

MEMORIES OF
RIDGETOWN

1950

OLD BOYS' AND GIRLS' REUNION

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THIS BOOKLET, prepared for the Reunion of 1950 at Ridgetown, is a second edition of "Memories of the Old Home Town," published in 1930 for the Reunion at that time.

This edition contains the substance of the previous publication with the addition of some human interest stories. Such stories in time become traditions. Similar stories to these are found wherever human beings have lived in settled communities for many years. They are not always recorded, but are verbally handed down from one generation to the next.

Mr. Bowyer, Dr. Young, and Freeman Green, who assisted in furnishing material for the 1930 edition, have passed away, leaving me alone to take the blame for the errors and omissions in this edition.

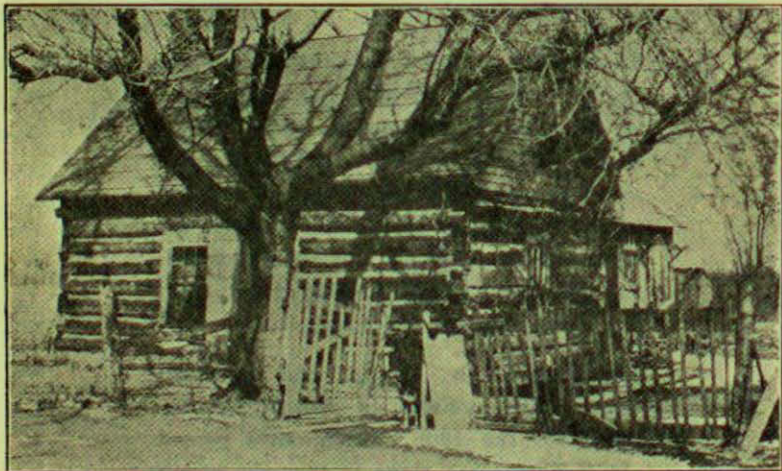
O. K. WATSON

Ridgetown, Ontario,
June, 1950

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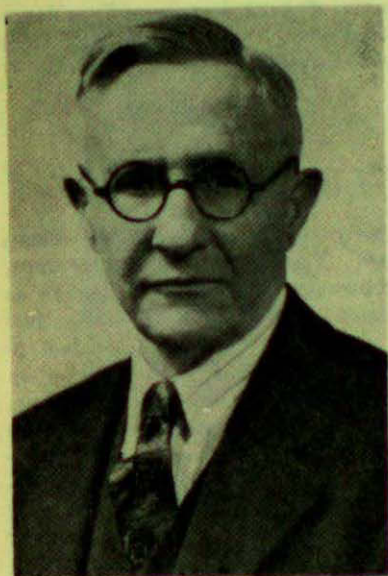
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A Typical Early Residence

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O. K. WATSON, K.C.

THE COMPILER of the early history of Ridgetown was born in Ridgetown in 1869, son of Zenas W. Watson and grandson of James Watson, the pioneer. After attending the Public and High Schools at Ridgetown and Osgoode Hall, Toronto, he became a barrister in 1892, carrying the political science course at Toronto University at the same time. Completed the University course in 1894, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts; starting practice in Ridgetown the same year; served on the Public Library Board for three years; in the Town Council for two years; on the Collegiate Institute Board for three years and was chairman of the Board; was named the town's arbitrator on the purchase of the electric light plant; was secretary-treasurer of the High School Board for many years; and on the Public Utilities Commission for thirteen years.

THE FIRST INHABITANTS



HE INDIANS, with whom the settlers came into contact when they settled here, were not the Indians who made the numerous arrow heads, stone axes and similar stone age tools which were plowed up all over the site of this town. The Indians who made those things were an earlier race referred to by the Jesuit missionaries as "The Neutrals." It was the Neutrals who had the fortified village at Clearville and another near Iona. Those Neutrals, like the Hurons and Petunes farther north, were just entering into settled communities and were adopting agriculture.

They cleared by burning an acre or two on a sandy ridge, grew squash and corn and when the land became unproductive they cleared another patch and abandoned the first. A clearing of this kind was found on the front end of the Mitton farm and was called the "Indian Ridge." At the time of settlement this land had no big trees on it but small growth, mostly thorn and wild crab apple. Most of the business blocks on the north side of Main Street are on the Indian clearing.

A surveyor by the name of McNiff, passing down the Ridge from Sandwich in 1790, said there were remains of bark houses and evidence that a dense population had at one time lived along the north shore of Lake Erie. These were the Neutrals who were exterminated by the Iroquois in 1650.

THE SETTLERS

The first settlers came in permanently about 1823 or 1824. There were no roads and nothing but solid forest. The timber was oak, walnut, beech hickory, ash, elm, whitewood, buttonwood, but no conifers, such as pine and cedar. The settlers in this district came from England to New York or Philadelphia; thence north and west along the line of travel to Buffalo, then by boat or with wagons and oxen to Colonel Talbot's place on Lake Erie, the Colonel being the land agent. The Colonel retained them in his employ for a time to enable them to become accustomed to the new life, then sent them to pick out farms for themselves. There were trifling settlement duties to be done and when these duties had been done the settler could obtain the patent to one hundred acres on the payment of \$20.00. The reason there is such a discrepancy between the date of settlement and the date of the patents is that many of the settlers did not have enough money to spare for nearly twenty-five years after they settled on the lands.



SARAH MARSH

SARAH MARSH, whose maiden name was Montgomery, was born in Scotland in 1779, and died at Ridgetown in 1883. She was the first white woman to set foot in Ridgetown.

The first settler in what is now Ridgetown was William Marsh, an Englishman and probably a U.E. Loyalist who worked his way down into this country from Nova Scotia. He built on lot nine in the tenth concession of Howard in or about the year 1823, and upon his land is built that section of the town known as Ward Two. The next settlers were also Englishmen, who came in a group in the same year as Marsh. They were James Watson, Edmund Mitton, Thomas Scane, the elder, accompanied by his two well grown sons, Thomas and John. Edmund Mitton located on lot ten in the ninth concession, Howard, and on his farm is that portion of the town known as Ward Four. His settler's cabin was located on the rise of ground back of Roszell & Graves'



JOHN SCANE

JOHN SCANE was born in England in 1800; died about a half a mile west of Ridgetown in 1876. He came in 1822 to locate with James Watson, Edmund Mitton, Thomas Scane, his brother, and Thomas Scane, his father, born 1765. From him is descended one branch of the Scane family. On May 12, 1832, he married Elizabeth Mitton.

his farm is what is now known as Ward Three, Ridgetown. The settler's cabin was of logs, fourteen by eighteen feet, and this was found sufficient at that time to house and shelter the Mitton family consisting of ten individuals.

In order to locate the farms in the forest the prospective settlers secured the services of trappers who were roaming through the forests in search of furs. One of these trappers, John Shippey, whose home was on the Lake Shore south from Ridgetown, was employed by the first group of settlers as guide and advisor.

As late as 1837 there was no store near Ridgetown where supplies were sold. There was, however, a small store at Morpeth kept by the Lees, (Garrett and Henry Lee) and another one on the Lake Shore at Antrim now Fred Coll's fishery) kept by a man by the name of Riddle or Ruddle.

The first settlers in this district had no wagons or carts, but did

store. James Watson settled on lot nine in the ninth concession and upon his farm is situated that part of Ridgetown known as Ward One. His settler's cabin was located on the lot now occupied by the Shell Garage. The Scanes remained permanently, but Watson after a short time returned to England and again came back to Canada in 1828 and finished his days here. The Scanes took up lots to the west of Ridgetown. Their farms were centred about a mile out and the sideroad is still known as Scane's sideroad. The Mittons, although having located with Watson and the Scanes, did not move to the farm at once, but returned to Aldborough where they had a former location, but in March 1824, they came in and remained permanently.

Most of the settlers came direct from the British Isles, but the Americans were also favorably impressed with the prospects on this side of the Lake and many of them crossed over and took up lots. For instance, Ebenezer Colby was an American who took up lot ten in the tenth concession, Howard, and on

their hauling on a jumper. Some years after the settlement was started a man by the name of Rhodes came into the place making wooden plows, wagons and carts, living with the settler while the work was going on, then moving to the next place. The shoemaker and other craftsmen carried on their trades in like manner.

WHY THEY CAME



AFTER THE NAPOLEONIC WARS prices of farm products in Great Britain dropped. For many years previously, the English farmer had sold his products at a very high figure and had in consequence a period of great prosperity. When the change came the farmer did not give up his luxuries and re-adjust himself to his deleted revenue, with the inevitable result that he first mortgaged his farm and later sold it or lost it to the capitalists and then moved to the nearest town or city to start life over again at a new calling. Other trades and occupations, besides farming, were affected by the cessation of war, the weavers, shoemakers, wheelwrights, gunsmiths, saddlers and all tradesmen, who contributed to the equipment of the army, felt the hard times after the war and emigration from the British Isles became something of a panic.

The feeling between the Americans and the British, which was never friendly after the War of the Revolution, was given a further impetus by the War of 1812, so that the United States was not an inviting field for a Britisher to settle in. For instance, James Watson in passing through on his way to Canada was taunted and insulted by reason of his nationality, which was no doubt apparent by his accent.

THE COLBYS

AS TO THE personality of the first settlers two of them were eccentric to say the least Ebenezer Colby was an American from New York state. Why he left there, he never made known. Perhaps he liked the wilderness best, perhaps he had enemies where he lived. It is told that on into the night the settlers would hear a most outlandish noise coming from the direc-



tion of his house. Those who took the trouble to go over would find Ebenezer sitting on the ground with his legs wrapped around a post in the yard pounding a pail with a stick and howling from time to time. Similar performances are recorded by travellers in savage countries.

Upon returning from a visit to New York state, he told of having been pursued by thugs all the way to Chatham and returning to his home at Ridgetown, he put up shutters over all windows and nailed the floor boards near the door, down with long spikes to prevent any attackers from crawling under the house and hoisting up the floor. He died at Ridgetown August 24, 1864, intestate. He had something of the philanthropist in his makeup, having donated the site for the first Methodist Church and first Presbyterian Church. His brother, Philander Colby, who had located north of Ridgetown on the farm that was afterwards acquired by Robert Buller, lot 11 in the 5th concession, came to Ridgetown after the death of Ebenezer and made most of the surveys and subdivisions on lot ten in the tenth concession. Philander was given credit for being the proprietor of a local mint. His coins, however, always passed at par in the settlement and his right to make them was never questioned. His house in Ridgetown is the brick dwelling behind the present B. J. Smith apartment house on the location of the original settler's cabin.

The early settlers in this district were not literary men, but manual workers. Some were farmers, some mechanics, but whatever the trade, there was no loafing; each had to grow his own living, otherwise go hungry.

THE MARSHES



WILLIAM MARSH, familiarly known as "Daddy," was highly imaginative. His wife, who by the way lived until she was 104 years old, used to say when he was entertaining his visitors with his stories: "Daddy, you are the worst liar the Lord ever let live." Daddy told the wonderful stories until he probably believed in them himself. When asked as to how he came to settle here, his reply was that he had climbed a tall pine tree at Toronto and saw this land, that it was good and made straight for it. About the quantity of game in these parts, he had to say that at one time, the deer were so thick that when he was hoeing corn, a large herd came along, that he took after them with a hoe and killed one which had become mired in a snow bank. On another occasion he claimed to have crossed Lake Erie on the ice, that it took him and a companion three days. They had started with a small quantity of food, nothing more, but when night came on they stopped, built a fire and cooked their meal on the ice. One of his listeners, whose wonder was excited, asked where the wood came from. Daddy was nonplussed for a moment and then said he was mistaken, he guessed, about the fire. He

had the only hand mill for grinding in the settlement. His mill consisted of two stones which were turned by hand. The corn or wheat was poured into a hole in the upper stone and as the upper stone was turned, the corn was ground into meal and sifted out about the sides. These stones were used by all the early settlers and when the old house on the Watterworth farm was moved in 1911, out from under it came Daddy's mill.

Alexander Marsh, one of Daddy's sons, received the patent or Crown grant for the south half of lot eight in the ninth concession. And another of his sons, Henry Myers Marsh, was one of the earliest storekeepers, the first storekeeper being Malcolm McLean in 1851. William Marsh was sufficiently advanced in years by 1853 that he conveyed his farm with the exception of a strip along the west side of Erie Street, to his son Henry Myers Marsh, but by 1862, Henry Myers Marsh was sold out by the sheriff through judgements recovered against him by his creditors, among the creditors being the Honorable Isaac Buchanan, a wholesale merchant located at the city of Hamilton. Each settler could homestead one hundred acres, and file on an additional one hundred acres, which he could buy from the government at a very small price per acre. William Marsh, evidently, filed on the south half of lot nine and assigned his rights to the Honorable Isaac Buchanan, because the patent for that hundred acres was granted to the Honorable Isaac Buchanan.

Like many of the early settlers, William Marsh was buried on his farm, his grave, (unless it has been removed) is in Wheeler's mill yard towards the south side near Oak Street. His settler's cabin stood a little back of the present residence of William Merrifield on Erie Street. The original log house was torn down by George Rockey about 1867.

Mrs. Marsh used to do some shopping in Toronto where she went twice on foot, a distance of 185 miles, carrying a load both ways. At her one hundred and first birthday, the village turned out to honor the occasion. A large number gathered in John Mitton's grove where Hitch's brickyard is at present located. Here a platform was erected upon which the old lady, surrounded by the leading citizens, was seated. Speeches were made by Dr. Smith, John Moody, John White and others, and the old lady was presented with a medal suitably engraved, at present in Mrs. Lake's possession.

EDMUND MITTON

Edmund Mitton was a weaver in the Old Country. He and his wife must have been a sturdy pair because after they, with their children, had landed in New York, they walked all the way to Colonel Talbot's place on Lake Erie, a distance of over five hundred miles, and Mrs. Mitton carried the baby in her arms; the baby being the late John Mitton, father of E. D.

Mitton and W. W. Mitton, Mrs. Porterfield and Mrs. Alice Gosnell of this town. There were eight children of Edmund Mitton altogether. Besides John Mitton, both James S. Mitton and William Mitton spent their entire lives in Ridgetown. The Mitton farm adjoined that of Watson on the east.

JAMES WATSON



JAMES WATSON was born in England in 1793 and died in Ridgetown in 1876. He located on what is Ward One, Ridgetown, in 1822. His son, Zenas Watson, subdivided most of Ward One. James Watson was a little man with all the qualities of a typical John Bull. He walked all the way from here to Philadelphia when making his first trip home after doing settlement duties on his farm. He was a farmer by occupation in the Old Country and used to tell that while at Dover with a drove of cattle to be shipped to feed Wellington's army, he could hear the boom of the cannon at Waterloo and knew the fight must be in progress. I think his hearing must have been quite equal to Daddy Marsh's sight.

As I have already said, the first settlers were not literary men and while they had sufficient book knowledge for their needs, when their children grew up, they all suffered from lack of schooling. There were no books, no free libraries, no means by which a child, however anxious he might be, could gain any knowledge outside of his daily grind, but they all learned to work and learned the lesson so well that it became a fixed habit and no matter what prosperity came to them as years went by, they were very restless unless kept constantly employed.

THE FIRST NEWSPAPER

As time went on a newspaper was published at Hamilton. The yearly subscription was \$5.00. A number of the settlers combined together to get it and it was read and passed around until nothing was left. The advent of the newspaper was so important that on one occasion it stopped for a time and Thomas Scane, father of the surveyor and son of the original Thomas; made a trip all the way to Hamilton to see what could be the matter.

WHISKEY

A barn raising or corn husking or logging bee was an event. Whiskey cost twenty-five cents a gallon. The barn could not be raised without whiskey and with lots of whiskey no one was able to raise the barn. James Watson called in the neighbors to raise a large log barn on the property now located at the north end of Walnut street. The raising started with a half barrel of whiskey. No work was done until the whiskey was all gone. When it was gone, no one would work until more was forthcoming, and the barn was finally raised on the last of a two gallon jug. Still, few of the settlers were addicted to its constant use. It seemed to have been more of a frolic than otherwise, although while under the influence, it took very little provocation to start a fight and as there were no constables and no court proceedings, the expense of a fight was not nearly so great as it is now.

RICHARD PHELPS

Richard Phelps, also known as "Daddy Phelps" came into the settlement in 1852. At that time there was something in the nature of a village. He was the Methodist minister, the magistrate, the doctor, a manufacturer and farmer, beloved by all. His shingle mill was situated directly back of Mrs. Pilger's house on the south side of Main Street, and it was there the town's first boiler explosion occurred. The boiler blew up one noon, injuring Daddy severely.

It became necessary for Daddy in his magisterial capacity to sit on the case of our late townsman, William Barclay (The Colonel) for fighting with one of the Pangburns; said fight taking place at the corner of Erie and Main Streets and lasting the greater part of six hours without anyone on hand to call time. It is now called a fight to a finish, and in this case both were pretty well finished, but the Colonel held the honors at the end. They were summoned before the magistrate in order that the majesty of the law might be asserted. The magistrate decided to bind the Colonel over to keep the peace and for that purpose, it required bondsmen. As soon as the necessity for bondsmen became apparent to the audience, they forthwith departed so that Daddy himself had to become the bondsman for it would never do to send any citizen to jail if it could possibly be avoided.

COLONEL PRINCE

For a long time Colonel Prince, of Sandwich, was the only lawyer. His field extended all the way from Sandwich to Toronto and if a lawyer was needed, unless the settler was first to retain Colonel Prince he would have to get along without a lawyer. Worked out practically, it is related that in the only law suit the early community had, the Colonel got a judgment for one of the parties for possession of the farm claimed by another. The defeated man at the first opportunity presented the Colonel with a

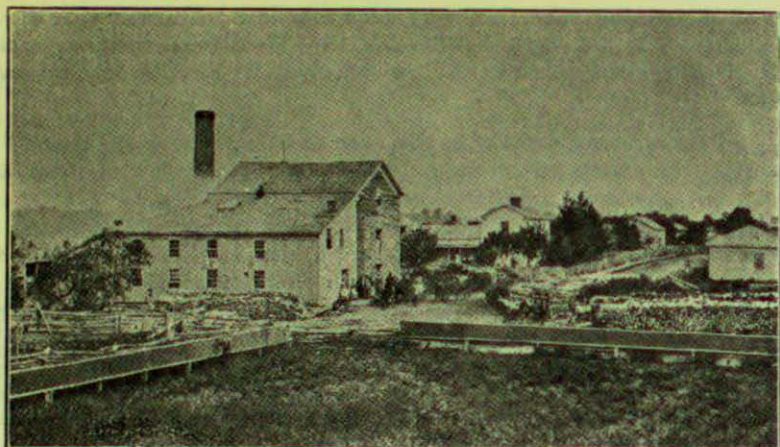
brace of wild turkeys and then persuaded him that there was an error in the judgment with the result that the first time the Colonel went to Toronto he had the judgment set aside and the other man re-instated in his former position.

So far we have dealt with the very first settlers on the ground on which the town stands. It might be well to note the names of those who took up the adjoining properties, and all of whom together formed the first local settlement. Lot eight in the ninth concession was taken up by Alexander Marsh; lot seven in the ninth by Levi Cornwall; lot six in the ninth by John Reeder; lot five in the tenth by James Scafe; lot eleven in the ninth by Richard Tyhurst; lot twelve in the ninth by Orwell Wilson; lot twelve in the tenth by Deacon John Willson; lot eleven in the tenth by Mr. White, an American. White assigned his interest to Samuel Kitchen, who obtained the patent on the 11th of March, 1937. The Ridge Road, now Main Street, was originally called the Middle Road and the original settlers received their patents not according to concession but as "lot so and so, north of the Middle Road," or south of the Middle Road after the manner of the lots north and south of the Talbot Road.

