.

Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

The first authentic census of Burford was carried out in 1803 by Thomas Welsh, clerk of the peace located at Charlottesville. Burford and Blenheim were grouped together and the combined population was 336. Burford had about 250 of these. By 1805 the population of these townships had reached 695. The taxes for these two townships amounted to 11 pounds, 16 shillings and 3 pence.

In 1801 they were transferred from the home to London District and Thomas Horner was appointed Registrar. Other appointments included George C. Solomon, James Mitchell and Thomas Bowly as magistrates, F.L. Welsh and George B. Askin, as commissioners of Customs, George Ryerson was collector of customs at Turkey Point and also inspector of licenses. Judge James Mitchell served as inspector of shops, stills and tavern licenses, while H. Van Allen was inspector of beef and pork. The District Board of Education consisted of John Rolph, J.B. Askin, James Mitchell and George C. Solomon.

With the outbreak of hostilities with the United States in 1812 the population decreased by about 100. Settlement and development were at a standstill, money was plentiful and for the first time cash was paid for all commodities used by the troops. After the war was over, however, the township found itself swept clean of supplies and a great scarcity of stock prevailed. The farmers could not obtain sufficient seed to meet their needs and prices rose accordingly. It was not long until money became scarce, and all but disappeared completely. For several years all trade was carried out on the barter system.

By 1817 Burford township contained about 100 dwellings. The population being about 550 plus some Indians. There were not churches but two saddle-bag preachers made regular rounds and services were held in the homes of the settlers.

Two log schools completed the townships educational establishments. Burford contained two inns, three grist mills and four saw mills. The first public meeting recorded took place in Burford village on December 5, 1817. Lt. Col. William D. Bowen presided over the meeting called to discuss the state of affairs of the township and how they could be improved.

Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

They resolved that if the township was to prosper, steps would have to be taken to abolish the restrictions imposed on them by crown grants, clergy reserves and land held by non-residents. They felt that this land should be made available to British immigrants, at a reasonable rate. This they felt would open up the township and help to restore the balance between producer and consumer that existed prior to the War of 1812.

On improved lands, if the owner found teams, implements, board and lodgings, the workman received one third of the crop divided in the sheaf. Horses were valued at \$100, cows \$30 to \$35, sheep at \$3 to \$4.

There were four blacksmiths in the township who manufactured axes, hoes, forks and many other useful articles. Their charge for shoeing a horse was 12 shillings and six pence. An axe cost the same price, a scythe eight shillings and nine pence.

In Burford Village were two tailors, who charge 27 shillings and six pence for making coats and ten shillings for pantallons, two shoe makers who charged three shillings and nine pence for making a pair of shoes, where the leather was furnished and five skilled carpenters who received ten shillings per day and board. Common received 35 pounds a year, or for the winter months two pounds per month, and during the summer three pounds, 15 shillings per month, during harvest, the rate was five shillings per day. The cost of clearing and fencing five acres of wild land was estimated at 18 pounds and 15 shillings. The average yield of wheat per acre was 22 bushels. Price of wool per pound, two shillings and six pence. Price of butter was one shilling and the price of cheese was one shilling.

The best lands at this period were valued from five to ten shillings per acre.

The Government Regulations governing the granting of land to new settlers in the year 1817 provided for a free gift of 50 acres. If he desired larger quantities, it was procurable under certain restrictions and upon payment of certain fees up to 1200 acres. He was obliged to clear five acres on each hundred granted to him, open a road in front of his lot and build a



Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

log house of certain dimensions and these duties, if performed within 18 months, after his location ticket had been issued, entitled him to deed from the Government.

There were but few villages between York and Amherstburg, a distance of 326 miles, Dundas, Burford and Ancaster, were the only places which from the multitude of their inhabitants were considered as villages, and the whole population of the three did not exceed 600.

The first houses erected in Burford village were located in the West end, between the old cemetery and its present western boundary. The townships, educational establishments numbered two, one of which was located in the village of Burford and was opened in the year 1807. There were two stores, two taverns, three grist mills, four sawmills, one fulling mill, one carding machine, and the cost of carding was six pence per pound.

The growing of hemp was strongly advocated, flax was cultivated by nearly every farmer for domestic use, as they were obliged to manufacture nearly all their own clothing there being scarcely any market for their produce. They were unable to export any of their crops at this period owing to the duties imposed in England. Having no money to pay for the necessities of life, they were compelled to get along with what they could furnish from their own labors. It is on record that not enough could be obtained from the distillers for a bushel of wheat to pay for the cost of production.

The Hessian Fly was much in evidence and added to the difficulties experienced by the agriculturalists. The orchards produced abundant crops of apples which sold for 1 shilling, 3 pence per 60 pounds and when manufactured into cider ten shillings per barrel of 32 gallons.

In 1833 the population of the township numbered 1302, 150 of whom reside in the village. The London District contained 33,225 persons. The population of the province had grown to the number of 256,244. Hamilton had now become an important market where "cash for wheat" and other products of the soil was the inducement which caused the Burford farmer to team his produce to that enterprising village. The current prices were: for wheat, for 60 pounds, seven shillings; flour, for 100 pounds, three dollars; beef for one hundred pounds, five dollars; butter a pound one shilling, to one shilling four pence. All payable in United States currency.

Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

In 1836 the population of the township had increased to 1413, London District to 41,130 and the province was 346,165. Burford had 7,480 cultivated acres and the total assessment was 20,640 pounds.

When Woodstock became the district capital in 1840, Burford township contained some 2,300 persons. There was in operation one grist and nine saw mills. The rateable property had an assessed value of \$180,000.

As the country continued to develop and expand, Hamilton on the east and London in the west became flourishing towns, while prosperous villages like Brantford and Woodstock had outgrown Burford and were fast becoming centres of manufacturing industry. Numerous hamlets had sprung up along the ancient Indian trail over which passed all the heavy traffic of trade and commerce, so necessary to the advance of modern civilization. Large strings of heavily laden wagons, transporting all that a country imports and exports, travellers on horseback, on foot, and in all sorts of crude conveyances, was a daily sight which the inhabitants of Burford and Sydenham greatly enjoyed. The arrival and departure of the semi-weekly stage coach with Her Majesty's mail and a varied assortment of foreign travellers, created more excitement and more interest, than today's express trains. In 1835 the Rev. James Hall, a missionary of the English Congregational Church arrived in Burford, where he found a number who had been connected with that society in the old country. He decided to locate in the village and continued his labors for several years. In 1839 a handsome church was erected under his auspices which at first was opened to the members of all religious bodies, this was the first church erected in the township. Mr. Hall resigned the pastorate in 1844 and was succeeded by the Rev. W.F. Clark.

In 1833 Eliakim Malcolm was appointed magistrate. In 1835 the first magistrates residing in the township of Burford, George W. Whitehead, and John Weir were commissioned Justices of the Peace on June 12,. After the formation of the Brock District, commissions were re-issued to the two Burford magistrates already mentioned.

In 1842 when the second commissions were issued the name of John Weir was omitted, and those of Lawrence Daniels, Ransford Rounds, John Eddy and

Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

Henry Horner was omitted and that of Charles Perley added. In 1849 Henry Horner was again appointed as well as George W. Whitehead, Ransford Rounds, Francis Malcolm, Charles Perley, John Eddy, Lawrence Daniel, Alonzo Foster and Robert C. Muir.

For 50 years following the creation of the province of Upper Canada, the municipality was permitted any voice in the regulations or control of its local affairs. From 1792 up to the year 1842 officials appointed by the Government, assessed the land owners, levied taxes, collected the licenses, and through this medieval system the Executive controlled the expenditure of all monies down to the last cent. This continuous sapping of the resources of municipalities like Burford, resulted in a state of affairs entirely opposed to the progress and development of the township.

In 1842 the first measure of relief was put in operation by permitting the districts to form an elective body to be called District Councils. The governor however, still retained the power to appoint the Warden, treasurer and clerk, the officers, of the elective bodies. Council meetings were not to exceed six days.

Each township having not more than 300 free holders was entitled to one representative at the council board, if more than 300 they were entitled to elect two councillors. The Brock District Council lasted eight years. The Act which abolished districts and substituted countys therefore did not alter the territorial limits over which the District Council had previously governed. The new county councils, however, were composed of the Reeves and Deputy Reeves from the various townships. Burford being represented by Ransford Rounds and Charles S. Perley, who were elected in 1850. The same year Burford's share of taxes to be collected towards the support, and to be under the sole control of the council was 280 pounds, 14 shillings, 8 pence.

The first meeting of Burford's First Township Council under the Municipal Act of 1849 was held at the Inn of Henry Dorman (later known as Vanderlips) Sydenham on June 21, 1850. The following members answered to their names : Ransford Rounds, Charles S. Perley, Robert C. Muir, Isaac Braock Henry and Charles Hedgers.



Act of Parliament Deprived Oxford of Burford, Oakland - cont.

The Council elected a reeve and deputy reeve in the persons of Ransford Rounds and Charles S. Perley respectively. George G. Ward who had represented Burford continued to be only during the years 1844-56 was appointed clerk, he was soon succeeded by Douglas Stevenson. In 1854 Robert Hunter was appointed, the latter served for one year and was succeeded by Alonze Foster, who for many years was Burford's well known and respected township clerk.

The late John Catton was appointed treasurer and served for many years as the custodian of the townships funds. In 1852 Joseph D. Clement was elected the first warden of the new county of Brant, and he was succeeded by Eliakim Malcolm who served during the years 1853 - 54.

The first Post office in the County of Oxford was opened at the village of Burford in the year 1819. Colonel W.D. Bowen consented to act as Postmaster but there was no official appointment. It was necessary however that the monthly mail should be received by someone in the village having the confidence of the community and where the letters and papers, addressed to parties throughout all the London District, would be found, when a journey was made to Burford for that purpose.

On the death of Colonel Bowen in the year 1821 he was succeeded as postmaster by William Van Allen, his son-in-law, the duties of the Burford postmaster however at this period was extremely light. In the year 1822 the whole amount of prepaid letters was 8 shillings, 10 and a half pence. At this period there was no postage stamp used in Upper Canada, the letters being marked or initialed with pen and ink by the official in charge.

In 1824 George W. Whitehead was appointed postmaster, this is the first official appointment, effecting the Burford post office which can now be found in the Dominion Archives. In 1844 G. W. Whitehead was succeeded by his brother, W.M. Whitehead. Burford continued to be the only Post office in the township until the year 1851 when a post office was established at New Durham on June 6 and Jessie Schooley appointed postmistress.



While the electrical era in Ontario began with the development of Hydro power under the leadership of Adam Beck later Sir Adam, it is interesting to recall that Woodstock was a pioneer in the use of electricity and also in the work of organizing the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. It is 55 years this year since this city signed the agreement for Hydro power. Today everyone takes electricity for granted. Yet, at the beginning of this century electricity was still an infant in swaddling clothes and remained for many years in the infantile stage largely because it cost too much to develop ----? power development on a public ownership basis. A few far-sighted municipalities joined to make it possible. Wood-----???? Today this city boasts of a plant that is paid for and a power rate both for domestic and commercial users that is as low as any in this country and lower than most in other countries. While the start of this was hydro power there is more to the story than that. There had to be human agencies to see that the people's property was honestly administered. Woodstock was fortunate in having public-spirited men to carry on the work through the years and there is every indication that she will not lack self-sacrificing men to carry on in the years to come.

#### First Use

The use of electric power in Woodstock dates back to the 80's when the first municipal electricity was made in the then water works at the corner of Main and Mill streets, supplying power to a very limited number of business places in the uptown district. The plant continued operating until the present waterworks plant was built. In 1891 the plant was acquired by the firm of Patrick and Powell, who also owned and operated the Woodstock Gas Company located on Young St. The same year a new building was erected adjoining the gas plant. The following year the machinery was moved into this new building. From time to time new features were added to bring the building and equipment up to the highest possible standard.

#### PUC Born

J.G. Archiblad became associated with the electrical branch of the business for Patrick and Powell in 1891, building the electrical plant on Young Street.

Woodstock Pioneered in Public Hydro Power - cont.

PUC Born - cont.

Woodstock became a city in 1901 and in the same year on March 1, the city purchased the electric lighting plant and moved the equipment into the new part of the building of the present waterworks plant.

The venture was successful and when the Public Utilities Act became the law the electric department became part of the public utilities of Woodstock and water and light came under the operation of a Public Utilities Commission. A system of management that has been found very satisfactory and has maintained the city's utilities at a high peak of excellence.

In 1905 when the hydro movement started Woodstock's Commission had the vision to see the great possibilities of the move and joined in wholeheartedly in the movement. A survey was made in 1907. An agreement to take power was signed May 18, 1908, and in 1910 hydro power became a reality in this city. Since Woodstock was one of the original group to sponsor this movement and guarantee the bonds of the Commission for the development of power from Niagara Falls the city has reaped the benefit over the years.

To develop this service as the city grew it was necessary to add to the original plant. Three sub-stations were built in 1918, in 1920 and in 1930. The former Public Utility Building on Dundas street was bought and remodelled in 1919. At that time equipment necessary to carry on the work in this huge public service. In 1962 for the third time in its 61 year history the Woodstock PUC moved into new offices to better serve the growing community for many years to come.

During the same period the capacity generated has risen from 125 horsepower and was used mainly for street and store lighting. In its first full year of operation as a Hydro municipality Woodstock had a peak demand of 640 kilowatts. Fifty years later, in 1961, peak demand reached 19,085 kw. and customers had increased from 772 to 7,000.

Displaying the keen business acumen of their ancestors, the people of Woodstock, through their Commission, have assured the success of their public utility by careful planning and systematic saving.

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ART WILLIAMS SCRAPBOOKS - OXFORD COUNTY - BOOK V

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For the 27th time since Confederation, Ontario is called upon to decide the party of the people's choice to govern them for the next four years. Oxford as we know it today did not always elect one member. From 1858 to 1867 Oxford was part of the Gore District which included all of the area of Waterloo, Wilmot and Dumfries townships, along with Preston, Galt and Hamburg villages. East Nissouri, Blandford, Blenheim, East and West Zorra and Woodstock were represented by George Alexander, who had defeated James Cowan by a majority of 53 votes with 4,297 ballots being cast.

The Thames Division was made up of the other townships of Oxford and the municipalities to the south including Simcoe, Houghton, Townsend, Middleton, Woodhouse, Windham, Charlotteville and Walsingham. Their representative was Alvin Blake who had defeated N.C. Ford.

#### Two Ridings

In 1859 the Representation Act of Upper Canada gave Oxford two sections, North and South Ridings. The North Riding consisted of the townships of East Nissouri, East and West Zorra, Blandford, Blenheim, village of Embro and the town of Woodstock. The South Riding consisted of North Oxford, West Oxford, East Oxford, North and South Norwich, Durham and the town of Ingersoll.

At that time voting was a far more serious matter than it is held today. To qualify to vote one must be a male subject; own or rent real property of the assessed value of \$300 or pay rent of at least \$30 a year. In a built-up community the assessed value set was \$200 or \$20 a year rent. The actual voting was done by open ballot. The voter had to be man enough to stand up and declare his choice in front of all present.

The days were known as "the year of political deadlock" in Canada. Neither party had a working majority. If a member was absent for an hour his party might be defeated.

In provincial elections in Ontario there was no ruling that an elected member could not be a member of both parliaments. As a result the first provincial parliament of Ontario at Toronto was postponed until the first session of the Dominion government was ended.

Ontario Premier, 2 Cabinet - cont.

First Election

Briefly this was the situation that existed on Sept. 3 and 4 in 1867 when the first election for the provincial parliament after Confederation took place in which Hon. John Sanfield MacDonald, Conservative, was elected premier of Ontario.

In North Oxford the fight was between George Perry and George Clarke. There were 2,144 votes cast giving Perry of the Liberals a majority of 230 votes. In the South riding it was just about the same with Adam Oliver defeating J. Noxon of the Conservatives by 232 votes.

In the provincial election of March 21, 1871, George Perry was returned by acclamation in the North. In the South riding the contest was between Adam Oliver and Mr. Richards. Oliver was elected with a majority of 385 votes.

The province voted against the Sanfield MacDonald Conservative Party and Mr. Blake was called to form the first Liberal government in Ontario. His cabinet was sworn into office on December 14, 1871. All would have been well except that the government in Ottawa passed an act in 1872 forbidding dual representation. Consequently Blake and several of his cabinet were classed as dual representatives. The situation in both houses was critical. The Conservatives held a majority of six seats and any loss due to a by-election could give the Liberals a majority. On the other hand the Liberal administration of Ontario was only holding power by a slight majority.

J. Sanfield MacDonald had died in June 1872 and M.C. Cameron was Conservative leader. This was the situation when Mr. Blake and Mr. Brown met with Oliver Mowat and asked him to resign his position of chancery judge and lead the Liberal Party. He accepted the position. Immediately Mr. Blake and his dual representatives resigned their Toronto seats and Hon. W.P. Howland asked Oliver Mowat to form a new cabinet. But he had no seat. Given the choice of many, he chose the North Oxford Riding which was known for being a stronghold of Liberalism. It was, of course, the old stamping grounds for such men as Hon. George Brown, Hon. William McDougall, and Hope McKenzie. The sitting member, George Perry readily resigned in favour of the new premier. In the by-election of Nov. 29, 1872 Mowat was election of acclamation.

Ontario Premier, 2 Cabinet - cont.

The position of sheriff was open for appointment at that time. Both Perry and Adam Oliver sought the seat. Perry received the appointment. Oliver sought re-election which he got by acclamation in January, 1874.

Mowat Premier

Mowat went to the people for the first time in 1875. In his own riding of North Oxford he received an acclamation and went on to carry the province with a large majority. In South Oxford there was the first four-man fight when B. Hopkins, a Conservative, and J. McDonald and Mr. Drolin, both independents, opposed Adam Oliver. Oliver was elected. During that election, for the first time the polls opened one day only, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. But, elections took place on different days in different constituencies which allowed land owners to cast their vote for more than one candidate if they owned land in more than one riding. Some had as many as four votes.

Mr. Oliver was unseated in South Oxford and a by-election was called for in Sept. 1875. In this election Adam Crooks, the Liberal candidate, defeated B. Hopkins, the Conservative, by 260 votes. Adam Crooks went on to become minister of education for Ontario in 1877 after the retirement of Mr. Egerton Ryerson recommended the creation of a cabinet position for education. He held the position from 1877 to 1883.

In the election of 1879 in North Oxford Mowat defeated N. Curry, the Conservative candidate by 1,157 votes, a decisive victory at that time. Crooks defeated two independent candidates Brown and Markan by a majority of 940 votes.

In that election secret ballot were used for the first time in a provincial election. The X replaced the stroke and any ballot not so marked was invalid.

Pattullo Elected

Mowat continued to represent his riding from 1883 until 1894 when he relinquished his seat to enter the government of Wilfrid Laurier of Ottawa. Andrew Pattullo, editor of the Woodstock Sentinel was elected to the North riding.

In the election of 1883 Crooks was successful in the South riding. Later Mr. Crooks was reported by the committee on privileges and elections to be



Ontario Premier, 2 Cabinet - cont.

Pattulo Elected - cont.

incurably insane and his seat was declared vacant. The Liberals under George A. Cooke defeated A. Noxon and the South remained Liberal.

A new name appeared on the ballot for the election of 1886 in the South riding. It was Liberal candidate Angus McKay who defeated all candidates from 1886 until Donald Sutherland took the riding for the Conservative party in 1902, for the first time since Confederation. In the election of 1886 the one man one vote principal was adopted.

The Liberal government was bitterly attacked on the subject of the Ross Bible. This was a selection of Bible readings suitable for opening and closing schools. The main objection by the Protestant clergy was that a Roman Catholic archbishop had been consulted. The book authorized by the Hon. George W. Ross, minister of education was made subject of many absurd charges against Mr. Ross and Mowat government. This alone produced many hours of heated debate on the political platforms. Despite this, the Liberal government weathered the storm and carried 58 out of the 90 seats. Meanwhile Andrew Pattulo kept the North riding in the Liberal camp until his death in 1902. He was succeeded by Col. Jas. E. Munro of Embro as sitting member for the balance of the term. Munro defeated Robert E. Butler for the seat.

Election night was a big night in Woodstock on Jan. 25, 1905. As a special feature the results were to be given out at the opera house. Seats were reserved for the members of the clergy and the candidates. Admission was by ticket only with no charge. The Windsors orchestra supplied the music between returns. The Conservative Party under J.P. Whitney was successful with a majority of 40 seats. This was the first time in 32 years that this party had won an election. Col. Munro held the North riding for the Liberals. The South riding remained Conservative even though W.A. Dowler was considered the favorite to carry the riding.

Tavistock Added

For the election of 1908 Tillsonburg and Norwich were listed as polling divisions in the South riding. In 1909 Tavistock was removed from South Perth and added to the North Riding. The day before the election 50 ballots were offered for sale by a poll clerk at Hamilton for \$1.00 to a party chairman.

In the South Riding there was much excitement in Ingersoll. Over 8,000

Ontario Premier, 2 Cabinet - cont.

Tavistock Added - cont.

people gathered in the streets and huge bonfires were lit. The town fairly shook with the roar of the crowd as returns came in. It was a close race. T.R. Mayberry was victorious by 44 votes over Donald Sutherland who had held the seat for seven years.

In the North riding, Dr. Andrew McKay held the seat for the Liberals. Meanwhile in South Perth, Valentine Stock of Tavistock defeated Conservative Nelson Monteith, minister of agriculture from Stratford. 1911 saw a new Liberal leader, M.W. Rowell, contesting the North Oxford riding which he carried with a majority of 559 votes. Woodstock voted conservative in favour of Robert Lockhart, In the south riding, Mayberry was re-elected with a majority of 203. Tillsonburg voted for William McGhee while Ingersoll favored Mayberry.

UFO Appears

A temperance campaign was conducted in 1914. The pace was hard and fast in the South riding. As a result of the issues and the vigorous campaigning Victor A. Sinclair defeated Col. T.R. Mayberry by one vote. It was four votes before the recount was held. Rowell was successful in the North riding but later left to enter the Dominion Cabinet. That year Premier Sir J.P. Whitney died and W.H. Hearst became premier. H.H. Duwart led the Liberals. The United Farmers of Ontario entered the political field. By 1919 the UFO was the party to be reckoned with. They formed a coalition with Labor and selected Hon. E.C. Drury for premier.

Locally it was a three man race in the North Riding with James A. Calder being re-elected for Liberal. In the South riding it was UFO all the way with A.T. Walker defeating Sinclair and Alex Rose with a plurality of 617 votes. On the death of -----???? Article ends here.

Few families have played as important a role in the history of Oxford as the Ingersoll Family. Not only was this family largely responsible for opening the townships of North and West Oxford but of Nissouri and they undertook to help the Canada Company establish a community at Little Falls (St. Marys) in Perth County.

