



**A look back at Lindsay Hotels
and Hostelries of Yesteryear**

It is only in recent years that Lindsay's population began to steadily climb. In fact 87 years ago the citizenry of the town was printed as 6,000. Today the figure is reported to be 12,000 although highway signs at the entrance to Lindsay shows a lower figure. According to realtors the population is advancing, homes are in demand and new-comers are flocking to Lindsay.

The population of Lindsay many years ago supported a large number of hotels, some of them called hostelries and one thing certain, every hotel had a hosteler, the man who stabled horses in stables or sheds. Horses were just about as plentiful as motor cars are today and most farmers took pride in their work horses and their fast stepping drivers.

On Kent Street there was the Royal Hotel, run by Thomas McConnell at the corner of Kent and Lindsay Streets, where first class meals were a speciality and banquets were popular. When the Masons met in the hall over the present

Star Cafe, members often had oyster suppers in the Royal.

The Hotel Benson has been in Lindsay for over 100 years. It was recognized as Lindsay's best hostelry and the home for commercial travellers. Travellers arrived in Lindsay with large trunks filled with merchandise and it was the custom for merchants to visit the hotel sample rooms to select order goods. Trunks were hoisted from the ground floor to the sample rooms above by a small hand operated elevator.

The Daily House, followed in the same location by the Pyn House, the Darch Hotel and the Elsmure were situated where Woolworth's store is now located. The Pyn Brothers were former railway men and the hotel catered to the railroad trade which was lucrative. Darch left Lindsay and located in Oshawa. The Elsmure was owned by the late F. W. Sutcliffe, owner of the Sutcliffe mercantile store one door east. The hotel was named after Elsie and Muriel Sutcliffe. In the days of the Pyn

Hotel the bar was the largest in Lindsay with two or three white-caped bartenders.

On the south side of Kent Street stood the Grand Union, which is still being operated. For some time the owner was a man named Hancock and later on Miss Wardrobe ran the hotel, particularly the dining room. The Wardrobe's were well known proprietors of the Hotel Benson for many years. Later the Grand Union was owned by John Mitchel who originally was a farmer at Janetville. In recent years Sam Bland has conducted the hotel.

Where Fee Motors is now situated at the corner of Kent and Cambridge Streets, was once the well known Butler Hotel which was the home for many years of the late Dick Butler who, along with his step-mother, ran the hotel.

The Veitch Hotel was located near the present Century Theatre and later on it was known as the little King Edward; the late Albert Ashmore was the owner.

For many years there were

hotels on William Street South, the old Carr hotel where Barbe's Shoe Repair and Gamble's stores are now located and the Manuder, or Central Hotel. The latter hostelry has been one of the best known in the district for many years. It has had a reputation for good meals and also for being well operated.

The Simpson House was located at Kent and York, the home of Claxton's store; before William and George Simpson become owners, it was known as the Jewett Hotel. This hotel had a wide and favourable reputation and William Simpson was known as an enthusiastic sportsman, interested in race horses and for some time was the backer of the championship baseball team known as the Lindsay Redbirds. In later years Mr. Simpson was succeeded by his son "Cap" Arthur Simpson who was head of several hockey teams in Lindsay.

At one time the building at the corner of Kent and

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Lindsay Streets was an hotel. It is now occupied by Houzer's store.

There were 2 hotels on Lindsay street south. one being the present Kent Hotel and the other was located immediately north of the Kent Hotel.

On William Street north one of the oldest hotels was situated at the corner of Peel Street, opposite St. Andrew's Church.

In the East Ward the old Waddell at King and Lindsay Streets was an hotel operated by Archer Bradshaw. It is also reported that there was an hotel further east on King Street, now a double house.

The large brick building at the corner of Glenelg and Victoria Avenue known as the Moose Hall was once an hotel. It was known as the McCarty House and was largely patronized by railway men when Lindsay was a busy terminal.

The Central Hotel on William Street South had the largest accommodation for horses, and during the fair it handled as many as 400 horses. The Butler hotel and Little King Edward Hotel also had large horse sheds, as did the Firly Hotel.

Bar rooms in these early days were something. Long, mahogany topped bars highly varnished with long brass foot rails and on the floor of the bar room large brass cuspidors. The walls behind the bars were backed by long, large, shining mirrors and there was always a large neat array of different kinds of bottles on them.

Bar rooms were entered from the front, as well as from the side and two swinging doors made ingress and egress quite convenient for customers, especially those who were inclined to be unsteady on their limbs. The hotels had nicely furnished waiting rooms with small but busy offices. At the rear of the counter could be noticed a number of pigeon-holes for the mail and a board decorated with keys. Hotels were by law forced to keep a register of all guests and rooms were available for \$1.50 a night and in some cases less. All hotels served good meals and it was not uncommon to get everything piled high on the plates for 25 cents. Some hotels had small rooms on the main floor where guests could be served privately and where card games could be played. The

beds were not always the most downy but they were clean and comfortable. There was no running water.

All in all hotelmen were busy people. In many cases they were quite generous when it came to supporting local shows, agricultural fairs, horse races, hockey games, baseball, and other sports. As a rule, hotelmen did not enter politics as candidates but they were always "in the know" and always interested. They were good citizens.