MOODY'S MILL



MOODY'S MILL was the first permanent industrial establishment in Ridgetown. It was built in 1855 at the corner of York and Water Streets, by George Moody, and in 1858, conveyed by him to his son, John Moody. It was a flour mill with a woollen mill in connection. In 1881 John Moody took his son, John A. Moody, into partnership with him and built a new frame grist mill with woollen mill in connection on Main Street. This mill was hardly completed before the roller process of grinding flour swept over the country, and in order to keep pace with the times it became necessary to build again and install the new process. In 1883 John Moody and Son built the large brick mill which is still standing, and installed the new process. In 1883 John Moody also built two brick stores, part of the Union Block, and also the large brick house now owned by C. W. Johnston. The frame woollen mill and grist mill combined on Main Street was burned July 11, 1889, and at the same time the brick mill was badly damaged. In 1889 the Moody family must have been the heaviest tax payers in Ridgetown; for in addition to the properties I have mentioned, they owned a number of houses. There is no question that John Moody did a great deal for the town while he was here. His mill is still carrying on, being now operated by George T. Mickle & Sons. The old mill on York Street became first a grain elevator and was used by Mr. Newman, an American, for several years. It was sub-



The First Mill in Ridgetown

Moody's First Mill at junction of Water and York Streets, 1855 to 1879. At the time the picture was taken, York Street stopped at the Creek and the cloth was stretched to dry where York Street now is located. Brooks, Kerby & Woods bought a site for a sawmill on December 5, 1853. Kerby ran it for a few years when it was burned and was not replaced. Dr. Young refers to this mill in his article.

sequently converted once more into a grist mill by the Howard Farmers' Co-Operative, but was destroyed by fire about 1926 and was not rebuilt. The site of the first mill is now occupied by the P. D. Bates plant. The woolen mills were never rebuilt after the fire of 1889. Mr. John Moody, at the age of ninety-seven, died on March 31, 1930, at Weston, where he had been living with his two sons, Edward and Duncan. John A. Moody has been dead a number of years. He was the first treasurer of Ridgetown.

TOWN MEETING 1843



HERE WAS NO municipal organization as we know it today until 1850. Prior to that the levying of taxes and disbursing of the money was in the hands of the magistrates in quarter sessions. These magistrates were generally retired army officers who were appointed by the Crown. The inhabitants were allowed town meetings once a year to elect certain officers. I am able to give the proceedings of one of these town meetings.

List of the Township Officers elected at a Town Meeting held in the schoolhouse No. 5, Ridge Road, on Monday, the second day of January, A.D. 1843 for the Township of Howard: Mr. Christopher Arnold in the schoolhouse No. 5, Ridge Road, now Ridgetown, on Monday, the second day of January, A.D. 1843 for the Township of Howard: Mr. Christopher Arnold in the chair; Mr. George Duck, Esq., and Mr. John Williams, Esq., District Council; Mr. Thomas Rushton, Town Clerk; Mr. Richard Rushton, Assessor; Mr. William Sheldon, Collector.

Common School Commissioners—Messrs. David Arnold, William Desmond, Richard Rushton, John Beaton, John Desmond, Benjamin Bell, Josiah Jewett.

Poundkeepers—River Thames, Isaac Palmer; concessions 3 and 5, Archie McBrayne; Ridge Road, Edmund Mitton; concession 8, William Anderson; Talbot Road, Hooper King.

Road Masters—Ridge Road: Thomas Scane and Edmund Mitton
Howard Road: James W. Brown and Jeptha Turner. The Third concession: John Spence. Townline East: Nicholas Whitesell. River Thames: Christopher Arnold and Randle McDonald. Townline West, Joseph Dezelett, John Hawgood and James Wood. Talbot Road: D. S. Baldwin, William Sheldon, John Palmer, and John Desmond. Lake Shore: John Shippey, William Ruddle. Sideroad between lots 81, 82, S.T.R.: Elijah Palmer. The twelfth concession: Robert McKinlay and James Cruickshank. Sideroad between lots 86 and 87: James Clark. Eleventh concession: John Green and George Moody. The tenth concession: James McGregor and John McKerracher. The eighth concession: Neal Sinclair. The second concession: Alex McKay. Seventh concession: Patrick Moore, George Lemmormen and Donald Campbell.

Horses remain as before, not free commoners—(Signed) Thomas Rushton, Town Clerk.

There were no fences and it was possible to register a stock mark or brand with the town clerk. I give below a few samples of these registrations.

"The mark of James W. Brown is two swallow forks out of the left ear registered this 25th day of January 1843.—(Signed) Thomas Rushton, Town Clerk.

The mark of Richard B. Rushton is a half penny out of the tip of the left ear. Registered this 9th day of Feb. 1843.—(Signed) Thomas Rushton, Town Clerk."

And this one appears later; apparently the Clerk did not think how it might sound.

"The mark of the widow Whitesell is a crop off the right ear and two slits in the same. Recorded this 14th day of April, Anno Domini 1851.—(Signed) William Latimer, Township Clerk."

Referring again to the town meeting and quarter sessions form of Municipal Government. This form of Municipal Government was a duplicate of that in use in New York state whence most of the U. E. Loyalists came into Upper Canada. The town meeting is of very ancient origin. Town is from the Anglo Saxon "Tun", meaning a township; hence although there was no town as we understand it the word was used in its ancient sense.

The assessor appointed at the town meeting did not value anything. He merely made out a list of each man's property, usually on town meeting day. He put down what kind of a house each lived in, how many stoves and fireplaces there was in each house, how much arable and meadow land and how many horses, cattle, sheep, pigs each possessed. Every proprietor was liable to a fine if he gave in a list misrepresenting his property. The list was forwarded to the Clerk of the Peace, who made out the collector's roll, a simple matter because each of the articles had a value on them by statute. A cow's value was so much, and so on regardless of the difference in cattle. The collector's roll was then delivered to the collector who obtained the money and paid it to a treasurer appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions.

The greater part of the direct taxes were imposed by the magistrates themselves; although some rates were fixed, such as a rate to provide a salary for the members of the Provincial Assembly. The magistrates decided what rate was necessary in each district and some times ordered special rates for townships or parts of townships for purposes of local administration; so that the inhabitants exercised no power over the question of their tax. They appointed the officers, it is true, but only to execute the orders of the magistrate. In 1843 a change was made and district councils were provided to take over the governing powers of the magistrates, and you will notice that at the town meeting, whose minutes have been given two district councillors were appointed. This is the first year that the inhabitants had that privilege. The district council idea lasted until 1850. The Court of Quarter Sessions is still in existence. It is now presided over, not by magistrates, but by the County Judge. It is no longer an instrument of government, but exists for the trial of causes.

The town meetings were called by the magistrates. They issued a writ for the purpose. Notices were posted up by the clerk and the people were brought together. The bylaws passed by the district council had to be laid before the Governor-in-Council, who might veto any of the bylaws. The people were allowed to appoint two councillors when the township contained more than three hundred electors. A poll was kept and in it

each man's vote was recorded at the town meeting. There was no secret vote. Another matter that might as well be mentioned here from the fact that it was only found in regard to the County of Kent, is an institution called "The Provisional Council". Originally it was the United Counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton with Sandwich the county town, or judicial centre. In 1847 the brother of Judge Woods as member for Kent, carried a bill through the house forming Kent into a separate district known as the District of Kent and under it a Provisional Council was organized for the purpose of providing the new district with a jail and court house and until this was done Kent was not to be entitled to separate existence and after it was done the ordinary method of county government was to go on. This council met on the 17th of August, 1847, in Chatham, at the Odd Fellows' Hall, and continued to sit until its purpose was accomplished when it disappeared; so that it was a special council created by statute to deal with a particular purpose and was not of general application throughout the Province.

KENT TOWNSHIP NAMES

Governor Simcoe came to Canada in October 1791, resigned in 1796 and landed back in England in October of that year. He named nineteen counties in Ontario, but not likely all the townships. He and his advisors were Englishmen and from England came most of the names given to our townships.

Starting at the city of London, England, going east down the Thames we come first to Tilbury, a town now, but originally a fort built by Henry VIII to defend the outer reaches of the Thames. Leaving the Thames and going north along the east shore of England we come next to Harwich, now a naval base for destroyers. Next along the north shore is Orford, an unimportant port. And next above Orford came Aldborough, the site of a Roman City, Isuriuk.

ROMNEY named for the Romney Marsh in Kent County, England. This marsh, so called, is 17 miles long and 12 miles wide, mostly a sheep pasture noted for its large and lonely churches.

HOWARD is believed to have been named for the celebrated English family of that name, one of whom, Catherine Howard, was one of the many wives of Henry VIII.

CAMDEN: William Camden, who is buried in Westminster Abbey, was at one time chancellor. He set apart a section of London City for artists and writers giving it the name of Camden Town. There is also a Camden Road.

CHATHAM was named for William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

DOVER was named for the seaport on the southeast coast of England.

ZONE was a much later township named long after Simcoe left Canada. It was part of the 50,000 acres granted to the Moravian Mission Indians. The area was surrendered to the Crown about 1837 and thrown open for settlement about 1842. I have no idea as to the origin of the name. It was probably named by the surveyors as designating a geographical area not conflicting with any other township name in Ontario.

RALEIGH was probably named for Sir Walter Raleigh.

TOWNSHIP OF HOWARD



THE EARLY HISTORY of Ridgetown is bound up with the history of the Township of Howard until it became incorporated as a village. Up to that time its affairs were administered by the township council. The first township council for Howard was elected in January 1850, and held its first meeting at Mitton's schoolhouse on January 21. The first council consisted of John Willson, George Duck, Fred Arnold, William Ruddle, John McKerracher. It was moved by Mr. Arnold, seconded by Mr. Duck, that Mr. Willson be appointed "Townreeve". Carried. Edmund B. Harrison was appointed township clerk pro tem. Two notices of resolutions were given and the council adjourned to the village of Morpeth to meet on the next day. The yeas and nays were called on the motion to adjourn and the townreeve gave the casting vote in favor of the motion. Right here it might be as well to take notice of the word "Townreeve" for it was not used before 1850. According to Professor Ashley the name "Reeve" for the presiding officer of the township council is peculiar to Canada and was possibly the result of the revived interest in early English institutions that marked the period. The word "Reeve" is an ancient term. He was the chief magistrate in England of a town or district. The shirereeve was the sherriff. The manorreeve was the chief executive officer under the Lord of the Manor.

In the meeting at Morpeth on the 22nd of January, John Willson resigned his position of reeve and George Duck was appointed. Among other resolutions passed was the following:

"Resolved that as the Governor-in-Coouncil has not under the present law power to disallow any bylaw and as there is no limit to the powers of the council as to the amount and number of rates and taxes to be raised and as the people may be taxed to a ruinous and unbearable extent and may be saddled with a variety of debts for twenty years to come and as no council hereafter to be elected will have power to alter any by-law made for that purpose until the whole of such debts shall have been paid. We bind ourselves by this resolution not to pass any by-law

for this year of 1850 for the purpose of taxing the people of this township either general or sectional until such bylaw or bylaws shall after being read the first and second time in the council be posted in the clerk's office at least thirty days for inspection in order that any complaint may be heard by the council at the first meeting after the expiration of the thirty days."

Bylaw No. 1 of the township passed January 22, 1850, divided the township into wards for the election of the councillors for 1851. Other bylaws were passed for appointing officers, for taxing exhibitions, for restraining dogs from running at large, to raise money for school purposes, to remunerate the councillors, granting licenses to houses of public entertainment. A splendid picture is presented to us by these first councillors. Here they stand facing a new order of things from what they had been accustomed to in the past. Now great power and responsibility had passed from the Governor and Council to the people themselves, including the power of taxation. They faced this responsibility in fear and trembling and as honest men, they now resolve that this power shall not be used during their term of office oppressively. Every move is made with dignity and caution, even on the vote to adjourn it is a tie. The names are all recorded so that each might carry full responsibility for what he did. Such then was the inception of responsible government in the township.

One feels that these men would much sooner have had the old order remain. One at least, George Duck, had fought as a member of a St. Thomas Company in 1837-38-39 to preserve the old order. They were undoubtedly the best men in the township to fill the new and important positions to which they had been entrusted by the other inhabitants. They accepted the offices under a sense of duty and not for personal glorification. Duck was an outstanding figure for he had been chairman of the Provisional Council to build the Court House, and in the present year of 1850, was named by the county councillors as the first warden of Kent.

Ridgetown in January 1850 was designated as "Mitton's Schoolhouse." The town meeting was held here in 1843, again in 1844, in 1845, in 1846, in 1847, 1848, 1849, and the first meeting of the new council was held here in 1850.

The Mitton's Schoolhouse referred to was the one built by William Nash on the site of the block in which Mr. Silcox and Mr. Kennedy now carry on business. It was used as a schoolhouse and meeting place as late as 1854. It was later used as a butcher shop by Blacksmith Mitton.

The new school house was also a "Mitton's School House", situated on the north side of York Street on Edmund Mitton's farm.

FIRST MENTION OF RIDGETOWN

The first record of a place of business in Ridgetown is found in the minutes of the township council of December 1st 1851, when Malcolm McLean was granted a license to keep a saloon and grocery in the Village of Ridgetown until the first of March, 1852, upon paying a license fee of two pounds and giving Robert Buller and James Ruddle as his sureties. On May 10, 1852, a license for a tavern was granted to Josiah Reeder.

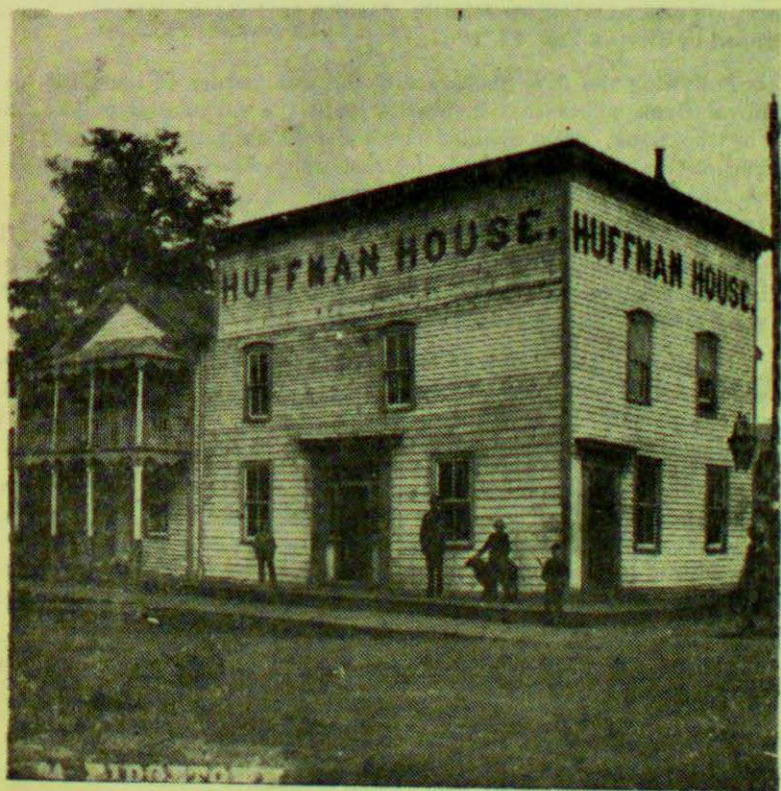
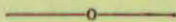
On May 10, 1852, the inhabitants of Morpeth appeared before the council offering a free site for a town hall and one hundred and fifty pounds. A representation from Ridgetown asked for the hall to be located in Ridgetown. The matter was laid over, but eventually the hall in Morpeth was built by private subscription and on April 30, 1853, the trustees of the hall offered the free use of it to the township council.

On August 21, 1854, a license for a Temperance Hotel in Ridgetown was granted to William Tyhurst. On April 1, 1853, complaint was made to the township council that the construction of the Great Western Railway was stopping up the road between lots six and seven on the front range. On June 6, 1853, the clerk reported that Henry Dodge had not been assessed. On December 3, 1853, John Britton was given a license to keep a saloon in Ridgetown. On March 13, 1855, a bylaw was directed prepared to provide a road from Hill's Dock to Antrim. On April 16, 1855, Henry Dodge was given a license to keep a tavern in Ridgetown. On October 9, 1856, permission was given to the Morpeth Brass Band to hold a concert in the town hall at Ridgetown. By bylaw No. 1 of 1857, Erie Street North of Main Street, Ridgetown was opened. On January 19, 1857, Mr. Whitlock, a barrister of Morpeth, was made township solicitor. On February 25, 1857, the reeve and clerk were authorized to sign a petition for a lighthouse at Rondeau, and on May 6, 1857, a petition of the people of Morpeth was presented, asking for a bylaw to prohibit hogs from running at large in the streets. On December 20, 1858, a petition from Mary Wallace, and others, praying that the council close William street in Thamesville. On February 22, 1859, William Sheldon was given a saloon license for Morpeth. On February 24, 1860, the office of the treasurer and clerk was divided and Mr. E. B. Harrison was appointed treasurer. In 1867 the reeves and deputy-reeves were appointed by a direct vote of the people.

In 1869 the following licenses were granted for the sale of liquor: In Morpeth—David E. Smith, Dominion House; D. W. Sexton, the Sheldon House; William Teetzel, The Commercial Hotel; John Bennett, The Temperance Hotel. In Ridgetown—Henry Dodge, Dodge Hotel; N. S. Benton, Western Hotel; Thomas Moore, "We Are at Home Hotel." In Howard—Mary Fish, Union Inn; Duncan Gillies, Travellers' Home; James Williams, Wellington Inn. Shop licenses—James Robertson, Selton; Andrew Hayward, Morpeth and Ridgetown; Charles Shaw, Morpeth.

On June 19, 1869, Dr. Smith and twenty-five other inhabitants petitioned for assistance in building sidewalks in Ridgetown which was refused. On November 4, 1871, a bylaw was passed granting a bonus to The Canada Southern Railway, of \$8,000.00.

On July 22, 1874, Charles Graham's Hotel in Ridgetown was destroyed by fire, and on the 23rd of September, 1874, The Southern Hotel of Ridgetown was destroyed by fire.



DODGE HOTEL

This hotel building stood on the site now occupied in part by the Royal Bank building. It was the first hotel built in Ridgetown.

Ebenezer Colby, owner of the farm, sold the corner lot, containing one-quarter acre, to Duncan McLean in 1853, for £6-5-0 Halifax currency;

the pound being taken at \$4.00 and the shillings at 20 cents. McLean put a building on the lot and sold to Dougald Leitch in 1856 for £325-0-0, who in turn sold it to Duncan Campbell for £375-0-0 in 1857; and Campbell sold it to Henry Dodge the same year for the same amount. It remained in the Dodge family for many years. Henry Dodge died in 1873 and in 1878, his executors leased it to Napoleon Huffman who ran up the false fronts and put up his sign.

The frame building was entirely removed by Mrs. Statira Dodge about 1886, and a new three storey brick block built on the lot. The new building was known as the Queen's Hotel Block and contained three stores in addition to the hotel proper. The new block, however, was not a paying proposition and was sold to John M. Sheldon in 1904 for \$12,000, but was destroyed by fire on Feb. 14, 1907.

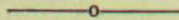
Following the fire, Sheldon sold the west corner of the large lot to the Royal Bank where that institution built the substantial building now used by the Bank, while Sheldon subsequently built the two storey brick building on the remainder of the lot and which block is now occupied by Clark's Hardware and the Dauphin Gocerry.

Henry Dodge married Statira Marsh, a daughter of Ridgetown's first white woman and at his death left a family of ten children, consisting of one boy, Albert, and nine girls. All the girls were exceptionally attractive and good looking. All subsequently married but one.