This undertaking was nothing new for them as from the time that the first Ingersolls arrived in the New England States they were active in town planning. They were also active in the settlements of the Niagara region, Port Credit and St. Davids.

Thomas Ingersoll and his sons Charles, James and Thomas Jr. were the family members active in Oxford and Perth counties.

This family originated in Bedfordshire, England where Richard was born in 1600 and John in 1615. In 1629 they left England and arrived at Salem, Mass. From here on little is known of Richard but of John a fairly accurate record has been kept. It was from his descendants the Canadian Ingersoll family originated. After living at Salem, John moved to Hartford, Conn. where he was married in 1651. He moved to Northampton, Mass., where his second marriage took place in 1657. He moved from Westfield, Mass., where he married for the third time. Here he died in 1684. During his 17 years in Westfield his house became known as the seat of the early aristocracy. In its early days it was used as a fort where the people would gather for safety from the Indians. Members of John Ingersoll's family went out to become famous in American history as judges, legislators, ministers and inventors and soldiers.

For some unknown reason the spelling of the name is frequently found spelled Ingersole.

#### Fifth Generation

The Thomas Ingersoll who settled at the site of the town of Ingersoll was a member of the fifth generation. His family had moved to Great Barrington, Mass., in 1774. This is the first we hear of Thomas Ingersoll beyond that he was born of Westfield, Mass. in 1779. In 1775 he married Elizabeth Dewey. The coming of the Revolutionary war threw the country into a ferment. The Ingersolls cast their lot with the loyalists. Some of the family

James Ingersoll, First White Child of Oxford, A True Founding Father - cont.

Fifth Generation - cont.

were imprisoned and suffered hardships at the hands of the revolutionists. Thomas Ingersoll took little active part in the war although he served in the Militia from 1777 - 1781. In troubled times of 1786 - 1787 he saw service with the rank of major.

Thomas Ingersoll was married three times and seven members of his family became famous in Canadian history. After his first marriage he purchased a piece of land and started a business for himself. The house was built in 1772 and today is the site of the Great Barrington library. The house is still standing as is the house on a side street which served him as a shop. The first child born to the first Mrs. Ingersoll was Laura who later became famous as Laura Secord. The Canadian heroine of 1812. She lived only a short time in Oxford as she was married to Capt. Secord soon after arrival here and then went to live in the Niagara district. Two other daughters Elizabeth and Myra both died shortly after their marriage. Abigail was raised by an aunt.

In May 1785 Thomas Ingersoll was married for the second time. This time to Mercy Smith. She died in 1789 childless. She was married and buried by Rev. Gideon Bestwick who was cosigner for the Oxford Tract.

First Oxford-Born

In Sept. 1789 Ingersoll was married for the third time. This time his bride was Sally Backus a widow of John Backus and sister of George John Whiting. She became the mother of the sons who made their name famous in Western Ontario. Charles was the oldest followed by Charlotte who married William Marigold, a pioneer settler of London, Ontario. Appy the third child married a Mr. Carroll who was one of the founders of Lakeside in East Nissouri. Thomas and Samuel were the next two while James was the youngest son. It is claimed that he was the first white child born in Oxford. All the other members of the family were born in Great Harrington. The youngest daughter Sarah was born at Etobicoke after the family left Oxford.

With conditions unfavourable in the United States, Thomas Ingersoll along with Rev. Gideon Bostick, R. Williams, S. Hamlin, Albe Kelser and others



James Ingersoll, First White Child of Oxford, A True Founding Father - cont.

First Oxford-Born - cont.

applied for the right to take over a township in Canada on the condition that they endeavor to bring in settlers. On March 23, 1793 they were given a tract of land of about 64,000 acres. Mr. Ingersoll along with Brant the Chief of the Six Nation Indians visited what is now Oxford and decided on the land along the La Trenche (Thames) River as the site of their township. He returned to Great Barrington.

Two years later Ingersoll and his family returned to Canada. They stopped off at Queenston. Two years later they pushed westward to the present site where Ingersoll now stands. All went well as long as Governor Simcoe remained but when he was removed steps were taken to reclaim much of the land held by American settlers. Ingersoll was not able to carry his case to the government in England due to financial difficulties. He had to accept the ruling of the local authority and therefore lost his township. He was allowed to keep his own farm. Broken-hearted Thomas Ingersoll did not remain here long but moved to Toronto and took up land at Merrigolds Point in Etobicoke Township. He died at Port Credit in 1812.

James To Farm

Not much is heard of the Ingersoll family here in Oxford until 1817 when Charles Ingersoll purchased the family farm at a sheriff's sale at Oxford. He sent his younger brother James to take possession. Prior to this Charles had served in the army and was attached to General Brock's staff. He, along with William Hamilton Meritt, raised a troop of dragoons known as the Provincial Light Dragoons. They saw much action including the battle of River Raisin of Maumee in which the Americans were defeated. After the war he joined partnership with Amos McKenny and opened a business at Twelve Mile Creek (St. Catharines). He remained there 'til 1821 when he and his family moved to the family farm which was fast becoming a settlement. On Jan. 6, that year he was appointed postmaster and shortly after a magistrate. In his official capacity Charles Ingersoll took a leading part in the development of the district.

As commissioner appointed by the government he laid out the boundary lines between Oxford and Middlesex townships and issued the charters for the various townships which were formed at that time. He also served as Lieut.

Highlands of Oxford Rich in Story, Beauty - cont.

Fountain - cont.

the County Home on your left you pass the VLA settlement on your right. Behind these buildings you will notice some of Woodstock's metal working, industries; also a look at the skyline of our fair city. Notice the large number of trees and at this time of the year they hide a good part of the city. As we proceed north we see the county shed where the county equipment is stored and maintained. This farm was originally a county farm but has been sold in recent years. On your right is another view of the Ontario Hospital. When you arrive at the corner and the stop sign ?? , turn left past more new homes and gardens. At the second corner on the left painted grey is the home of Mrs. A. Hart, well known in rural activities.

Golspie

The first sign of a community is at Golspie. It was never very big but was the centre which many early Scots called home, and just north of here was an early school. The school on the left has an interesting history.

A fine stone house on the left in the aristocratic style while a typical stone house is to be seen on the right. It is very much the same as when it was first built. William Sutherland has many of the artifices that were once used by his forefathers. As we approach the corner you have the option of visiting the old log cemetery and cairn of Dr. Leslie McKay of Formosa missionary fame if you wish. It is about one and a half miles up the road on your right. If you care to visit here turn right and when you return to this corner turn left and follow the pavement to Cody's Corners.

At Cody's Corners we see on our left the birthplace and home of the late Bob Hayward, Canada's Harmsworth Trophy winner. The large white chicken house accounts for his tag of "chicken farmer". At the corner we turn right, the building on the right was the home of the Cody family which settled here about 1800 before the Scots arrived. The last of the local descendants live in the large white house on the left. As you cross the railroad you are in fishing country. The old dam ruins are all that remain of the Scotia Mill. Along the river behind the old dam site are to

### Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living

With the coming of fine weather a great many will be taking to the open road. It is our hope that you will take advantage of the suggested trips which will be laid out from time to time in this column. On these trips you will encounter a group of people unlike the natives of Oxford. They are known as the Amish Mennonites. These people are not hard to pick out as they dress in an attire quite distinctive of their faith. When you see these folk you will also see horses - an animal as a beast of burden which is fast disappearing. In order to enjoy Oxford I feel that you should know a little more about these people and their ways.

The Amish are of a religious faith whose beginning dates back to 1632 when they adopted their Confession of Faith written in Dordrecht, Holland. To this day their life is centred around this confession. A member is not baptised until after he is married on the belief that until they marry they are not mature enough to realize the seriousness of this event. All groups of these people, of which there are at least 12, are not all alike today. The Old Order Amish are the most strict in adhering to ancient ritual and custom while the other extreme might be considered as Conservative Amish which agree to their members owning motor vehicles. In the Old Order Amish one is baptised with the understanding he cannot leave the faith. Anyone trying to do so is shunned. This treatment often brings the victims back into line; to make a public confession and plea for forgiveness.

### Buggies

An Amish home may be recognized by the presence of a horse drawn buggy in a farmyard. Where possible the buggy of the 1890's is still in use. Due to the fact these are fast wearing out, the type of vehicle found will often be a homemade version which might have buggy or light democrat wagon wheels with a closed in cab-type body. Some will be single seaters for the newly-weds while older married couples will have a two-seated version capable of carrying six to ten passengers. The rig may be drawn by a light driver-type horse or by a team of light draft horses. Very seldom are heavy draft horses used for this purpose.

If by chance the house is located near the road a look at the windows

Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Buggies - cont.

will show plain blue or green curtains, nothing fancy as lace and ruffles are forbidden. Surrounding the homes of the more settled Mennonites you will find well-kept lawns and attractive gardens.

The homes of these people will be found to be very plain but spotlessly clean though sort of chilling owing to the lack of furniture. As we noted before they are plain people and do not believe in a lot of unnecessary furniture. The table, will be big enough for the family and covered with an oilcloth. Chairs will most likely be odd and unmatched, dishes and cutlery are not sets but odd pieces which have been picked up at auction sales. A corner cupboard or commode will most likely contain all the extras for the family. An iron bedstead is often the only furniture in the bedroom. The size of the family will indicate the needs of the family. Since these people are not affected by changing styles it is not necessary to have a large wardrobe for milady and her teen-age daughters. There will be no sign of television, radio or hi-fi sets as all forms of musical instruments are considered playthings of the devil and are forbidden. In fact you will find no trace of ornaments, pictures or portraits, nor rugs, carpets, fancy quilts or pillow cases in the Amish home.

If an extra table has found its way into the home it will usually hold the family bible or other religious books: perhaps, a local newspaper but more likely a copy of the Sugar Creek Budget. This is a paper that is published in Sugar Creek, Ohio and tells all about what is going on in the world of these people as contributed by their members from Pennsylvania to Iowa from Ontario to the far west.

Furniture

To the average person it is hard to realize how they get along with such few pieces of furniture. But plain as it may be, it is immaculate. The potbellied stove fairly blinds you with its high gloss and the painted floors are fit to eat off. The only color is usually found in the kitchen where flowering plants adorn the window sill. The old hand pump is gradually giving way to the kitchen tap and bottled gas is finding its way and



Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Furniture - cont.

replacing the old wood stove in the kitchen. Electric lights are still forbidden in many groups but gasoline lamps are replacing the old coal oil lamps. When a new farm is purchased all forms of central heating, electricity and fancy bathrooms are removed unless a mortgage on the farm requires that they remain.

The barn is the Mennonite's castle. Under this one roof he centres all his work, his religious services and his youngster's entertainment. The barns found on our farms fit quite suitably into their way of life as they were designed originally by Pennsylvania Dutch settlers and adopted by all others, so little need be said about their structure and capabilities.

Sundays

Sunday observance in Amishland is more than simply complying with the Third Commandment. It is a day when all can get together and without this get-together the Amish Society would soon disintegrate. They are a loyal class of people to their faith. On Sunday they will do no more than they have to in the line of chores. About all they will do is feed the livestock and milk cows but they do not ship milk on Sunday. Coffee or milk may be heated for meals but other than that all foodstuffs is prepared the day before. They even hesitate to call a doctor for man or beast on Sunday. These people do not believe in church buildings or meeting houses. This is with the exception of certain groups. Instead they meet with their members in the barns of different members until all members have had an opportunity to entertain the group. The religious part of the gathering takes place in the barn usually on the old threshing floor where wooden benches are arranged with the men sitting on one side while the women young and old alike occupy the other side. The side occupied by the menfolk centres around a table where the song leader holds forth. Any singing that does take place usually deals with songs of martyrs and their faith and suffering. Between the singing of their hymns the service is carried on by a bishop and one or two preachers and a deacon. When these men preach they will take a passage of scripture that deals with their choice of subject and without notes or Bible they will preach from forty to 70 minutes each. The bishop reads from the New Testament. The four Confessions of Faith are repeated followed by prayer which they all stand for. There are no collections or responsive readings. Apart from the singing of the hymns, the congregation remains silent.

Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Sundays - cont.

After the service is over the men leave first followed by the women who go directly to the house to lay the table while the men stand around and visit. The table is made out of boards placed across a couple of benches. Incidentally these benches belong to the people and are moved from place to place for each meeting. The table is laid on white cloths. This is a communal meal when the men are seated in one row and the corresponding woman member of the family sits opposite. The host leads in silent prayer.

During the meal no one speaks but consumes a filling amount of foodstuff which will include a variety of cold cut ham, cheese, jellos, pickles, beets, carrots, hard boiled eggs, large bowls of bread and milk. One eats his fill then after a silent prayer of thanks leaves to make room for another and retires outside for a period of social visiting. As the day wears on the older ones will leave for home. If the unmarried ones have chores to do they will leave only to return for the evening entertainment.

Young People

On Sunday evenings the young folk are allowed to gather for a period of frolicking at the barn. Here they sing the so-called fast songs and play social games. The young men and women have a chance to be together. Sometimes a harmonica or gramophone will supply music for square dancing. Square dancing is permitted but modern dancing by couples is not permitted. As mentioned before this is just for the young at heart and after marriage and baptism this sort of revelling is forbidden.

If a boy is attracted to a girl it is not proper for him to approach her himself but must ask a friend to intercede. If she refuses his attention it does not become a personal wound as it was not direct to him. But he can watch and if she leaves for home alone he can offer to hitch up her horse for the girls also drive horses, who knows, he might even drive her home. Any sign of special attention is kept secret until such time as they decide to wed. The whole community has a good idea what is going on but does not let on for the good of the couple. Boys will be boys though and during the courting period all sorts of tricks are played on them.

Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Young People - cont.

The young Amish fellow while he is not able to sport a fancy convertible he can become the envy of the community girls by the horse and rig he possesses. It seems to be perfectly all right for them to have a fancy harness for their horse but like the other pleasures of youth it will all be given up when he joins the church. When a couple are married they are considered to have taken on a big undertaking. In the Amish world its tasks and labors are harder than in other social groups.

The young couple want to succeed. They must succeed economically in spite of all the hardships that beset them. They must stay on the land, find a farm where they will raise a family. They have to work in such a way that they may eventually become a debt-free family.

Biblican Lanes

So much for their social ways. Now lets take a look at the people themselves. In the choice of names we find that good old biblican names are still in use with such names as John, Israel, Samuel, Isaac and Stephen for males while Marie, Sylvia, Malinda, Delila, and Sarah are common names for the women folk. Every boy or girl will take the first letter of their father's name for their middle initial. This helps to separate names and people when you find a limited number of surnames. Sometimes the first initial of a grandparent's first names must be added to distinguish descendants. Mennonites have always been easily recognized by their hair especially among the menfold. The bishop of an Amish district sets the length of men's hair. It may be long as a finger's width below the lobe of the ear or as short as to the upper tip of the ear. It is forbidden to comb part or dress up the hair in any way, shape or form. Patting the hair with the hand is all that is allowed. This they expect will keep it in order but after all they are seldom seen without hats except when inside the house. The reason for the beard is not readily found. A very good assortment of beards will be found according to the section of the faith. When a man marries and joins the church he grows a beard but he also shaves his upper and lower lip and he may shave his cheeks. It must not be treated any better than the hair on one's head.



Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Biblican Lanes - cont.

The hat while usually black varies in style or design according to what is available. Some make their own while others depend on manufacturers. The hat may vary from a 4 inch brim with a four inch flat crown to a three inch brim with a five inch round crown. The black band varies from a shoe string to a one inch band. Their lapelless coats with narrow standing collars along with hooks and eyes instead of buttons are the style for outer clothes. Undergarments and trousers have button closings and barndoor flaps instead of vertical or zippered varieties. Belts of leather are forbidden, cloth suspenders but not rubber ones are allowed. In the summertime a sleeveless black vest may be worn over a white or blue shirt. Neckties are forbidden. A pocket watch is the only piece of extravagance allowed but not wristwatches.

Women's Apparel

The women are even more conservative than the men. Their hair is parted in the middle then brushed back and rolled, never braided, in a knot on the back of the head. All women wear identical white net prayer caps and black bonnets. Adult women never appear without a head covering. The women have freedom in dress only in the choice of solid colors of their dresses. The districts decide on the style in cut, length and number of pleats. Black and dark blue are the predominant colors although other solid colors may be seen. Prints, checks or flowered materials are forbidden. Undergarments may be white as may the aprons worn at district meetings. Otherwise aprons worn are the same color as the dress.

In winter time the women wear a full scarf or shawl of black heavy wool which extends over much of the back. Stockings are black lisle. When button shoes were available they were a must but today black oxfords have replaced them.

The dresses of the women are closed with clasps or simple pins rather than buttons. Only small children are allowed the pleasure of buttoned closings on the back.

Hair fancying is unknown to the adult Amish women as are jewelry or wedding rings.



Latest Immigrants to Oxford Brought Strict, Plain Living - cont.

Women's Apparel - cont.

Changes do appear from time to time but it is only because they can no longer purchase a certain article. No sudden whim or fancy can change them. Although time has had this force.

Their costume is not modern but it is dignified and picturesque. While they are not as common here in Oxford as they are in the States of Pennsylvania and Ohio they do add a little something to our countryside and do help to give us a little insight on how some of the other people live. Further information on these people may be found in "Our Amish Neighbors" by William Schrieber.

While Ingersoll has suffered destruction by fire and flood it has always managed to rally and move onward. In its march of progress it has been the policy of its landowners to remember those who made their town possible by naming streets after them and their families and in many cases if it were not for the street being so named, the person would have been completely forgotten.

Originally the community was known as Oxford and later changed to Ingersoll to honor its founder, and along with this came Thomas and Ingersoll streets to further honor the founder. His family were remembered with the street names of Charles, James and Frank. James street was that part of Wellington running between Canterbury and King streets. James Ingersoll was the first white child born in Ingersoll. Whiting street was named for Sarah Whiting, who was Ingersoll's third wife. Merritt street is for Anna Maria Merritt, who married Charles Ingersoll.

The most famous of the Ingersoll family does not appear to have left her mark on the town as no street was named for Laura Secord, a daughter of Thomas Ingersoll by his first wife. Benson street honors the Hon. James Rea Benson and his son's name given to Frederick Street. The relationship between the Merritt and Ingersoll families is signified by Bond street.

#### Laid out Town

Col. Worham was the surveyor who laid out the town and his family bore the names of Francis, Ann and Albert and all are remembered by street names. Militia street is named for a well liked citizen Miss Militia Breakly, a step daughter of M. McCaughty, a local lawyer.

Originally Duke street extended from Charles street to Ann, but for some reason, the south end was changed to Earl. There is no record to show why it was demoted in the peerage.

Church street was evidently named due to the fact that three churches were close at hand. The church of England was on the south side of King street, the Methodist on the north side and the Presbyterian on Charles street. Boles is a short street running north from Charles, east of Albert and was named after John Boles, an early merchant, while King street was named after the King family, a family of millers. It extends from the east to the west of the town but at one time from Carroll street east it was called Commissioners Road.

Ingersoll Street Names Honor Pioneers of Area - cont.

Laid out Town - cont.

Concession street marks the front of the first concession and it was surveyed to run right through to Thames street, while Hall street is named for Elisha Hall who erected the first brick house in Ingersoll. His son was active in the Rebellion of '37 and was known as "Rebel" Hall. Mrs. C.P. Hall, the wife of another son of Elisha Hall gave her name to Martha street, while Noxon street was named after James Noxon, founder of the implement works and one time mayor of Ingersoll. His home was located on the grounds now occupied by Alexandra hospital.

Col. Holcroft, who was in charge of an Imperial regiment in Canada during the war of 1812, and lived in Ingersoll for a time at the Tucker House which he built, is remembered with Holcroft street.

Visit Recalled

The visit of Lord and Lady Dufferin in 1874 is recalled by Dufferin street and previous to that it had been Catherine street, after Mrs. C.E. Chadwick the wife of the mayor of the town.

In the southeast section there are names of more historical people.

David street after David Canfield, whose father came from Pennsylvania and settled at Centreville, Carroll, and Daniel streets after David Carroll and McCarthy after Dr. McCarthy, son-in-law of Mr. Carroll. Harris street, of course honors the Harris family and the Harris street settlement while Taylor street is named after a Mr. Taylor who owned a large tract of land at one time.

John Carnegie, son of a Scottish laird who came to Canada about 1834 held 1358 acres of land north of the river and when it was divided he chose names of Scottish families and battles. The street where his home stood was called Carnegie and his wife, formerly Isabella Thompson of Edinburgh was remembered with Bell street, Catherine, Victoria, Helen, William, James and George were the names of his children. The Crimean and Peninsula War were commemorated by Alma, Ingerman and Waterloo streets while the distinguished soldiers were remembered by Raglan, Cambridge and Cathcart. Union street marks the union of the Crotty and Carnegie properties. The eastern limit of the Carnegie survey was Mutual street, the line being fixed by the mutual consent of Carnegie and Carroll.

Ingersoll Street Names Honor Pioneers of Area - cont.

Mill Prospered

Mutual street does not meet Charles street exactly at Carroll and for this there is a reason. It seems that Mr. Carroll owned a mill at what is now the northwest corner of Charles and Mutual which got a good deal of the business passing along Charles street. But Peter Stuart also owned a mill out on Canterbury street near the end of Hall and Carroll streets and it was feared that farmers would miss the Carroll mill when they came in from the north and proceed on to the Stuart Mill. Therefore Mutual street was laid out slightly to the west and the mill prospered. Mr. Carroll wished to perpetuate the names of three kings by calling three streets in his survey Bruce King Solomon and King Hiram. There is nothing to indicate the reason for this. He did wish though, to have the name of an early governor of Canada remembered when he named Metcalfe street in his honor.

That part of Skye street running east of Worham was originally Henry after Squire Crotty but the name was dropped and the street became Skye for its entire length. His wife is still remembered with Margaret street, while the pioneer goes unrecognized, Percy street was named after his son. McKeand and Haines streets are named after George McKeand and Thomas Augustus Haines, both of Hamilton who owned a large tract of land here. There are other streets whose names we cannot account for but Jura and Skye are good Scotch names while Caskel and Ossiman support the Irish.



\* The first of a series of weekend tours of Oxford prepared by Arthur Williams and the Sentinel-Review that more people may come to know this county, its history and its beauty. (maps included in orig. scrapbooks)

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During the last 60 weeks we have attempted to bring to you a little about the history of Oxford County and of the communities that have played a part in this history.

Starting this week, we are laying out suggested trips so that you will be able to spend a few leisure hours seeing this county of Oxford. Also, these trips are planned with the visitor in mind - people who are here for a visit who have never been off the main highways. These trips will give the man insight of how great Oxford really is.

All our trips will start and end at the City Hall in Woodstock.

Our first trip is taking us down into the county first settled by the Quakers, after a long trip along the Old Stage Road then back up and into Woodstock by way of Curries.

