

# On The Main Street



with FORD  
MOYNES

Over three score and ten years ago hotels and taverns were as thick as mushrooms in Victoria County. Every hamlet had a hotel of some type. In fact most of them were very good hostelries.

The village of Woodville was no exception. In fact, at one time, Woodville had three hotels all running and thriving. One was located where the McIntyre garage is now situated, one where the present municipal hall is located and the third was just east of the present bank. They were busy.

Often the inebriates became

very obstreperous, obnoxious and noisy and the small one-cell coop or jail was many times overcrowded with them.

Almost suddenly the three hotels were out of business because of the many temperance people.

But it was felt Woodville needed a hotel of some kind for the village was a lively place with a number of fine stores and business places, including a carriage shop, bank, drug store, three grocery and general merchandising stores, a meat shop, barber shop, library, blacksmith shop, implement shop, post office, bakery

and confectionery shop, two churches and a Masonic hall.

A group of businessmen realized the situation and formed a stock company known as the Woodville Hotel Company. They were soon in business, operating a temperance hotel at the east end of the main street. Sam Ainsworth was the first Manager and he ran a good hotel, a good dining room and a good stable. The directors of the company contributed \$4,500 collateral and they were in business.

A strong set of bylaws was adopted, a copy of which is now in the possession of Charles Stoddart, proprietor of the funeral home on Mill Street, Lindsay.

The original company shareholders were: Matthew John Stoddart, undertaker; McLachlan, merchant; Alexander and Good, merchants; James John Ruan, resident; Joseph Vining Staples, rancher; John Prouse, harness maker and William McKee, lumber merchant.

All went well for some time, in fact until a disastrous fire razed the hotel. The white painted frame structure went up in flames in quick order and soon all that remained of the hotel was a pile of ashes and smoking timbers. Sam Ainsworth moved on to Sunderland where he operated the Brock Hotel for a number of years.