In spite of the fact that both the Dodge and Marsh families were numerous here at one time, only one descendant of either family is still in Ridgetown, namely, Henry Buller. Dr. Walter E. Lake was another, but since his death, none of his children are living here.

If the reader examines the picture of the Huffman House, he will see a boy and a dog. That dog was a big Newfoundland and a friendly dog who never picked quarrels with other dogs and would never fight unless forced into it, in which case, however, it was bad for his antagonist who usually went away on three legs loudly yelping and thereafter kept to the other side of the street.

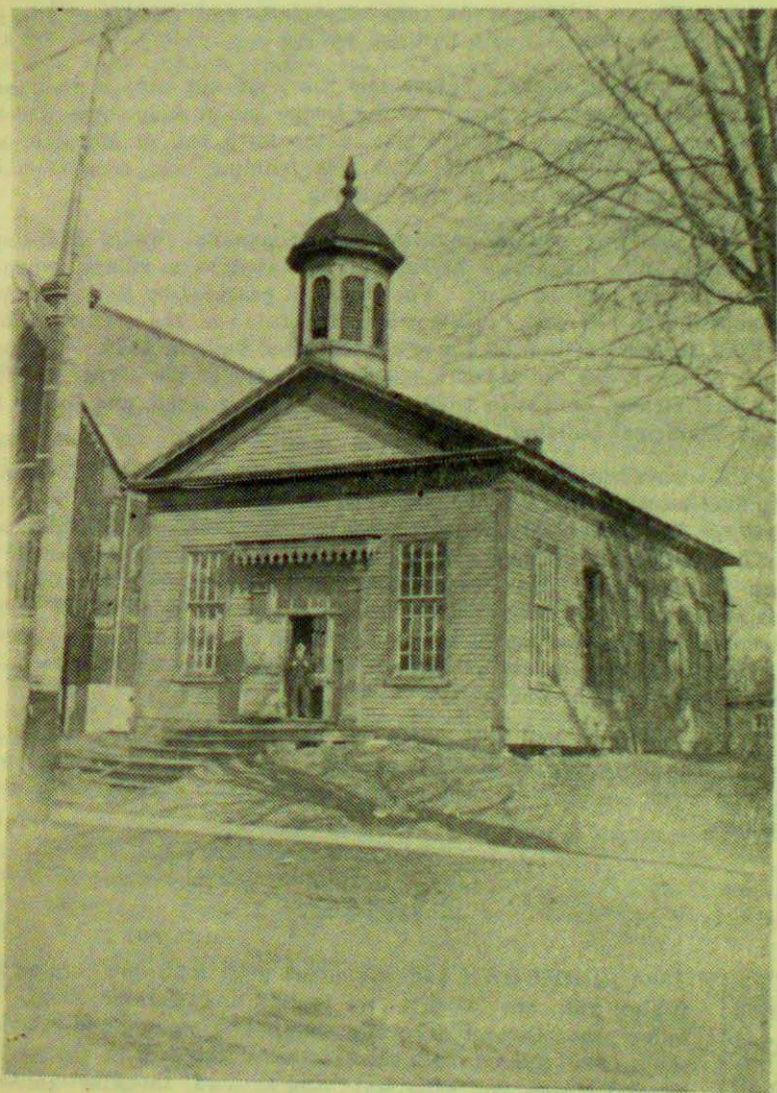
Dogs at one time were nearly as plentiful on Main Street as cars are today.



THE OLD TOWN HALL

On April 16, 1855, bylaw No. 8 of the Township of Howard was passed for the purpose of providing a township hall for the Township of Howard. The bylaw recites that Ebenezer Colby had offered a free site, village lot No. 7, on Main Street, Ridgetown; that the inhabitants of Ridgetown had raised by subscription the sum of one hundred pounds; that a second one hundred pounds was to be raised by the collection of

rates over the whole township. The building committee named in the bylaw was Charles Grant, John Wilson, John McKinlay, John Ferguson and John Mitton. On June 15, 1855, the two tenders submitted for its



construction were opened. D. McIntyre tendered at \$1,400.00 and James Ferguson and sons at \$1,175.00. The tender of James Ferguson and sons (said sons being John and Robert, who finished their days in Thamesville)

was accepted. The building was duly built and the first meeting of the council in the new town hall was held on August 30, 1856. James A. Rolls was reeve; C. Ashwin was deputy reeve (both elected to office by the council itself) William McKerracher, Francis Ogletree and John Desmond were councillors. William Latimer was clerk and treasurer; Richard Marsh and E. B. Harrison were auditors for the year 1856.

The township council, before this time, did not have a permanent meeting place. It met frequently at the Dodge Inn at Ridgetown, and the Caswell Inn at Morpeth. It also met in the town hall at Morpeth, and apparently at Thamesville, but after this building was completed the sittings were held regularly in this building.

This building was the centre of the communal life of Ridgetown and district until Ridgetown became incorporated as a village, when it provided its own meeting place. The first hall provided by Ridgetown was a combined fire hall and council chamber, located at the corner of Erie and York streets. It was of frame construction, built in 1879. The next council chamber was the old M.E. Church situated at the corner of York and Albert streets, bought in 1889, and was burnt in 1896, and finally the present Municipal building.

All travelling shows gave their entertainments in the old town hall. All public meetings were held there until Porter's Opera House was built in 1878. The Porter block now owned by Mrs. Arthur McKinlay still stands at the corner of Main and Erie streets. The first show given in the Opera House was "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the building was the first three storey structure built in Ridgetown. It was the pride of the village and so well constructed that it is still a splendid monument to the builders. Mr. Malcomson, son-in-law of John P. McKinlay, was the architect and Henry Porter was the owner.

The old town hall still exists. It has since been bricked and enlarged. The Township of Howard uses it as its municipal headquarters. The one room upstairs is used by the two I.O.D.E. chapters for their meetings.

1864



IN 1864 RIDGETOWN had one steam grist mill, one carding and fulling mill, one ashery, two saddle and harness shops, one tailor shop, three blacksmith shops, two wagon and carriage shops, two cabinet and chair factories, three shoe shops, four general stores, one drug store and grocery, three hotels, three temperance societies, six church congregations, namely: Presbyterian, Wesleyan Methodist, Episcopal Methodist, New Connection Methodist, Regular Baptist and Church of Christ Disciples.

It also had a Bible Society, an Orange Lodge, a good school, mails three times a week received from Thamesville and despatched to Morpeth. Division Court was held at Ridgetown and Morpeth alternately.

The Presbyterian Church in Ridgetown was built in 1854, of frame at a cost of \$1,200.00, seating two hundred, the Rev. Mr. Forest, minister, who also took charge at Morpeth, Haggart's settlement in Harwich, Thamesville and Clearville. The Episcopal Methodists had service in the Presbyterian Church every two weeks at 7 p.m. The Disciples met in the town hall, the Wesleyan Methodists had the Rev. Thomas Hanna for minister.

The officials of the temperance organization, Ridgetown, were James Pangburn, Prudentia Britton, Ephriam Britton, John Hawkins, Jane Wetherall, Benjamin Wilson, Robert Britton, Miss M. J. Lawrence, Miss M. J. Pangburn, Thomas Puoy.

The officials of the Orange Lodge were George Gosnell, William Bailey, Francis Brien, Henry Dodge, and John Weitzell.

Those engaged in business were: Mrs. A. R. Brash, grocer; Robert Brash, carpenter; James Britton, harnessmaker; John Clantanaff, cabinetmaker; E. Colby, farmer; Walter Coleman, cabinet and chair factory; Henry Dodge, hotel; Charles Elford, Clerk; T. Stoakley, proprietor Farmers' Home Hotel; Robert Flater, carpenter; Marshall Graham, carpenter; Nixon Graham, carpenter; Rev. Mr. Hall, New Connection Methodist minister; Levi S. Hancock, postmaster, tailor and British and Foreign Bible Society Depository; William Harrison, student; William Kitson drygoods and groceries; Mrs. Leitch, proprietor Western Hotel; Charles Lincoln, wagon and carriage maker; George Lozar, cabinet maker; Donald A. McGugan, machinist; Mrs. Morgan, milliner and dressmaker; James S. Mitton, farmer; James Mitton, blacksmith; R. C. Palmer, boots and shoes; Joseph Porter, cabinetmaker, H. M. Proudfoot, physician; John Moody's Mills, grist, carding, cloth dressing; Thomas Schlenker, harness maker; J. J. Simmons, general store; Jacob Smith, M.D., coroner, physician, surgeon, and dealer in drugs, medicines, groceries, oils, varnish paints and turpentine, also carried an assortment of all kinds of patent medicines; Richard Serson, harnessmaker; James Watson, farmer; Levi Wetherell, boots and shoes; Charles B. Willson, buggies, wagons and blacksmith shop; Clark Wilbur, boots and shoes; William H. White, teacher; Rev. W. S. Wright, Episcopal Methodist minister; Rev. G. Brown, his colleague, James Young, blacksmith.

From a County of Kent directory published in 1864 by T. R. Sutherland, of Ingersoll, we are enabled to obtain information about adjoining villages. For instance Morpeth: In 1864 Morpeth had four general stores, three groceries, one harness shop, five shoe shops and two tailor shops, three hotels, one carriage factory, two cabinet shops, one cooperage, one bakery, three blacksmith shops two butcher shops, one

carding and fulling mill and foundry, a town hall, Masonic and Orange Lodges, two churches, four physicians, a good school, mails daily east and west on Talbot Road, Hill's warehouse and dock were just building. The population was 600. The attendance at the school was 100. J. J. Boulter was principal, and Miss Tobias was assistant.

The Village of Morpeth was laid out by William Sheldon and Post Office established in 1830. Captain Wheatley was first postmaster. The first store was erected in 1830 and kept by Henry Lee. A tannery was opened in the same year by Robert Wood, and a blacksmith shop by Joseph Eberle. In 1833 the first frame building was erected by Edward Lee. In 1841 William Sheldon built a hotel and laid out the eastern part of the village. In 1846 Morpeth had three stores, two hotels, two blacksmith shops, one distillery, one cabinet shop, one tailor shop. In 1852, it had a population of 331 and in 1859, 500.

Duart—Post Office was established in 1857. In 1864 the village had one grist mill, two sawmills, a rake and cradle steam factory, two cabinet shops, one blacksmith shop, two shoe shops, two tailor shops, one harness shop, four general stores, two hotels, two tanneries, two churches, a school, an Orange Lodge and two Temperance Societies. The Howard and Orford fair was held here and at Morpeth alternately. The township council met in Duart and there was a daily mail. The Duart Baptist Church was built of frame in 1856, size 30 by 50 feet, cost \$800.00. Rev. Archibald Campbell, minister. The Wesleyan Methodist was built, same size, in 1862. Rev. Thomas Hanna, minister.

Clearville—In 1864, N. S. Benton kept hotel there. Charles Landos was a cabinetmaker.

Thamesville—Formerly Tecumseh. In 1846 it had fifty inhabitants and in 1864, 500, and for many years formed a part of the Township of Howard.

In 1850 the population of Howard Township was 2,465; in 1861 the occupiers of the land in Howard totalled 462.

In 1862 there was one High School in the County of Kent, called The Grammar School and located at Chatham. The total receipts for this school from all sources that year were \$1,336.48; the total expenditure was \$1,016.80; the master's salary was \$782.60; the number of pupils attending were 71; from Chatham 25; from the county 43, and from other counties 3. Thirty-four took Latin, eight Greek, twenty-four French, forty-nine Mathematics, sixty-two History, fifty-two Geography and twenty Physical Science.

In 1854 the Ferguson family, who afterwards built up large fortunes in Thamesville, came to Ridgetown. John and Robert were carpenters and built many of the early buildings here, including the Township Hall.

DR. S. N. YOUNG

Dr. S. N. Young was born in Ridgetown in 1854; took his Collegiate training in St. Thomas High School; taught school for a number of years, both in Kent and Elgin counties, and lived to see many of his former pupils attain positions of prominence. He was assistant teacher in the High School at Ridgetown in 1884, graduated in medicine in 1888; received the Medical Council's certificate in 1889; practiced in Fletcher for eighteen years and in Ridgetown for twenty-two years; and he was the Medical Health Officer for Ridgetown during the greater part of his practice here, and held the office until his death.

MY FIRST RECOLLECTIONS IN RIDGETOWN



THE FIRST BRICK building I ever saw stands yet, and is used as a dentist's office. J. S. Mitton's farm house next in line. At the corner of Main and Albert Streets, James Young had a blacksmith shop. Outside the shop was a pole, twenty feet long above ground. In a line five feet from the ground, to the top was bored a series of holes, one foot apart and the two lower holes each had a peg. The trial of strength consisted in pulling out the first peg, placing it in the third hole, the second peg in the fourth hole, and so on to the top and reverse to the ground. I saw one man do the trial. Jim moved to a shop north of the present Arlington site. Here I saw a pair of oxen shod. They were thrown strapped so as

to have no movement. Two shoes were put on each foot and sixteen shoes on each pair of oxen

On the corner where the Arlington now stands, John Britton lived and kept a hardware store. William Passmore, his successor, lived and kept a shoe store. He eventually bought the building and moved it to Church Street, where part of his family live at the present time.

The next business place, a large frame building with a wing on each side was where W. Coleman had a furniture store. At a later date Joseph Jackson had a butcher shop. On north west corner of Erie and Main Streets, Mrs. Rich kept a store, and on the west of this Hayward had a grocery and liquor store, next a small frame building built for and used as a school house. One Millar was teacher. Two pupils, Abe Stover and H. E. Young, for some misdemeanor were asked to settle. They refused and bolted and Millar after them. They ran upstairs of an empty house and Millar made a good third. The boys jumped out an upstairs window and escaped.

Reeder's Hotel was run by Tom Moore. An invitation to patronize it was painted on the front, thus:

"We Are At Home Hotel"

By T. Moore

The hotel was burned and on part of the lot Dennis Lake built and started a drugstore. Dennis was a lover of wild animals and kept a fox chained behind the store. His next neighbor kept geese with no limit to their range. Guess what happened!

Next in line was John Potts' dwelling and still farther west George Sutherland's wagon shop. At a later date James Vanalstine owned the shop. On the west corner L. S. Hancock owned a building. Across Walnut Street, a frame house was occupied by a Downey family. George Watson and brother stocked it with dry goods and groceries. The upper story was rented to the I.O.O.F. The property now owned by the Shell Company was the property of John Watson and stood side to the road. He built an addition to the west side. The upper story he used to take pictures. The lower story was occupied by Bobby Grant as a candy store and dwelling. This part was afterwards used by George Watson for a magistrates office. Where the double brick residence of Mrs. N. West's now stands, was a saw mill and yard, owned by Kirby.

In this mill I first saw surgery performed by an edging saw. It was quick clean and a success. The edger put his hand where he should have put a board. In a split second he was minus a finger. I now come to the last house in the row, a cottage, a part of the present residence of A. J. Brush. Dr. Van Camp lived there.

I come to York Street. On the northwest corner of York and Victoria Avenue lived R. Porter, his mother, his sister Annie and brothers Henry and Robert. The old schoolhouse is the next in line. This was the second school house, also called Mitton's School House. At this time it stood end to the road. Now it stands side to the road and is used as a garage. Here I received my first public school education, along with many others. My first teacher was Mr. E. B. Harrison, who was county school inspector for many years, for the County of Kent. Among the pupils were George Watson, Dan Willson, Gil Cochrane, E. D. Mitton, Henry Beardsley, William and Sid Harrison, Zack Spence, George Mitton, James Brien, J. W. Mitton, Nancy, Sarah, and Maria Dodge, Isadore Mitton, Hannah Kirby, seniors.

The boys about my age were: Darwin and Frank Sinclair, Henry Britton, Jake Kinsey, Ed. Mitton (Captain), J. F. McKinlay, John Page, John Weston, W. Mitton, John McDiarmid, Ab. Dodge, John Moody, George Westland, Hart Proudfoot, Elizah Diamond, Joe Mitton, John and James McGregor and Thomas Nolan.

The old schoolhouse had two rows of beautiful pictures on each side of the room, each row full length of the room. All the animals of Ontario were represented in their colors and nicely painted or photographed. Here was a splendid chance to study natural history, but it was not used.

The teachers as I remember them were: E. B. Harrison, Mrs. McSween, F. Smith, E. Stewart, E. Masales, H. McDiarmid and Hattie Young, assistant, T. J. Tuthill, and D. A. Maxwell.

The old song twenty years ago tells the story of changes:

The old schoolhouse is altered now
The benches are replaced
By new ones very much the same
Our penknives had defaced.

Now, one of these teachers, on his way south after dark to interview one of the Board of Trustees, saw across the road fence a bright light. Curiosity overcame his better judgment. He investigated and found a burning log heap. This looked good and he stretched out beside it and slept until morning before seeing the trustee. He was our next teacher. He was partial to poetry and soon had us reciting in unison. I quote one verse of a poem that seemed to be an especial favorite:

James Ferguson was born in 1710,
One of the most wonderful men,
While he lived he kept his sheep in a pen
And lay on his back and studied the stars
And traced the courses of Venus and Mars.

He taught just one term and then left to seek other worlds to conquer.

The girls of my class were: Ada Rich, Annie Porter, Pamela Mitton, Maria and Elizabeth Mitton, Statira Dodge, Emma and Edith Van Alstine, Kate McDiarmid, Kit Early, and Bella McDiarmid.

After we had learned to count on the numeral frame, we used slates to do addition proper. We sat in the gallery, slate and pencil in hand, ready for action. Hannah Kirby was our monitor, and a good one she was too. Now Hannah lisped and this afforded us some amusement for a time, but we soon got used to it. Below us, on the floor, stood an easel, and on it a blackboard. As Hannah wrote a figure on the board she named it. Ten, five, nine, four, thix, draw a line and add up. The monitor was a necessity. No one teacher could do justice to so many pupils. Our school tax was twenty-five cents a month for each pupil.

The next residence was owned by Van Valkenburg, grandfather of C. V. Grant. Next in order was John Moody's residence and farther west

his first mill. Some years after, he added a woollen mill. The first mill was a grist mill. Gunder and Gibson leased both mills and ran them for years. Steam was the power and wood the fuel at that time. This fuel consisted of beech and maple body wood, four feet long, delivered for one dollar per cord. William Downy presided over this department for a long time. James Watson's farm was on the opposite side of the creek. A stream ran through what is now Watson's Grove. Tom Watson, then about ten years old, had the idea that this stream would be a fine place to erect a miniature saw mill. Tom dammed the creek and proceeded to erect the mill. Material was scarce but Tom was a genius. In a short time the mill was ready for trial. He turned on the power. It worked. He had no material fit for a small mill. Wood would not do. In his mother's garden grew a large quantity of beets, just the material he wanted. These were soon cut in slabs and neatly piled. About this time his Dad found the mill and Tom had to settle.

The property at present owned by Miss B. Clark and myself was at one time owned by Rev. R. Phelps. He had a shingle mill on the west side of the lot. It blew up and the owner was badly hurt. On the back part of the lot in the hollow he had a cranberry plot. On the next lot stood a building where Robert Britton had a blacksmith's shop. Second lot east was a frame house where resided one Pat McClasky, a jolly Irishman and a dandy singer. Dougald Leitch's hotel comes next in the row. This house was known far and wide for its good meals and bed. In those days agricultural implements were peddled over the country and not sold in shops. One Halloween a peddler drove his load in front of the hotel and when he came downstairs next morning his implements were hanging in the top of a willow tree, across the street.

One, Cheap John, made periodical visits to the village. He drove a closed wagon and had in it a great variety of goods. His method of selling was somewhat unique. He holds up a certain article and says: "I want three dollars for it. I ask no more and will take no less. Who will have it?"