We leave the city hall and travel east past an old landmark, the post office, as well as the new Canada Permanent Building and Old St. Paul's Church. On the outskirts of the city we see the new YMCA building on the grounds of the first cabin in Woodstock; the large home on the left is that of Mrs. T.L. Hay. As we near the open country the monument to Springbank Snow Countess appears on the left near the Western Wind and Weather building. An ever-increasing number of industries are seen as we travel the dual highway to Eastwood which we approach after passing under Highway 401.

At Eastwood we leave Highway 2 and take Highway 53, also known as the Burford Road. This road was one of the original projects of Sir Casimir Gzowski who was recently honored by having a stamp issued in his honor. At the third crossroad after leaving Eastwood we come to Muir school and church. This is the boundary between Oxford and Brant Counties. Here, we leave the main highway and turn right along the boundary road to the first corner which is plainly marked "Stage Road" at which we turn.

Historic Townships Have Beauty, Industry - cont.

This is the road once used by John Graves Simcoe on his historic walk from Niagara to Sandwich. Most of this road still follows the original route. Along this road are found the style of houses used by the English settlers of the Vansittart era also one of the old original school houses which was erected in 1875. This is the heart of the dairy country and many fine herds will be seen along with modern methods of feeding, such as the self-feeder silo on the right.

At Oxford Centre are the old churches and in the Anglican cemetery a stone to the memory of Canfield, one of the early settlers of UEL stock. Here, is an example of maple drives seen so often on our county roads and fast disappearing from the town and cities and main highways.

Turn left at Oxford Centre past the township hall, war memorial and United Church. Here is Oxford scenery at its best as we look out over the rolling fields and such show places as are seen here. At the second road, turn left, down a typical county road and pass the corner once known as Oriel and on to the county road where we turn right. This leads past one of the milk farms of Oxford and by the school on the left at Beaconsfield. This was a Quaker settlement at one time.

As we approach highway 59 we turn right for Burgessville. This is the apple centre. At this time of the year the apple blossoms are a sight to behold. Notice the white house on the left with the old fashioned dinner bell on the kitchen roof. Take a few minutes to drive around the village and see the old houses and their quaint trim around the eaves and also view the Old Baptist Church down the road from the main corner.

Coming back to the main corner there is the new post office to the left of the old hotel recently demolished. Take this road out past the new school to the first crossroad and turn left. Along this road notice an old-fashioned sawmill still in operation with saw and carriage outside. As we near the highway again there is a house on the left which is one of the oldest houses in North Norwich township known as the "Wildwood Farm". It was built by a Mr. Gillams who came here before 1820. It was to this farm that the Rittie Brothers brought several holstein cows in 1896 to be among the first with purebred Holsteins in South Oxford. Another of these

Historic Townships Have Beauty, Industry - cont.

was Aaltjie Posch 4th, one of the founders of the Major Holstein family in Canada. In 1899 this cow produced 494.3 lbs. of milk containing 23.86 lbs. of butterfat.

At Highway No. 59 we turn right and head for Norwich to pass more well kept dairy farms and one of the county's ever-increasing turkey farms.

Slow down on entering Norwich, as there is much to see here. This town has a long and colorful history dating back to the Old Quaker meeting house on Quaker street which is still marked with a plaque. It was the centre of a lot of activity in the rebellion of 1837. In this town too, you will find the Otter Creek Conservation Area and the small park at the far end of the business section. The museum is located in the post office. Rest rooms are also to be found in the business section. If you are looking for the cemetery, it is on Avery Lane which is opposite the Conservation area. Travelling out of Norwich on Highway No. 59, we approach the tobacco country around Burgessville. There are some good fishing creeks in this area. The old stump fence on the left indicates you are nearing the turn to Burgessville, when you turn right. The white frame building at the railroad tracks was used as a jail in time of the rebellion and is one of many things to be seen here. Watch for the sign to the park and park your car in the lot to the left of the gate which is marked. Here is a good place for dinner and a chance for the kids to blow off steam. They have been doing it here for over 60 years.

As you leave the parking lot follow the road down by the river and you will see the old dam while across the road is the old mill built in 1845 by Edward Bullock and still in operation and using water power. Coming back into the business section we turn right opposite the park, turn, going out past the Anglican Church. This road will take you south of town and at the end of the pavement turn right. The New York Central Railroad is to the left. Along this road will be seen another sawmill of a different type, also many years old, as well as farm buildings in good repair, and an 1865 school house. At the main corner marked by a stop sign, turn left and go one mile to Rock Mills, a pretty and scenic spot. Then re-trace your course of travel to the corner and so straight through northerly on the main road to Springford. This is the home of Canada's famous mounted Boy Scout Troop, also the name of Wilcox, the man who got rural mail into



Historic Townships Have Beauty, Industry - cont.

Canada. It is also one of the oldest post offices still in use daily. If the grocery store is open, call in and have a look at the quaint boxes where the villagers get their mail.

Travelling north out of Springford there is a stretch of construction work being done on the country road for four miles until we turn on the county road No. 18 having passed the old Newark cheese factory. This is a section of the county where the Mennonites have settled, and it is possible you may see some of them out for a drive. Turning left you will see what remains of Newark. At the first corner turn left for Zenda which appears in the valley as you top the hill where the schoolhouse is. The area by the cheese factory is the old home of the famous Zenda garden party of pre-war days. Following this road we pass the milk plant of Canada Dairies Corp. a type of plant which is fast replacing the old cheese factories of Oxford. Turning right here, follow the pavement to Holbrook and highway No. 59. It was in this area that former president of the U.S.A. Herbert Hoover's mother came from. Here again are the orchards of Oxford in their spring finery. Turning left on No. 59 we approach Curries, and a reforestation project. The house on the right once served as the station when the railroad crossed here and the proper name was Curries' Crossing. There are many fine herds of cattle to be seen in this area.

Yes, that is the other end of the Stage Road that you just passed. Approaching Highway 401, overpass you will see Overland Transport, Dr. Salisbury Products and the new home of Holland Hitch on the left. If you care to stop, the Department of Highways has a park area here on the left, with all facilities.

Approaching the city of Woodstock, there is the new church of the first Christian Reformed Church. On the left, through the trees you can catch a glimpse of the new College Avenue Secondary School built on the site of the old Baptist College (Woodstock College). Turning into Cedar street, we pass the Harvey-Knit one of the city's larger industries. On Wilson street we see some of the homes built for the English gentry in the Vansittart era and later. Turning left onto Peel Street, we arrive back at the city hall by way of the Woodstock market. This has been the meeting place for half a century, on a Saturday morning for untold thousands of Oxford residents.



Pioneer Settlers Came to This Area from Many Countries  
of Old World - Page 24

This land is your land, this land is my land.  
From Tavistock to Tillsonburg, from Platsville to Spearmans Corners  
This land is meant for you and me  
From the Highlands of Zorra to the Lowlands of Dereham  
From the clay loam of Nissouri to the sandy lands of S. Norwich  
You'll find cattle grazing, tobacco growing  
Open-faced mining and oil wells booming  
In this land that's meant for you and me.

Our ancestors came from the Highlands and from the Rhineland  
From the Old Land and the New Land  
To make this land for you and me  
This land is your land, this land is my land  
This land is meant for you and me

By Arthur Williams

Today our trip will take us up into East Zorra through Blandford and Blenheim. This is land settled by the Germans around Tavistock, the English and Scottish at Bright, Plattsville and Hickson, and the Americans around Princeton.

As we leave the city hall, we turn right and then left at Riddell street past the Collegiate, Central United and Knox Presbyterian Churches, left onto Hunter street past the library and Central School, one of Woodstock's oldest schools. Here on our right we see the County buildings, a shining example of the esteem our ancestors held for public office. The small building on the corner is the old registry office while the new registry office is behind it. The other new building is the Children's Aid and the other building occupying the block is the county jail. A visit to these buildings is time well spent.

The militia armories and war memorial can also be seen from this point along with Victoria Park. Returning to Hunter street we proceed to Vansittart Avenue where we turn right. This is one of the finer streets of Woodstock with its stately homes set off by the equally majestic maples. As you cross the railroad you will see The Lions' Pool on

Pioneer Settlers Came to this Area from Many Countries  
Of Old World - cont.

your left. The cemetery on the left commemorates the only casualty suffered by Oxford County in the Fenian Raids.

As we cross the railroad at the foot of the hill we approach the area that will become part of the Pittock Dam and park site. At the top of the other hill we find the Ontario Hospital and its fine buildings for epileptic patients.

East Zorra

We are now into East Zorra. The school on your left is known as the Toll Gate School as there was a toll gate here when this road was privately owned and known as the Woodstock and Huron Gravel Road. The large farm on the right owned by V. Kaufman and Son is a major undertaking in raising beef cattle on dry lot feeding. Feed is brought to the cattle. On your left we find the Oxford and District Cattle Breeders Association sub-unit and Willow Lake Park on the site once occupied by Squire Harrington's mill. The large farm on your right is Hartholm Farm, the home of many champions and the family home of D. Hart whose farm columns were read across Canada.

We are now approaching Huntingford. The church on your left is among the oldest Anglican churches in the county. This church was turned completely around and renovated when the highway was resurfaced and widened a few years ago. Craigowan Golf and Country Club is on the right, making use of one of the first fine homes in Oxford. This house was built prior to 1852 and was known as the Farmer House. Across the Mud Creek Branch and on to Strathallan. This is what is left of a thriving community which moved to the railroad and became known as Hickson which we see as we approach the corner which is the junction of Highways 97 and 59.

Hickson

Hickson possesses a modern milk plant and turnip (rutabaga) storage plant. You are now into the rutabago country. More turnips are grown in this section of Oxford County than anywhere else in Ontario. Early turnips will soon be planted and you may see fields ridged up for this purpose. As we leave the English section of Zorra we enter the German country. This is clearly visible by the larger bank barns with their overshots

Pioneer Settlers Came to this Area From Many Countries of Old World - cont.

Hickson - cont.

which supply shelter for cattle on bad days. These also help to keep the stables cool on hot days as well as protection from the winter winds. These early settlers were great believers in feeding all that they grew and therefore needed barns Trinity Anglican Church on the right was originally a mission of Huntingford Church.

We are now approaching Tavistock as we cross the Thames River and keep right. Here we see more of Oxford's famous orchards. In Tavistock we find a community which carries a fine German tradition. Its shops are well worth a visit. One of the outstanding sights of this town is actually just over the border line in Perth County at Sebastapol the latter is considered part of Tavistock. Here we find the old Lutheran Church with a clock in the belfry. If you care to visit the cemetery you will notice all the older stones are inscribed in German. One of the extra features of the day is a Drumhead service put on by the Perth District Boy Scouts on Sunday afternoon. If you have your lunch along, the Tavistock park is an ideal picnic spot. It is located near the flour mills and Memorial Hall off Maria Street.

Rudyville

As we leave Tavistock, we turn right at the cairn on Hope Street passing the Fields Woolen Mills which have been in operation since 1877 under this name. It is on the left while "Rudyville" is on the right. This is the home of Reeve Robert Rudy, well-known Oxford County Council member. Two miles out this road at Road 16 of East Zorra we see the barn of Oscar Leis, here we turn right for Cassel. Much is to be seen along this road including many fine farms, each with their different type of architecture. The large church on your left is one of the few Amish Churches in Oxford. These are the more modern Amish who drive cars and are much as other Canadians. The typical county church also on your left is the St. Matthews Lutheran Church of East Zorra, dating back to 1954.

It was into this area that Herman Bolbert had purebred Holstein cattle prior to 1896 and from whose herd the famous Posch family had its beginning.

At the crossroads of Cassel we see logs being cut into squared timber and

Pioneer Settlers Came to this Area From Many Countries of Old World - cont.

"Rudyville" - cont.

and finished lumber. Turn left here past the Cassel Cheese and Butter Factory and proceed to the end of the road and turn right. Here you will see a series of woodlots, the ones on your right are as nature intended them with a mass of undergrowth while the one on the left is a sugar bush. Notice the clean floor and sugar shanty. At the second road turn left for Ratho. Keep an eye out for a large two-storey, stone house, one of the largest stone houses in Oxford. It is the residence of Percy Zinn. As we approach Ratho the little cement building on the right is the Community hall. Note the sky light on the house at the corner. This is Lower Town. Upper Town is at the railroad to your left. Turn right at the church corner and proceed to Highway 97 turning left here for Bright (some construction along here). Note the fine stone houses also the large brick homes and ornamental trim.

Take a drive around Bright, typical village, then take road 22 for Chesterfield (New Hamburg Road) past Bright cheese factory to Chesterfield Church. Turn right at concession 13 Blandford. Bad hill so drive slowly. On your left is Blink Bonnie school and as you enter Plattsville you pass over a plank bridge which is rather unusual in Oxford. Notice the mill on your left with the water power. This is on the Nith River. Plattsville is the home of the Canada Sand Paper Co. whose modern plant and office is on your left. Visit the other sections of the village. As we leave, we pass the main office of Canada Sand Paper and continue out on Highway 97. Note the change in countryside. The land is more rolling and the farms are changing. Here we find beef cattle replacing dairy cattle and many fine buildings.

Washington

As we approach Washington we recall the Community Farm of the Brethren. If you wish to see this farm turn right at the main intersection, go to the first crossroad turn right and it is on your left. At Washington a rather unusual sight is the way the name is painted on the school on your right. On your right you will notice a large brick house with five chimneys. This is a result of an experiment in immigration carried out by Arthur Mills. This house was built in 1870. The scenery from this



Pioneer Settlers Came to this Area from Many Countries of Old World - cont.

Washington - cont.

area equals any to be found especially in the fall when the trees are in color. Note the large fields and the number of rail fences, also fine herds of beef cattle.

At the county boundary (it is marked) turn right, proceed to Highway 401 and cross over turning right immediately at 11th of Blenheim. You are now entering fisherman's paradise. Drive slowly as the road is winding and there are narrow bridges. At the second road turn right. Here you will find that you are now entering the tobacco growing area and with it reforestration projects. There is a bad hill on this road (which is marked) as you cross the bridge you see Wolverton Mountain. Little has changed here over the years so why not park your car and stretch your legs. The silos are all that is left of the mill but further down the street is Wolverton House and the Baptist Church. Around the corner is another fine old house. The old cider mill across the corner. Notice the river as it winds through here. A little too far to walk but along this road and to your right is the cemetery. Re-trace your route back over the bridge and up the hill to the first turn on your right where we turn for Drumbo. Keep right at the "Y" in the road, over the new bridge and proceed to Drumbo.

Even though Drumbo was once practically destroyed by fire it still contains many buildings of interest. After viewing the village turn left past the war memorial to Princeton. This road is paved but has several sharp curves so drive carefully. From this road you will see several large woodlots which help to make this area a good farming area. Entering Princeton turn right at the corner and see the old red barn that served as the village hall and one of the oldest buildings left, also the fine collection of birds belonging to R. Rumble. They are in pens to the right of the old building. Proceed to Highway 2, turn right to the Princeton cemetery to see the Horner Plaque and Benwell's grave. The latter is marked by the light colored stone the shape of a coffin.

Gobles

Another bridge is being replaced here. The change is to tobacco farming. At Gobles we see Oxford's oil wells working. The fire is gas being burned

Pioneer Settlers Came to this Area from Many Countries of Old World - cont.

Gobles - cont.

off. The village of Eastwood is next with the Anglican Church which the Vansittarts attended on your left. Proceed past 410 after the Ontario Provincial Police office, turn right at first corner for Innerkip. Follow this road but watch for turn and railway crossing. Cross over tracks and proceed to Innerkip on paved road. There is a large commercial strawberry patch on your left. At Innerkip the quarries are a must. They appear on your right. While there visit the village. Retrace your route out of Innerkip past the Esso station and take first turn on your right (do not cross the bridge and railroad). As you travel this road you get a good view of the north side of Woodstock. That large house on your right as you near the 13th is now occupied by a Chinese farmer but at one time served as a training school for English boys learning farming in Canada. At concession 13 turn left into Woodstock. This road is narrow so drive with caution. This is part of the city's residential area. At Devonshire turn right to Riddell past the General Hospital. Turn right at stop sign and left at Graham. As we near the main business section we see the new Salvation Army Citadel and the new Public Utility Office. Here we are home again. The Town Hall is on your left but a left turn is not permitted.

Distance approximately 75 miles. Time three and a half hours plus time for sightseeing.

For our third trip we are going up into the Highlands of Zorra and into East Nissouri where the Scots from the Highlands came to settle and where they replanted a little of the old land in their new found homes along with many Pennsylvania Dutch from the U.S.A.

One of the things that you will notice is the number of stone houses and ornamental stone work. Many of the Scots were stone masons as well as carpenters. The order for a house would be given a year or more ahead. The carpenter would spend the winter building the intricate parts such as the strip around the eaves and porches along with the fancy staircases. The mason would spend a fair amount of time along with the new owner-to-be selecting the proper stones. Each mason had his own pattern. You will notice this in the different way the stones are assembled to form a pattern. The brick houses through the first part of our trip were made mostly from Innerkip brick which are a very hard brick. Some brick were made near Embro but not enough to fill the demand. Later in the trip, are houses of brick from Harrington and Thamesford. The bricks for the Anglican Church at Lakeside were made right on the spot as a brickyard was right next to the church.

#### Fountain

As we arrive at the city hall to start, let's take a look around the square and notice the different types of structure. The Imperial Bank Building is indeed a work of art when you consider the crude tools that they had to work with in comparison to what we have today. Take time out to read the inscription on the fountain. Andrew Pattullo died in 1903 and left \$1,000 for the erection of a fountain in front of the city hall. In 1916 this was fulfilled. He was a great newspaper man as well as an outstanding orator and became one of our leading politicians in the provincial field. As we leave the city hall turn left onto Dundas St. and travel down Dundas St. hill - the hill that caused much grief to the street railway when it operated here. The cars would jump the track going down and if it was slippery they would have trouble getting enough traction to come up on the return trip. At the foot of the hill keep right at the flower garden, proceed out towards the Governor's Road passing under the railroad (CPR) bridge, cross the new bridge and then turn sharp right. As you approach

On Sunday, June 30, the congregation of Knox United Church, Embro, will celebrate the centennial of the opening of the present church.

It was the third building occupied by the early settlers who were followers of the Presbyterian faith and later joined by members of the Methodist church. The first church was known as the "log church" of the seventh line of Zorra, while the second church, which stood in the area of the present war memorial in the village, was known as the Old Kirk.

The official opening took place in Feb. 19, 1863 and over 1400 attended the services, in Gaelic at eleven, followed by a service in English in the afternoon. There was also an evening service.

With Centennial observances set for the weekend of July 1, Embro's Highland Day, a full line of entertainment is planned for those visiting, with a minstrel show being held on the evening of June 29, in the town hall. On Sunday, the morning service at the church will be conducted by Rev. H. C. Benson, with Dr. Ernest Long, secretary of the General Council of the United Church, delivering the message. In the evening, Rev. O. G. Taylor, who was minister in the church from 1943-1950 will conduct the service, and the message will be by Rev. F. H. Yardley, minister from 1950-1954, but now of Sarnia.

Following the morning service, a luncheon will be served, and in the evening refreshments will be provided following the service.

#### Organized in 1830

In Zorra, about the year 1830, the Presbyterian settlers in this district came together and erected on lot 9, concession 7, West Zorra, a building which is still recalled as the "Log Church". Although this old structure has disappeared there is a well kept cemetery which is still used by many of the older families. It now contains a replica of the first church.

As the number of settlers increased a larger building was necessary, and a frame building was erected in Embro in the year 1836. This then became the mother church of Presbyterianism in the London district. There was no Presbyterian church in the village of London and settlers would come to Embro from as far away as McWilliams township to attend communion services here. They also came down out of the Queen Bush county as well as from all of Oxford County. It was through these communion meetings that many of the Presbyterian churches were founded.



Many Will Join Embro Congregation for Special Anniversary Observances - cont.

Organized in 1830 - cont.

This church building was used for 20 years before it was to become too small for its congregation and steps were taken to obtain more land for a bigger, better church. At the congregational meeting of 1855 a committee was appointed to look up a site for a new church. William Oliver was chairman of the committee which brought in a report at the annual meeting held in the church on January 3, 1856. Although the report is not given in the official minutes, the next order of business recorded is a resolution accepting the site offered by Donald Matheson, and where the building was afterwards erected.

The deed was dated February 26, 1857, and the land was a free gift from Mr. Matheson to the trustees of the Presbyterian congregation of Knox Church in Embro, belonging to and adhering to the body of Christians called the Presbyterian Church of Canada. The names mentioned in the deed were: William McKay, Donald Clark, Donald Campbell, Alexander Murray, James Adam, William Sutherland and Alexander McCorquodale.

The names of the committee appointed to prepare the deed were: Angus Munro, Alexander Clark, Donald McLeod, John McKay (Elder), Donald Matheson and J. M. Ross. At the congregational meeting of January 8, 1857, this form of deed was adopted. The building committee reported progress and stated that the amount subscribed towards the erection of the new church was 1,450 pounds or about \$6,000.

Short in Funds

The plans for the new church were received and found satisfactory but from the records it would appear that the subscriptions were not sufficient to complete the building and not much was done until the annual meeting of 1861. At this meeting it was decided to proceed with the building and the following were named to the building committee: Donald Matheson, Donald McLeod, Donald Sutherland, D. R. McPherson, William McKay, William McKay (Deacon), James Sutherland, James Mann, Alex McCorquodale and Alex McKay (eighth line). This committee elected D. R. McPherson chairman and James Mann secretary and Charles McDonald treasurer.

On March 4, a meeting of the congregation was held and the church plans were agreed upon and the building committee ordered to proceed with the work.

On May 10 a number of contracts were awarded. The corner stone was laid on January 20.

This ceremony took place on Thursday, June 20, 1861. It was conducted by Rev. D. McKenzie, pastor of the congregation, who also placed the corner

Many Will Join Embro Congregation for Special Anniversary Observances - cont.

Short in Funds - cont.

stone in its resting place. Within the stone, in a space created for the purpose, was a glass bottle containing a writing showing the names of the pastor, elders, deacons, church building committee and the trustees. There were also copies of the Montreal Witness, the Toronto Globe and the Embro Review, together with a number of pieces of the current coinage of the day. The ceremony being thus far complete, the assembly was requested to retire to the church so as to escape the oppressive and scorching heat of the day. The Rev. Straith Smith of Ingersoll delivered a very excellent and impressive address.

The opening of the church took place on Thursday, Feb. 19, 1863. The weather was disagreeable with a steady drizzle falling but in spite of the bad weather a large number turned out, filling all available shelter with their horses and the streets were literally lined with sleighs. Long before the opening of services, the church building was filled to capacity.

