

with Ford Moynes

Among the many baseball teams in Lindsay several years ago, one of the best was known as the Sand Pit Sluggers. So said Ernie Corley, Adelaide Street North and he should know because he was one of the players who played in the long grass on a large field nearby. "Lindsay had many teams and rivalry was very keen. We kids used to make our own baseballs by getting a small rubber ball and winding around the ball yards and yards of twine. Some times a kid got ambitious and covered the ball with leather. Later on better balls were used as they were discarded by the players on the big Town League teams."

It is interesting to note that the players on the Sand Pit team included Leonard Nesbitt, Jack Grey, Ernie Corley, Dick Grey, Bill Simpson, Earl Vanstone, Jack Vanstone, Ed McGinnis and Joe Mark.

Two of these players Dick Grey and Joe Mark earned places on the Lindsay Greybirds of the Central Ontario League. Grey was one of the best hardball pitchers in this part of Ontario. Joe Mark was for a time a player on the Lindsay Redbirds, a team which headed the Midoque League and included such outstanding players as Bill Cinnamon, Herb Workman, Curly McLaughlin, Norm McGill, Bert Menzies, George Little, Bill Stalker and others.

Drifting the conversation to the days when teaming was "big business" in Lindsay long before the advent of motor cars, Ernie Corley vividly recalled the terrific snowstorms and blizzards of the distant past. "I have five horses and I had the contract to snow plow the sidewalks in the North Ward. The Town Council quibbled and nibbled with figures and I received the magnificent sum of \$35.00. Those were the days when we really had snow storms and many times I urged my horses through snow that was two feet deep and at times the drifts were three feet deep".

Residents were furious with the Council and the plowmen when the plow did not 'plow them out' until a day after the storm and some times two days late.

At times the plowmen were accused of placing a shovel under the nose of the plow so the plow point would not dig down too deep in the snow making it easier on the horses. However Ernie Corley was not guilty on this practice. Many of the walks were made of 12 foot long planks and many times planks were missing and this became a hazard to horses and men handling the plows.

At times the snow was so deep on the walks and the walks were so narrow that the plowmen took to the road and made laneways for horses and pedestrians and these were the days when business men and store clerks walked to work — not like the practice in this modern age when people step into motor vehicles and seldom flex a muscle by walking.

School days were fondly recalled to mind, especially when as a wee laddie Ernie Corley attended the first school on Francis Street, opposite the County Court House. The teacher was a small little woman who was loved by everyone, Miss "Banty" Wray. "She was a good teacher and this fact we realized later in life", said the narrator. There was 'the old wooden pump and the battered and rust tin cup attached with a chain. At one time there was a Presbyterian church on the school lot. I remember the old North Ward school and also that there apparently was a burying

grounds and a number of old tombstones.”

Where once there were vacant fields on the Corley farm, today the ward is literally flooded with hundreds of modern homes. Where once there was a large gravel and sand pit at the corner of Colborne and Angeline Streets and a large dump north of Colborne Street, today there are modern homes, a tennis court and a park.

“Times have changed” said Mr. Corley, but we had lots of fun and lots of hard work in the old days’.