About where Dr. Marr's office stands a fram house stood. Our family lived then in this house. The Township Hall was next. Where the Presbyterian Church now stands, was a dwelling house where E. Coburn lived. On this hill Dick Coburn and I spent many happy hours. Here is where I was first insulted. My outside clothing consisted of a sunbonnet and dress. A minister came by, placed his hand on my head and said, "What little girl is this?" What small boy would stand for that? He received his answer. I think the answer was satisfactory as he went away smiling.

On Erie Street, south west side, John Potts had a harness shop, in front of the site of the present post office. South of Ebenezer Street there were three white frame cottages. The first on the corner owned by

Ferguson Brothers, Thamesville, and occupied by Rev. Mr. Waddell, whose pastorate was Blenheim. Joining this lot was W. Lindop's lot. He also owned the property behind this lot as far west as the present water distributing tank. An ashery then stood where the tank is at present. John Page brought the Lindop property and some of his family have lived on it ever since. John Kirby lived on the next lot. Robert Floeter, a carpenter, was the last on that side of the street. Erie Street South was not opened up any farther than Ed. Scarlett's residence. The old river road, as it was known at that time, ran behind Scarlett's house, through woods, and across farms, to the 12th concession. On the east side of Erie Street, at Jane Street, Henry Clark had a residence and wagon shop. Charles Grant, Sr., lived in a house that stood on the site of the Bowling Lawn. W. Lindop's shoe shop (one of the two brick buildings in the place) where now is Srigley's Service Station. In the next building Thomas Rushton kept the post office. Post master and post office were in a few years changed, the office taken to Main Street and L. S. Hancock succeeding Rushton. On Ebenezer Street John Hatch and Moses Newcomb had a blacksmith shop at different dates. J. D. R. McLean stored and packed tobacco for shipment in the same shop. James Watt had a foundry in the same shop at a later date.

The lights at this time consisted of the tallow candle, usually, In travelling at night, the hickory bark torch furnished the light in most cases. The fifty acres of the Colby farm bordering on Erie Street South was a veritable paradise for the boys during autumn. On this fifty acres grew hickory, chestnuts, beech, walnut and butternuts in profusion. Wild pigeons fed on beechnuts and were so numerous that a man capable of handling a shotgun, almost in any way, could fill a bag in an hour as there were thousands of them and then some.

Besides pigeons, there were partridge, quail, pheasants, ducks, turkeys, black squirrels, mink, fox, raccoons and an occasional deer. The majority of farmers owned an ox team and cleared and worked their farms with them. For many years after the horse was used for farm work in many ways Buck and Bright held a large place in farm work.

Everything eaten was cooked at home. Bread was baked sometimes in a bake pan. The live coals from a fireplace were drawn out and a bake pan with the dough in it was set on the live coals. Some had an oven outside, others baked inside in an old fashioned cook stove with an elevated oven.

Wood could be had for drawing it away. Most houses had an open fireplace.

Most householders raised hogs. The nuts in the woods fattened them. It made a rather oily pork but by depriving the hogs of the nuts and feeding them on corn, four or five weeks, the meat was good. In winter and spring, in scarcity of food, cattle were browsed; that is: trees,

principally elm and soft maples, were chopped down and the limbs cut off to be within reach of the cattle. They thrived on this food by eating the small branches and buds and were in first class condition in spring.

The clothing worn at this date by many families was full cloth or flannel, both made from wool but by a somewhat different process. The sheep were driven to John Mitton's washing pens, washed and driven home. Some laughable things happened sometimes at these washings. Two barrels were fastened to the bottom of the compartment where the sheep were washed for the convenience of the washers. A farmer and his man were busy washing when the barrel the farmer was in broke loose. The closed end came to the top and the open end went to the bottom and the farmer with it, and there he was until the other fellow extricated him. After the sheep were sheared, the wool was carded and then spun into yarn and then taken to Moody's mill and woven into cloth, which was taken home and manufactured into clothes for the family.



THE REV. MR. WADDELL,

an early Presbyterian minister, was a highly respected and greatly beloved man. He was a classical scholar and a gentleman, and is still affectionately remembered by those who knew him, an example of the truth that a man is respected for what he is rather than for what he has.

The ministers of those days were: Presbyterian: Revs. Forest and Waddell; Methodist: Revs. Phelps, Daimond, Hawk, Hannah, Chapman and Benson.

The Physicians were: Drs. McLaughlin, Proudfoot, Smith, Fraser, Van Camp.

The hotels: H. Dodge, D. Leitch, J. Reeder.

Blacksmiths: J. Mitton, J. Young, J. Hatch, M. Newcomb.

Wagon Shops: G. Rockey, G. Sutherland, J. Vanalstine, W. H. B. Morgan.

Masons: Russell Young, Elliott Young.

Carpenters: R. Floeter, Phil Floeter, H. Ryckman, Joseph Porter Cooper, Sam Ryckman.

Shoemaker: Levi Wetherel.

Ridgetown had a cricket club good enough to trim most of the teams from other towns. The grounds were south of the present Baptist Church.

The players were: Thomas Hucklebee, H. Westland, Jerry and Oxley Rushton, John Hartwick, Charles Grant Sr., Charles Grant, Jr., James Grant, John Watson, George Watson, A. F. Young, John Duck, James Nation, Eph. Britton, and others. They played for the pleasure of the game. As the old blood began to weaken, young blood was taken on, to be ready when called on.

Now, good reader, I have written what I considered the most important things of eighty to ninety years ago. Many other things might be written, but time will not stand still.

If I have brought to memory anything that causes a smile to illumine your face or a tear to dim your eye I will consider myself well paid.

Extracts from Lovell's Directory of 1871

Lovell's Canadian Directory corrected to January 1, 1871, gives the following information:

RIDGETOWN: A village in the Township of Howard, County of Kent, 10 miles distance from Thamesville, a station on the Great West Railway, fare 50c; from Morpeth, 4 miles, fare 25c; from Bothwell, 17 miles, from Chatham, 21 miles. The proposed Southern Railway will pass half a mile from town, mail daily, population about 500. Then follows a list of those in business.

MORPETH: A thriving village in the Township of Howard, County of Kent. It has a wharf on Lake Erie about 1 mile off and possesses several Saw and Grist Mills. Distance from Thamesville, a station on the Great Western Railway, 14 miles; Mails daily. Population about 600, followed by the usual list of those in business.

HIGHGATE: A small village in the Township of Orford, County of Kent; Distance from Bothwell, a station of the Great Western Railway, 9 miles, fare 50c; from Chatham, 25 miles; Mail bi-weekly; Population about 70.

DUART: A small village in the Township of Orford, County of Kent, electoral division of Bothwell; Staves, lumber, and country produce afford the principal trade here; Distance from Bothwell, 14 miles; from St. Thomas, 40; from Chatham, 30; Mail daily; population about 200.

CLEARVILLE: A village in the Township of Orford, County of Kent; Distance from Bothwell, 15 miles; from Thamesville, 18 miles; from Chatham, 30, fare \$1.25; Mail daily; Population about 150.

P. H. BOWYER

Phil Bowler for half a century played a prominent part in Ridgetown and East Kent affairs. Coming here from Toronto in 1872 a mere boy, as early as 1878 he stepped on the scene as secretary of the town Liberal-Conservative Association, and a few years later became secretary of the county association, offices which he almost continuously held for a quarter of a century or more. During all those years he vigorously aided his party's forces in every Dominion and Provincial contest. He was editor of the Ridgetown Standard from 1880 until 1894, and of The Dominion from 1896 to 1917. In the Provincial General election of 1905 and 1908 he was elected to the Ontario Legislature. He was chairman and secretary of the Public Library Board, chairman and secretary of the Board of Trade. He served ten years, thrice as chairman of the High School Board and was for many years a member of the Public Utilities Commission, of which he was chairman for five years. Few public movements making for the growth and betterment of the town but had his active support.

RIDGETOWN IN 1872

P. H. BOWYER



MR. BOWYER had a very vivid memory of the town in 1872. In August of that year, at the age of eleven, he came with his uncle from Toronto with all their goods and effects to start a home and business in Ridgetown, and he gives the following statement of the places of business at that time, starting at the Bank of Montreal corner (now the offices of Drs. Orr and McCallum) and proceeding westerly along Main Street: first, T. Parrish, drug store; next Pelton Drygoods; next McLaughlin, groceries and liquors, subsequently sold out to John Law, first village clerk; next, Mrs. W. H. B. Morgan, Millinery; next, Ephraim Britton, Harness Shop; next, Simmons' Store, occupied by Mr. Martin; then a lane; then the Western Hotel, Chas. Graham, proprietor; then dwelling houses

Crossing to the north side of Main Street and going west from Erie Street: first, Stillman's Store; next, Thompson's Liquor Store, afterwards occupied by Cronk's Shoe Store; then H. W. Westland; then Blacksmith Mitton's residence property; then Reeder's Hotel, Tom Moore, proprietor; next, Mike Tompkins butcher shop; then Colin Zarn Furniture; then a

vacant space with the post office operated by L. S. Hancock, with a lean-to shed occupied by Tailor Brown. Across Walnut Street where The Dominion Press is now located, stood George Watson's store; next came a frame building for a time occupied as Conn's Bakery. The long frame building which came next was occupied at the one end by Bobby Grant for both store and living room, and the other end by John Watson's living rooms below and Elfred's Photograph Gallery above.

Starting at the Royal Bank corner, which was at that time occupied by Dodge's Hotel, E. E. Lumley proprietor; the next building was Mitton's Blacksmith Shop; then John Bevan's cottage, and nothing more until Kate Madden's Millinery Shop on the lot just east of where the Bookshelf Bindery now is; then came Dr. Marr's house; then Dr. Lake's; then the Township Hall and Presbyterian Church adjoining, and across Church Street stood the Benton House, where the Memorial Park is now located.

On the north side of Main Street, starting at Erie and going east, the first store was occupied by Mr. Bowyer's uncle as a jewellery store; the next shop was occupied by a man by the name of Dutton, a railway engineer working on the Canada Southern. This shop next housed the first barber shop, the barber being a Mr. Marren, who came from Toronto and sold out to Richard Porter. Next was a vacant space; then Thomas Schlenker's Harness Shop; then another vacant space and Boughner's Tin Shop; and on the Arlington Hotel corner stood Dave Bedford's store with dwellings farther east.

All these buildings along Main Street were of frame construction and slimy at that; so that when a fire started in 1873 on the south side of Main Street, it levelled everything from what is now the Orr and McCallum office down to the first open space near the O'Donnell store.

After Mr. Bowyer's arrival, the town built fast. The impetus came from the construction of the Canada Southern Railway. The Porter block, now the McKinlay block, went up in 1878. The Ross House, which replaced the Western Hotel, was built somewhat earlier.

At the time of the fire in question, there were at least two brick buildings in Ridgetown. One was a brick block where the Srigley Gasoline Station is on Erie Street, built by W. E. Lindop, a shoemaker, and the brick house where Dr. Feagan's office is. These two brick buildings were the first brick buildings erected in Ridgetown. The Public Library was started under the name of The Mechanics' Institute in 1879. The Salvation Army started in 1881. The Roman Catholic Church was built in 1880. The Methodists held meetings here and were organized in 1852, and had a meeting house before 1864. The Presbyterians were organized about the same time and had a meeting house in 1854 and the present church was erected in 1879, Rev. Archibald Currie, pastor. He was followed by the Rev. G. G. McRobbie. The Methodist episcopal body started here about 1867 and built their church in 1876. The Church

of Christ Disciples organized in 1867 and built their church about 1869. The Regular Baptist Church was organized in 1862 and had the first brick church in Ridgetown, erected in 1875, the first minister being Elder Turner. The L.E. & D.R. Railway was built in 1896.

As the town grew and the building operations continued, a demand went out for factories to be established and the town proceeded to bonus industries. The first one bonused was Brown's Foundry; the next was the Casket Factory; then a Canning Factory; then a Pork Packing Factory. These bonus enterprises continued to run as long as the people poured money into them, but when that source of supply stopped, the factories stopped. The Casket Factory kept running and employing a number of people for several years, but ultimately went broke, moved to London, and caused heavy losses to the citizens who had been backing the enterprise out of their own pockets. The only industries that kept going were those that did not receive public aid and were confining their activities to local demands. During the building period, Howard Dell, Tolmie & McMartin, and Charles E. Scane had sash and door factories, while Scane had a large sawmill in addition. There were two brickyards, one on the Watterworth farm and one operated by Duncan Campbell just north of the Canada Southern Railroad. At one time the town had two skating rinks, one owned by Charles Dauphin, and other by Mr. Martin. Dauphin used his rink for a gymnasium in the summer time.



The Town's Second Boiler Explosion, April 6th, 1896—Watson Brothers Heading Mill

Wm. Watson, one of the owners, was killed. The father of Miss Buller at the Gas Office died a few days after, and Wm. Cunningham,

son of the Town's first mayor, and Dan Leitch were both killed instantly. Many others suffered injuries. The factory was a complete wreck.

In addition to the early fires which destroyed most of the frame buildings on Main Street, there was a disastrous fire on the 10th of May, 1882, which swept away all the Main Street buildings from what is now Locke's to Walnut Street on the north side and most of the buildings on the south side opposite. The fire apparatus and company from St. Thomas came up and rendered assistance. This fire resulted in the end for good; the properties being rebuilt in uniform construction and all brick. The series of buildings were known as the Union Block. Again on October 24, 1899, another fire destroyed the north side of Main Street from Erie to Albert, carrying down all the magnificent three-storey blocks located there, but these again were promptly replaced.



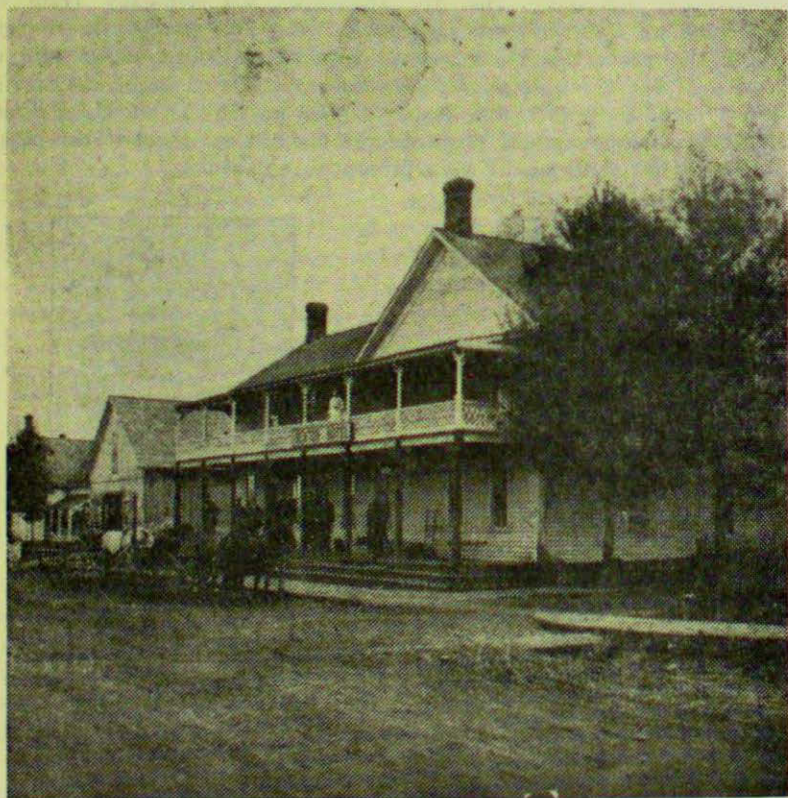
ZENAS W. WATSON was born at Ridgetown in 1830 and died at Ridgetown in 1913. He consistently followed the occupation of a farmer, but was a very progressive man and a great worker, forwarding the interests of the town in every direction. He was married in 1859 to Ellen Scane and after her death a short time later, he married again in 1863 Melissa C. Kern of Tillsonburg, who died in 1923 at the age of 95. Zenas W. Watson had several subdivisions of parts of the farm when required for building purposes.



JAMES RUSHTON was the son of Richard Rushton, the man who was elected town assessor at the Town Meeting in 1843. He was born at Rushton's Corners in 1883, moved into Ridgetown in 1878 and embarked in the grain business. He was prominently identified with local affairs, being a member of the Ridgetown council for twelve years and reeve for two years. In 1889 he was elected as treasurer of Ridgetown and held the office until his death. He was married in 1857 to Mary Smith, who was born in Howard in 1835.

THE BENTON HOUSE

Noah S. Benton, who had been operating a hotel at the village of Clearville, taking advantage of the probable boom that would come to Ridgetown when the Canada Southern Railway came through, a bonus of \$8,000 having been voted to it on Nov. 4, 1871, moved to Ridgetown, built



this hotel and operated it successfully for some years until his death. It was a very popular stopping place for travellers. It had extensive barns for horses and on that portion of the lot facing Ebenezer Street stood a set of covered scales and a yard for the use of drovers dealing in livestock.

After the death of Noah S. Benton, his widow and son continued to operate the hotel, but generally unsuccessfully, and after some years of ups and downs, it, with the entire set of outbuildings, was, in 1903, destroyed by fire. On the site where the hotel stood, now stands the Soldiers' Monument, while the rest of the land used in connection with the hotel, is now covered with modern dwellings.

CHURCHES

Methodist, Rev. W. German, pastor; Presbyterian, Rev. A. Currie, pastor; Episcopal Methodist, Rev. C. Burdett, pastor; Disciples, Rev. C. Sinclair, pastor; Baptist, Rev. J. L. Barlow, pastor.

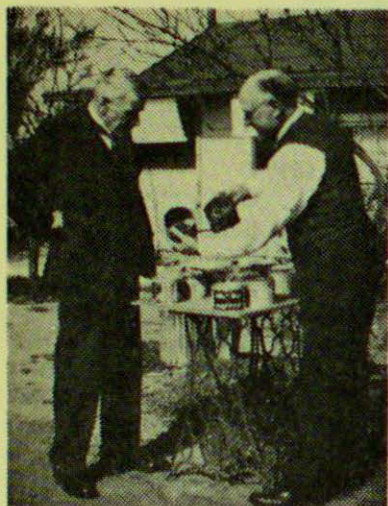
ADVERTISEMENTS IN 1877

Vol. 2, No. 7, of November 15, 1877, East Kent Plaindealer and Ridgetown Advocate, indicates that the following places of business were alive and doing business at that time. There were other places of business besides those advertising in this paper: H. Tallman (successor to Mr. Kerby) baker and grocer; Ridgetown Bank, Elliott, Baker & Elliott; Thos. Scane, Provincial land surveyor; George M. Wilcox, sewing machines; James McEwan, boots and shoes; John Whyte & Co., bank; James Watt, foundry; Charles Owen, wagon shop; Charles Kennedy, dentist; Benton House, hotel; Dr. R. C. Young; Dr. C. B. Lake; Dr. Jacob Smith; C. P. Simpson, barrister; W. Ross, Ross house; John Moody, Moody's mills; J. E. Chrysler, jeweller; Marquis & Co., fruit and cigars; George Gunder, flour mill; Martin E. Neads, drug store, Mrs. E. C. Banker, millinery; R. Bowyer, jeweller; J. McCaffery, boots and shoes; Cronk & Co., boots and shoes; J. H. Leech, organs and pianos; John Chapman, insurance agent; W. O. Adams, musical instruments; S. K. Garnham & Son, lumber yard, W. H. Boughner (Shaw block), hardware; McDonald & Summerville, hardware; Golden Beehive Store, B. B. Ingram; Maurice Hay, school books and stationery; Johnson Smith, ladies' and gents' furnishings; G. W. Ingraham, readymade clothing and gents' furnishings.