The service began at 11 o'clock with a brief and fervent prayer by Rev. D. McKenzie, who was followed by Rev. William Meldrum of Harrington. A sermon was preached by Rev. J. Fraser of Thamesford on Psalm 67 v1. The service was conducted in Gaelic.

The afternoon service was conducted in English when Rev. J. Scott of London delivered an address based on Isaiah, chapter 33 v 15 and 17. The day was completed with an evening service. It was estimated that 1,400 attended the service.

Interior Changes

The interior of the church has been changed since its building. The tall Presbyterian type pulpit was at the front of the church and on an even level with the balcony. The communion area was the centre of the church with the long table. At communion all partakers would sit around the table for this service. There was no organ or choir, and all singing was led by a precentor. Gaelic was the mother tongue to most of the original settlers. Therefore the service was originally in Gaelic, but as time went on it was gradually replaced by English. The last service was held in October, 1895, the same year that the session introduced hymn singing into the service. Previous to this only the Psalms were sung. By 1900, great changes had taken place in the church and a general revolution was in order. This brought about the lower pulpit and permanent pews in the centre of the church. In 1900 the first organ was installed. There had been one in the Sunday School since 1893.

Many Will Join Embro Congregation for Special Anniversary Observances - cont.

Interior Changes - cont.

Prior to church union in 1925, the following clergymen ministered here:

Rev. D. McKenzie 1835-1872; Rev. Gustovua Munro 1873-1891; Rev. Gilbert Currie  
Patterson 1872-1907; Rev. James Barker 1907-1910; Rev. Finlay Matheson  
1910-1914; Rev. W. p. Lane 1914-1920.

Following church union, Rev. W. D. McIntosh, 1926-1933; Rev. R. Connor,

1933-1942; Rev. O. G. Taylor, 1943-1950; Rev. F. Yardly, 1950-1954;

Rev. W. J. Maines, 1954-1960. The present minister is Rev. H. C. Benson.

When a community elects a council to carry on the affairs of government it usually abides by council decisions at least until the next election. This was not always so in Oxford County. In 1886, Norwich elected to council George E. Cook, reeve; L. D. Swartout; H. Engmann; William Stroud and D. W. Miller.

Early in the year steps were taken to prepare a bylaw for construction of a town hall. Finally in May, Bylaw No. 129 was prepared and given the necessary readings. It was decided to build on property deeded to the town for a market square but now occupied by the town's newest industry.

This was the first fly in the ointment as the party who donated the land for the market informed council this was to be used solely for a market. Steps were then taken to purchase other property. The property selected at this time was owned by a William Addison. The price paid never was made public at Mr. Addison's request.

This was the second fly in the ointment along with the fact that a number of special meetings were being held by council to push the matter through without the ratepayers knowing what it was all about. In those days a council meeting was a major event of the month and all possible attended. The pace quickened, and by the middle of September three-quarters of the eligible citizens of Norwich had signed a petition stating they opposed the move to spend \$12,000 for a town hall. The vote of council was three to two in favor of proceeding with the building. Council let the contract to Able and Redmond to erect such a building. E. Swartout was to be the architect.

At this point the fat was in the fire and the citizens decided to take legal action to stop the building.

It was through their action that Chief Justice Proudfoot at Osgoode Hall Toronto, passed judgment that would outlaw Bylaw No. 129.

While proceedings were being carried on in Toronto, the citizens used every means possible to show that the village could spend its money to better advantage.

Letters appeared in the newspapers telling of the deplorable condition of the streets, which they stated were no more than a series of mudholes, and that it was unsafe for a lady to drive here carriage on them for fear of being thrown from the carriage.



Court Action Halted Move for Town Hall at Norwich - cont.

Businessmen contended it was causing them to lose trade, as farmers would not come into town unless they really had to.

The situation became so bad that Councilman Swartout decided to take a short holiday in Michigan.

After the ruling was handed down there were a few loose ends to be cleaned up, including a bill for \$105 presented by E. Swartout, the architect. Word got around before the meeting that this bill was to be presented. C. Tidey served a letter on the village clerk stating that if this bill was paid he would be held liable. It had all the earmarks of another court case.

### Woodstock Almost Lost in Bid for County Seat

The following item of interest was recently uncovered in a copy of the Daily Sentinel-Review, dated Nov. 13, 1886.

An occasional correspondent sends us the following -

Dear Sir:

I wonder if Woodstonians know how perilously close they came to being left, when it came to choosing a county seat. It is said that the present site of the village of Norwich was visited with the thought of establishing it there, but some of the property owners objected. They did not want a village as the boys would steal their fruit and trample their grain. That was Woodstock's gain.

To the patriarchs who live to recall these stories of the olden times and who narrate them so vividly, the 40 or 50 years that have intervened are as yesterday when it has passed. One little story worth repeating is this. A young man who came over from across the seas, flush with money, and ambitious to accomplish wonderful things in the new world, wanted a tree that was standing on the banks of the Otter cut down and floated to the mill, not far away.

A neighbor, knowing the man's ignorance of the usual payment for such labor, and of the easy swing of the woodman's axe, agreed to do this work for \$100. Another, anxious to earn an honest dollar (?) offered to do it for a little less. He got the job. Two dollars says my informant, would have been ample pay for the job.

Norwich seems to have thrived astonishingly since the first coming of the railroad in 1876. The population they say has more than doubled. Four hotels all called first class, four churches with settled pastors, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterian and Church of England. The Friends conduct a flourishing Sunday school and expect some day to have a church. A neat looking building is called the Salvation Army "barracks".

The Methodists have a fine new church edifice built since the union of the Canadian and the "ME's" in 1884. The cost of the church and parsonage was \$25,000. The hurricane that recently swept through the U.S. and Canada stopped long enough in Norwich to injure the new church to the extent of \$500. One of the hotels was also seriously damaged. The owner of the fruit evaporator profited by the storm. Thousands and thousands of bushels of

Woodstock Almost Lost in Bid for County Seat - cont.

apples were brought in by farmers and sold at 10 cents a bushel. They had been blown from the trees and spoiled for packing. Those were fortunate whose trees were left standing.

The vinegar works of Norwich are widely known. I am told that they imported 70 cars of cider from New York last summer. "Allens prepared cider" for a summer drink is advertised extensively and the vinegar is sold from Quebec to Winnipeg.

Mr. G.A. Cook, MP for South Oxford has just moved into a spacious \$20,000 residence in Norwich. He has a large woolen mill here employing from 60 to 70 hands. There is a knitting factory that does excellent work at reasonable rates. Its wide awake proprietor finds a steady market for his goods in Montreal and Toronto. He uses the Bronson and the Creelman machines, one Canadian and the other American make.

There is a carriage factory where the best of work is done. There are two flour mills and an oatmeal mill and two saw and planing mills. The Bungay Manufacturing Co. has a long list of agricultural implements made in their foundry. Their reliability has been an established fact in Canada for years. The enterprising manager is a son of G.W. Bungay, long resident of New York City, author of "Creed of the Bells" and many other beautiful poems.

There are seven dry goods stores, as many grocery stores, shoe stores, a photograph gallery, at least one good library, three livery stables, blacksmith shops and others too numerous to mention.

Last but far from least, is an excellent newspaper devoted to local interests with no patent inside or outside.

All this stir and enterprise is in a village of less than 2,000 inhabitants. Two or three brick yards near furnish building material that is rapidly being put to its legitimate use. You will perceive that Norwich is coming to the front.

When the forests of Oxford county were being ruthlessly cut down and the land laid bare to the elements the early settlers were quick to realize that if the land was to continue to give them a livelihood, steps would have to be taken to maintain its fertility. In some cases, a cover crop was necessary to keep the light sand land from blowing away. This, together with the fact that Oxford is an inland county meant in those days before the coming of the railroad, that the only way to get produce to market was overland by means of teams and wagon.

To the people living in the Norwich area this meant an overland trip to Ancaster or Hamilton, with the result that the man of the house would be away for more than one day at a time. This was valuable time, especially in the spring, or during harvest season of the year. Faced with these problems it is no wonder that the trend in Oxford from the beginning has been to dairying. It not only called for the need of a cover crop, but also provided ready market for all the crops that they could grow right at home, thus eliminating the need of being away from home for any length of time.

If it ever did become necessary to sell off any of the surplus stock, a market could always be found where new families came in. Then, too, local communities provided a market for beef.

#### Sold Butter

A problem that did arise however, was what to do with the surplus milk produced by the dairy cows. True, they did not produce the amounts recorded by today's cows, but then again, there was not the population to consume it. It was always possible to sell some of the butter to the local store providing you would take the sale price out in groceries or supplies, a custom followed by most farmers. But an obstacle was that a good many of the town folk kept a cow and thus had their own supply of butter. This meant that the grocer paid a lower price for at times, it would be difficult for him to dispose of the surplus butter.

Such was the situation in 1863 when a certain Harvey Farrington visited Oxford. He had been a cheese maker in Herkimer, N.Y. but was not satisfied



## Norwich Cheese Factory Gave Impetus to Co-ops - cont.

### Sold Butter - cont.

with his lot. He left his family in Herkimer and started to tour Canada looking for a good location to establish a cheese factory. Once he entered Oxford his mind was quickly made up. He had found the place for which he had dreamed. He immediately returned to New York State, disposed of his holdings and in 1864 moved his wife and family to what was then referred to as Norwichville.

Before buying a farm he set up a cheese factory on what is now known as Quaker Street in Norwich township. It was on lot 10, concession 4, that he opened the business. It was not a case of him setting up a factory and buying the milk from the farmers. That would be much too simple. The farmers were a little dubious of this newcomer getting their milk. After all, what proof did they have that he could pay for it.

After much talking and practically offering them the shirt off his back, Farrington finally was able to persuade a few of the neighbors to give it a try. They would supply him with the milk; he would make cheese for them in his factory at a given price for every pound produced. The profit realized from the sale of the cheese would be divided among the farmers according to the amount of milk shipped.

### Beginning of Co-ops

This was the beginning of what was to be known as the co-operative cheese factory movement that later spread through the country and replaced most of the privately owned factories. This was not the first cheese to be made in Oxford, as many of the farmers' wives who had migrated from the United States, knew the art of making cheese, but only on a small scale. A farmers' cheese press may be seen today in the Norwich Pioneer Society's museum on the second floor of the Norwich Post Office which is open each Saturday.

Farrington was going to need help to make cheese, so he decided that it would be to his advantage to train farmer children in the art. This would serve two purposes. By using local people, it would help to create an interest in cheese; secondly, if a farmer had a son making cheese, he would

Norwich Cheese Factory Gave Impetus to Co-ops - cont.

Beginning of Co-ops - cont.

feel that the chances of being a loser would be reduced. The idea soon caught on and a steady stream of students served their time under Farrington. It was so successful that right up until the time when big enterprises took over the small factories, farmers' sons would learn the trade by working in the local cheese factory.

Plants Mushroom

Within a very short time factories started to spring up around the country and Farrington-trained men opened factories at Burgessville, New Durham, East Oxford and in the Gore of Norwich. The cooperative movement gained favor and where Farrington had to plead with the farmers to let him process their milk, it became a case of the farmers looking for a cheese maker to open a factory for them.

True, Farrington was not the only big name in the early cheese industry of Oxford, but it has been considered that he did more than any other one person to get the industry started. For his efforts he was recently named to the Farmers' Hall of Fame at the Ontario Agriculture College, Guelph.

A movement is also under way, through the efforts of the Milk Producers of Ontario, to erect a plaque in honor of Mr. Farrington and the part that he played in establishing the cheese industry in Oxford county one hundred years ago. It is hoped to have the plaque erected on Quaker Street, near the site of his first cheese factory.

It was in 1914 that Ralph Moore of Norwich reached a decision to switch from raising cattle to producing seed for sale. He acted immediately to carry out his proposed plan. He began by disposing of 140 acres of his 160-acre dairy farm, retaining only 20 acres which he held for five years.

From that small beginning the Moore family has expanded its holdings until now they are producing vast amounts of seed on a total of 750 acres in North and South Norwich, Dereham and North Dorchester townships.

It all started during the First World War when mangel seed became scarce due to the fact that Canada imported most of its supply from Europe. The government advised that if the farmers wanted to continue growing mangels they would have to raise their own seed. Ralph Moore was one of the few who did. Before the end of the war a good trade had begun to build up for the home-grown seed proved better than the imported varieties.

Mr. Moore's first crop of mangel seed was grown in 1915 on one and a half acres. The largest acreage was under cultivation during World War II when forty acres produced seed for three successive years and much of this seed went to Russia. It was quite an undertaking as most of the work had to be done by hand and labor was hard to get. Many Norwich district housewives helped with the harvest. About all that could be done by machinery was the actual threshing of the seed. This was done with a combine. Today there are no mangels grown for seed here as it is much more economical to bring the seed in from Europe and besides, very few farmers grown them now.

Mangels were not the only seed crop grown. At least 60 different varieties of garden seeds were distributed across Canada. A common sight in the early spring at the local seed houses was the Moore's Seed van bringing in Cairnlea Farm Seeds for the gardens of the community. These being special crops, there was little machinery available. Therefore it became part of the job to improvise equipment. Much of the machinery that has since become standard equipment was originally designed and built by Ralph Moore. From 1918 through 1956 a modest seed catalogue was issued to customers in North America. UNRRA shipped fourteen tons of Moore seeds to Europe and Asia in 1946. During the years between 1940 and 1956 a gradual changeover was taking place and a new line of seed was introduced. It was spray millet. This was natural as millets had been handled since 1930.

Norwich Seed Firm Has Served 50 Years - cont.

During the Second World War, spray millet, which had been imported chiefly from France, became a scarce article on the pet shop shelves. A man who operated a pet shop in Brantford asked Mr. Moore if he could grow some for him and the first three rows were grown. This eventually became one of the main items in the Moore line. They are both the first and largest commercial growers of spray millet in Canada. There are only two other large growers in Ontario.

Harvesting of spray millet is all done by hand, with workers walking up and down the rows picking off the best heads which are tied together and hung in a drying shed. The chief problem with harvesting this crop is that it must be harvested immediately it is ready. This period usually clashes with the tobacco harvest and the wages are not quite as high as those paid the tobacco harvesters. However, as soon as the tobacco season is over, workers are readily obtained.

Nature also supplied a first class picker for millet in the form of the native birds of Ontario. As the robins flock to the cherry orchard, so do all birds flock to the millet fields. Each year they destroy about ten percent of the crop despite the efforts to frighten them off. Once a bird has eaten part of a millet head, it is not marketable.

In an effort to keep the birds out of the crop, Moores have installed three large compressed air noise-maker cannons in the fields. These are fired automatically every few minutes with a loud report. It does not kill the birds but frightens them away. It is not possible to use killing methods as most birds come under the protecting arm of the law that covers migratory birds.

Spray millet is sold with the seeds still on the heads and either with heads wrapped in cellophane, or in packs of fifty heads to dealers and large breeders. When fed to pets such as budgies it is a special treat. It is far too expensive to be used as a regular bird diet.

Millet is not the only crop being produced by Ralph Moore and Sons. They are growers of such vegetables as asparagus, beets, carrots and rhubarb for processing. Last year they produced 1,329 tons of these crops with a large percentage going to the canning factories. Some asparagus is sold to chain stores and to Oxford residents who drive to the farm to buy it freshly picked.

Hand labor is also a big item with the asparagus and rhubarb crops, while the beet and carrot crops are harvested by machine.



Norwich Seed Firm Has Served 50 Years - cont.

After fifty years in business there have been many changes on the Moore farm but the most noticeable change is in the buildings. When the first plant was started the work was all confined to a small barn which today is still in service plus several others including a two-and-a-half storey frame structure housing the office and working area for preparing the products for market. At the rear of the property is a large millet drying shed measuring about 80 x 80 feet.

The first power seed cleaner built to clean mangel and garden seeds was made available to farmers for cleaning their grain. Moore's thus became the first commercial seed cleaning plant in Oxford County. For some years more grain and grass seeds were cleaned than at any other plant in the County. In 1935 they cleaned 7,000 bushels of grain and 1,400 bushels of grass seed. Today farmers are bringing grain in to be cleaned and are purchasing the clovers and grass seeds sold by the firm.

With the coming of sunny days and cold frosty nights many local farmers start to think about syrup making as a cash crop to help meet the spring demand for money needed for seed and fertilizer for the coming crop season.

Today when one goes to the sugar bush it is a far cry from the days when he was a boy. In those days the equipment consisted chiefly of a hole dug in the ground and the sides banked the ground and the sides banked with stones on which to rest an iron kettle or a large flat tin pan in which all the sap was deposited and boiled until the person in charge thought that it was ready to take off. It was then taken to the house and finished off on the back of the kitchen stove, to the satisfaction of the lady of the house who would then carefully preserve it for the coming year.

It was a happy day when she could bring out a jar of syrup for the threshers and hear them rave over the fine flavor of her syrup. Of course she would always claim that this was not as good as some she had done.

#### Times Change

Today it is a far different story. True the principal is the same but the method has steadily changed. Basswood spiles and wooden buckets have been replaced by metal spikes and today even synthetic plastic has entered into the field.

It is not uncommon to still see the pails hanging on the trees from the spile. But one will also notice in the sugar bush today what at first glance looks as though the kids from the house had come back to the bush and used up all the bailing twine to make rope fences or trails through the bush. On taking a second look one will notice that it is one-quarter inch plastic tubing.

At each tree there will be found a red plastic gadget attached to the tree. This acts as a spile and at the same time allows the sap from the trees farther up the line to pass by on its way to the barrel conveniently placed to catch the sap from a number of trees. When it comes to gathering the sap instead of having to visit each tree the team or tractor is driven to the barrel -- effecting a great saving in both time

Sweet Sap Flowing From Oxford Maples - cont.

Times Change - cont.

and effort.

In the sugar shanty things have progressed, but not as drastically as out in the bush. No longer do we find the old boiling pot. In its place is a fancy factory-made evaporator with a large firepot on which are set three or four pans. As the sap is boiled, it makes the way from the back up to the front where the finished syrup gathers. When it is removed from the fire all that is left for one to do is to cleanse the finished product for the market or for storage in the fruit cellar.

Taffy Pull

If it turns out to be a good year for syrup chances are there will be a taffy pull providing there is any snow. It has always been the highlight of the syrup season for the younger folk to be able to go back to the bush and have dad make you some taffy which he put in the snow to cool off.

From some of the stories told by older folk it seems that this was always a good spot for a couple to become better acquainted as they tried to get the better of the taffy pull. Fifty years later they still argue as man and wife that they got the best of the deal.

Bumper Crop

While many wonder what this year will be like for syrup, Burns Innes of the Harrington area goes out on a limb and declares that by all looks of things it will be a bumper crop. Mr. Innes and his two boys Grant and Edward got things moving last Saturday. The weather was ideal and by Sunday they had to start the fire going as they could not keep ahead of the run.

Each year they set out over 650 buckets but of recent years they have started using the Mapleflow system of gathering with the aid of plastic tubing.

This is not a sudden decision by Mr. Innes. He has been making syrup in this same bush for close to fifty years and claims that it always pays to keep up with the times. Next year they hope to install a bigger evaporator. With the small woodlots disappearing the demand for syrup has increased and there is a ready market for all that can be produced.

In the great names of the Canadian west one will find that of the Rev. James Robertson along with such men as Commissioner A.G. Irvine of the RCMP and Jerry Potts, the immortal guide and interpreter.

Mr. Robertson born in Scotland, moved to Oxford county after the severe winter of 1854 when his father lost his flock of sheep. They settled in East Oxford Township on the outskirts of Woodstock where James was able to finish his education enabling him to get a teacher's certificate.

#### Was Teacher

After getting the certificate it was no trouble to get a school. The one he chose was on the Governors Road and the 10th line of Zorra.

In 1859 he transferred to Innerkip and it was here that he met his wife. He remained here three years, but he was not really happy at his profession. His mind was set on the ministry.

After leaving Innerkip, he went to the University of Toronto three years, then to Princeton University for two years of theology followed by a final year at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

As a student he had distinguished himself in several New York churches where he was offered positions. He turned these down and returned to Oxford where his sweetheart was waiting. He and Mary Ann Cowing were married Sept. 23, 1869.

#### Ordained Minister

In November 1869, he was ordained and inducted into the charge of Norwich which also included two other parishes - southeast Oxford and Windham. His wife later said some of the happiest years of their lives were spent here.

It was here that three of their five children were born. While here, Mr. Robertson became noted for his feats of endurance. There was a time when he was within four miles of the place where he was to attend a meeting when he found the road blocked with running water, ice and logs. The average person would have called off the remainder of the trip but not Mr. Robertson. He simply made arrangements for his wife's accommodation for the night, and then went on to the meeting. He arrived on time and the only inconvenience he encountered, so he declared, was that his bare feet occasionally stuck to the ice.

In 1870, plans were made to open a Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg. The



Oxford Pioneer Played Role in Developing Canada's West - cont.

Ordained Minister - cont.

call went out to the Home Missions to supply a minister as the church grew.

Strange as it may seem to us today only two ministers received the call, one of them Mr. Robertson. There were only two branches of Presbyterian churches in Canada at the time. One in sympathy with established church of Scotland while the other supported the Free Church of Scotland.

Prairie Post

Mr. Robertson agreed to take a charge at Palestine an additional 100 miles west on the prairie in Jan. 1874.

He visited his parishioners regularly despite the western winter. In the course of his visits he loaned his horse to fetch a doctor for a girl seriously ill. He led the planning for the first school in the district and when not doing this he was helping the settlers settle disputes.

He quickly realized that the big need for the West was to attract more women settlers. He wrote to his wife and requested that she try to coax some spinsters West. He contended that a man with a family of girls would be considered a benefactor of the West.

In March, he went back to Winnipeg to report on his charges. The report that he delivered amazed the listeners. In three short months he had gathered enough facts and had firmly gripped the mission situation that he astounded those who had spent years before him without success. By this time the splinter groups of the Presbyterian Church had decided to unite. Mr. Robertson was offered the Knox charge in Winnipeg, which he accepted in October 1874. His wife then went West.

For the next seven years, he met every boat and stage that came into Winnipeg and his wife kept open house for the immigrants.

Mission Chief

In 1881, there were only 21 ordained ministers and 15 catechists in area extending from Kenora to Edmonton, and from the U.S. border to Battleford. When the Assembly met they were asked to appoint a superintendent of missions. The name of James Robertson was proposed at a salary of \$2,000 which would include travelling expenses. With minor changes he accepted. His field was at first 1,000 miles with 1,000 families, a real challenge,

Oxford Pioneer Played Role in Developing Canada's West - cont.

Mission Chief - cont.

but to Robertson all in the line of work. It was in this field that he really established himself with the builders of the West.

Later British Columbia was added to his territory and it all became known as "Robertson's Land", stretching from Fort William to Victoria. His chief aim was to get churches and manses set up on a permanent basis where it would not be necessary to live in makeshift quarters or with the settlers while they strived to get a turf shack up for the minister. These were trying years, and undoubtedly led to his early death in 1902 at age 62.

