

RD MOYNES

ON THE MAIN STREET

April 21/67

Senior citizens strolling past the Moose Hall today miss the glass cupola which topped the building many years ago and they miss the six foot high board fence which surrounds the lot.

It will be news to readers to learn that the Moose Hall of today was originally a well patronized hotel and that it rendered particular service to railroad men in the early days. The first railway station in Lindsay was built back in 1888 and was located where the present CNR freight sheds and temporary station now stands.

The present Moose Hall was owned and operated as a hotel by a man named McCarthy. In its pioneer days the hotel served the wants of railway men and others. As time galloped past the building served as the first Home for the Aged and later for many years, for the Children's Aid Society, when Mrs. Ellen Sharpe was the officer in charge and also the Truant Officer for Lindsay. For some time the late Gordon Stinson was Caretaker of the building.

The present Moose Hall served the people well as a lodging house when Mr. and Mrs. James Brown were the operators. Mrs. Brown, generous and capable, the mother of Councillor Carl Brown, was a friend of the railroaders as she not only looked after the meals and the many details of running a lodging house, but also packed many large baskets for the railroaders, as they were absent at work for two or three days in a stretch.

The Brown's had the hotel filled with roomers. The main wide stairs immediately inside the front door was also in the middle of the building.

When there were rooms to let Mr. Brown climbed small stairs to the attic and lighted a lantern in the pinnacle spot, the red glow being a signal that there were vacant rooms available.

In the hotel there was a large sitting room in the southwest corner and the Brown's private parlour was in the north-west corner.

The front door was never locked and the Grand Trunk Call Boy entered the hotel at all hours of the night and rap-



ped on doors calling railroad men to work. When railroad men required their lunch baskets they waited until the women of the house pulled on a bell and the men hastened down stairs and picked up their baskets from a small opening in the wall of the kitchen.

The Brown's worked hard. Wood for the heating of the big building was brought in from the Brown farm at Whitehall, northern Ontario drinking water was pumped from a good well at the rear of the Hotel and it was a real job to keep the water pitchers in the many rooms filled with water for washing and bath purposes and these were also the days when no matter how frigid the weather happened to be inmates and patrons had the experience of trotting out to the backhouses.

It was hard work, it was a busy life and the hotel was a delightful "home on the

road" for many a railroader. Many of the young men at the time married Lindsay girls and established their homes in Lindsay.

It is interesting to note that the Browns ran the lodging house from 1908 and for a long term of years. Here it was that Lindsay's popular Councillor experienced many thrills and boyhood tribulations but he took matters in his stride and after several exciting days in different parts of Ontario he returned to Lindsay and established himself in the Jewellery business, a very successful venture.

Councillor Brown was a few years back known as "Mr. Parks" because of his great and invaluable works as a member and Chairman of the Lindsay Park's Board, and he was aided materially in this effort by another popular Chairman of the Board, T. R. Price, Regent Street.

Watson Kirkconnell's history of Victoria County records that in 1895 the Home for the Aged organization took over the Mansion House at the corner of Victoria Ave. and Glenelg Sts. and maintained the institution until 1905.