J. C. LOCKE



OF ALL the business places that were here when this town was a village, still operating under the original name, that of J. C. Locke alone remains. He came with J. L. Bradshaw from Jarvis and bought out the furniture stock and equipment of Charles Baker in 1879. Locke & Bradshaw continued partners for about four years, when Mr. Bradshaw left for Stratford, where he entered into partnership in the same business with a Mr. White. Subsequently, Mr. Bradshaw left that business and went into the china and glassware business by himself. J. C. Locke later converted his business into a partnership, taking in his son-in-law, Mr. B. J. Smith, who still operates the business under the same name of Locke & Co.



TWO ELDERLY YOUNGSTERS

Here are two old Ridgetown boys, George T. Mickle, now 92, and Levi Passmore, not so old. The original was taken at San Diego, California, in 1937, by Lee Passmore, who is an outstanding photographer and naturalist. He has had his work appear in the National Geographic Magazine, a sufficient guarantee of the outstanding value of his work.

RIDGETOWN VILLAGE



IN 1875 RIDGETOWN was incorporated as a village by by-law No. 337 of the County Council of Kent. In 1876 an amendment was made reducing the limits from what they were in the original by-law. The population according to the census taker, was 1,027. The first council for the village consisted of Jacob Smith, reeve; Zenas Watson, Charles E. Scane, H. W. Westland and David Watterworth, councillors. John Law was made clerk. John A. Moody, treasurer; Samuel Rychman, assessor, and Mike Tompkins, Chief Constable. The first meeting was January 15, 1877, and from now on its affairs were separated from those of the township.

The crying needs of the village were for fire protection and sidewalks. It was a wooden village. There was no uniformity in construction. The buildings were fire traps and they needed paint. The council of this year devoted itself to the sidewalks and organization, putting through from time to time the by-laws necessary in a new municipality, such as for order and good government, for the regulation of health, for licensing, etc.

The 1878 council remained the same except that Watterworth and Westland retired and John Moody and Thomas Schlenker took their places.

JACOB SMITH, M.D.

JACOB SMITH was a descendant of the Loyalists of New Jersey. His grandfather served in the Revolutionary War on the side of the King, and settled in Canada in 1784 in the Niagara Peninsula. Jacob Smith was born in Beamsville in 1830, came to Kent in 1844, taught school for a time, graduated in medicine at Toronto in 1856, practiced two years in Bothwell, started practice in Ridgetown in 1853 and remained until his death, he being the first one interred in Greenwood Cemetery. He was first reeve of Ridgetown and the only Warden of the county Ridgetown had up to 1930. He was a good speaker and received the Liberal nomination at one time in preference to the Hon. Arch. M. McKellar.



GEORGE ROCKEY

George Rockey was a native of Devonshire, England, and came to this country when a young man, spending a couple of years at Union, Elgin County, before coming to Ridgetown in 1856. A wagonmaker by trade, he engaged in that business and soon was playing a leading part in this community and continued to do so for over fifty years when he retired. After incorporation, Mr. Rockey served several years in village, town and county councils, many years as director and one year as president of the Howard Agricultural Society. He was a leading member of the Volunteer Fire Company and a strong supporter of the old time brass band, and of cricket and baseball clubs; and was the regular director of Queen's Birthday sports and games. He gave his time and money without stint to place Ridgetown on the map and keep it there. He passed away in his 85th year, January 13, 1918.



JOHN WHYTE

JOHN WHYTE was born in Scotland in 1842; he came to Ridgetown in 1875. His family first settled in Waterloo County. He, himself, followed farming and lumbering in Middlesex County and after moving to Ridgetown, engaged in the banking business. After leaving Ridgetown, he went to Brooklyn, N.Y. and carried on truck farming until the time of his death.

possession forced the other one to go to a more remote tank. At one fire, which occurred in a woodshed of the Canadian Southern Railway, both engines attended and put out the fire, then followed a water fight between the two crews. This was in the days preceding prohibition. This council of 1879 was satisfied with the Ronalds engine made in Chatham and passed a resolution to buy it; subsequently the reeve, apparently, got in touch with an American company that manufactured the Silby engine and got the Silby on the ground. J. Moody and G. Rockey stuck to the Ronalds while T. Tolmie, John Whyte and Hugh McDonald were for the Silby and were bound to buy it. They forced through by their majority by-laws for issuing debentures and raising the money for the purchase of the Silby. The two members voted consistently against the proceedings. The debentures had to be signed by the treasurer, John A. Moody. He refused to sign. A new treasurer was appointed and the former treasurer refused to give up the books. The council issued new debentures and had them signed by the new treasurer, but they were seized by John Moody when

THE COUNCIL of 1879 consisted of John Whyte, reeve; John Moody, William Tolmie, Hugh McDonald and George Rockey, councillors. These men started in earnest to get fire protection, and in doing this the village was in the end found to own two fire engines with a judgment against them, for the one they did not want, of \$4,035.29. The history of the fire engine deal discloses the fact that as men became used to managing the public business they lost the sense of personal responsibility. In the fire engine squabble the village became divided into hostile camps—the Silby camp and the Ronalds camp—Each engine had a volunteer crew of its own backers. When a fire occurred, which was frequently, both crews would rush for the nearest tank and the one that got

the treasurer, Mr. Thomas Brown produced them before the council and were badly torn in the scuffle. In this manner the year of 1879 closed. The election for the next council was what might be called a "hot election" and resulted in a victory for the Ronalds supporters. The council of 1880 consisted of Jacob Smith, reeve, who beat John Whyte; John Moody, George Rockey, Charles Baker and Thomas Schlenker. In



SATE BANKER, PETER BAWDEN—BICYCLISTS, 1889

These two were captivated by the low wheel bicycles just on the market. Sate had the first lady's wheel in Ridgetown. There were no pneumatic tires for some years later. The invention of the pneumatic tire revolutionized transportation; first the bicycle, next the racing sulkey, then the automobile, the tractors, the airplane, and the end is not yet for pneumatic tires.

the meantime suit had been entered by the owners of the Ronalds engine to recover the purchase money. Suit had also been entered by the owners of the Silby to recover the purchase money for that engine. The new council fought the Silby suit and lost; hence the judgment of \$4,035.29. The whole affair was finally settled by turning over to the owners of the Ronalds, the debentures issue and the Silby engine and received cash from the Ronalds owners \$5,000.00. I have not tried to untangle the amount of the debentures that were handed over, but judge it must have been \$10,000.00. This was the start of the public debt. Up to that time the village had raised from taxes each year enough to pay all expenses with some over for sinking fund. The idea of the first councillors being to accumulate a sinking fund and then buy the engine. The Silby was eventually sold to the Town of Dresden and probably can be seen there at the present.

The fire engine squabble started the late P. H. Bowyer on his life's career as a newspaper publisher.

He espoused the Reynolds' cause, the supporters of which were the leading Conservatives, and in order to help he started a newspaper called "The Telephone" printed in the Blenheim Press wherein he advocated the necessity of encouraging home manufacturers (John A. Macdonald's national policy), while the Grits looked upon the tariff as a direct tax on the consumer to favor a manufacturer of something that could not compete with older and more highly industrialized countries.

The Silsby could be bought with duty paid, for less money than the Reynolds and was as good or better than the Reynolds, they claimed.

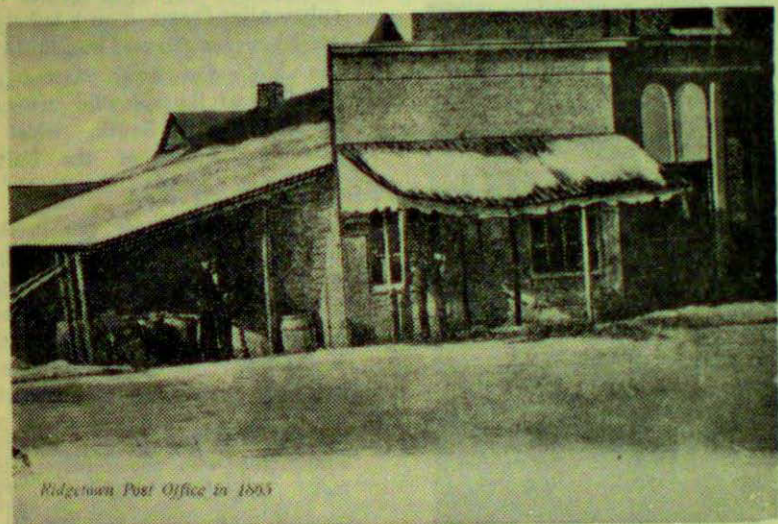
A test was made on Main Street in front of the three-storey Porter Block on top of which was a high wire sign and above that a flag pole. Both engines could throw water to the top of the building, but not much farther. They seemed to be about "sixes", but the Silsby engine made the most noise.

Phil's success here gave him encouragement to continue in the publishing business until his final retirement.

Nothing had been done so far towards finding a place for the fire engine and a council chamber. The council of 1880 took this matter up and built the combined fire hall and council chamber at the corner of York and Erie Streets. The first meeting of the council in the new hall was May 12, 1881. Another matter had been overlooked and that was the lighting of the streets, and on April 26, 1881, a motion to buy six street lamps was carried, which six were as far as the records shows the first attempt at street lighting, and as I remember them, they were coal oil lamps set at the end of a pole with a large glass globe to keep the wind off.

Returning again to 1878 we find that August 29, 1878 was set apart as Civic Holiday and was the first Civic Holiday ever declared for

Ridgetown. I see that on March 12, of 1877, L. S. Hancock asked for permission to move his Post Office building from corner of Main and Walnut Streets in order that a new building might be erected on the site.



Ridgetown Post Office in 1883

The building to be moved was a one storey frame with lean-to addition, and in such a condition of repair that a new building was advisable. I see also that by by-law No. 23 passed November 16, 1877, the first industry in Ridgetown received a bonus of \$5,000.00. The bonus was to start what was known as Brown's Foundry. It was unsuccessful and fell into the hands of the town by 1889 when an advertisement in the Plaindealer of July 18 that year shows that foundry and plant is being offered for sale by D. Cochrane, clerk of Ridgetown. On December 8, 1877, James Ross, later the proprietor of the Ross House was granted a livery stable license. In 1878 the Canada Southern passenger station, which up to that time had been located to the west of Erie street up where the water trough engine house is now located, was moved to its present location. In 1880, August 3, a by-law to exempt John Moody's new grist and wollen mills was passed, declaring the property to be exempt from taxes for the years 1881-82-83-84 and 85; so that his new mill must have been in course of erection in 1880. In this year also the village, having increased in population sufficient to incorporate it into a town, by-law No. 70 was passed appointing Edmund Shaw to take the census in order to ascertain the exact number of the population. It is apparent from a motion passed October 26, 1880, that J. W. Hawkins must have been the contractor for building the combined engine house, council chamber and lockup. The lockup in this building was first used in the month of December, 1880. In January of 1881, a petition was sent from the village council to the county council asking for a High School for Ridgetown.

"A LITTLE HIGHER THAN YON"



PRIOR TO 1875 both the Methodist and Presbyterian bodies had substantial frame church buildings on Ebenezer Street, but in 1875, the Methodist body started the building of the splendid structure on Erie Street South, which is now the home of the United Church of Canada.

Three years later the Presbyterians, not to be outdone, called in the services of W. G. Malcolmson, the Detroit architect who had planned the Porter Block and the Methodist Church, to design a building for them.

The chairman of the building committee was the minister, the Rev. Archibald Currie. The ground plan for a building 60 x 100 feet, and other particulars, were agreed upon; then came the question of the steeple.

How high a steeple do you want Mr. Currie, the architect is said to have asked the chairman, who replied, pointing to the Methodist steeple, "A little higher than yon." So the tower and steeple were

made to reach two hundred and twelve feet which would be higher than the Methodist steeple by at least ten feet.

The spire was difficult to construct because of its slender nature, causing the carpenters to quit after it became too high for their nerves, and two volunteers, Charley Dauphin and Lou Hummell finished it.

This needle like spire stood for twenty-four years, but a high wind in 1904 buckled it about two-thirds of the way up from the brickwork, and in 1906 the entire spire was removed and has never been replaced.

Each of the Church towers had a large bell installed with a hammer attachment to be used for tolling and as a fire alarm. A rope hung down the outside of the tower within easy reach from the ground, and for many years this system aroused the citizens at all times, day or night, when there was a fire in the town.

The picture was taken as the broken piece of the spire was finally cut free by workmen, and started to fall.

The large bell, installed in the tower, after some years developed a crack, not an uncommon occurrence with large bells rung when the temperature's very cold. Mr. Neil C. Campbell has the authentic record of the bell, which was finally replaced by a new one in 1898.

PLACES OF BUSINESS NOVEMBER 2, 1882

Places of business November 2, 1882, as taken from the advertisements in the Plaindealer. There were others whose names are not given for lack of a copy of Mr. Bowyer's paper of that year:

C. P. Simpson, V. K. Cunningham and N. Mills, barristers; R. C. Young, physician; Thomas Brown and P. C. Smith, dentists; George Murray, veterinary surgeon; Dr. F. B. Marr and Dr. C. Lake, physicians; Frank Brien, architect; H. W. Westland, issuer of marriage licenses; D. O'Loane, blacksmith; J. Drake, barber; J. C. Anderson, insurance; D. A. Johnston, harness; Logan & Tait, drygoods; Craig Brothers, general store; Locke & Bradshaw, furniture; Hagaman & Jull, general store; McMartin & Tolmie, planing mills; J. Moody & Sons, millers; McDonald and Summer-ville, hardware; George Hunter, butcher; B. Remey, jeweller; James Mc-Master & Co., foundry; Baird & Luxton, hardware; William Wallace, fruit trees; John Yocomb, plows; Laing & Ruth, hardware; Molsons Bank; L. E. Tait, manager; N. D. Hurdon, accountant; J. A. Dart ticket agent; J. Johnson, sewing machines; Cunningham & Leitch, lumber yards; Z. S. Fleming, coverlet weaving; H. Golden, blacksmith; George Gunder Star Mills; W. S. Smith, furniture and undertaking; H. P. Wilson, harness; Mrs. E. C. Banker, millinery; R. H. Constable and Mr. Gambel, photos; E. McCallum, school books and stationary; M. Grose, boots and shoes; William Bowman, tailor; L. J. Hummel, watchmaker; T. G. Guest, grocer; G. A. Barnard, variety store; McLean & Chute, drygoods, boots and shoes; The Lozar House Hotel; Benton House 'bus, H. A. Goring; Dr. Clark; W. B. Rowe, veterinary surgeon; G. M. Wilcox, sewing machines; J. W. Gowie, painter; Elliott & Westland, bankers; W. D. Trott, photographer; G. R. Brien, merchant tailor; H. Powell, boots and shoes; Robert Bowyer; Geo. Gunder, miller; C. Luxton, hardware; John McCulloch and R. Davidson, general merchants; W. Smith, furniture; A. L. Benton, grocer; T. H. Kyle, drug-gist; D. McNicol, Nixon agent; F. D. Rose, dairyman.

H. D. CUNNINGHAM

Hugh David Cunningham was born at Duart, Orford Township, Sept 11, 1834, where he lived until he moved to Ridgetown in 1879. In 1845 he was married to Altha Ford, also of Duart. He owned and

operated a sawmill at Duart, and in Ridgetown was engaged in the lumber business, also to which he added a grain and real estate business. He died while still a young man on June 10, 1888. He, with Edward Horton, a barrister of St. Thomas, acquired the James S. Mitton farm and subdivided the greater portion of Ward 4. In municipal affairs Mr. Cunningham took always an active interest. He was an early reeve of Orford Township, a member of the County Council for many years and the first mayor of Ridgetown.

INCORPORATED AS A TOWN



THE CENSUS taken August 21, showed a population of 2,097. On September 1, 1880, by-law No. 71 was passed by the village council authorizing the reeve, Jacob Smith and the clerk, Charles Grant, to take the necessary steps to get the Village of Ridgetown and adjoining territory incorporated into a town to be called Ridgetown. The steps necessary after taking the census were to first insert a notice for three months in the local newspaper setting out the intention and stating the limits intended to be included. The census returns having been duly verified and proof of the notices having been given, all were sent to the Provincial Secretary at Toronto. Then the Lieutenant-Governor by Proclamation and which would be published in the Ontario Gazette, proclaimed what was formerly a village to be a town. These steps were apparently not all complied with until the end of the year 1881 and on January 16, 1882, the mayor and reeve and three councillors from each of the four wards took their seats and were sworn in as the first council of the Town of Ridgetown. The meeting was in the council chamber over the fire hall at the corner of Erie and York Streets, which place is gone now, but was occupied by the Salvation Army for many years, it having been leased to them after the M.E. Church was bought for a town hall. The mayor was H. D. Cunningham, who defeated John Moody. The reeve was J. P. McKinlay, who defeated George Rockey. The councillors were—

- Ward 1, W. H. B. Morgan, Charles Baker, George Hunter.
- Ward 2, James Rushton, Malcolm McDonald, John A. Elliott.
- Ward 3, W. W. Mitton, F. B. Marr, Thomas Schlenker.
- Ward 4, John Leitch, James S. Mitton, James W. Brown.

Charles Grant was clerk; W. N. Hoag, collector; James Grant and D. Cochrane, auditors; Jos. Dingham, assessor; John A. Moody, treasurer; M. Tompkins, chief of police; Fred Eansor, engineer for fire engine.

1882 NEWS ITEMS

The following play by local talent in Porter's Opera House, controlled by H. A. Mallory and L. J. Hummel, entitled "The Streets of New York" is advertised for one night, November 8, 1882, with the following cast of characters: A Wall Street Banker, Mr. L. C. Hawkey; the Banker's Clerk, R. Porterfield; Captain Fairweather, Luther Carpenter; Mark Livingstone; a speculator, Mr. Bannerman; Paul, son of the captain, Mr. A. Smith; Puffy, a baker, Mr. E. G. Kitchen; Dan, the baker's son, Mr. T. Jones; Edward, the banker's servant, Mr. L. J. Hummel; Alida, the banker's daughter, Miss Ella Hay; Mrs. Fairweather, Mrs. R. Porterfield; Lucy, the captain's daughter, Miss Jennie Leitch; Mrs. Puffy, the banker's wife, Mrs. C. H. Wilder; street arabs, Masters Graham, Barnard, and Hawkey.

Hagaman & Jull came from Oakville and opened up a general store in the Westland block just built. This firm remained in business from 1878 to 1898 when it sold out to Northway & Anderson. It was a very successful business. Many young men received their early training in mercantile life with the firm of Hagaman & Jull.



Hagaman & Jull's Staff in 1895

Top row, left to right: R. Barrett, Art. Orendorf, Ken Willison, J. C. Smith; bottom row, left to right: Ed. Bowes, George T. Mickle, S. S. Willison, William E. Smith, S. J. Jefferies.

PLACES OF BUSINESS AND NEWS ITEMS JANUARY 7, 1885

Places of business January 7, 1885, as taken from the files of the Plaindealer of that date. At this time Mr. P. H. Bowyer was publishing

the Standard, but the files of that paper not being accessible, this list will be far from complete:

Elected at firemen's meeting: For Captain, F. Herman; first assistant, John Wilson; second assistant, J. Allen; secretary, T. Watson; treasurer, James Grant; captain of hose, T. Bowman; first assistant, A. Herman; second assistant, W. O'Neil; first branchman, T. Stanton; second branchman, A. Lennie; third branchman, H. Cameron; fourth branchman, Joseph Laing, captain of the coal cart, J. Rockey.

Mrs. Pedlow resigned as teacher in Ridgetown school, and Miss Sarah Tolmie was appointed at a salary of \$250.00 per annum.