Headed Fund Drives

He not only did a great job in the West seeing that things got done but he took time off to go east on financial drives to get funds to carry on with. All the funds did not come from the East. It was nothing for him to approach some of the more secured people of the West to support his work.

It was once told that he approached a cabinet minister in B.C. and asked for a contribution. The politician wrote a cheque for \$100, but when Mr. Robertson finished with the man the cheque read \$1,000.

In his 1901 report he told of aiding in the building of 393 churches, 82 manses and 3 school houses to be used as churches or 478 buildings worth about \$574,000.

In the days of the early West it was truly a land that produced many giants and certainly James Robertson was one of them. So great was he that his work inspired another son of Oxford to write up his life, "The life of James Robertson". by Ralph Connor. To this day as one travels through western Canada they will find that his work was appreciated and he still is well remembered as one of "The Giants of the West".

And well may the people of Norwich be proud of the man who left their charge to tackle a task such as this.

In the lower southeast corner of Oxford County there is a section of South Norwich Township whose history rivals that of any other part of Oxford, both in fame and fortune.

Today, this section is a sort of retired section of the county. That is it has had its heyday and now is contented to be just quiet countryside. It is bounded on the north by the Otter River and Springford; on the west by Tillsonburg; south by Middleton, a township of Norfolk County, and on the east by Windham Township of Norfolk County. In this area you will find the general trend is tobacco farming.

It was here at Rosana in 1927 that the first tobacco was grown by a white man in Oxford County. Of course, the Indians of the Neutral Nation grew tobacco crops here prior to 1649. Incidentally, Petun is the Indian name for tobacco and the great tobacco growing tribewas known as the Petun Nation. They lived onthe south side of Lake Huron. While the Neutrals lived here all was peace and quiet.

#### Look Into Past

Instead of looking to the future, let us look into the golden era of the 1800's when there was a sawmill on every creek along with a grist or woollen mill. People did not head for the larger centres to shop. They did what the merchants are trying to get the people to do today, shop at home. Consequently small communities sprang up wherever a store or mill was permanently established. Better still, if the railroad agreed to a station that meant a real metropolis in the making.

This section of South Norwich had all this and more to offer. It was traversed by the two main railways of southwestern Ontario; The Southern Railroad connecting Detroit and Buffalo, and the Port Dover and Stratford line. These two lines made foreign markets just hours away.

It was the opening of these lines that made South Norwich one of the most modern farming areas of Ontario. Stations were opened at Cornell and Hawtrey. Cornell was served by the Southern (now Michigan Central) and Hawtrey was served by both the Southern and Port Dover and Stratford, which became later the Grand Trunk Railroad.

#### Cornell Settled

Cornell was originally settled about 1855 by two brothers, John and Samuel Cornell. They laid out Lot 15, Concession 10 in village lots calling it Cornell. Here they also built a store, a warehouse and a meat packing

Southeast Oxford Countryside Once Bustling Section - cont.

Cornell Settled - cont.

plant on the northwest corner of the road intersection.

For many years Cornell was the central grain, egg and pork market for miles around. The Cornell brothers would send out wagons to collect the produce from as far west as St. Thomas and as far east as Port Dover. Grain and hogs would be brought here and to be sold and the hogs would be processed with the finished products going by wagon to Woodstock and Brantford, some even were sent to New York.

By 1870 the railway bug had taken hold of the country and received full support of township councils. In 1872 ties were laid through Cornell and the station opened.

Hotels, Shops Open

This appeared to be the turning point of Cornell becoming a city of South Oxford. John Wood built a hotel, John Clum started a shoe repair shop. Dan McCormich had a blacksmith and carriage shop. The school was improved. There was a Church of the Messiah and a Baptist Church. To accommodate the traveling public, a second hotel was opened by Dennis Hicks. John Sutherland built a large sawmill on the banks of the Otter Creek which flows through the town.

The future of the community seemed secure but the hand of fate had the final word. With the death of John Cornell, sales fell off and were lost to competitors. Then the store, which also served as a bank was robbed causing great loss to the farmers. Fire destroyed the store, warehouse and pork factory. Samuel Cornell and his company rebuilt, but the loss was too great. The company went bankrupt. The new buildings of



Southeast Oxford Countryside Once Bustling Section - cont.

Hotels, Shops Open - cont.

brick were torn down and sold.

With the future in doubt for Cornell and most of the prime timber removed, the sawmills moved to greener pastures to be followed by the hotels and buildings. The old Hicks hotel ended up in Tillsonburg as did the Messiah Church.

This was a hard blow to South Norwich as Cornell appeared to be the jewel in the crown.

Hawtreys Growth Told

Hawtreys did not become such a boom town. Instead it became a shopping and shipping centre like many other communities along a railway line.

George Southwick moved to Hawtreys in 1843 and started a sawmill later branching into the shingle and planing mill. Mr. Southwick also built the first two stores. Being a keen business head, he realized the advantage of the railroad and built one store near each line. The frame one along the Southern Railroad burned, but the brick one has stood the passing of time.

Hawtreys had Dr. Carder, who was among the first settlers to arrive, and in 1873 John Seatler opened a drug store at the corner of the 10th Concession.

Another of Mr. Southwick's enterprises was a public hall which served the community for all social, religious and political events.

Henry Southwick had a hotel as did John Armstrong. The latter was built along the Southern Railroad to cater to the travelling public.

Fire destroyed the frame store and later the school, but the village held on. It was not until the Grand Trunk closed its line and cut off an important source of revenue for area farmers who shipped milk to Toronto, that Hawtreys began to realize it was not destined to be a metropolis, but instead a crossroad hamlet to serve local residents.

River Important

Not all communities were along the railroad. The Otter River played an important part in the lives of early settlers. Consequently communities sprang up all along its banks where good mill sites were available. These communities never became threats to Tillsonburg or Otterville but they did

Southeast Oxford Countryside Once Bustling Section - cont.

River Important - cont.

play an important part in the life of South Norwich.

One of these communities was known as Milldale. It was first settled by William Potter Barker who settled in 1822 from the U.S.A. and started the Red Mills which were for both flour and lumber. He gave the Quakers their meeting hall. His son James Barker was the head of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in this area.

James had a son who became head of the department of medicine at John Hopkins University. He was Dr. Llewellyn Barker. In 1838 N.B. Bowman took over and operated the mills under the trade name Eureka Mills.

Though it never contained many families the community did offer a variety of services such as a sawmill, flour and grist mill, cider mill and a pump factory. Old age and high water wrecked the dam here which was the death knell to another community along the Otter.

Rock Mills Survives

While Milldale has failed to win the battle of the elements along the river, the community of Rock Mills has been able to withstand the endless onslaught to become our only survivor still able to carry on where others failed.

David Stover first settled south of Springford in 1826. It was not until September 1854, that he received the crown deed for 100 acres on Lot 22, concession 11 of South Norwich for 100 pounds. In 1857, Adam Spencer purchased the property which included the first dam, grist and sawmill. He was responsible for the community being called Spencerville. After his death it was taken over by John and Phoebe Rock - Mrs. Phoebe Rock being a Spencer. To this day it has continued to operate but is now known as Rock Mills.

We have talked about the railroad communities and the Otter River communities.

We must not forget the small communities that sprang up along the wagon trails. The one most is Rosanna. While Cornell and Milldale have disappeared from the official maps of Oxford, Rosanna still appears and is well remembered by the oldest residents in the south of the county.

By 1860 some 30 farms had been taken up south of the Otter River in South Norwich by such people as Joseph Graham, Robert Graham, John Willis, Pettenger Brothers, William and Charles Patterson, George Sitzler, William

Southeast Oxford Countryside Once Bustling Section - cont.

Rock Mills Survives - cont.

Almost, the Johnsons, Gerhart, Leflers, Kennedy, Stephenson, Walker, Firby and Patits, to name but a few.

Education Problem

Until 1864 the task of educating the children was a hard one. It was necessary for students to cross the Otter River and go to school at Cornell. After much deliberation it was finally decided to open a second school. This was to be located on Lot 18, Concession 11.

The 11th Concession at this time was no more than a trail through the bush following the path of least resistance. In 1869 the road was surveyed and straightened out. At the west end, the new road was one half mile north of the old road, and south of the old road at the east end. This meant lots had to be rearranged and consequently the school had to be moved. This happened in the winter and the building was set on blocks. In the spring the blocks settled and so did the school which almost upset causing a quick evacuation by the students and the teacher.

The old school lasted until 1895 when a new school was erected for \$870. The total cost of the school and equipment amounting to \$1,300. But not only a school existed here. Area residents were members of the Free Methodist faith.

The town of Ingersoll has a background of historic pioneer lore and it has advanced from the early settlement days in a progressive manner. Settlement took place slowly until 1800 and after the second decade the village was well established. It was called Charles until 1817. Thomas Ingersoll who originally came from Massachusetts, to open up the township by supplying at least forty settlers and to construct a road from Burford to the Thames River. The settlers were each to get two hundred acres of land at a cost of six pence per acre. The Indian chief, Joseph Brant, was the one who helped him find settlement.

#### Log Cabin

Thomas Ingersoll's own log cabin was built about the centre of what is now Ingersoll's main street, which was the original path of the Indians. His son James, was the first white child born in the area. This son later became a member of Parliament and he named the town Thames, in memory of his father. In 1805 James Burdick constructed a small mill on the outskirts of Ingersoll, but in 1814 General Arthur Westbrook, destroyed it by fire when McCarthy's raiders swept up from Michigan. Strangely, Westbrook owned the mill so, really he was burning his own property.

The second flour mill was built on Ingersoll Creek on King Street at the entrance of present day Memorial Park. This mill served the people from 1820 to 1833.

That year another mill was built on Mill and Water Street where it received its water from a canal. This mill, built by J.B. Benson, was destroyed by fire in 1934.

#### First Post Office

The first Post Office in Ingersoll was built in 1821 and opened in January 1822, with the appointment of Charles Ingersoll to the position as post master.

As Ingersoll grew from the early 1800's, the water power of the Thames and transportation facilities shaped its industry. Old engravings showed the Ingersoll Packing Company at the height of its production.



Ingersoll's Golden Past Wins Contest's 1st Prize - (cont.

First Post Office - (cont.

The woollen mill stood at the corner of Mutual and Charles Street. The mills location was next to the site of a modern knitting mill operated by Shelby Knitwear.

In 1827, Ingersoll's population was approximately 150 people, and in 1841 it was over 1,000. In 1851 it was 1,190; and in 1861, the census showed 2,576. It was during that decade that Ingersoll had a tremendous drain on its population. By 1919 the population was 5,000.

Inland Road

In 1849 there was enough traffic coming down from the inland centres that a road was built linking Ingersoll and Tillsonburg with Port Burwell. The road was to be 31 miles long with 16 miles in Oxford County. Parts of the road were to be gravel but the low sections were to be plank. The average cost of the gravel section was 276 pounds per mile, while the plank section was 300 pounds per mile. There were eight toll gates along the route.

In Ingersoll there was only one stage robbery. It happened between Ingersoll and Woodstock on the old stage road. It happened when an army major and his batman were taking a payroll to London. The stage was stopped and robbed. The money never did turn up. A story is told of several farmers who were later able to pay off the mortgage on their farms and it was all paid in gold.

Incorporated 1852

This vigorous community petitioned the government for the status of an organized municipality in 1851 and a proclamation dated September 12 of that year set up Ingersoll as an incorporated village. The proclamation stated that the new legislation was to take effect on January 1, 1852. The end of villagehood was reached in 1864, when Ingersoll attained the status of a town. In time it has continued to advance, and through its manufactured products, as well as those of the rich farming district by which it is surrounded, soon was accorded recognition on world markets, notably for bacon, cheese, and apples which were exported in tremendous quantities.

Ingersoll's Golden Past Wins Contest's 1st Prize - (cont.

The Cheese

Ingersoll was long known as the "hub" of the cheese industry in western Ontario, and it also was the birth-place of the Western Ontario Dairy-men's Association, which annually held conventions in the town hall, attended by prominent dairymen from all parts of Canada and frequently from the United States.

In 1870 in Ingersoll three dams gave way, creating much property damage, but there was no loss of life.

In 1887 the King's Dam burst and claimed five lives. The dam held back a body of water covering almost twenty acres. With the dam, a portion of the mill building, a frame terrace consisting of four dwellings, and hundreds of cords of cordwood were lost.

Industry

In 1887 John Morrow came to Ingersoll from London, Ontario with five men, and established a small machine factory, the John Morrow Screw Company, engaged principally in the manufacturing of set and cap screws.

It was not until 1914 that Ernest Wilson founded the Ingersoll Machine Co. to produce munitions for the armed forces overseas. After the war, the company continued to grow and in 1920 it was re-organized and given the name it is known by today, the Ingersoll Machine and Tool Co.

Thomas Ingersoll's registry office used to be where Joanne Beauty Parlors and Riddell Meat Market are today.

This is only a small part of all the historic events that have taken place in Ingersoll.

Beachville is a small village between Woodstock and Ingersoll with a most interesting history. It started in the late 1700's when the first settler, John Carroll, from New Jersey selected a site on the north side of the Thames, on what are now known as lots 23 and 24.

There were nine sons, and one daughter in the Carroll family, who contributed much to the founding and development of the country. At the age of 102, John Carroll died, and his body is found in Harris Cemetery, Ingersoll.

Beachville was named after a Mr. Beach, operator of the first grist mill, and by 1791 there was a considerable settlement at Beachville.

#### Between Two

Beachville, although it was the first settlement of the country was accompanied by a community on either side of it, called "Oxford on the Thames", and later as a postal centre called "Ingersoll". On the other side of Beachville was Oxford -- a village first settled by Zacharias Burtch in 1798, which later became known as Woodstock.

Governor John Graves Simcoe passed through on his way to Detroit in 1792, plotting town plots, and bestowing English names on the little colony he was founding.

Later these names were to be a beacon light to his fellow countrymen. By 1793 most of the settlers were situated along the river. Settlement extended back from the trail which became known as the Ingersoll Road later on.

Settlers now applied for deeds for their land. The ones who did not, later found that the land belonged to the Crown, so they had to move. They were dispossessed upon being paid the \$5 per acre which was required by the law for the land they had cleared.

#### For Protection

The Oxford Militia was organized in 1798 with one company from Burford district, one from Blenheim with Thomas Horner as captain, and two from Beachville and Ingersoll under Captain Thomas Ingersoll.

That same year, Governor Simcoe was recalled to England and the new governor refused to validate the land grants that had been made to

## Beachville Essay Takes Essay Contest 2nd Prize - cont.

### For Protection - cont.

Ingersoll, Horner and others in Oxford were given two hundred acres squatters deeds like everyone else.

Ingersoll and his family moved, and settled near York, where he died in 1812.

With the withdrawal of Governor Simcoe and Thomas Ingersoll, the settlers received no further aid in improving their roads.

The Oxford Militia was in active service almost constantly during the War of 1812.

Two young lads, hardly big enough to hold muskets, fought through the campaign, and when the army disbanded, got home on foot, begging food and lodging from farmers along the way.

Elections for Oxford County was held at Martin's Tavern, at the corner of the Old Stage Road at Beachville.

General Chewett reported that Oxford contained "the most valuable land in the province" in 1830.

### Soldiers Settled

After the Napoleonic wars in 1833 when the army returned home, many immigrated with their families and retainers to the new land, Canada. Jed Jackson had the contract for carrying mail from Brantford to London, twice a week. He carried it at the average rate of three miles an hour. He carried it along the "Old Stage Road" from which circumstances the road is named.

In 1838 John Downing emigrated to Canada from Clovelly, Devonshire, England, where he had owned lime quarries. Coming to Beachville he found that it was rich in lime, so he started a lime quarry in Beachville which started the lime business today.

He started what is now called "Beachville's million dollar industry", first named the Standard White Lime Company.

The name changed to Gypsum Lime and Alabastine Canada Limited in 1930, and had been renamed again lately.

### Lime Industry

Charles Downing, a son of John Downing started a second venture in 1916, called the Beachville White Lime Company. He sold this plant to the North American Cyanamide Limited in 1929.

Before John Downing started his million dollar project in 183- small, privately owned lime kilns stretched along both sides of the Thames, and



Beachville Essay Takes Essay Contest 2nd Prize - cont.

Lime Industry - cont.

remains of some of the old kilns may be seen yet.

The main part of Beachville developed on the south side of the river in the 1840's. Taverns, stores and businesses of all kinds.

When Arthur Mills set out in 1840 to establish a colony in Washington, Oxford County, for lower class Englishmen, little did he realize that 90 years later a group of people with similar ideas but not just for the lower class, also would settle in the same area.

This is what happened. In 1931, three adults and their children, with deep convictions that mankind could escape many of the ills of the human race by following the teachings of Jesus Christ, formed what is today a thriving community of nearly 100 residents, and they control 1,200 acres of land known as the Community of the Brethren.

In the community's early years it was found necessary to change location. In the depression it was moved to Bremen, Sask. Here members received another family into the community. Later they went to Yarrow, B.C. where the community became a reality, with a total of 21 members. In 1940 they returned to Ontario and eventually settled on the present site one mile south of Washington.

#### All do Share

Once firmly established, they began their undertaking in a way similar to that of an industrial plant with work co-ordinators seeing that all do a fair share of the work if physically able.

Being a communal project we find the idea is carried right into the living quarters. Each family is given private quarters where the members spend their leisure hours. At meal times all meet in the common dining hall with the men sitting on one side and the women on the other. The children eat after their older folk. The meal is prepared in a modern common kitchen similar to that of an average hotel.

Duties of the men are more or less permanent but the women's duties rotate from the kitchen to working in the processing plant. This includes preparing produce for market such as fowl, their specialty being geese, noodles, homemade bread, fruits and vegetables. The community sells goose feathers, down pillows and comforters, all products of their farm. Life on the farm of the Community of the Brethren is not an ordeal. In the eyes of an outsider it would be a pleasure to work on. All heating is done by a central plant which supplies steam heat to all living,

## Oxford Brethren Community Makes Communal Life Thrive - cont.

### All Do Share - cont.

working, and meeting areas. The latest in modern farming equipment is used in preparing the land and harvesting the crop. The noodle plant is one of the most modern of its type, as is the killing plant for poultry. All the commercial undertakings are under strict government health supervision and the products carry the seal of approval.

### Life of Children

Life for the children is no different from any other rural community. A school is operated by the Brethren which follows the regular Ontario curriculum. There are two teachers, one a member of the Community, and one a normal school graduate. Education of the children continues to the eighth grade, when a child may continue his education through correspondence courses. Secondary school education is considered a temptation. It is felt that allowing the teen-age activities would not be fair to them in that these activities are opposite to the way of life followed by the Brethren.

Men are not permitted to use razors. Cosmetics for make-up are not permitted by the women. It is their own belief that when God made man He was pleased with what he saw and today when people change their appearance it is going against the works of the Maker. They have no television, radio or magazines other than farm or educational.

### Three Councils

To conduct affairs of the community, the Brethren actually have three separate councils. The smallest is composed of trustees appointed by the community to act as their voice in legal matters; with some purchasing power, and to see that those who must travel are financially equipped for their journey.

The second group comprises all the baptised men. It deals with larger farm purchases and expenditures and the church affairs.

The third, a sort of a voice of the community, is composed of all baptised members, men and women alike. They deal with general matters, and it is here that everybody shares the burden. It is through sharing the burden that the community spirit is able to prosper.

Brother Orval Bauer, the minister of the community, explains that there

Oxford Brethren Community Makes Communal Life Thrive - cont.

Three Councils - cont.

is no room for pettiness and egotism. "Commercial living means that we must learn to bear one another's problems. People who have lived a life of self-indulgence would find some things here a real trial. The life is one of self-sacrifice and members must turn from their selfish desires".

We expect our pay in Heaven not down here. A man cannot take his worldly goods with him when he dies, therefore it is for the good of all mankind to help your fellow-man as much as you can while you are on this earth. You will receive your reward in Heaven.

The goose-raising enterprise is undoubtedly the largest of their farming enterprises, although beef and dairy cattle are kept, and milk is shipped to the Bright Cheese Factory. All the grain and hay crops raised are used on the farm. Fruits, meats and vegetables for the community are homegrown and any surplus is taken to Kitchener each week, along with home cooking, pillows and comforters filled with down or goosefeathers.

During the last year a new pen was erected for the geese. It is 320 feet long and is divided into pens with a work area in the middle. Everything about this building is done to save needless labor and still benefit the geese.

An automatic control turns on dim lights at dusk or bright lights as the need may be and repeats the process in the morning. Water is kept at a constant temperature suitable for the geese. The feed hoppers are automatically controlled from upstairs so there is feed at all times. Large fans control the temperature and humidity of the air without the human to open or close a window. It is still necessary for one of the Brethren to gather the eggs.

The breeding flock consists of approximately 1,700 birds chiefly of three breeds, Chinese, Embden and Pilgrim, with a few birds of other strains placed in the pens for breeding purposes. The success of the geese enterprise is not wholly due to breeding but to great extent on feeding.

The goose raised here is not a bird entirely free from grease but it



Oxford Brethren Community Makes Communal Life Thrive - cont.

Three Councils - cont.

does contain less grease than other geese. These geese are constant winners at the Royal Winter Fair. Each year close to 20,000 eggs are hatched, many being sold as day olds while a good number are raised for market.

Noodle Business

As a side line, the noodle enterprise is proving very successful. From September to April it supplies work for three of the Brethren and for many of the sisters at a time when work is slack. The noodles that are made here do not compete with those made by larger enterprises. They are of a special type made of egg and flour, not water and flour as are some others. They are marketed chiefly in Toronto and Hamilton, although they can be purchased in Woodstock and Tavistock.

Close at hand to the noodle factory is an up-to-date eviscerating plant. The fowl move along in assembly line fashion coming off the line, cleaned, trimmed and packaged. Some are sold fresh killed while others are frozen and stored in a cold storage room for selling later. Many of the geese are sold at Kitchener while others find their way to the larger centres of central and western Ontario. A product that is in great demand is goose grease for cooking purposes.

As in all places that rely heavily on machines to keep their economy rolling an efficient crew of service men is required. The Community of Brethren are no exception. They are fortunate in having members who are capable of practically any undertaking from replacing a steam boiler in their heating plant to repairing a sagging door. To achieve this position of readiness they have at their disposal a modern machine shop complete with lathe, presses and milling machines along with numerous other machines and tools.

Religious Services

Brother Orval Bauer also fills in as teacher and baby sitter. Religious services are held for the entire community on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings and on Sunday mornings with Sunday school on Sunday afternoon and a singing program on Sunday evening.

When asked for the reason for their success, the answer given is that they are not perfect but are simply striving to do God's will with His help and that if more people would try to do His will the world would be a happier place.

