

An "oldtimer" takes a trip down  
memory lane and revisits

15 Sept. 1964

# **NORTH VICTORIA AND HALIBURTON...COUNTIES OF HISTORIC TRADITIONS AND PROGRESS**

Victoria County, named after Great Britain's illustrious Queen Victoria "the good" and Haliburton County named after the distinguished Lord Haliburton, one of the old country's greats have historic background of tradition and progress equalled by no other side-by-side counties in the province of Ontario. Encompassed by rich and fertile agricultural lands in the south and miriads of large and small lakes of enchantment in the northern county, by busy and thriving mercantile firms and business men, populated by a citizenry "the very salt of the earth", enriched by stately large and small church edifices and excellent places of learning, these two friendly counties actually present a picture landscape no artist can paint.

It was a delightful experience and wonderful opportunity for the writer to revisit parts of Victoria and many areas in Haliburton recently and to note the long steady stride made in the past few years especially in the beautiful highlands of Haliburton where boosters boast of five hundred named lakes, and another five hundred still to be named.

Highways from Lindsay to Bobcaygeon, north along the old Galway road to Kinmount, through Gooderham to Tory Hill where they boast of being 1100 feet above sea level, then to the busy town of Haliburton, and to the equally busy county metropolis of Minden, thence homeward bound through Miner's Bay, Moore's Falls Norland, Coboconk, Rosedale, and Cameron to Lindsay was accomplished on beautifully smooth highways.

Truly the Highland of Haliburton are a veritable land of rugged rocks, woods and forest, hundreds of crystal clear lakes, water falls, meandering streams, and rivers. Altitude around 1200 feet means warm days, cool nights, and no hay fever. A wide choice of cottages, lodges, motels, and

hotels offer excellent accommodation by the week or overnight. Also camp grounds are available. The lakes offer ideal swimming, boating, canoeing, fishing, and water sports of all kinds. Little wonder painters and photographers return year after year.

To the motorist inexperienced with the highways, it is very necessary that the speed be lower than the 40 to 60 miles per hour limit if the motorist wishes to get even a fleeting glimpse of the enchanting scenery. Never have we seen so many white guard rails and so many white double lines, it takes the best judgement of a

good motorist to navigate the dozens and dozens of curves and bends to see the scenery and still keep in the right lane of traffic. On the Kinmount-Tory Hill stretch of eighteen miles there were times when the white double line was solid for upwards of three quarters of a mile.

Having been through two disastrous fires in 1942 and 1958, the village of Kinmount has a new look but some of the old names remain, such as the Austin saw mill, and the scenery has been enhanced.

Haliburton village is practically the hub of the highlands. Mercantile operators of various lines of business were busy looking after the wants of tourists and the main street was lined with cars and visitors.

An old inactive mogul adorns the landscape near the high school. The big locomotive is a fine sight for tourists but it is minus one valuable adornment, the old brass bell which some unknown person apparently stole some time ago.

The journey to the county seat of Minden is but eighteen miles long but it seemed longer because of the twists and turns of the highway. They may be villages by actual stature but they are busy-as-beaver towns in the summer months.

Minden has gained prestige because it is a country town for judicial and other purposes. Minden is the mecca for hundreds of summer visitors and it also has a reputation for being the only town in Ontario to hold curling bonspiels in the summer time. Imagine the mercury hovering around the eighty mark and having men and women curlers cavorting on the two ice pads.

There are many names associated with the long and useful life of Minden, but two or three stand out boldly as solid citizens of the north. They are the Hartles and Welches, both pioneers in the growth and life of Minden. The genial

and hard working Sam Welch has been in the general store business for upwards of fifty-five years or longer and is still hale, hearty and well met. The

Welch emporium is a combination of ancient and modern merchandising. The main street store is literally jammed from cellar to garret with merchandise. For many years the owner ran a row boat then a small motor boat up the Gull River and Gull lake delivering merchandise to farmers and in particular to summer cottagers. The practice was discontinued long ago when the proprietor found he was too busy to deliver. Now people visit the Welch store and there they find articles they never dreamed of were for sale in Minden.

A few years ago a broadcasting outfit in Toronto searched high and low for two or three pairs of old fashioned high laced boots worn by women. They found them in the attic of the Welch store and although Shirley Harmer wore the boots for some particular scene, and the Welch store did receive widespread mention over the air, the proprietor is still waiting for the promised cheque for the footwear.

Haliburton village is proud of its Skyline Park, where the sign reads "3,133 miles to the North Pole". The park, high up in the highlands and presents a wonderful panorama for miles and miles. It must present a scene of unusual grandeur in the fall when the leaves are turning.

Minden people point with pride to a fine golf course where "people from various parts of the world" gather for relaxation and recreation.

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Continuing on the homeward voyage by beautiful Miners Bay and picturesque Moore's Falls, you have soon left behind the old burg of Norland, the home of the LeCraws comes into view, as well as Coboconk, where for years the Pattie or Jackson House has been home on the road for many passers by.

Rosedale nestled in the beautiful shaded woodland was

tiful shaded woodland was skirted as the journey proceeded over the new government bridge and in another half hour we were bumping on the streets of Lindsay. This was a wonderful trip and in all it covered only 137 miles.