Those advertising were: A. S. Vogler and Thomas Brown, dentists; F. Brien and Henry F. Duck, architects; J. A. C. Anderson, insurance; H. W. Westland, marriage licenses; George Murray, veterinary surgeon; George Gunder, flourmills; T. B. Shoebottom and N. Mills, barristers; R. C. Young and John Stalker, physicians; George Thomas, livery; John Moody & Sons, millers; Mrs. E. C. Banker, millinery; J. R. Caigr, insurance; A. G. Grigg, jeweller; Craig Brothers, general store; D. Logan, drygoods; Kenny & Hay, bookstore; Atwill's Gents' Furnishings; J. Davidson, tailor; Pain's Shoestore; Kaufman's Shoestore; Joseph Reycraft, shoestore; Shepherd Brothers, cabinet shop; Davidson & Berdan, organ factory; the Traders' Bank; the Molsons Bank; F. X. Schindler, tailor shop; Whyte, Somerville & McDonald, bankers and brokers.

The foundry and plant of Brown Brothers was being offered for sale by D. Cochrane, clerk of Ridgetown.

James W. Young had a wood and coal yard. E. McKay was editor of the Plaindealer, and Saunders and Caughell were druggists.

In 1878 two brothers, John and William Craig, came here from Bristol, Quebec, and opened a general store under the name of Craig Brothers. They continued to operate the store for about ten years, when the business was taken over by Tom Craig, another brother. Thomas Craig, in turn, carried on the business until the time of his death on September 4, 1924, when it passed into the hands of his two sons, Gordon Craig and James Craig. These in turn sold out to R. S. Brown & Son, now Walker Stores, in January, 1926. The Craig store was equal to the store operated by Hagaman & Jull. Thomas Craig, the manager, was a public spirited man. He had been a candidate to Parliament before coming to Ridgetown and was quite at home in a public gathering. His family, all of whom were quite young when he came to this town, were badly decimated by an epidemic of diphtheria. He himself was finally attacked by the disease but recovered. While Mr. Jull retired to Toronto with his earnings, Mr. Craig remained here until the time of his death and together with H. D. Smith, the Crown Attorney, 1931, rebuilt the Main Street area, formerly occupied by the Livingstone block after the disastrous fire of October 1899.

NEWS ITEMS FROM PLAINDEALER, JULY 18, 1889

Mr. B. Jull is developing into a clever bicyclist. Goldring is entered in the 2.27 class. Mr. M. G. Hay, W.M. of Howard Lodge, A.F. & A.M. is at Owen Sound attending Masonic Grand Lodge. Mr. John A. Elliott is also at Owen Sound representing Erie Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. John McMahon is manager of the Molsons Bank. Fine Durham cow for sale, giving milk; inquire of Will Landon.

Collegiate Institute Board: The Board met July 15. The resignation of Mr. Chase was accepted. Mr. J. G. Little was appointed principal at a salary of \$1,100.00. Mr. J. H. Smith was appointed second principal at a salary of \$800.00.

Mr. James R. Macdonald, of Muirkirk, on Friday last, lost a roll of bank bills amounting to \$37.00. Gracie Watterworth picked up the money in the street opposite the post office, took the money home. Mr. Watterworth immediately came down and found the owner. Mr. Macdonald bought this little girl a new dress, and has requested us to give this statement publicity.

The thirteenth annual picnic and excursion of the M.C.R. to the City of St. Thomas. Fare from Ridgetown 90 cents.

Mid-summer Entrance Examinations: List of those passed at Ridgetown with marks made: William Atwill 368; Austin Bottoms 494; Joseph Campbell 399; Lorne Campbell 455; Frank Gosnell 402; John A. Henry 350; J. W. Jull 457; Mal McTavish 378; Emma Gardiner 424; Harriet Guyitt 448; Lena Hayden 406; Aggie Johnson 273; Mildred Lent 365; Maggie Lee 355; Minnie Passmore 455; Minnie Reycraft 406; Mary McCall 369; Emma Bottoms 431; N. Brosnahan 382; Rosie Baudry 409; Maggie Clark 420; Kate Donovan 378; Recommended: Maggie Baker 351; Rosie Campbell 353; Laura Hayden 371; Minnie O'Neil 382; Jessie Ruth 329.

On Thursday, the 11th of July, 1889, fire devastated Moody's Mill. The result is a deplorable from every point of view. With a nominal insurance of nearly \$30,000.00, Mr. Moody will only get \$11,000.00; \$2,000.00 is paid on woollen building; \$2,000.00 on woollen mill machinery; \$1,500.00 on the damage to the flour mill inside and \$570.00 outside. His woollen mill was the only one between Chatham and St. Thomas.

The building was frame, four stories high and about 150 feet deep by 50 feet wide, containing besides the office, the stock of woollen goods and an immense storeroom for bran and flour, manufactured goods including tweeds, blankets yarn, flour, bran and shorts. Mr. Moody also lost a dwelling house on the opposite corner and two others badly damaged.

Town Council July 16, 1889—Letter from T. B. Shoebottom stating that the trustees of the Methodist body had completed the conveyance of the Albert Street Church and asking the Corporation to issue check for the purchase money \$1,500.



RIDGETOWN STREETS AND SURVEYS



VERY FEW Ontario towns were planned and divided into building lots before any sales were made: most of the towns now existing and many that no longer exist started without any definite plan or expectation of real growth, of which, Ridgetown was one. The method used on the start was to obtain from the farmer a parcel of land suitable for some special purpose, most common being a site for a mill for manufacturing local products. The parcel required was set apart by measurements called technically a description by metes and bounds, but if there is to be much call for small parcels of land, the subdivision by metes and bounds must be abandoned and a systematic plan for development made. There are some parcels of land in this town that have never been incorporated in any plan, but are still dealt with by metes and bounds as part of the original farm lot. The area north of Main Street between Rhody's house on the one hand and Mrs. Dr. Young's house on the other, is one. The section now called Churchill park is another. The area on Main Street North, where the funeral home is located, is another. This parcel extends from Cunningham Ave. to Police Constable J. Wootten's house and back to within three chains from Cathcart Street.

There are now thirty-eight separate plots of land surveyed and mapped into building lots at different times. These plots, when subdivided were owned by different persons.

The first plan and subdivision, registered as such, was made by Ebenezer Colby, Plan No. 62. It consisted of about nine acres of his farm and was the area from the Royal Bank corner to the Soldier's Monument property and back to Jane Street, the street that runs in front of the Public School grounds. Thirty-two building lots of one-quarter of an acre each are shown on his plan.

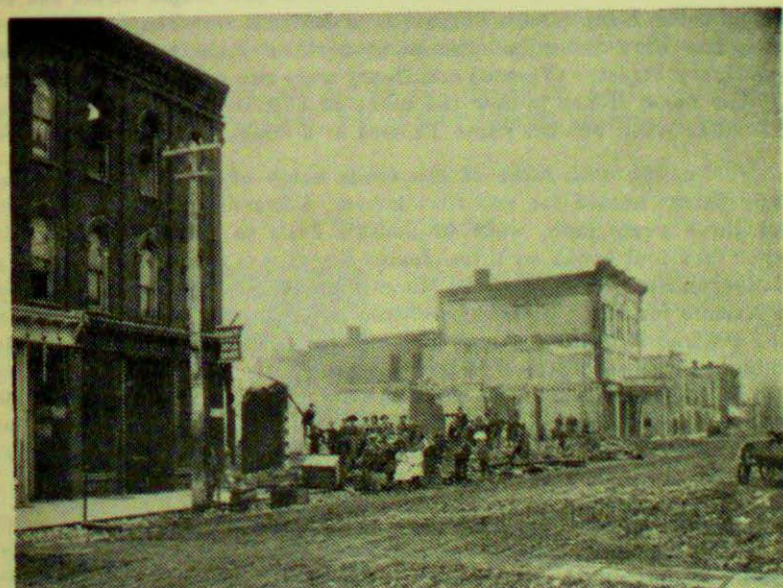
When subdivision was made, the owner of the plot named the streets in the plot. Colby named the street back from Main after himself, Ebenezer, and the next one back of that, Jane Street, for his wife, who was a Scane.

The next plan and subdivision registered was for about thirty-five acres of the Marsh farm up to and including William Rhody's property and back to David Street. The lots varied in size from quarter acre lots to large units, which were afterwards subdivided again by someone else. The

street names in the Marsh subdivision were Richard, William, Henry and Marsh, named for members of the Marsh family.

The next plan and subdivision registered was by James Watson, about twelve acres. Plan 64 on the North side of Main Street, extending from the East corner of the farm which was located at the point where the East wall of the building occupied by Kennedy's Billiard Parlor joins Main Street and extended west to Pearl Street and back to and including a row of lots North of what is now York Street.

I have taken the plans in the order in which they were registered. Before the Marsh plan referred to was recorded, William Marsh had been selling parcels by metes and bounds, also by lot numbers, and must have had an unregistered plan of lots at the corner of Main and Erie Streets.



In the month of October, 1899, a destructive fire swept away all the three storey buildings on the north side of Main Street from Peter Bawden's Drug Store on the west to the Arlington Hotel on the east. This picture was taken after the fire had died down, although smoke was still rising.

which plans were finally recorded as Plans Nos. 65 & 66. There were business places along Main Street West from Erie Street, before his son, Henry got control with high expectations of making his survey the centre of the business section of the town. Henry laid out the city market square just

South of the regular Baptist Church. The square is now owned by Tommy Keys. On it, he grows vegetables and flowers. It was formerly used as the village commons where baseball, cricket and football were played. It was also used as camping ground for gypsies.

When the different subdivisions came to be joined up, the roads didn't always meet, nor did the street names agree. A very good example of the street names is found in what is now York Street: The street north of and parallel with Main Street, starting from the West end going east was York Street, from Maple to Pearl, the continuation of it to Erie Street, was called Queen Street; East from Erie Street as far as Albert Street, it was Mulberry Street and from Albert Street to Cunningham Avenue, it was Havelock Street. Cunningham Ave, North of Main Street was called Nelson Street and South of Main Street, Broadway. Victoria Ave. was Edman Mitton Street. Albert Ave. was Sherman Malcolm Street and Erie Street North was called John Mitton's Lane. What is now Maple Street had that name north of Main Street, but south of Main, it was Thomas Street and what is now King Street had that name north of Main, but South of Main it was Henry Street. (Thomas and Henry were two sons of the Scane family). The name Henry is now the name of a street south of Main Street and further West, but the name Thomas as a street name has disappeared.

Dealing with more of the roads north of Main Street, we have Tiffany Street named for our first lawyer, Edward H. Tiffany, who after about three years here, went to Smith's Falls to practice and was the author of a text books on titles. James Street was named for James Watson, Morgan Street for W. H. B. Morgan, an early wagon maker; Cunningham Avenue for Hugh Cunningham, who with Edward Horton bought most of the original Mitton farm and subdivided it.; Altha Ave. named for Mrs. Cunningham, Edward Street for Mr. Horton; Cathcart was probably named for Sir George Cathcart who was sent here to quell the MacKenzie Rebellion; Brant, Tecumseh and Algonquin are Indian names; Albert was named for Queen Victoria's husband and Victoria Ave. for the Queen; Cecil Street was named for a son of E. D. Mitton.

South of Main Street, West of Erie (the Marsh farm), originally what is now Ebenezer Street was from the West Border of the Marsh farm to the Creamery, called William Street; from there by a narrow passage way to Erie Street, was called Ebenezer to connect with Ebenezer Street East of Erie.

George Rockey subdivided two blocks, J. and K. of the Henry Marsh Survey into building lots and gave us George Street. David Street was named for David Watterworth, who bought what was left of the Marsh farm and made some subdivisions. He named Oak Street and Chestnut Street.

In the section south of Main Street and east of Erie Street known as Ward Three, a number of separate subdivisions were made on the Colby

farm. John Mitton subdivided an area South of Jane Street and reaching from Erie Street to the East boundary of the Public School grounds.

Statira Dodge subdivided a parcel of equal size next, East of Mitton.

Philander Colby, brother of Ebenezer, who had died without children and intestate subdivided some of the original farms and sold some in bulk to be subdivided by others. W. W. Mitton subdivided different blocks out of his farm adjoining the Colby farm on the East. Harold, Cecil and Lynn Streets are named for Mitton children.

There was a short boom when Henry Marsh put on his subdivision. As a result, the building lot just south of the Disciple Church, now used by Herb Campbell for storage of his cement equipment, found sale at \$1,000.00, but the purchase price was not fully paid when the contract was abandoned.

The lot on which the Disciple Church is built and which must have been a more valuable location was eventually sold for taxes.

Henry Marsh was sold out by the Sheriff in 1862. He went to Nebraska where he made and lost money through speculation and died

B. W. WILLSON



BENJAMIN W. WILLSON, for many years Ridgetown's leading citizen, was born in Howard Township, immediately outside the town limits in 1847. From 1872 to 1878 he engaged in farming and cheese making. In the latter year he moved into town and for a quarter of a century was a leader in the grain and produce business in partnership with the late D. Cochrane. Four years he was Reeve of Howard Township; four years he was a county commissioner, and four years was Mayor of Ridgetown. In 1882 Mr. Willson was Warden of Kent. In 1883 he contested East Kent for the Ontario Legislature and in 1904 for the House of Commons, in the Conservative interest. For several years he was license inspector for East Kent. "Ben" Willson was well

suddenly in Chicago where he had taken a shipment of cattle to dispose of. A daughter of his wrote me about three years ago to see if I could get his birth certificate, but unfortunately, there was no official registration of births until 1869 and he was born long before that date.

The second boom the town experienced came as a result of the construction of the Canada Southern Railway. Horton and Cunningham saw possibilities apparantly and bought all the Mitton farm not already subdivided, about 150 acres, and subdivided it into building lots and put on a selling campaign. I do not think it made them any money because the remainder of the lots became bank property. But for some years, about 1879 to 1885, there was a constant increase in population and the erection of buildings.

It would seem that barring some unusual happening, of which we have no present knowledge, the town has reached its limits.

OLD TIME HUSTLERS



OLLOWING ARE SOME old timers, and some not so old, who in various activities kept "the old ark amoving along" and who may not have been mentioned in other sections. Many have passed on. Memory is treacherous, some names worthy of mention may have been overlooked, but none intentionally. The printed records are not complete, so the compiler of this list begs pardon for omissions. Some attempt has been made to keep the names in order of time, but errors are unavoidable.

John (Laddie) McKerracher, Andrew Lennie, Sam Stover, J. B. McLachlan, F. X. Schindler, T. W. Brown, Luther Carpenter, W. H. Passmore, G. G. Martin, James Drake, D. A. Johnston, Dwight Mickle, D. H. Bedford, James Vanalstyne, Henry, Richard and Joseph Porter, John Weston, William and Isaac Downing, Eph. Britton, Harry Thompson, Sim Grant, William Kerley, Sergeant Beattie, Bobby Grant, S. Wightman, Thomas Schlenker, John McPherson, William Somerville, Tom Marcus, Tom Somerville, John and Meredith Grass, P. J. McLean, Hugh McDonald, H. M. Green, John McCulloch, S. Elliott, Thomas Cole, G. A. Barnard, H. W. Livingstone, James Scarlett, Herb Patteson, George Butler, Harry Tallman, J. M. Cronk, T. G. Guest, S. S. Willison, Will Mann, S. J. Jefferies, Charles, James Henry, George, John B. and C. V. Grant, Robert Davidson, Ingraham & Lenentine, Isaac Banker, George and Wesley Thomas, John Bobier, Ezra Bonham, W. H. Boughner, Cosmo McBeth, Frank Weldon, Ransom Pierce, Ben Shupe, George Atwill, George Hunter and sons Roy and Harry, Baird & Luxton, Auger & Bobier, Tom Ro s. Charles Bird, George Whitsell, The Tear Family, George Coulthart, Ed.

Tooley, George Allen, Hagaman & Jull, B. L. Chipman, Henry Coombs, William Bowman, J. A. C. Anderson, Albert Coles, James E. McKinlay, Joe Hall, Ben, Hugh, Angus, and John Beaton, Nate and Charles Lutes, Joseph Leatherdale, Seth Sumner, Hugh Palmer, Dan McLean, W. O. Adams, Abe Armstrong, John McKerracher, S. Pocock, John Bevan, L. D. Marlatt, John Armstrong L. W. Fish, Salem Ruth and sons, Isaac Cates, P. J. Orendorff, John and James Young, Col. Barclay, John A. and G. R. Brien, Charles Landon, Duncan Young, Thomas Steel, A. Long, Harry Carter, Joseph Laing, M. Grose, Charles Ellis, E. D. and W. W. Mitton, A. Dean, Nims Brothers, Cattle and Porter, L. J. Hummel, A. D. Campbell, J. E. Clark, J. H. Thompkins, James O'Connor, William McDonald, J. E. Bedard, S. Craner, Charles Gibson, Neil Willson, O. M. Hayden, Chris Welsh, Edwin McCollum, Edward Mitton, William Lamont, the Sheppard boys, M. J. Kennedy, John Pocock, Peter Martin, H. A. Mallory, The Crandells, George, Alf, and Harry Westland, Will Potts, William Landon, M. H. Doherty, John and Dan Young, Joseph Moore, Jake Lounsbury, William and J. C. Smith, George Richardson, Alf Huffman, W. Ecclestone, Douglas Forsyth, James and John Gowie, Sandy Agar, James Davies, George Lowe, W. A. Gosnell, A. J. Grigg, George Beckett, Robert James and Alf Marcus, William Carr, J. R. Martin, John Francis, H. J. McDonalld, Alf, John and James Page, W. U. Little, J. E. Vair, George Murray Robert, Charles, William and Sylvanus Shaw, the Dodmans, the Decous, Joseph Baker, David Green, George Gillings, Elijah Wakeford, W. J. Stoliker, Ed Ryal, Than Decou, Jim Price, John Hartwick, L. D. Parney, Daniel O'Loane, Albert and Billy Ferguson, Tom Stanton, Edward Lee, John Jones, John Watson, Albert Gammage, Archie Beaton, Harry Gillis, Ben Paine, L. G. and W. B. Rowe, Hiram Young, M. G. Hay, Charles and Fred Dauphin, W. F. Mattice, C. West, John Henry, John Bent, Fred Eansor, John Savage, Abe Ritchie, W. H. Betts, Dan Gilbert, W. C. Regan, Robert Hamilton, Robert Buller, T. Bennell, C. A. Dunkley, W. Greiner, J. E. Nelson, W. J. Scane, Ferd, Henry, Sumner and Levi Hancock, Norman Steer, Albert Savage, Art Fletcher, Mack Smith, Thomas, William and J. R. R. Craig, Harvey O'Loane, Eli Gillings, Charles Thorold, J. C. Macdonald, C. H. Eastlake, John Bawden, Michael and Matt Cosgrove, Anson, Israel and H. D. Smith, Pat Mellon, Fred Bates, H. Hardcastle, George Wedge, George, Lew, Arthur, and Bob Orendorf, Clinton, Russel and Howard Clark, Duff Boughner, W. Thorold, Lew Davis, Fred, Charles and Roy Gammage, Herb Ingram, Larry O'Connor, Henry Cameron, Charles Monk, Ross and Milton Ellsworth, "Stub" Gibson, Charles Mitton, James and Tom Blake, A. D. and Donald Campbell, Joseph Chalmers, Sam Kennedy, George and Andy Laing, George Davis, Frank Mickle, Sim Coll, Nat Porter, Herb Boughner, Andy Doupe, Alex Watson, Gage and Ben Hagaman, Pat Harrington, "Babe" Mannix, "Mike", William and Joseph O'Neill, Jim and Bob Currie, Tom Johnston, Harry Harrison, Art Kennedy, Charlie Clark, Dougal Leitch, Fred and A. B. Herman, William McMackon, The Bowmans, The Edgeworths, George and Jerry Brown, Charles Kent,

The St. Johns, George H. Grant, James Fisher, The Talcotts, Roy Hunter, "Sandy" McGregor, James Baird, John Richardson, James, Len and Fred Coombs, Vet and Morris Street, Seth Everitt, John L. Carpenter and M. Grose, Albert Schindler, H. W. Lumley, Robert Porterfield, William Fitzgibbon, William Knights, John L. Willson, S. J. Willson, Henry Catton, Dave Kinsey, Nelson Walker, Joe Rhody, Mack Dodman, Hilton Wakeford.