In Oxford's short history, a number of sons and daughters have brought fame to the county.

One of them bore the title "The Cheese Poet", a title no other person ever has been able to claim.

The cheese poet was James McIntyre of Ingersoll. The title was given to him for the great number of odes to cheese and the cheese industry that he wrote.

James McIntyre was born in Forres Morrayshire, Scotland, in 1827. He left home at an early age to follow the paths of an older playmate, Donald Alexander Smith, who later became Lord Strathcona of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Smith started out with the Hudson's Bay Co. but not so McIntyre. His early life in Canada is lost to us but when he was past 60 he wrote of his early life in a poem:

Our first Canadian job when boy  
In the big woods we did enjoy.  
Large maple bush we did tap  
And to camp carried maple sap.  
Of old we thought our neck was broke  
By having on it a neckyoke  
And on each side a heavy pail  
Suspended from the yoke by bail

From this we are led to believe he spent his early days in Canadian east and did not follow Smith to the great plains and northern forests. A further glimpse of his early life is given in his poem on land clearing in which he describes how he almost destroyed the cabin when the fire used to burn the brush got out of hand. In other poems he presumably weaves the tale of his early life telling how he worked as a laborer. Good fortune came his way when he was hired by a wealthy farmer who had an only daughter. According to the poem he married the daughter and inherited the farm.

One thing we are sure about - he did marry and eventually did settle in St. Catharines operating a furniture factory, there. This also is preserved in poem.

#### Moved to Ingersoll

Sometime in the late 1850's he and his family moved to Ingersoll where

Cheese Was A Special Dish Oxford Poet Got His Wish - cont.

Moved To Ingersoll - cont.

he operated a furniture factory and was an undertaker. According to the Oxford Gazetteer, 1867, we find James McIntyre firmly established in Ingersoll as a cabinet maker, upholsterer and undertaker. He is looked upon as one of the town's leading business men. He manufactured all types of furniture and caskets, and had a hearse for hire. It was not unusual for a furniture merchant to serve as the local undertaker. But, we do not find any mention of him being engaged in any dealings with cheese.

He served on different committees for the betterment of the town. He was also active in the Masons for 40 years, and the Independent Order of Oddfellows, of which he was a member 50 years. Mr. McIntyre held many high offices in both orders.

Next to lodge work he spent considerable time working for the Reform Party (Liberal) and always considered Thomas D'Arcy McGee one of his best friends. His opinions on politics meant little to his friends in Ingersoll. During one of the many spring floods that swept Ingersoll, his business was destroyed and he was practically ruined financially. His friends rallied to his cause and raised more than \$600 to enable him to start in business again. He was not always so fortunate. In one of his business ventures he ended in bankruptcy.

Began Writing

It was not until he was past 60 that he began to write. This coincided with the great steps being taken in the cheese industry at this time. Naturally with cheese being the topic of the day he had little trouble getting information for his poems.

His first book "Musing on the Banks of the Canadian Thames," was published in 1884. In 1889 he began writing a second book. This one contained more than 100 of his best poems and was published under the title, "Poems of James McIntyre", with a subtitle "Fair Canada is our Theme, Land of Rich Cheese, Milk and Cream". It was published in Ingersoll at the Chronicle office.

The second book appears to have been more popular than the first. It

Cheese Was A Special Dish Oxford Poet Got His Wish - cont.

Began Writing - cont.

contained all the poems on the cheese industry, and presented a complete section under the title of Dairy and Cheese Odes. Along with his poems he also tells the story of the early cheese industry in prose giving all the names of people and places involved in the industry.

One poem deals with Mr. Ranney who was among the first to make cheese in Oxford. He made his cheese at home and managed to win top prize at all the important fairs.

Ranney 1856 Dairy System

Ranney began with just two cows

Which he in winter fed on browse

And now he hath got mighty herds

Numerous as flocks of birds

May he long live our hearts to cheer

This great and useful pioneer

As Ranney's herd increased, he started to teach the art of making cheese.

It was here that many of the hands used in making the mammoth cheese learned the trade.

Factory Plan

In 1864 Harvey Farrington moved from the United States and started a cheese factory at Norwich. This was the beginning of the factory plan of cheese making. He also taught cheese making to his neighbors. Some 200 cheese factories had sprung up in Ontario by 1867. Quebec was the only other province to have a cheese factory.

Farrington 1864 Factory System

The farmers they now all make rich

Since Farrington went to Norwich

And the system first there began

Of making cheese of factory plan

He came from Herkimer County

To Canada he was a bounty

Norwich village moved but slow

Till railways made it quickly grow



Cheese was A Special Dish Oxford Poet Got His Wish - cont.

Farrington 1864 Factory System - cont.

And industries now take root

The townships famous for its fruit

The first ode Mr. McIntyre wrote to cheese was to honour Ranney and his prize winning cheese.

Father Ranney the Cheese Pioneer

When father Ranney left the States

In Canada to try his fate

He settled down in Dereham

There no dairyman lived near him

He was the first there to squeeze

His cows milk into good cheese

And at the provincial shows

His famed cheese was all the go

This ode carries on for seven verses telling about the different cheese factories within a day's drive by horse from Ingersoll.

In other odes he tells about the proper way to make cheese, how to feed cattle, about windmills and stone stables, also about using cheese curd for bait when fishing.

In other sections of his book, "Poems by James McIntyre", you will find poems dealing with anything from agriculture implements, church union, Indians, Penwell murder, poems to please a boy, Robert Gourley, the Lord Strathcona Horse Regiment, and patriotic poems. But the poem that was his crowning glory was:

The Ode to the Mammoth Cheese

We have seen thee queen of cheese

Lying quietly at your ease

Gently fanned by the evening breeze

Thy fair form no flies dare seize.

All gaily dressed, soon you will go

To the great provincial show

To be admired by many a beau

In the city of Toronto

Cheese was A Special Dish Oxford Poet Got His Wish - cont.

The Ode to the Mammoth Cheese - cont.

Cows numerous as a swarm of bees  
Or as the leaves upon a tree  
It did require to make thee please  
And stand unrivalled queen of cheese  
May you not receive a scaras  
We have heard that Mr. Harris  
Intends to send you off as far as  
The great world's show at Paris  
Of the youth; beware of these  
For some of them might rudely squeeze  
And bite your cheek, the songs of glee  
We would not sing, Oh! queen of cheese  
We'ret though suspended from balloon  
You'd cast a shade even at noon  
Folk would think it was the moon  
About to fall and crush them soon.

This ode was written after the cheese makers of Ingersoll district had joined together to make one cheese weighing 7,000 pounds. It was the largest ever made at that time. Later a larger one was made at Perth, Ont., but Oxford always has claimed the title of the Home of the Mammoth Cheese. A plaque commemorates it outside of Ingersoll.

In July all of Canada will honour Harvey Farrington and his first cheese factory at Norwich.

James McIntyre lived in Ingersoll until his death in 1906. Many oldtimers recall him sitting in a rocking chair in his store located where the P.T. Walker store is. As the children paraded by the window he would touch his hat to them as a friendly greeting which he offered to all who passed his way.

The "Big Cheese" plaque (a local sore spot and much discussed topic) which has always been hard to find and not much to see when you did find it.

Now it really has local residents and visitors fed up - because no one is able to find it.

Some mouse snatched the Big Cheese.

Or so it seemed until investigation revealed the following.

The plaque, located south of town just east of 19 Highway on 2nd conc. was removed last fall by West Oxford Township Council and sent to Toronto to be restored. It had been severely damaged by vandals who apparently had used it for target practice for their rifles.

There has been no notice put up to let the visitors to the site know what had happened. As a result, they drive around in circles wondering what they are looking for, finally ending by asking local residents to help them locate it.

This was even a standard procedure before the plaque was removed. The Big Cheese had always been hard to find.

Township Reeve, Elmer Karn said there has been no decision by council yet as to where the plaque will be set up or if changes will be made. The council is discussing the possibility of either erecting a replica of the Big Cheese along with the plaque or inscribing the words on the replica. For this they would like to have a piece of property of their own.

The property where the present plaque - now not present because of its absence - is located is not owned by the township.

So if they are going to spend money to make a more beautiful site and a better memento (which everyone would be happy to see) then they would naturally like to own the property, said Mr. Karn. The problem is the present owners would not sell.

Signs still stand on both sides of No. 19 highway reading "Historic Site" The Big Cheese" with an arrow pointing east down the second concession road but from there on lots of luck.

For the benefit of the public (and council) we wish every success in

Missing "Big Cheese" Plaque Cheeses Many - cont.

a quick solution to this much discussed problem of one of our few attractions.

For those readers who might not know what this Big Cheese is all about I shall attempt to slice a little off the past to enlighten them.

The plaque, reads: "Oxford County was the birthplace of the commercial cheese industry in Canada. In 1865, James Harris erected on this site the first cheese factory in the Ingersoll District.

To stimulate interest among foreign buyers a group of Oxford's producers co-operated to manufacture a gigantic cheese here in June 1866. Weighing 7,300 pounds and measuring 21 feet in circumference, it was exhibited at the New York State Fair and in London, England".

Oxford County has long been famous for its dairy products and it is interesting to note, one of first efforts to make products known on the British and American markets was and still is known as the Big Cheese.

In 1863 Harvey Farrington of New York State, who was a cheesemaker by trade and desired a change in his place of living, paid a visit to Oxford County to examine the possibility of establishing a cheese factory.

He was so impressed with what he saw that he returned home and disposed of his business and brought his family to the Norwich area in 1864 and opened a factory about June 10th of the same year. In the first season of operation he made 15 tons of cheese which was sold for shipment to England.

The following year (1865) Hiram Ranney, James Harris, George Galloway and John Adams built factories and they produced 40 tons of cheese for export their first season. It is presumed that a season was the time cattle were on grass as in those days cows yielded little milk when confined to the stable.

In 1866, within two years of the opening of the first factory, plans were underway for an undertaking of great magnitude, the making of the "Big Cheese."

The organization known as the Ingersoll Cheese Manufacturing Company of Oxford County was organized for making the largest and best cheese ever to cross the Atlantic to England to compete with the then long established American factories who had a monopoly on this market.



First Quaker Settlers Came To N. Norwich Area In 1809 - cont.

Lands Seized - cont.

from France with a group of raistocratic emigres, and has prospered in Duchess county, and Peter was able to finance the Noriwhc deal. First families to move were the Peter Lossings, with three sons and two daughters, and the former's stepson, William Hulet. Sears Mott and his wife, with their five sons and one daughter arrived in 1810. In 1855 Moses Mott wrote the following account of the trip of the first settlers:

"My father, Sears Mott, with his wife and family of six children, one girl and five boys, came from the town of Washing, Duchess County, New York, to Canada in June, 1810. He had previously seen Peter Lossing, who had purchased a large trace of land in the township of Norwich in Canada the year before and made arrangements in regard to the time of leaving.

Covered Wagons

"Two other families from Beekham town (Note: Town in New York State was the equivalent of township) came with us as far as Brant County, each of the three families with a covered wagon similar to those often seen about the country used by gypsies.

"We were 21 days on the road, but laid by Sundays and some rainy days. We crossed the Hudson river at Catskill and travelled a rough hilly road over a mile long. The country near the lake was well settled with quite a village near the east end of the bridge and good roads.

"When we came to the Genesee River where the city of Rochester now stands, the country was quite new with very few settlers. A number of men with teams had just come to repair the bridge as we came to it. They said it had been condemned as unsafe and if we drove on it, it would be at our own risk. They also said we had better stop and settle there, that Canada was a cold place with but few white settlers and most of them had squaws for wives. However, after careful examination of the bridge we ventured on, one at a time, and all got safely over. At a short distance they took the teams from the wagons and fed them by the road, there being no house or clearing in sight, the land being oak opening or plains.

"After starting in we met an Indian richly dressed in Indian costume, with much jewelry and wampum about him supposed to be a great man in

An interesting and unusual event will take place on Wednesday, July 8, at the original Quaker burying ground on North Norwich Township, when two plaques will be unveiled. One of the plaques is being erected by the Ontario Historical and Monuments Board, to honor memory of those members of the Society of Friends, more commonly known as Quakers who settled in the North Norwich land, start a migra?????????. ???que is being erected by the Norwich Pioneer Society, in recognition of all the earlier settlers who came to the area, and made their homes here. The Society feels that it is only fitting that all of those gallant old pioneers should be honored in memory.

Influx of the Quakers to North Norwich area began in 1809, after two farmers from Dutchess County, New York, Peter Lossing and his brother-in-law, Peter DeLong, came across the border to attend a Quaker gathering in Prince Edward County. It was while at this meeting the two men learned that there was much land available at only 50 cents an acre in the North Norwich area.

They immediately arranged to purchase a total of 15,000 acres in Norwich township. It was their intention to go back to Dutchess County, and by interesting their neighbors there, and selling them portions of the Norwich land, start a migration to Canada.

Of course, neither of them had seen the land they purchased, but the way they felt about it was that anything would have to be better than the poor terrain around Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York.

#### Lands Seized

After the American Revolution, the wealthy owners of vast farm lands, such as the Livingstones, Roosevelts, and Beekmans, had seized more properties including most of the lands belonging to the loyalist Tories. This hit hard at the small farmer, and some of these, like the Emighs, were extremely annoyed that they were being forced to pay ancient feudal dues.

Under these circumstances, when Lossing and DeLong came back to Dutchess County, and told of their Norwich land purchase, about 50 families decided to make the move to Canada.

Not all of these people were of British ancestry, but they were people who had a belief of fair treatment for everyone, and not just the landed gentry. Peter Lossing was a descendant of Christina Emigh, first white child born in Dutchess County. The Lossing family had come to Albany in 1658 from West Germany via England. Peter DeLong's family had come

First Quaker Settlers Came To N. Norwich Area In 1809 - cont.

Covered Wagons - cont.

his tribe, the first being of that kind we youngsters had ever seen, and it made us keep pretty close to the old folks.

"The country appeared quite new for some distance and roads were bad, but as we came on towards the Niagara River the country was more improved and the roads good. We crossed the river above the Falls at a place then called Black Rock where there is a very strong current. The craft we crossed in was something like a scow with four oars, two men at each, and one man to steer. They started upstream close to the river bank in the eddy and went about half a mile, then turned into the current and pulled their best. But the bear went down stream for a mile or more as fast as a horse would run, before they got through the swift current. It took nearly all day to get the three teams over, one at a time.

"We came along by the Falls and stopped and took a look at them. The road along the bank was good, but when we turned toward where St. Catharines now stands, the roads were horrible nearly all the way to the Grand River. Some small streams had no bridges, others had old rotten ones. Then we were stuck in a mud hole at times and had to be pried out and have a double team pull us through. We saw where a few white people had settled along the road and came across an Indian village or two between Niagara and where we had crossed the Grand River, which we had to ford for there was no bridge or ferry boat.

"A man rode a pony through to guide and the teams followed close behind, the water coming up to the horses' sides some of the way through. We crossed very near where the bridge now stands and put up a little tavern on this side of the river just below where we crossed, kept by a man named Foster, and stayed over Sunday. At that time on the north or northeast side of the river where the city of Brantford now stands were scrub oak plains. A road cut wide enough for teams to pass was all the clearing there was. No kind of building was in sight.

Part Company

"When we started Monday morning we parted company with the other two families, they going toward what was then Long Point where they had some connections. We went through scrub oak plains to John Yeith's an honest Pennsylvania Dutchman living in the township of Burford, about ten miles from where we crossed the Grand River. There were a number of other settlers scattered around Yeith's but none were very near.



First Quaker Settlers Came To N. Norwich Area In 1809 - cont.

Part Company - cont.

"In the fall of the same year (1810) Peter Lossing with his family and his stepson William Hulet came in and stopped at Yeiths which was about twelve miles from the tract which he had purchased all the way a wilderness. Soon after Peter Lossing came, he and his father and their sons went through the woods to locate and commence clearing and building shanties for the men while chopping throughout the winter.

"Father had bought 20 acres of land, the north halves of lot 13 and 14. Concession four, but it was some miles from where Lossing was settling on Lot 8, Concession three, so he took a reserve lot across from Lossings' to settle on, the north half of lot 9, concession four and they were the first settlers in North Norwich.

"That was all in the Fall of 1810. The next fall several families, Lancasters, Cornwells, and Delongs came and in 1812 the Stovers. In 1812 war broke out between England and the United States and continued for three years which retarded the settlers coming from the States a good deal at it was very difficult to cross the lines. My two older brothers were drafted and served some time, Jacob with his musket and Enoch as a teamster. Enoch was present at the Battle of Lundy's Lane and helped carry the dead and wounded from the field of battle. After this war other settlers came in from the States and other countries very fast. My father settled on land belonging to the government, leased for 20 years with a chance to purchase at the expiration of the lease. When father died the lease had not expired. I bought out the heirs and bought the land from the government when it came to market, the farm I now live on. I have since bought also the farm where Peter Lossing settled. During the war there were but few settlers scattered through the woods and plenty of Indians hunting all over the place. Sometimes the settlers felt afraid the Indians might do them injury as we often saw them with their faces painted in streaks of red and black and acting somewhat fierce but they never harmed any settlers of their property in the least probably because there was not whiskey at that time that they could get drunk on.

The Rebellion of 1847-48 disturbed the country a good deal otherwise we have lived in peaceful times.

July 1885 ..... Moses Mott



Now that the Quakers of the Norwich area have been recognized as an important link in Oxford's history by the erection of a plaque in their honor, I think that the next move should be to honor one of their daughters, the former Emily Howard, one of six daughters of Quakers Hannah Howard and Solomon Jennings.

She was not only the first woman medical practitioner in Canada, but was the leader of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada. It was through her untiring efforts until her death in 1903, and the efforts of her daughter, Dr. Augusta Gullen, that on April 12, 1917, royal assent was given a bill which gave women a right to vote in Ontario. The federal franchise was gained May 24, 1918.

Emily Stowe was born in Norwich on May 1, 1831. As a member of the Society of Friends her parents considered her education important. The six daughters all received their early education from their mother. By the time Emily was 15 she was prepared to teach public school. Seven years later in 1853-54 she was engaged to teach at Brantford Central School. She continued to teach there until 1856 when she gave up teaching to become the bride of a carriage maker and a Methodist lay preacher, John Stowe. They made their home at Mount Pleasant where she became the mother of three children, two sons, Frank and John, and one daughter, Augusta. When John Stowe became ill with tuberculosis and was confined to a sanatorium, Emily went back to teaching to support her family but her heart was not in it. She had become interested in the field of medicine and realized the need of more trained doctors when her husband became ill. Also through the Society of Friends she was aware of the fact that the society had founded a Women's Medical College in Pennsylvania in 1850 in keeping with the belief that women should have equality with men.

#### Refused Entry

She first applied for admission to the University of Toronto but was told in no uncertain terms that the doors of the University were not open to women and it was hoped that they would never have the same opportunity as men. This was the turning point. She was now determined that the day would come when this University would have to enroll women. Seeing that she could not gain admission into a Canadian university she applied for

Dr. Emily Stowe of Norwich First Woman MD in Canada - cont.

Refused Entry - cont.

admission into the New York Medical College for Women.

In 1866 Emily graduated. She started her practice in Toronto where she became Canada's first female practicing physician. There was great prejudice against women doctors and the papers carried an endless line of letters to the editors stating that a woman's place was in the home. This open hostility to women taking over a man's job created such a feeling of bitterness that Emily did not receive her license until 14 years after she graduated. On July 15, 1880 Dr. Emily Howard Stowe was officially licensed to practise medicine in Canada. It was a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving in the Stowe household.

Made Speech

Emily was described as "sensible, clever, a woman with vision and a very hard worker". She had proved her sensibleness and cleverness in earning her degree in a difficult field and now she had a vision of a society where women would not be discriminated against.

Here she was alone in a man's profession. She had won the first battle in the fight for equal rights for women. In order to improve her position in this battle she undertook a career in lecturing. She did not confine her lecturing to Toronto but covered a great part of Ontario lecturing at Oshawa, Whitby, Bradford, London, Woodstock and Milton.

Club Formed

Until 1877 she had more or less carried the fight single-handed. That year she travelled to Cleveland to attend a meeting of the American Society for the Advancement of Women. She was greatly inspired by this meeting, and discussed the possibilities of women organizing with Helen Archibald. The result was that on Nov. 3, 1877, a group known as the Toronto Women's Literary Club was formed.

The time was not ripe to call it a suffrage movement as too much public prejudice existed against suffragettes. The aim of the Literary Club was to secure a free interchange of thoughts and feelings upon every subject that pertained to women's higher education including her moral and physical welfare.

Dr. Emily Stowe of Norwich First Woman MD in Canada - cont.

Club Formed - cont.

Dr. Stowe served as president of the club which met each Thursday in members' homes. The club experienced a rapid growth in membership and did obtain some goals. It helped establish better sanitary conditions in factories and stores, and agitated for the removal of some of the evils of the sweat shop. In 1882 under Dr. Stowe a petition was presented to the Legislature for co-education at the University of Toronto. In the session in 1884-85 women were admitted. Another advance was made in 1882 when the Legislature passed a bill allowing unmarried women with property qualifications to vote on municipal bylaws. During this period Dr. Stowe had scored a personal victory. In 1879 her daughter, Augusta, was enrolled in the Toronto School of Medicine, affiliated with the Victoria University at Cobourg. In 1883 Augusta received her degree in medicine. She was the first woman to study and graduate in medicine in Canada.

When she was presented her diploma the whole audience stood up and cheered her for several minutes. Shortly after this Augusta Stowe married Dr. Gullen, a fellow student. They started a joint practice in Toronto. This led to the battle for parliamentary franchise for qualified widows and spinsters along with the municipal franchise for married women. John Waters, MPP for North Middlesex, was the champion for the cause in the Legislature. He proposed his first bill for provincial women suffrage in 1885, claiming that he would introduce such a bill on every session, as long as he was a member. He kept his promise.

Hire Organizer

Jan. 31, 1889, saw the formation of the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement League with Dr. Stowe as president. It remained a strong provincial group in Ontario but received little dominion-wide support. One of its first moves was to send a large deputation to Legislature to try and influence the members, particularly the Cabinet under Sir Oliver Mowat, to support Mr. Water's bill. After hearing a speech delivered by Dr. Stowe, Attorney-General Mowat claimed that while he sympathized with their cause he did not know when their wishes would be granted.

Dr. Emily Stowe of Norwich First Woman MD in Canada - cont.

Hire Organizer - cont.

At this time it was decided to hire an organizer. Mrs. Mary Seymour Howell was selected. Dr. Stowe accompanied her on many of her trips. In 1892 an important advance for the cause was made when women ran for the School Board in Toronto. Dr. Augusta Stowe Gullen was elected for the fourth ward.

Hurt In Accident

On April 30, 1903, the suffrage movement suffered a great loss when Dr. Emily Stowe died. She had been injured in an accident while attending the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 which led to her retirement from active practice. She went to her family island in Muskoka. After his recovery from tuberculosis put her husband through dental college. He died in 1891.

Her daughter carried on in her place and finally in 1917 the long struggle ended with the provincial and municipal enfranchisement in Ontario of all qualified women voters. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia had already voted in favour.

The significance of Dr. Emily Howard Stowe's contribution to the Suffrage movement in Canada is clear. In 1914 a bronze bust of Dr. Stowe was presented to the Toronto City Hall. It would be fitting if Oxford could see fit to honor their daughter in some way in 1964. This information was taken from the Ontario History of December 1962 from an article prepared by Miss J.E. Thompson.



This year all of Canada celebrates with Oxford County the Centennial of the cheese industry.

It was in 1864 that Harvey Farrington started Canada's first cheese factory on lot 10, concession 4, North Norwich township. The road is now known as Quaker St. On the site of the factory a cairn will be dedicated August 22 to commemorate the industry.

Actually, this plant did not produce the first cheese made in Canada. Earlier, cheese was made in the homes and known as cottage craft cheese. According to the 1861 census, Ontario farms produced 2,687,000 pounds of cheese with Oxford producing over 400,000 pounds of the total. Prior to this records indicate that cheese was made almost as soon as the first French settlers brought in a cow. They made a type known as Fromage raffine. It is still made on the Isle of Orleans.

Records of 1764 show the export of cheese from Nova Scotia, while the United Empire Loyalists are credited with introducing cheese making to Ontario.

Great pride was taken in the cottage-made cheese, with keen competition being noted at all exhibitions. The Oxford area men who consistently took the prizes included Hiram Ranney of Salford, H. Pendleton of West Oxford, James Harris of Ingersoll and Adam Smith of Norwich.

Mr. Ranney is credited by many with introducing cheesemaking to Oxford. He arrived from the United States and had two cows. As his herd grew he undertook to teach the girls of the neighboring farms the art of cheese making. It was here that James Harris learned the trade while courting the girl who was to become his wife.

Harvey Farrington was a cheesemaker, in Herkimer County, New York. He was unhappy with the conditions that existed in that county and after taking a trip into Canada decided that Norwich was a good site for a factory. He returned to the United States and sold his business, returning to Canada the following year, to open the Pioneer Cheese Factory. There are reports that two other factories opened the same year but definite proof is not available. The year 1865 saw two other factories operating in the county, - The Harris factory on Harris St. in Ingersoll, and the Galloway factory in West Oxford. The same year the first factory opened in Quebec.

#### Taught The Art

Farrington undertook to teach the art of cheesemaking to all who were interested. His factory being in the midst of the Society of Friends

All Was Not Just "Curds and Whey" in Early Days of Cheese Industry - cont.

Taught the Art - cont.

(Quakers) where women were considered equal to men and not confined to doing housework, so many sons and daughters of these folk took instruction in the trade. By 1867, 36 factories were operated in South Oxford and before long factories were so numerous that it was reported that no farm was more than two miles from a cheese factory.

The progress was not only in Oxford. In 1865 Ketchan Graham opened a factory in the Belleville district while another was started at Athens, also in Eastern Ontario. By 1867 Ontario boasted 235 cheese factories. This rapid increase in the number of factories had its problems, the major one being a market for their product. It was the practice to operate the factories only during the months when the cows were out on pasture, as winter milking was practically unheard of in those days. This meant that the cheese had to be stored during the heat of the summer. This led to a lot of poor cheese. Ingersoll, Belleville and Brockville became the centre of the cheese industry and cheese became known as Ingersoll, Belleville and Brockville depending upon where it was sold. The first cheese was purchased direct from the maker, but in 1873 the first cheese board was started at Ingersoll. Shortly afterwards boards were established at Stratford and Belleville.

The first cheese factory buildings in Western Ontario were usually well built. They did, however, lack facilities for waste disposal and for handling whey. The factories usually included two buildings, one for curing it.

In 1888 Mr. Robertson, first head of the Dairy School wrote that the cost of a cheese factory for 200 cows need not exceed \$1,000 with full equipment. One competent cheesemaker could do all the work of manufacturing. The average returns from a cheese factory for the season would be between 80 cents to 85 cents per 100 lbs. of milk net to the patrons.

Equipment Crude

The first equipment was rather crude but it was practical. This being a new industry utensils had to be improvised until somebody came up with something better. If no large amount of milk was available a wash tub was used to hold it. It was then placed on a stove or by an open fire-

All Was Not Just "Curds and Whey" in Early Days of Cheese Industry - cont.

Equipment Crude - cont.

place. In some cases the curd was placed in a basket. The hoops were of wood and a homemade lever was used to press the cheese. Then came the large vat, which was about the first improvement. The vats were fitted with a heater running underneath the vat. When the cheesemaker cooked the curd, he would place a fire at the end of the vat and hot water from the jacket would circulate under the vat. Steam boilers were developed in 1872-73 and the self-heating vats became obsolete, but the vats, became obsolete, but the vats, together with curd knives and a cheese press, made up the equipment common prior to 1880. A curd mill was introduced about 1880 and the makers started to cheddar the curd.

The first curd stirrers were wooden hay rakes, some of which are still in use today. The first power agitator used to stir the milk as it heated was invented about 1878-80 by J.C. Britnell, and the W. Baird and Son Co. of Woodstock began to make power agitators in 1892. The gang press supplemented the upright press after 1886 and greatly improved the consistency of the cheese.

The curing rooms were usually fairly large as they had to hold an entire season's make of cheese. There were no central warehouses. The rooms had no temperature control and became very hot in the summer and the result was poor quality. After the export trade developed the factories did not hold their cheese but contracted them out. This was about 1890 and then around 1902, experiments were begun to handle old cheese at a temperature of 55-58 degrees and a great improvement was noticeable. Many cheesemakers started to install cold storage rooms, but not without some objections. Ice-cooled storage rooms were installed at Ingersoll in 1886 and in 1867 the CPR put up an ice cooled storage plant there. Another was built at Stratford in 1888. By 1907 mechanical refrigeration was coming into use.

Not a Cure-all

The adoption of modern improvements was not a cure-all for the ills of the cheese industry. Many factories were located along a stream and



All Was Not Just "Curds and Whey" in Early Days of Cheese Industry - cont.

Not a Cure-All

these quickly became polluted from the waste of the factory. Then, too, many of the factories kept hogs to consume the surplus whey, and this created further problems, as the odor from the pig pens did not help the sanitary situation. Things became so bad that in 1924 the Farmers Advocate published a series of stories on the unsanitary conditions existing in cheese factories. The paper opened a "Cheese Factory Improvement" competition which did a lot to improve sanitary conditions.

In September, 1866, a picnic was held at the farm of Jonathon Jarvis about three and a half miles west of Ingersoll on the River Road to celebrate the return of the militia from active service in connection with the Fenian Raids. That year Mr. Jarvis had erected the Maple Leaf cheese factory. A number of men interested in the cheese factories attended the picnic and later met at the Maple Leaf factory and discussed the advisability of holding a convention of dairymen and of effecting a permanent organization to promote the new industry. A meeting was held in the town hall at Ingersoll on July 9, 1867, to arrange for a convention to be held on July 31, August 1, and a committee consisting of Messrs. C.E. Chadwick, J. Nixon, H. Farrington, J. Harris, R. Adamson, C. Banburg and E. York was appointed to carry out details.

On July 31 over 200 dairymen were present. The organization was named the Canadian Dairymen's Association. The problem of finding a market for the output of the rapidly increasing number of cheese factories was uppermost in the minds of the delegates and the appointment of an agent to represent the producers in England was suggested.

The Association aimed at representing the province and proposed to have its center at Ingersoll but representatives from the Belleville district where factory cheesemaking was rapidly developing formed a new organization in 1872 called the Ontario Dairymen's Association, with headquarters in Belleville. These associations applied to the Ontario Government for an annual grant of money but were told that assistance would be given only to one organization and so an amalgamation was effected (at a convention held in Ingersoll) in 1873 under the name The Dairymen's Association of



All Was Not Just "Curds and Whey" In Early Days of Cheese Industry - cont.

Not a Cure-All - cont.

Ontario. An arrangement by which the annual convention should be held in Belleville once in every three years was continued until 1877 when the Belleville interests refused to co-operate further, and the Western Ontario and the Dairymen's Association of Eastern Ontario came into existence. Aloofness between the dairymen of eastern and western Ontario is still evident.

#### First Officers

Ketchan Graham was the first president of the Dairymen's Association of Eastern Ontario and Harford Ashley, Secretary. In 1885 the creamery interests of Ontario organized the Creameries Association of Ontario with Valancey Fuller of Jersey cattle fame as president and Moses Moyer as secretary. All three associations received annual grants from the Ontario government until 1897 when the creamery interest was merged with the other two associations and the names were changed to the Butter and Cheese Association of Western and Eastern Ontario, respectively. The old titles were revived in 1900. During the first two decades of the factory period, the annual convention of these associations were the only agencies for the dissemination of information on any question related to dairying. Cheese-making topics had a prominent place in the discussions. After the mid-eighties, reports of field instructors, provoked discussion and James W. Robertson, then professor of dairying at the OAC: Dr. William Saunders, director, and Dr. Frank T. Shutt, chemist, of the Experimental Farm, Ottawa were regular speakers. About this time Governor Heard of Wisconsin, founder and editor of Heard's Dairyman, became a regular visitor and was probably the most popular speaker who ever came from the United States. Theodore Louis, another Wisconsin visitor, was a speaker with quaint humour and sound common sense.

An example of the rivalry between the two groups is to be seen in the fact that whatever one group did the other would try in an effort to do better. The cheesemakers at Ingersoll decided to make a big cheese for publicity purposes and display it at the New York Fair in 1866. The cheese weighed 7,000 pounds and it was a successful venture. After the friction of 1877 the eastern group was always on the lookout to do one better and this they accomplished. On Dominion Day at Perth, Ontario.

All Was Not Just "Curds and Whey" in Early Days of Cheese Industry - cont.

First Officers - cont.

in 1892 the curd from 12 cheese factories was dumped into a mould made of quarter-inch boiler plate. The finished product was a cheese weighing 22,000 lbs. It was 20 feet in circumference and six feet high. To make this cheese required 207,200 lbs. of milk from 10,000 cows. It became known as "The Canadian Mite" and was shown under glass at the Chicago Worlds Fair for six months under glass and later sent to England and sold. From the very beginning Canadian cheese has always been popular in England. Prior to the second World War, as much as 280,000,000 pounds of cheese were exported to England. Today less than 10 per cent of this amount is exported. The production of cheddar cheese for 1963 was 137 million pounds with 96 per cent of the total coming from Ontario and Quebec. Besides cheddar another 15.5 million pounds of these are produced here mainly Swiss, Tilsit, Camembert and Parmesan. Canadians are now eating more cheese themselves than prior to 1939. The present figures indicate the average Canadian eats eight pounds of cheese per year. This is not an unusual figure as the average in France is 25 lbs. per person. Now that the cheese industry has reached its centennial the question is what does the future hold for it?

Fenian Victim Killed In Action 100 Years Ago - Page 1

Thursday Canada and Oxford County celebrated an anniversary. It was 100 years ago that the country was threatened by an invasion of the Fenians. Two Oxford companies of militia were among those who went to its defence and one brave East Zorra man died.

Who were the Fenians? Following the war between the States, and for a period lasting from 1862 until 1871, a group of hot-headed Irish patriots, dreaming of revenging the true or imagined wrongs their country had endured at the hands of the British decided to attack.

At the close of the War of Secession, this host of desperadoes, too lawless to settle down to the tasks of peace, were let loose on the country. They flocked to the ranks of the Fenian brotherhood with one aim in mind and that was to conquer Canada.

They felt this was the easiest way to get back at Britain, so easy in fact, they had already, in anticipation, parcelled out the choicest lands among themselves. But they didn't reckon with the courage, fighting skill and loyalty of the Canadians.

One of the first actual invasions was scheduled for St. Patrick's Day, 1866, in the Windsor-Detroit area, but it was called off because of bad weather. In any case, the Canadians knew about the proposed raid in advance and all borders were being patrolled.

Threats Shift

For the next few months, the threats of invasion shifted to Eastern Canada and New Brunswick was forced to hurry troops to the borders. The loyalty of the troops in that area is said to have led to the decision by that province to join the confederation.

Playing an important part in the defence of the borders were members of two companies of the 22nd battalion Oxford Rifles. One of the companies had been joined earlier by the Embro and West Zorra Highland Rifle Company and the combined forces were pressed into action.

When the St. Patrick's Day invasion threat first became known, the Embro contingent marched to Beachville and joined up with the militia from Woodstock and Ingersoll. They went by train from there to Windsor and were stationed at Sandwich where they remained on defence duty until late in June.

Fenian Victim Killed In Action 100 Years Ago - cont.

Threats Shift - cont.

While things were pretty well at a standstill in the Windsor area, at the end of May a band of 900 Fenians, under one Colonel O'Neil, crossed from Buffalo to Fort Erie and advanced to destroy the Welland canal.

On June first, a telegram was received in Woodstock asking for reinforcements, "post haste." All that was left was a second company of the Oxford Rifles led by Captain J. W. Nesbitt, great-grandfather of Oxford's MP Wally Nesbitt. This company, just newly formed, had no formal training and had indeed, just received their uniforms a week before on May 24. They were all rural men and when the telegram arrived asking for help, they were back on their farms. Capt. Nesbitt then pulled a "Paul Revere" by hiring a local youth who owned and could blow a bugle. He rode all over the area telling the members of the call to arms.

There is no record of how many actually heard the call and responded, but with what they had, they boarded a train in Woodstock and started out.

Battle Over

Their orders were to join up with another company of soldiers from Goderich at Paris, but after waiting there all night and finding no trace of the Goderich troops, they left early in the morning and arrived in Fort Erie at 10 a. m. only to find out the battle was all over.

Before the arrival of the Oxford men, the Canadian troops had done little to add to the lustre. After a skirmish that lasted for about two hours, they retreated ingloriously, leaving the Fenians masters of the field.

The victory was short lived, however. In a matter of minutes after winning the battle, the Fenians heard there was a regiment of British regular soldiers on the way and without any delay, scuttled back across the border to Buffalo. All that was left was the dead and dying, and among them, was Malcolm McKenzie, a member of the Toronto based Queen's Own Rifles, and a native of East Zorra. The records indicate McKenzie, who was a student at Toronto University and was a member of the student's branch of the Regiment, had been killed by a band of Fenians who had sneaked ashore at Black Rock after being refused permission to board a ship at Buffalo.



Fenian Victim Killed In Action 100 Years Ago - cont.

Top Student

Young McKenzie had been an excellent student under George Strauchan at the Woodstock Grammar School (now the Collegiate) and a clipping from the Woodstock Sentinel of June 10, 1864 had this to say:

"We are glad to learn that our young friend Malcolm McKenzie has just passed a very creditable examination at the Toronto University, standing first in all subjects studied. He was formerly a pupil at the Grammar school and later at the Canadian Literary Institute. The honor conferred on him reflects great credit on those who were instrumental in initiating him in the branches now so fully understood as to secure first honor in all subjects."

McKenzie's room-mate at the university was G. R. Pattulo, another Woodstock youth and later to become owner and publisher of the Sentinel-Review. To Pattulo fell the task of bringing McKenzie's body back to Woodstock.

The funeral was one of the biggest ever to be held in the early days of the area. There were 60 teams of horses in the procession with a Union Jack on each of the horses pulling the hearse. The funeral was attended by four fire companies, all the members of the town and county councils and hundreds of citizens. All stores were closed.

As most of the local military men were away on active service at the time, a Captain Coon, who was described as a retired officer of the Imperial Army, organized a firing squad of pensioners who fired three volleys over the grave. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. W. T. McMullen of Knox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock.

At the June session of the Oxford County council in 1866, a recommendation was made that a suitable monument be erected by council in memory of Malcolm McKenzie and the council pay the expenses of his funeral.

Although there was no difficulty in raising the money for the funeral (\$40.62) the matter of the monument was a little different. By December a special committee appointed to raise the funds by private subscription, reported they were short of their objective by \$322.95.

They asked the county council to supply this amount and were refused. However, in January, 1867, the Hon. George Alexander, MLA for Oxford, went before the council and asked them to approach their constituents to raise the money.

It was reported this was done by getting 10 cents from as many county residents as possible, and in June 1867, the required amount was raised. The monument still stands in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Woodstock.

Fenian Victim Killed In Action 100 Years Ago - cont.

Top Student - cont.

Leonard Coles, Oxford's clerk-treasurer for the past 24 years, who has delved deeply into the history of the county and has supplied much of the background for this article, says the monument is due to get it's first cleaning at the end of this month.

It's interesting to note that although the monument cost only \$689.53 back in 1867, it would cost almost that much to clean it today, and the contractor who is to look after the cleaning told Mr. Coles it could not be built for less than \$20,000 today, and possibly as high as \$30,000.

Although neither one of the rifle companies from Oxford got into action in the Fenian wars, the records indicate the men, particularly the group that went to Fort Erie, had a lot of hardships.

No Food

To begin with, this bunch of big, healthy and usually well-fed farmers had nothing to eat from the time they left Woodstock. In for Erie, with nowhere to sleep, Capt. Nesbitt went to a poolroom and asked if he could billet his men there.

Capt. Nesbitt did not know it then, but the poolroom operator was a Fenian sympathizer and he refused. According to the Captain that was the closest the group ever came to action. He was Irish himself, and with his Irish temper up, he told the poolroom man he might as well give in because they were going to stay anyway. That was that and the men moved in.

Getting back to the Fenians, other raids along the border were easily repulsed and four years later, in 1870, after Confederation was well established, Colonel O'Neil, who had been mentioned earlier, tried to attack Quebec and was beaten back.

The following year he tried it in Manitoba, but by that time Canada and the United States were friendly and U.S. troops followed O'Neil across the border and arrested him. With this, the last Fenian raid ended in a farce.

In recording the history of Oxford one finds many changes have taken place and the way of life of the hardy pioneer is gradually being lost. A few reminders still remain - it may be a log cabin, an early barn or a store. Often by examining a renovated building we will find the mark of the early builder. These signs are often found in a doorway, a window or a cornice all showing signs of a skilled craftsman of another era.

With this in mind I once again invite you to accompany me on another series of trips through Oxford and to enjoy not only the remains of a vanishing era but also the beauty which belongs to Oxford alone along with the present trend of modernization.

For our first trip let us wander through the townships first settled by Samuel Canfield and then down into Quaker country, an area rich in history and beauty.

Leaving Woodstock and its industrial environment on Highway 2 we approach Eastwood, the village created by Admiral Vansittart in the mid 1800's. Be on the lookout for homes built during this period including Bysham Park on your left. This house <sup>was</sup> built by Henry Vansittart about 1851 and is built on the Regency plan similar to Capt. Drew's cottage.

Also note the appearance of roof lanterns which served as a sunroom as well as supplying the necessary light to the attic floor. The quaint little Anglican church is the same church that the Vansittarts worshipped in. The rustle of the bustles caused all present to turn and view the latest styles.

#### On To Muir

Leaving the village by the first road beyond the church proceed with caution to the Burford Road and on to Muir and the Stage Road, a road rich in history, mystery and romance.

Along this road passed the Six Nations Indians before the coming of the white man; Lord John Graves Simcoe, when he made his famous trip overland from Niagara to Windsor; soldiers used this road during the war of 1812. This road takes you into the heart of East Oxford and still follows the path of least resistance. You will notice many fine homes along this road, many of them were built by members of the Vansittart party who took up land here. Also notice the little old school house now boarded up. It was built in 1875. A new one is being built a little further on.

First County Tour Takes In South Area - cont.

On To Muir - cont.

At Oxford Centre we find the resting place of Samuel Canfield, the first white settler in East Oxford and on whose farm the hamlet now stands. Two fine examples of early church architecture are to be found here.

Turning left here we view some of Oxford's grandest scenery as we proceed into the land of the Quakers. Today the name alone remains of the hamlets of Oriel and Beaconsfield but the permanent type homes built by the farmers of this area signify the type of people who settled here.

Watch for the quoined corners on many of the houses, many appearing with different colored bricks, also for gothic windows and fan-shaped transoms.

At Burgessville

Nearing Burgessville we see a scene repeated yearly which adds to the beauty of Oxford. During the latter part of May and early June the many apple orchards are in full bloom and a blanket of blossoms cover the country side. Within the village we see a sign of the passing of time. It is the old railway station which once was a main stop on the Port Dover and Goderich railroad. It served from 1875 - 1941.

Be sure and visit the North Norwich school located just south of the highway at the main intersection, erected in 1961. Compare it with the rural schools seen on your trip.

The first store was opened at Burgessville in 1845 by Nelson Batterton. The following year Edward W. Burgess, for whom the village is named, had the first blacksmith shop. Spend a few moments and enjoy this rural community. Leaving for Norwich on Highway 59 watch for a three-storey farm house on your right after rounding the curve on No. 59 highway. This is Wildwood Farm and has one of the first brick houses built in Norwich township. It is made of bricks made right on the farm and possesses a basement kitchen. It was here that the Rittie Bros. had the first pure-bred herd of Holstein cattle in South Oxford.

When you observe the sign indicating a historic site you are at Quaker Street. Turn right and you are now entering the heart of the Quaker country. Along this road for over 150 years members of the Society of Friends (Quakers) have travelled to meetings and to bury their dead.

The first cemetery is the site of the Lossing farm and the old barn was the first post office building in Norwich.



First County Tour Takes In South Area - cont.

At Burgessville - cont.

Note the small type of tombstones. Take time to read the plaques before you travel on to the old cemetery and site of the first meeting house, along with the cairn for the first co-operative cheese factory in Canada.

Watch for the brick yard, one of two still in operation in Oxford.

Visit Museum

Turn left beyond the cheese cairn and proceed to Norwich. Rest rooms are to be found near the post office. If you visit the village on Saturday be sure and visit the museum upstairs at the post office. It contains many fine relics of yesterday.

Space does not permit us to give all the details about Norwich so just feel free to drive or walk around the village and you will soon realize why Norwich is often referred to as "The showplace of Oxford."

Pay attention to the street names as many are named after people who played an important part in the village or townships history. This also the birth-place of Dr. Emily Stowe, Canada's first woman doctor.

Leaving Norwich we notice an increasing number of tobacco farms -- Otterville, our next stop, is in the heart of the tobacco country. Here are more signs of yesterday. At the railroad crossing we notice a white frame building on our right. It was here that the government troops kept their prisoners during the rebellion of 1837. This area was the hotbed of resistance and the home of Dr. Charles Duncombe, a leader in the rebellion.

If you brought your lunch along, visit the community park or call in for refreshments. Visit the dam and the mill. The mill was built in 1845 and is still operated by water power. Pay attention to the many well kept homes, many of them date back to Confederation.