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS



IN 1875 MR. J. CHAPMAN, a druggist who possessed a small printing press and several fonts of type, at varying intervals issued a small four page paper for the benefit of himself and a few others in advertising their wares. The paper was distributed free and served its purpose. The first real local newspaper, The East Kent Plaindealer, began publication in 1875. The editor and publisher was Robert Constable who brought the plant here from Ingersoll. In 1881 Mr. Constable sold the paper and plant to Emanuel McKay. The latter, a former high school teacher, was a vigorous writer, supported the Liberal party and made it uncomfortable for local politicians and others with whom he differed. In 1897, McKay sold out to Claxton & Whitwam, the latter retiring from the firm in 1902 and going to Leamington. Mr. Claxton continued until his untimely death in January, 1923.

In 1879 Doherty and Bockus of the Rondeau News of Blenheim invaded the Ridgetown field by publishing a Ridgetown edition of that paper, called The Telephone. This paper, which had as its editor P. H. Bowyer, carried plenty of hot stuff during the Ronald-Silsby fire engine battle, but after a year's existence gave up the ghost.



ROBT. CONSTABLE

During Robert Constable's time the Plaindealer took little or no part in party politics, so in 1880 a group of local politicians determined to have a Liberal paper here. E. C. Johnston, Buffalo, employed by The Express of that city, and a B.A. graduate of Yale, was induced to come here and on July 1 of that year the first issue of The Standard appeared, with the motto, "The good of the people ought to be the first and paramount consideration," under its headline. An American, Mr. Johnston, a gentleman in every way, knew little of Canadian politics and soon tired of a thankless task. Five months was long enough for him; so, after quietly disposing of the paper and plant to P. H. Bowyer, he returned to Buffalo. That week The Standard appeared as a Con-

servative paper and, needless to say, the motto remained the same. For fourteen years The Standard, besides giving full attention to local doings, waged vigorous battle for its party, and after Mr. McKay took over The Plaindealer, body blows were regularly exchanged and no quarter asked or given.

From 1881 to 1885, J. S. Gadd was associated with the publication of The Standard.

In 1892 John Mitchell, employed for a few months by McKay, encouraged by a few local Liberals, secured a plant in Toronto and started The Liberal, but the promised support failing to materialize, the third paper had a short life. Only a few numbers were issued when the plant was shipped back to Toronto and Mitchell departed at the same time.

Returning to The Standard: Early in 1894 Bowyer sold out to William Wesley, and a general provincial election taking place that fall, the paper departed from its political faith and supported the Liberal candidate. In 1897 Wesley sold to Phillip Waters, who carried on until he died in 1899, after which his brother, John Waters, conducted the paper until in 1901, it was bought by Claxton & Whitwam of the Plaindealer. Shortly after this, Howard Gordon, who had been foreman of The Standard office, secured the plant and took it to Dresden. This left The Plaindealer the sole Liberal organ.

In the meantime the spectacle of two Liberal papers in Ridgetown had been a source of worry to the Conservative soul of P. H. Bowyer, and in November of 1895 that gentleman commenced the publication of The Dominion which he conducted with his customary vigor and success until in October, 1917, he sold out to E. V. Bingham. The death of Mr. Claxton in 1923 and the change in newspaper conditions during and following the war presented a opportunity too good to be lost, so a few months later Mr. Bingham took over The Plaindealer and Ridgetown's oldest and youngest newspapers became one.

On Sept. 1, 1945, Mr. Bingham formed a partnership with Mr. G. C. Craven under the name of The Dominion Press. The business grew rapidly in the next couple of years, and on the acquisition of The Manning Press, a job printing business, in 1947 the former quarters proved inadequate. In May, 1948, the plant was moved, with much new material added, to the present quarters in the Masonic Building at the corner of Main and Walnut Streets.



OUR SCHOOLS

THE FIRST Schoolhouse of Ridgetown was a log building situated on the east corner of lot seven in the ninth concession of Howard Township, almost opposite the brick schoolhouse known as No. 6, Howard. It was built on Levi Cornwall's place. It served for meetings and school for many years, and was opened in 1828 with the following pupils in attendance, namely: William Mitton, Harriett Carlisle, Margaret Scafe, Ann Scafe, Anthony Scafe, John Scafe, Jane Scane, Thomas Scane, John Scane, Fanny Marsh, Charlotte Marsh, Satira Marsh, Rebecca Marsh. The teacher's name was Gowdie, an Irishman, and Lemuel Coll's stepfather. He was a strict disciplinarian and very free in the use of the gad. The parents used his name to frighten the children. "If you do not behave, I'll give you Gowdie." Other teachers who taught in that schoolhouse are Sophia Nash, who later became the wife of James Watson, then Alexander McKillop, of Aldborough, and a man by the name of Thompson.

The teacher was supported by contributions from the parents of the children who were attending school. Each parent at the beginning of the school term would subscribe, as it were, a certain number of his children to attend school, and at the end of the term the expenses were divided up into as many parts as there were children subscribed and each parent was called upon to pay for the number he had subscribed, whether they had all attended or not. Part of the salary of the teacher was paid by boarding around with the families who were sending children. Two weeks for two children, three weeks for three children. Cash was a scarce article in those days and payment in produce or services was resorted to in lieu of cash, and the board was taken as payment on the teacher's salary.



SOPHIA NASH

Sophia Nash was born in Kingston in 1799, daughter of Zenas Nash and Mary Brier, who had settled on the Lake Shore, near Morpeth. She taught in the log school on Levi Cornwall's farm in 1828 and married James Watson in 1829. She died at Ridgetown in 1869.

The qualifications of the teacher do not appear to have been inquired into, further than he or she was willing to take the position.

The next schoolhouse for Ridgetown was built on the next corner of lot nine in the ninth concession (James Watson's farm) where Mr. Beck's store is now located. Harriett Reed taught in this school as did also Charles E. Scane. This location becoming valuable for business purposes, a new schoolhouse was built on the north side of York Street, where Mrs. Buckberrough has her garage, and was the school in use at the time the older members of the last generation were children. A wing was added to this school building in 1872 and two teachers employed. The accommodation again became too limited. In 1875 the building and ground of the Methodist Church on Ebenezer Street where Miss Mary Cruickshanks now lives was bought by the Public School Board and what was formerly the church, and was later used as a stable, became the primary wing of the Public School.

The following pupils attending Public School on York Street in 1877 of '78 were given in a letter sent in 1907 from Stratford by Charlie Ellis: Alf Westland, Dunc. Young, Art McKinlay, Harry Westland, Anson Smith, Bill Landon, Charlie Mickle, Bob Watterworth, Arthur Sinclair, George Rockey, Colin Rockey, Nelson Hartwick, Will Schlenker, George Orendorff, Jack Porter, Will Vanalstyne, Jim Currie, Will Potts P. H. Bowyer, and amongst the girls, the Dodge girls, the Vanalstyne girls, the Mitton girls, Rose Schlenker, Ada Moody, Ella Herman, Mary Smith, Jennie McKinlay, Almeda Watterworth, Allie Fields and Bessie Hartwick.

In 1882 a large brick school building was erected on the south side of Jane Street in Ward Three, upon the site of the sawmill which had been operated by George A. Watson and his brother Thomas, but which had burned. This building became at once and has remained the only Public School building in Ridgetown. It is a two storey brick structure with basement containing originally eight rooms to which additional rooms were added in 1898, making a total of ten teaching rooms, of which, however, only eight are sufficiently filled at the present time with pupils and eight teachers only were employed.

On September 3, 1883, the High School was opened in two rooms of the Public School building with about thirty pupils in attendance. Mr. G. A. Chase was principal and S. B. Sinclair was assistant. The average age of the pupils was seventeen years. After the Christmas holidays, eighty-two pupils having been enrolled, Mr. Robert Moir, B.A., was added to the staff and the old temperance hall, located where Fred Bates built his new house, was pressed into service for a third room. 1884 there were one hundred and forty-five pupils enrolled.

The first High School building was completed in 1883. The

contract price of the building being \$7,467.00. The furniture and equipment had to be added, making a total price \$10,162.47. The number of pupils in attendance in 1885 was 155. A number came from a great distance, attracted by the reputation of the school and particularly of Mr. Chase, the principal. The report for that year says: "Some are from a distance of about two hundred miles." The number of teachers employed was five and in that year the Government requirements were met to have the school ranked as a Collegiate Institute and it remained a Collegiate Institute for many years, but the requirements to keep it in that rank eventually became so excessive that it, together with a number of other five teacher schools, had to reduce its rank to that of a High School.

In September, 1926, the Agricultural Vocational School was opened with forty-two pupils in attendance under the principalship of Mr. Norman Davies. The success of this school was phenomenal and an additional building was erected in the year 1930 in order to accommodate the increasing numbers of students. The course taken up was a four year course and the equivalent of university matriculation. We have on the High and Vocational School staff eleven regular teachers and one occasional or part time teacher.

ENTRANCE PUPILS, 1906

A newspaper clipping produced by Miss Evelyn Backus gives the list of successful candidates at the 1906 Entrance Examinations held at the Ridgetown High School. Credit for the highest standing went to Ruby Patterson who not only headed the East Kent Inspectorate, but also won



G. A. CHASE, B.A.

G. A. CHASE, B.A. First High School Principal, was a Nova Scotian by birth and came here from Galt C.I.. He was an author of many of the Literature texts used in the High Schools of the Province and the author of a Geography which was authorized and in use for two years when it was withdrawn, because of protests from the Anglican Church that it upheld the theory of evolution. Mr. Chase was a Presbyterian. After leaving Ridgetown he became a successful teacher in Jarvis Street Collegiate, Toronto, until he retired.

the Robert Hall medal. Mr. Hall was a member of the School Board at the time and was afterwards Police Magistrate for many years.

Three others had high standing namely: Rosabel Scherer, Annie Pringle and Joe Sheldon. The list of successful students is as follows:

O. Anderson, Arthur Brien, M. Campbell, A. Campbell, E. Carney, J. Cochrane, Earl Desmond, Lancelly Devereux, Leila Eberle, Burton Fisher, B. Henry, R. Hargreaves, C. M. Hogg, Levi Hancock, O. Hornby, S. Keorner, Mary Latimer, George McLean, Aex McDonald, Bella McDiarmid, Priscilla Poole, A. Parsons, E. Parker, Verna Spencer, N. Simpson, J. Smith, Rosabel Scherer, Joe Sheldon, Cecil Buckberrough, Evelyn Backus, A. M. Campbell, N. Clark, C. Clark, R. Campbell, Robert Delmege, Ross Ellsworth, Max Eastlake, O. Galbraith, G. Henry, H. Holmes, Kate Hall, William Hummel, F. Konkle, B. Leitch, Grace McPherson, Stanley McDonald, G. McLarty, G. McGregor, Ruby Patterson, Annie Pringle, G. Ritchie, H. Spencer, B. Spence, Arthur Spencer, Beulah Sheppy, and Irene West.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS



THE IDEA now universally adopted that education of the nation's youth is the duty of the state and that schools should be supported by general taxation was slow in taking root in this province. For instance, in 1804, the Legislature of Upper Canada on three different occasions voted to refuse to permit the County of Glengarry to establish a school for its own children and repeated its action during the following session.

In 1807, a slight change in this attitude is noted, for in that year the Legislature declared that it was the duty of each county to provide for the elementary education of its youth and yet it started by establishing grammar schools which were secondary schools, and not until 1816 was any attempt made to establish primary schools throughout the Province.

Educating a child in the primary subjects was considered the duty of the parents, if the parents did not have the necessary means, his child had to grow up unlettered. The evidence of this lack of schooling is seen in old documents in the Registry Offices, where so many are signed by mark.

The churches early took a leading part in establishing schools where pupils from a distance could board in the schools, while local pupils were also received, but came to school each day from their own homes.

As samples of this type of school, we have Victoria College, Coburg, (Methodist); Woodstock College, (Baptist), Bishop Ridleys, St. Catherines.

(Anglican); St. Michael's College, Toronto, (Roman Catholic); Knox College, Toronto, Presbyterian.

There existed also similar schools operated as private enterprises. For instance, Rockwood Academy near Guelph where James J. Hill, famous Railroad Magnate attended, Dr. Tassie's school at Galt. From the teachers in that school, we obtained our first High School Principal, Mr. G. A. Chase.

Upper Canada College, on the other hand, was established in imitation of the public schools in England such as Eton, Harrow, Rugby. These schools are called "public" in England, but are far removed from our conception of a public school.

Ridgetown seems to have been a pioneer in the educational field. At the time our High School was established, namely, in 1883, and for many years afterwards, pupils came to us from Kingsville, Leamington, Blenheim, Wallaceburg, Dresden, Thamesville, Rodney, as well as territory nearer, because there were no opportunities for secondary education in any of these places.

We were also the first in the field with our Agricultural Vocational School established in 1926. The Department of Education had no guide and no regulations for the conduct of a school of this kind, with the result that Mr. Norman Davies, the Principal, had a free hand in determining the curriculum and the course of studies.

In the preliminary proceedings, connected with the establishing of the Vocational School, the representatives of the Department of Education from Toronto said that our great difficulty would be to get the pupils. They said that all attempts so far at Agricultural education had suffered from lack of support from the farmers themselves. The feeling amongst them seemed to be that to farm, what was needed, was practice and not theory, that the surest way to lose your boy from the farm was to keep him too long at school. But we got the pupils and the school became well known. Credit goes to Mr. Edwards, the Principal, for the idea that all pupils of both schools should take Vocational work for the first year after entrance. This idea has now been adopted by the Department of Education and made compulsory for all High Schools in the Province.

Mr. Davies, first principal of the combined schools, because of his success here, was made an inspector and removed to Toronto, while Mr. Edwards has lately been made a member of the Senate of Western University, London. Therefore, it appears that while training the young for their life's work, our schools have also aided in equipping our principals for wider spheres of influence. Taking all together, it is a pretty good record for a small town school.

The growth of our High School for the first few years was phenomenal. It opened September 3, 1883, in one room of the public school building with thirty pupils, of whom, I was one, and two teachers, Mr. G. A. Chase, B.A., Principal, and S. B. Sinclair, who held a first class teachers certificate, assistant. It didn't require two teachers to handle the thirty pupils and Mr. Chase spent a good deal of his time rounding up more pupils, amongst those who had completed the public school training, but had not since attended any school. When the school re-assembled after Christmas, there were 82 pupils. The staff was increased to three, one more room in the public school was commandeered, as well as the old temperance hall, a building on land adjoining the public school grounds.

By 1884, there were 145 pupils in attendance, making it necessary to have a building especially suited for the work. That building was placed on the spot now occupied by the new High School and in 1885, our status was raised to that of a Collegiate Institute. The difference between a High School and a Collegiate Institute consisted in the professional standing of the teachers, who must all be specialists and not fewer than five in number in a collegiate. The equipment is also much more extensive for the collegiate than for a high school.

University graduates were not required to take a course in the art of teaching as public school teachers did. A B.A. was supposed to know everything, including the art of teaching without any special training in that field.

Until the Vocational school was added, our attendance never exceeded one hundred and fifty-five. In time, other High Schools were established in sections from whence we had formerly drawn pupils. Then followed continuation schools everywhere. At the same time, the Department of Education kept demanding more and better buildings and equipment for Collegiate rating than we could supply and we with other five-teacher schools had to drop our Collegiate standing and revert to the status of a High School where we have since remained.

Mr. Chase, our first principal, remained until 1889 and was followed by Mr. J. G. Little who continued until 1911. After Mr. Little resigned, there were frequent changes of Principals. They followed in this order: Charles Potter, F. H. Frost, J. T. McLaurin, J. R. Cameron, Thomas Preston, and R. H. Young. Mr. Young was not qualified to teach agricultural subjects. Consequently, he had to be replaced by a man who was qualified to teach both the High and Vocational subjects. Acting on a tip from the Hon. John Martin, Minister of Agriculture, who had himself been a High School teacher, we got in touch with Mr. Norman Davies, principal of the High School at Amherstburg and persuaded him to take the two schools under his control. He was probably the only teacher in the Province who had the necessary qualifications at that time.

The Department of Agriculture built the Vocational School buildings on land furnished by the High School Board, fifty percent of the equipment was paid by the Department of Education on the basis of the grants to all Vocational Schools and the remaining fifty percent of the equipment for the first school was raised by the Board through private subscriptions. It was all an experiment in a new field, no one knew whether it would succeed or fail.

A great deal of the credit for the success of the establishment of the Vocational school must go to the late Angus Gillanders and to Mr. Reek, afterwards, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, but who was at that time in charge of the experimental farm here. These two men left no stone unturned to make a success of the original experiment.

We are now to embark on a new method of extending the educational facilities of our secondary schools. The land is to be relieved of much of the burden of taxation which is to be transferred to the general funds of the province. High School boundaries are to be enlarged to cover sections of the adjoining townships. School busses are to be provided to bring the pupils to the school and return them to their homes at night. We have had school busses serving this school for four years, but at the expense of those using them. The effect was to place an unequal burden on those living at a distance over those living near the school. It is proposed to rectify this inequality under the new order.

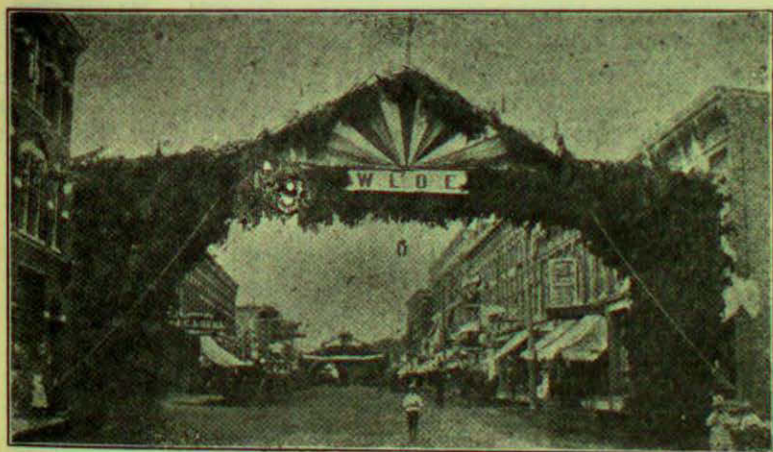
The new movement has roused a demand for elaborate schools to be built in sections that could be more economically served by schools already in existence. Our school could care for as many as 400 pupils, but if the territory we have been serving is cut down as intimated by the preliminary survey, we may have a smaller attendance than we have at present, although we have facilities for a much larger number. It is not likely any final decision will be made on these controversial subjects, until the effect of the move is more thoroughly understood and considered.

I have now tried to give the reader of this article a view of how secondary education has been handled from its inception 140 years ago to the present time. It is difficult now to find in this section of the Province anyone who can neither read or write, nor any who do not have a fair grasp of our system of government and what is happening in other parts of the world. If our democratic form of Government is to function, we must have an intelligent Electorate.