Straight ahead for Springford, if the store is open call in and view the quaint mail boxes, a style long gone from the larger post offices. Turn left and visit scenic Rock Mills, just beyond the New York Central RR crossing.

Returning by way of Springford take the left fork and you will be seeing the Mennonites as you make your way back towards Holbrook. This is another area famous for its apples. It was in this area that the late U.S.A. President Hervert Hoover's mother came from. Eisenhower's mother came from the Norwich area.

You are now back on Highway 59 heading for Woodstock via Curries. The house sitting at an angle to the road is the old station house used when the hamlet was known as Curries Crossing. The Port Dover and Goderich RR followed the general line of the hydro lines you notice beyond the house.

Having visited the land of the Quakers in Oxford County let us now wend our way this week northward and visit the predominantly German area of Tavistock and the English areas of Bright and Plattsville, stopping off at Wolverton, Drumbo, Princeton and Gobles on our way home.

A good part of this trip will keep us off the main roads of the county. This does not mean that these communities are off the beaten track. All roads in Oxford lead to an interesting place if we take time to enjoy it.

This trip will offer you a chance to study more of the county's early architecture with the old stone houses being most noticeable. Most of them are Random Ashlar style made of selected stones cut to size.

You will also see many different styles of brick and frame homes. Many of these have good examples of the Gothic type of windows, especially in the gables, the unusual transom windows and the fancy woodwork on the verandas and upper balconies.

Leaving by way of Vansittart Avenue we have a chance to see two outstanding homes on your right. The Henderson house built in the Italiante villa style. It is quite noticeable with its square tower. Also the Carbide Wilson Home now the property of the Woodstock Separate School Board. It has been declared an historical site.

#### Oldest House

Following the detours we are soon in open country and can view the progress of the dam, the overpass and the railway. At the Craigowan Golf and Country Club we see the oldest house. It was recorded in 1852 by Shenstone when he prepared the only history of Oxford.

The material for this building was brought from Hamilton by oxen and sled, much of it having come from England in a sailing ship. A mate for this house appears on the opposite side of the road but is hidden by trees.

Be on the watch for a group of houses to the right of the highway. This was once the thriving community of Strathallan when the railroad by-passed it in 1867 Hickson quickly took over and today Strathallan is one of Oxford's ghost towns.

At the junction of Highways 59 and 97 is Hickson, the centre of the rutabaga industry in Zorra. This is the centre of the turnip growing area of Oxford which produces more turnips than any other area in Ontario.

We begin to see the difference in the style of barns. The older barns are considerably bigger and many have overshots over the stable doors. The purpose of these were to protect the doors from the cold winter winds and to help keep the barns cool in summer.

Oxford's German Areas Visited In Second Tour - cont.

Oldest House - cont.

It also provided protection for the stock when they were turned out during bad weather. This type of building is typical of the buildings found in all areas settled by the early Germans, both those coming from Germany and those from Pennsylvania. The closer you get to Tavistock, the more prominent the German influence appears.

Tavistock Opera House

Tavistock is a community with many sights to be seen. Look around for the fountain in the centre of town on the town square, also the old Opera House where Guy Lombardo played on many occasions. On the outskirts of town is Sebastopol, famous for its Lutheran Church with a large lance tower containing a clock with four faces and operated by wooden mechanism.

In the cemetery you will notice tombstones that have the engraving done in German. There are many things to see in Tavistock so drive around on some of the side streets and enjoy it.

Leaving by way of the county road at the cairn opposite the fountain, we pass an unusual industry. The woollen mills, are one of the few woollen mills still using raw wool for the manufacture of socks, etc. Most of their wool comes from New Zealand. At the 16th concession turn right for Cassel.

The large church on your left is the church of the Mennonites, a group often referred to as Church mennonites as they worship in a church while other branches of Mennonites worship in homes or barns. This is a very strong group with an attendance of nearly 600. The group also controls two other churches in the area.

At Cassel we see an open air sawmill with all the mechanism in full view. Turn left here and proceed to the end of the road and turn right. Compare the difference in woodlots. The one on the right has never been pastured and the one on the left has been kept trimmed off and is a sugar bush. Perhaps you can see the sugar shanty. At the second road turn left for Ratho.

Ratho originally consisted of two parts -- Upper town and Lower town. Upper town is located at the railway and at one time had a store, hotel and station. The store still remains. In lower town we find the church and behind the house with the roof lantern is the community hall of yesterday. It is still used for elections and other public gatherings.



## Oxford's German Areas Visited In Second Tour - cont.

### Bright Is Next

The iron gates and fences were made by one of the village's many blacksmiths. Follow through until you reach Highway 97 turn left and you are bound for Bright. There are several examples of fine stone work along this highway as well as several fine examples of woodworking. Be on the lookout for "The Oaks 1911." Notice the porches on both the lower and upper level. A roadside park is here if you wish to stop.

Bright is an English settlement often referred to as Plattes Station due to the fact that it had a railway station and Plattsville didn't and while Plattsville was bigger it was necessary for them to come to Bright to receive their freight. Bright still possesses one of the few hotels still in operation in a community of this size.

We leave Bright and go north or left from the corner we entered by. We will see a cheese factory in operation and it is possible to buy cheese here. At Chesterfield the octagon drive shed (eight sided) can be viewed. Have you seen any windmills?

There are a few left and are to be seen along this road. Also notice how the farm homes are set well back off the road. It is said that this was to allow the farmer to be closer to his work and would not have to spend unnecessary time going from one end of his farm to the other. Many of these lanes are an avenue of trees and greatly enhance the beauty of the countryside.

At the border line between Oxford and Waterloo we see more signs of the German influence. Turning right we get an excellent view of Oxford County as we travel over hill and dale. There are several examples of snake rail fences and an old fashioned bridge not wide enough for two vehicles to meet.

Taking the road to your right (not the one at the bridge) you will see Oxford from an elevation and on a clear day the view is unlimited. That is Plattsville in the hollow. Turn right and visit the thriving community that sponsors one of the better horse shows each spring.

### Sandpaper Industry

Plattsville is the home of Canada Sandpaper, one of the largest manufacturers of abrasive products. The firm exports to all parts of the world. If you brought a picnic lunch, call in at the community park. A refreshment stand is close by.



Oxford's German Areas Visited In Second Tour - cont.

Sandpaper Industry - cont.

On leaving Plattsville, turn left from the park and proceed on Highway 97. A change in scenery is taking place as larger fields and beef cattle replace the dairy farms. There are several interesting homes along this road. Notice the wild game sanctuary on your left. At the county line (it is marked) turn right and see more of Oxford's beauty. These next few miles have more to offer in a variety of scenery than any other part of Oxford.

After crossing 401 and the Nith river watch for the sign 10th Concession of Blenheim and turn right here and follow this road as it winds its way through hill and dale back to 401 and back until you come out at the 8th concession.

You will see many things along these roads including perhaps the largest flock of sheep in Oxford as well as several examples of stump fences and several good fishing spots.

You are nearing Wolverton. Turn right and drive carefully as there are several steep hills as you approach the village. If the lilacs are still in bloom the hills and river bank will be a purple blanket of lilacs.

This village always reminds me of Rip Van Winkle as it rests here in the valley almost untouched by progress and a picture of peace and contentment. The big house 'Wolverton Manor' still occupies its place of honor as does the old Baptist Church across the road.

Following the road around the big house it will take you to the cemetery where an American soldier killed in the Civil War lies at rest. He was brought home by his brother and is buried within the iron fence. There is a grand view from here. Retracing your tracks up the hills from the river, turn right at the first corner and you are bound for Drumbo. Crossing the Nigh river again watch for Oxford's totem pole, at the side of the road.

This indicates the scout camp at Warsaw.

Drumbo, while practically destroyed by fire twice, still possesses many fine homes with a flair for picturesque porches and well kept grounds. After viewing the village take the road for Princeton. At Highway 2, turn right. A plaque in memory of the father of Oxford County, Thomas Horner is located in the cemetery along highway 2. In the same cemetery lies Frederick Benwell who was murdered by Birchall. His tombstone resembles a coffin.

Oxford's German Areas Visited In Second Tour - cont.

Sandpaper Industry - cont.

At Gobles we twitch our nostrils to the smell of oil as we enter Oxford's newest enterprise. The oil fields of Gobles are among the richest in Ontario and the supply of natural gas is a promise of the part Oxford can play in the manufacturing world of tomorrow.

Continue on Highway 2 and you will soon be back in Woodstock. This trip is about 75 miles and takes 3½ hours, plus time for sightseeing.

In our rambles through Oxford takes us into the Highlands of Zorra and the Wildwood Country, ending up with a trip through Nissouri before returning to Woodstock.

The townships of West Zorra and East Nissouri are among the younger townships, having come into existence about 1820. The name Nissouri is often referred to as meaning Ni Zorra. Zorra has two favorite interpretations; a Spanish version meaning "a lazy fox" and the biblical version meaning "men of might". The first settlers are believed to have been children of John Carrol, the first settler at Beachville, and they formed a village near Uniondale. Next came the settlers from the southern portion of the county. They settled along the 4th line of Zorra. Then came the Scots. They, assisted by the English and American immigrants, soon settled the townships.

It is said that the Scots soon made the other settlers more like the Scots than the Scots themselves, which appears to be quite true as we view the mark left by these Highlanders.

Leaving Woodstock by way of the Governor's Road, so called because it was laid out by Gov. John Graves Simcoe when he chose the town plot for Woodstock, we turn right immediately after crossing the river and proceed to the County Home. Here we pause for a moment and gaze back at the city. How many places do you recognize?

Turn left at the stop sign and proceed to Golspie, named by the Highlanders from a community in the old land. Their life centered around this two-mile by one-mile block to the north and it was here that they had their first school and church. The stone houses in the next mile give you an idea of the determination that these people possessed. Their first homes were of log, but it was not long until stone houses made their appearance.

Turning right at the corner we stop at the "Old Log Kirk Cemetery." This was the site of their first church and burying grounds and a stone replica of the church has been erected on the site of the old church. This was the first Presbyterian Church in Oxford. Services could not be held in the church during the winter months as there was no heat available. There is also a cairn for Rev. Leslie McKay, "the black bearded barbarian" who was the first Canadian missionary to go to the Orient. He started Oxford College in Formosa and today it is one of the highest seats of learning in the Orient.

## Sunday Drive Leads Through Home Of 'Mighty Men' - cont.

Glance across the hollow where the old manse stood. Lime was burned along the river bank for use in plastering on the stone and for chinking between the logs. Proceed to the top of the hill and turn left for Embro. The tall church spire among the trees is the first indication of the village that bears the abbreviated name for Edinborough.

This quaint little community was once one of the leading villages of the county. Today it is proud to be known as the "Home of the Zorra Highland Games" held each year on July 1st. In keeping with its Scottish ancestry we find many of the streets bearing names such as Argyle and St. Andrews. Notice the stores at the main corner with their false fronts and shelters over the sidewalks. Few other places have retained this link with the past. Be sure to drive up to the park and see Dr. Donald Sutherland's home and the many other fine homes throughout the village. Did you see the wishing well? There are several collectors of old cars living here and if the weather is good they will be out driving.

Leaving the main part of the village, we travel north past the town hall and the old unused railway station. On your right there is another cairn this one honors the famous "Zorra Tug-of-War Team that won the world's championship in 1893 at Chicago.

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority maintains a conservation area to the left of the next corner. Watch for the sign. Return to the main road and continue north along the road that served as the main link between Oxford and "The Queen's Bush Counties" of Perth and Huron in the days of the Canada Company. It soon leads through Youngsville, the house once served as a hotel. It was here that the township council held its meetings for many years.

### Pass Ghost Town

At the next crossroad is Brooksdale another of Zorra's ghost towns. As you top the rise glance off to the right and gaze upon the magnificent house on the hill. This is the home of Mr. & Mrs. Wallace Munro.

It is a splendid example of the Classical Revival type of house that every country gentleman strived for late in the 19th century. There is an excellent view from the road as you look up the tree-lined lane. Notice the entrance with its pillars and artistic windows surrounding the deer. This home is truly a show place of the county.



Sunday Drive Leads Through Home Of 'Mighty Men' - cont.

Pass Ghost Town - cont.

Getting back to nature, you are now entering the Highlands of Zorra. Turn left at the school house. Pause as you reach the summit of any hill and glance across the land that furnished Ralph Connor with themes for many of his books. "The Doctor" is one in particular and this same doctor lived right among these hills.

The church where Connor's father preached has been burned, but a new one has replaced it, adding much to the beauty of Harrington. Another UTRCA Conservation area is located here.

Wildwood Dam

At the old stone school turn right and we see the head waters of the Wildwood Dam -- one of the major projects of the Conservation Authority. At the base line (dead end) turn left. By following this road it will take you to the dam proper which is located in Perth County, but the lake is in Oxford. It is not possible to cross the dam and we detour by Highway 7 and proceed to Highway 19 at the high ground beyond the dam.

Take this road to Uniondale. Another of Oxford's cheese factories can be seen on the right. Mennonites recently purchased land here and have a fair sized settlement. Turn right at the cheese factory and proceed to the town-line, three roads over and turn left. On the fourth lot (there are five lots between the sideroads) you will see Oxford's last log cabin still in its original shape and still being used as a dwelling.

Turn left at the corner and proceed to Lakeside by way of Medina, a ghost town of Nissouri. Even the school has disappeared here. At Lakeside to the left of the main corner will be seen another fine example of stone masonry at the Seaton home. It was built in 1873 and bears a name plate to prove it. Visit the old Anglican Church at Lakeside that was built by James Ingersoll when he opened this part of the county. He also founded St. Marys about the same time. The lake was used by the Indians for a camping area and in the spring marks on the fresh plowed ground indicate where they had their camps. Today the lake serves as a centre for all types of water sports and attracts large numbers of visitors from early summer to late fall. Good picnic grounds and swimming facilities are available so stop awhile and relax.

Turn left as you leave the picnic area and proceed to the second road which is paved, turn right and you are soon at Kintore. It once had a cheese and box factory. Today the cheese factory is used for the manufacture of trailers and the box factory is a lumber yard.

Sunday Drive Leads Through Home Of 'Mighty Men' - cont.

Wildwood Dam - cont.

Continuing through Kintore past the cemetery, we proceed to the town line again and this time visit the Cobble Hills.

Turning left here we see how a waste land was transformed into a winter wonderland. A group of businessmen created a ski resort and during the winter people come from far away to enjoy skiing in Oxford.

Smaller Farm Buildings

Little has been said about farm buildings. If you recall the massive size of the German barns, compare them with the ones that you see here. Notice that many of these barns have no stone stables beneath them and instead of one large barn we find several smaller buildings. Also notice how the land has levelled off and your view has become limited. In this area we find many grain farms with no livestock kept. The scarcity of fences on such farms is noticed.

At the Zion Church stop and visit at the Memorial Gardens on the right. Here a plot of ground has been set aside as a memorial to the pioneers of Nissouri. You will find a memorial cairn, a replica of the first church, a miniature museum, a wishing well and several memorial plots, wellplaced in a natural beauty spot. An ideal spot for lovers of nature. The museum is in a log cabin at the very back of the park area.

From here, proceed to Highway 2 and turn left for Thamesford, Oxford's fastest growing community. Take time to view the old stone church, the dam and the old mill. You will have a good chance to compare the old and the new types of architecture as they often appear side by side in Thamesford.

Proceed back to Woodstock by way of the Governors Road. On this road you are able to get a fine view of the countryside. We see the Canada Cement Plant, and closer to Woodstock we pass the Memorial Gardens on the left. Keep an eye on the right and you will see the famous octagon barn of Oxford. There are only four of these barns in existence in Ontario today. This one was built late in the 1800's and never proved successful for a cattle barn. Today it is part of a mink ranch. Our trip covered about 75 miles and took about 3½ hours, plus time for sightseeing.

Oxford County's best known historian is Len Coles, clerk for the county. Mr. Coles presided over his 28th election of a warden for the county this week. After Stanley Gehring, reeve of South Norwich Township had been elected, Mr. Coles asked for council's indulgence while he reminisced a bit. He presented the election of wardens in the county.

Mr. Coles was appointed clerk of the county, he said, in 1943. Before launching into a brief account of elections he has witnessed personally the county clerk filled in a bit of background of the tradition of electing a warden.

#### Started In 1911

The unique open vote system used in county council to elect a warden was begun in 1911 Mr. Coles said. Since that time there have only been two acclamations to the warden's chair. In 1915 John Campbell of Dereham Township was acclaimed and in 1936 the same was true of William Lampman of East Oxford.

In 1943, when Mr. Coles became the clerk, he was faced with a tie vote between J. K. Wardell of South Norwich and J. K. McLeod of East Norwich. Fortunately Mr. Coles had been alerted to the prospect by the roads superintendent at the time and was prepared for the eventuality.

Dereham Township with the highest equalized assessment was allowed the deciding vote. John W. Smith decided who would be warden of Oxford County that year.

Other tie votes were recorded in 1959 and 1966. In 1959 Ed Pearce was finally elected warden and Ed Pearce had cast the deciding vote. In 1966 Cyril DeMeyere cast the deciding vote in favor of Hugh Monro.

#### Four Running

Mr. Coles recalled that in 1951 there were four Reeves running for the warden's office. On the 28th ballot Harry Little withdrew but there were still three in the race at the 52nd ballot at 4:20 in the afternoon.

Mr. Coles warned council if they couldn't make up their minds he would ask for an adjournment. The adjournment, he thought, would allow the councillors to get together to decide what they were going to do.

The adjournment was not necessary though because Thomas Pellow withdrew after the 53rd ballot. Mr. Coles recalled that there were 20 councillors at that time. He calculated that he called names out a total of 1,040 times during the election.

## History Of Oxford County Council Voting Explained - cont.

### Most Ballots

The most ballots ever needed was in 1913, well before Mr. Coles' time. That year Charlie Denton of Tillsonburg was elected warden after 63 ballots.

The tradition of driving around the county to see all of the councillors before an election was established by J. C. Eichenberg, reeve of Tillsonburg in 1944, Mr. Coles said.

Eichenberg had entered the race late and to make up for lost time he visited all councillors to press his claim for the office. Mr. Eichenberg came out on top and the tradition has remained.

Mr. Coles recalled too that in 1945 before the first ballot Al Parsons of Tillsonburg complained that there were four Reeves running for the office of warden and that he was not too familiar with the men. He asked that all of the candidates be required to deliver a speech to the councillors. Council agreed with the proposal and without any preparation the four outlined their ideas to council.

### Best Orators

Apparently East Nissouri produced the best orators that year for their reeve, Alex McCorquodale went on to win the election.

Mr. Coles said that apparently the election in 1948 was illegal. The Sunday before the election Bob Rudy of Tavistock broke his leg. The village council met and selected Milt Roth to stand in for the injured reeve.

Roth voted for the warden as any regular member of council.

However, this year when Bruce Amos found out that he might be absent from the election a check was made to find out if another town councillor could vote for the warden in his place. The answer, no, came from the legal offices of the Department of Municipal Affairs in Toronto.



There is a growing feeling Canada should pay more honor to its legendary heroes. Editors and TV commentators as well as historians and scholars have joined in the campaign at various times.

And among those names frequently mentioned is Co. W. J. Boyle, "Klondyke Joe" -- one time resident of Woodstock, prospector, adventurer, promoter, soldier; the man who helped save the Romanian crown jewels during the First World War. He proved a tower of strength to that little Balkan nation in an hour of need.

"Klondyke Joe" won the friendship of Marie, queen of Romania. She called him "strong and true" in a final tribute to the "Uncle Joe" of her young daughter, Princess Ilena.

Queen Marie's story of her association with Col. Boyle appeared on this page Nov. 6, 1926.

It is the only occasion a queen's byline has appeared on this page. Whether Marie actually wrote the article or it was "ghost-written" for her is irrelevant. The story was copyrighted in Canada by British United Press and in Great Britain by the Yorkshire Evening News. A note explained Sydney Walton, director of the Yorkshire Evening News and other British newspapers, also was a close friend of "Klondyke" Boyle. It was Mr. Walton who suggested to her majesty that the day might come when she would like to honor the memory of "Uncle Joe" and that the queen felt a visit to Canada would be the appropriate occasion. The note continued: -

"The article was written without any fee or financial reward whatever. By courtesy of Mr. Walton and the Yorkshire Evening News it is now published in Canada."

The queen wrote in part:

"It was during the war, during one of the most tragic periods for us -- Russia was in revolution; Romania was cut off from all her allies, surrounded by foes on every side, her whole issue blocked up Russia in flames ... and to this forsaken, tortured little country came one man who could near seeing what he called "the small man being bullied'."

"... When Joe Boyle first entered my room as a stranger, as many entered it in those days (for all people came to the king and queen - our doors were open, perhaps in the hope that even 'luck' might slip in) it was thought suddenly a rock had miraculously appeared before me, a rock upon which I could lean.

"It was exactly that - a rock - all around dark waves, storm; voices full of anguish against a background of flame, and all at once Joe Boyle was there, a stranger, and yet somehow not a stranger, because I seemed to have been waiting for him - it seemed quite natural that he should be here..."

'Klondyke Joe Boyle' - Woodstock Man Became A Legend In The Balkans - cont.

"Gray-haired, strong, quiet, quaint of speech, his eye was steady, his hand clasp covenant, his very presence a refuge against fear. Though I had never seen him before, knew nothing about him, knew not his story, nor where he came; that first hand clasp sealed a friendship strong and indestructible which lasted to the hour of his death."

Marie told of the stories "Klondyke Joe" related, of his adventures, how he had made and lost fortunes; stories of Canada's icefield and of Canada's bushland. She added, "with all that, he had a great simplicity about him, sometimes almost the simplicity of a child. He had always kept faith and could not conceive that anyone would doubt his word."

Again: "But this I must say, he could only take a leading attitude, he had to dominate. Love him as we did, I can but confess that he could be quarrelsome when opposed; he never could play second fiddle, he had to have things his own way."

She told the story how Boyle leaped aboard a ship at Odessa on which the Bolsheviki had loaded Romanian captives and by gestures held the Reds in check. For 10 days the ship sailed aimlessly about the Black Sea - Boyle tired out the Russians and the prisoners ultimately landed safely again at Odessa. She told how he suffered a stroke, how his mighty strength was gone. It was at the time of this illness the little Princess Ilena became his greatest comfort. He was her "Uncle Joe".

Recovered, Boyle continued his work of aiding Romania. Finally, Marie wrote, "there came a sad hour when he felt his day in Romania was over. "My queen, I am for times of trouble, I am a stormy petrel, I am not meant for days of peace. I am a fighter, I am quarrelsome. Court life is not for me...."

So Joe Boyle left Romania -- with the blessing of a queen, and with the Romanian people's heart "full of gratitude".

He died in 1923.