ATHLETIC SPORTS



FROM 1880 TO 1883, RIDGETOWN had a Lacrosse team that was really in the professional class. They played games successfully as far east as Woodstock and as far west as Detroit. The club consisted of the following players: Charles E. Dauphin, Herb Boughner, Riley Young, Butch McLean, Alf Westland, Jack Craig, N. D. Hurdon, R. Robertson, Harry Carter, Bob Porterfield, Tom Kyle, Jim Leitch, George Fitzsimmons, Isreal Smith, A. J. Bannerman, George Skey, Jack Pockock, C. H. Eastlake. The arrangement of the game was usually in this order: Eastlake, goal; Smith, Skey, Bannerman, Leitch, defence; Carter, Porterfield, Fitzsimmons, centre; Pockock, Westland and Kyle, home. The players were strung from one goal to the other and each player was matched by one on the opposite side so that the defence on one side would play against the home



Firemen's Tournament in 1887

of the other side. Frequently goals were made by these players without the ball ever touching the ground from the time it was faced off in the centre. The practice ground was the old fairground in the centre of which now stands the residence of J. D. Brien. This fairground was abandoned in 1882 and sold to George Addeman who subdivided it, and the Fair Board moved their buildings to the present site, nearly a mile further east on Main Street.

THE LACROSSE TEAM



Top row, left to right: C. H. Eastlake, C. E. Dauphin, Isreal Smith, R. Robinson, James Leitch; middle row, left to right: H. Carter, Riley Young, H. Boughner, Jack Craig, Jack Pocock; lower row, left to right: Tom Kyle, George Fitzsimmons, W. H. Skey.

THE BOWLERS



Trophies won in 1923. The names of those in the picture from left to right: A. F. Holden, Ralph Dauphin, P. Bawden, W. Thorold, John

Davis (caretaker), Dr. D. Marr, L. Hoover, J. Bawden, E. R. Riley, George Laing, Grant Small, Herb Hoffman.

The Ridgetown Bowling Club played for many years on the lawn of Robert Porterfield, up to the year 1904 when the Ridgetown Bowling Club was incorporated as the Ridgetown Bowling Association, due largely through the efforts of the late Squire McKinlay, at the time the oldest bowler in Canada. The club's first officers were: W. H. McMackon, president; J. A. Elliott, treasurer; W. L. Baird, secretary.

For many years Ridgetown was one of the most successful clubs in the West, carrying off trophies at the largest tournaments. Ridgetown also has the honor of having been favored with two visits from the British Bowlers, the only small town in Canada having had that honor. On the last occasion the Britishers were beaten by fourteen shots. On these visits the citizens gave the visitors a very warm welcome, including a grand banquet and speech making. Ridgetown is now well known and kindly remembered by the British Bowlers.

THE CURLERS



The town was without an ice rink for some years after Dauphin's rink closed. About 1893 Joe Mitton built a new rink on the lot adjoining the Baptist Church. Curling then took the place by storm and for several years the ancient Scotch game became the great winter sport. In this picture we have eight of the town's leading citizens with their trophy.

Reading from left to right, top row: Art McKinlay, Dr. Stalker, William McMaster, Peter Bawden, J. G. Little, B.A., principal of the Collegiate Institute, and Dan Leitch. Following row, Harry Gillis, merchant and Charles E. Dauphin Ralph Dauphin's father.

The game of cricket was in full blast seventy years ago. Among the players were John Bent, Joseph Laing, R. Porterfield, James Grant, George Grant, Charles Grant, John Grant, N. D. Hurdon, John Duck, Armstrong Dean, Luther Carpenter and John Hartwick. This aggregation defeated an English cricket team at Chatham. The English team was touring Canada at the time.



One of the Old Baseball Teams

Called "Ideal Ball Team". Eli Gillings, Manager. Front row, left to right: Harry Davis, Jerry Sharp, Yank Kennedy, Harry O'Neill; Back row: Albert Ferguson, Ross Ellison, Tom Fraser, Dr. Harold Little, Sid Richardson, Lorne Hoover, Charlie McDonald, Laird Mickle.

GUN CLUB

The rifle was the gun most used in the early days. The game was large and there was little use for the shotgun. The ability to use the rifle was passed from the older generation to the younger. The favorite rifle for target shooting was the muzzle loader fifty years ago. Among

the good rifle shots, we find the names of Levi Palmer, John Bent, Joseph Laing, George and James Leatherdale, Ed. Spence, James and John Atkinson, George and James Lawton, John Hartwick, Charles and Harry Scane, James Williams, William Thorold.

When the breech leading shotgun came on the market, the rifles were discarded in favor of the shotgun for target shooting. The targets in this case were flying targets. A gun club was organized in 1880 to shoot at glass balls. The ball was tossed in the air from a trap and broke when hit by the shot. This target gave place to the tin pigeon, a contrivance something like a saucer which when hit with the shot, caused a tongue to drop indicating a hit. This in turn was abandoned for what was known as the clay bird trap, and this kind of a target is used at the present time. In 1891 at the Dominion of Canada tournament held in Toronto in a fifty bird race for each man, in a team of five, Henry Catton broke fifty straight; Dan Leitch forty-nine; Harvey O'Loane forty-eight; Harry Scane forty-seven; Charles Scane forty-six. These five won the Mail Trophy by a wide margin. In the same year at Windsor in a three man team race, H. Catton, D. Leitch and Harry Scane won the international championship; and a handsome trophy. In later years Howard D. Bates became an international figure in the shooting world. He won the Grand American Handicap at New York City, defeating all the best shots of America including Annie Oakley, a professional, who travelled with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. He defeated Louie Youngblood in a matched race at Windsor. Of later years he has changed to Golf for amusement and has had the distinction on December 19, 1929, of making a hole in one at San Diego, California, and repeating the performance a day afterwards on another green.

Another international shooter was Charlie Gammage. In July, 1923, he won high average at Hamilton. At the Grand American Handicap in Dayton, Ohio, he won second high average with a score of 95.41 shooting at 1,200 targets. He broke 394 out of a possible 400 in continuous shooting and frequently made 100 straight hits.

The following list of names are of those who could break eighty per cent of the targets or better: H. Scane, A. Laing, Herb Taylor, William Thorold, Charles Thorold, Charles Scane, Eli Gillings, Fred Brien, Fred Miles, Herb McDonald, Fred Gammage, Roy Gammage, George Scane, C. H. Eastlake, Sim Coll, A. McRitchie, A. Wade, James Scane, Fred Galbraith, Joseph Laing, James McLaren, John McMillan, William Cruickshank, Dan Leitch, Harvey O'Loane and Henry Catton.

The O'Neill family were the town athletes that could always be relied upon. There was Billy the foot racer, who was unfortunately killed by being wound around a shaft in Moody's Mill. There was Mike, who was a star performer in the Caledonian games. Tossing the caber, throwing the hammers and the fifty-six, he travelled long distances to take

part in these games and I believe held the world's record with the hammers and in addition was no mean sprinter. Then came Joe, the youngest. His hop, step and jump still stands unbeaten.



Main Street East, north side, when it had three-storey buildings

J. A. Dart built one next the Arlington and Henry Livingstone built the other and larger one. These buildings were destroyed in 1899 by fire.

HENRY LIVINGSTONE

HENRY LIVINGSTONE was born in Scotland, a shipbuilder by trade, came to Ridgetown about fifty years ago and engaged in contracting. He built the large three storey building on Main Street, which was destroyed by fire in 1899. He ended his days here.

BANK MANAGERS

The Molsons Bank, later Bank of Montreal: R. Robertson, L. E. Tait, John McMahon, F. Ward, N. D. Hurdon, Harry Thompson, Mr. Williamson, J. Billings, H. P. D. Evans, H. H. Stevenson, D. L. Willson, F. C. Smyth.

The Traders Bank, now the Royal Bank: J. A. McKellar, John Pool, E. C. Newman, Hugh Ferguson. Royal: C. R. Davis, E. S. Highstead, the present manager. The Union Bank: Grant Small, H. Wright, H. Eastman. Bank of Commerce, D. A. Bull, 1st mgr., and now A. R. B. Conrad.

In the old days of private banks: John Whyte, J. A. Elliott, Charles Baker, were engaged in the banking business.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS



PROFESSOR LEACOCK in his "Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town" describes the Marine Excursion of the Knights of Pythias from the imaginary Town of Mariposa. The Knights of Pythias epidemic struck Ridgetown about 1893. It also had a band and an excursion, not by water but by land, to Marine City. If Jack McKellar, John McMahan, Jim Quinby and Mike Dougherty were alive they would remember it, but since they are not, those living will have to remember it for them. I am not going into competition with Professor Leacock in describing the excursion. A Knights of Pythias excursion has been sufficiently described by Leacock, however, the names of the members of the band have been pretty well remembered. It is needless to say that they were not all trained musicians. No one could expect that, but they could all toot occasionally, which is all that should be expected from a Knights of Pythias band. Run your eye over this list of names and you will be able to pick out the good players: Josh Billings, Tom Sheppey, Billie McIntosh, Alex Watson, Fred Nelles, J. Fred Jennings, Joe Moore, Jack Tucker, Ab Dean, John Smith, Bob Downey, Jim Simpson, George Sheppard, Gage Hagaman, Stub Gibson, Jack Hartwick, Will Smith, Charles Dauphin.

The Knights of Pythias Lodge disbanded finally in about ten minutes, when the fire of October 1899 reached the Lodge Room in the Dart block up went the records, regalia, charter and the whole works so that now no one can prove who was who or what was what or whether anyone ever belonged to the Knights of Pythias. It is another memory, that is all.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

In 1912 Ridgetown installed the present system of waterworks, securing from deep wells a full supply of most excellent water both for domestic and fire purposes. At the same time it took over the electric lighting system established by James McMaster and then owned by W. H. McMackon. It was decided to place these operations under a commission. The first commissioners were J. A. Elliott and Robert Hall, in 1912. Mr. Elliott and Al Long served in 1913. In 1914 R. W. Stokes succeeded Mr. Long and served on the commission until 1923 when he gave way to O. K. Watson, who remained in office until Jan. 1937. Not until 1916 did Ridgetown hook up with the Provincial Hydro system. In that year the necessary by-laws were passed and everybody admits "It was a good day's work." Mr. Elliott was succeeded in 1917 by C. West and he in 1918 by P. H. Bowyer, who was on the Commission until his death.

Ridgetown enjoys for both water and hydro service, rates among the lowest in the Province. The town has at present 266 street lamps, including twenty ornamental lamps in the business section.

THE HOWARD AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

(By Freeman Green)



HEREIN ARE SOME very interesting facts pertaining to times in general, and to the commencement of the Howard Agricultural Society. These very interesting items have been very kindly presented by Mr. Freeman Green, who was born on lot 12, concession 11, in the Township of Howard, in the year 1846, and who was a very prosperous farmer and spent his life on the said farm until about the year 1923, when he retired and moved to Ridgetown, where he was highly esteemed by all who had the pleasure of making his acquaintance. Mr. Green also mentioned that he had been a competitor at plowing matches since he was 18 years old, making thirteen entries and winning nine firsts, two seconds

and one third. The plow used by Mr. Green at these matches was the "McDiarmid Plow", which was designed by A. D. McDiarmid, father of D. R. McDiarmid, Reeve of Howard Township at the time of last Reunion. Mr. Green takes us away back to the year of 1853, when the first public auction sale of sheep was held at the Howard Inn, (Gillies) on Talbot Street, which is now known as King's Highway No. 3. The lambs sold at this sale were of an inferior breed and in consequence only brought prices ranging from 75c to \$1.00 each. The farmers were advised at this sale to get into a better class of sheep and obtain a higher price. This was done and the following year lambs sold for prices from \$1.00 to \$1.50 each, and in consequence this breed of sheep has made the Town of Ridgetown and surrounding vicinity known throughout the continent through the fame gained by Brien & Son in winning prizes at all stock shows.

In 1854 the first fall fair was held on the Cyrus Smith farm, east of Morpeth, near Big Creek. There were possibly one hundred in attendance at this fair, and there was a good display of sheep, swine and cattle. The main exhibits were the knitted goods and homespuns and homemade cooking. This was a banner day and was well remembered by all. It was at this time that three directors were appointed from the Township of Howard and three from the Township of Orford to conduct an annual fall fair. The directors were as follows: Orford: Messrs. Stewart, Gesner, and Bury; Howard: Messrs. Richard Green, George Duck, and Col. Desmond.

This fair was held alternately between Orford and Howard; two years at Clearville, two years at Duart, two years at Morpeth.

Mr. Green accompanied his father, Mr. Levi Green, to the fair of 1854, their means of transportation being with the ox team and lumber wagon, and incidentally here are some details relating to the lumber wagon. This wagon was assembled by Henry Clark, and the timber used was cut out of Levi Green's bush and kiln dried in an outside bake oven which was ordinarily used to cook the staff of life. The hay that was taken to the fair to feed the oxen was tied in a bundle by hay hope (twisted hay) and the hitching posts at the grounds were thorn trees, and the system of tying the oxen was to hook the draw chain around the tree.

The fall fair was held at the different places as previously mentioned until 1860 and at that time the directors dissolved partnership and a local Board of Directors were appointed, namely: Ed. Tyhurst, Zenas Watson (father of O. K. Watson), A. D. McDiarmid, William McKerracher, Thomas Buller, Robert Shaw and others, and in this year the first fair was held in Ridgetown on Deacon Watterworth's farm. At this fair the main exhibitors were — Brien (grandfather of J. D. Brien), Henry Mitton, —Cameron and others. There was a large attendance and a varied display of livestock. The exhibitors of live stock were obliged to supply rails and build their own show pens on the ground. The fine arts, baking, etc., were displayed in the Township Hall on Main Street, and the poultry was shown in crates on the rear lawn of the Township Hall property.

The fair of 1860 proved a howling success and the directors decided to buy a permanent fair ground and purchased with funds raised by public subscription, two acres of land where the residence of J. D. Brien is now situated, having it conveyed to three men as trustees, namely: Zenas Watson, Edward Tyhurst and Arch. McDiarmid. The fair grew so rapidly that an additional two acres was purchased to accommodate the ever-increasing attendance. The fair was held on this property continuously for about twenty years and in 1882 it was sold to George Addeman, an uncle of the late Henry Buller. After this sale was completed, a committee was appointed to locate a new site to carry on the famed fall fair. The committee appointed for this purpose was Freeman Green, chairman; Anson Fisher, father of George Fisher; Isaac Gardiner, father of Herb Gardiner; George Rockey, father of Alex Rockey; and Henry Buller. The committee had five sites to choose from, and through the far sightedness of the chairman, who by the way was president of this society for eleven consecutive years, the present site was decided upon, and the main hall that had been built on the previous site was moved to the new grounds. This main hall is at present used as the poultry house. The main hall that is now on the fair grounds was planned and built by Frank Brien, an uncle of J. D. Brien. At this time it was decided to hold a two day fair.

There was a great deal of work to be done on the new grounds and as money was scarce, it was decided that each director organize a bee to do the work. This was done, with the result that the grounds were

eventually put in shape without any outlay of the society's funds. The society was regularly incorporated September 7, 1871.

Through the untiring efforts of the above named and others, the Howard Agricultural Fair has now developed into a three-day fair and is said to be one of the best fairs, and the best site for a fair ground in Western Ontario.

RIDGETOWN 50 YEARS AGO



IN 1895, Canada was experiencing one of those business depressions which seem to come periodically. The markets for farm produce were as follows:

Wheat per bu., 70c to 75c; Oats per bu., 18c to 20c; beans per bu., 40c to 60c; beans handpicked, 65c to 70c; potatoes per bu., 25c; red clover seed, \$4.25 to \$4.50; clover hay per ton, \$5.00 to \$6.00; Timothy hay per ton, \$6.00 to \$7.00; eggs, per dozen, 12c to 13c; butter per lb., 12½c; chickens 7c per lb. and turkeys 10c per lb.

In 1895, all of Main Street, North side from Erie Street to Albert Ave. consisted of three storey buildings. In 1899, a fire destroyed all but the McDonald Block at the Erie Street end and the Arlington Hotel at the Albert Street end. The burned over area was subsequently replaced by the present two storey structure and at a later date the third storey of the McDonald block was removed, bringing it to a two storey level.

In 1895, the site of the Royal Bank and the Goodhue block was covered with a three storey brick block built by the Dodge family, owners of the original site and of the frame hotel formerly standing thereon. The new building housed the Queen's Hotel and three stores. This block was purchased by John M. Sheldon in 1904, but unfortunately burned two or three years later. Mr. Sheldon then sold the corner to the Royal Bank and built the present brick block on the remaining land, now owned by the W. H. Goodhue estate.

In 1895, there were no automobiles and no concrete highways. Boots and shoes were still being made by M. Grose and harnesses by Cattle and Porter. The town had a canning factory and a Citizens band. From the advertisements it appears that the lawyers at that time in Ridgetown were E. H. Ridley and W. E. Gundy, in partnership, Walter Mills and the Honorable David Mills, his father, in partnership, Herbert D. Smith and myself. H. W. Westland issued marriage licences and George A. Watson was Justice of the Peace and Insurance Agent. Dr. A. J. Stevenson was a physician, as was also Dr. Stalker, Dr. McFarlane, and Dr. C. B. Lake, who started practice in 1866. He and his son, Walter,

have served this community for the past seventy-nine years. Dr. F. B. Marr came in about five years later. Angus Smith, C.E., was a civil engineer and land surveyor. A. S. Vogler, Dr. G. A. Bentley and J. W. Coyne were dentists. John P. McKinlay was in the insurance business, and Colonel William Barkley was the auctioneer. Sam Ellis and Robert Dodman were barbers. The Arlington Hotel was operated by P. R. Campbell, father of Senator Gordon P. Campbell. J. A. Stevenson was a veterinary surgeon with office and residence in the Benton house. The Benton house occupied the site of the present Cenotaph, and the area at the rear, now covered by dwellings was used by the hotel for barns and



The Methodist Church Quartette

The Quartette, left to right—William Smith, Jim Simpson, Ab Lutz, Organist Ella Smith. These people were all good singers and constituted a male quartette from the Methodist church choir. They were active in the Crossley and Hunter Evangelistic Work in Ridgetown about 1887. Simpson is the only living member at the present time.

stock yards. On the corner now occupied by B. J. Fisher stood the town's weigh scales. Joseph Lang was in the hardware business. Miss Kate Madden was a dressmaker. The leading merchants were Thomas Craig, who carried a very extensive stock, and Hagaman and Jull, who also carried extensive stock in many lines. The Molsons Bank, managed by W. E. Ward and the Traders Bank, managed by John Pool, were the two banks in Ridgetown.

"The Highgate Monitor", under the management of Henry Watson, put out its first number on November 28, 1895. Two of our local doctors advertised in that paper, Dr. J. Golden and Dr. F. B. Marr. The late Angus Gillanders' father was buried on that day. The write up says that he was 80 years and 8 months old and came from the Parish of Urrah in Rossshire. The L. E. and D. R. Railway was operating three passenger trains each way daily. A steam laundry was operated in Ridgetown by the Ferguson family. Robert Davidson was advertising for his tailoring establishment in Ridgetown. Henry Watson was offering his business at Clearville for sale as he was just about to move to Highgate. Watson Brothers, of Ridgetown, were advertising in the Highgate Monitor two hundred thousand shingles for sale. Watson Brothers had a stove mill here, which was afterwards destroyed in a boiler explosion.

In a copy of The Standard newspaper of October 11, 1894, is given the honor roll of Ridgetown Public School of fifty years ago, containing the following children's names:

The highest form comes first in order.

Division 1—Lepha Scane, afterwards Mrs. Sherman Wagner, but now dead; Lillie Iler, Mrs. Fish, still living; James Coultart, deceased; James Bright, now a farmer in Howard Township; Robert Middleditch, deceased; Maud Scane, Mrs. James Craig, still living; Etta Campbell; James Craig, Michigan dentist, now deceased; James McEwan, deceased.

Division 2—Ben Hagaman, deceased; Ruby Baker, living in town with brother William; Cecil Mitton, living in Alberta; Eva Lumley, Mrs. A. E. Sherlock, London; Ernest Mitton, living in Ridgetown; Stella Lent; Arthur Wesley; Etta Wickham, married to a Doctor in Toronto; Mary O'Loane, Mrs. George Wescott, deceased; Eva Page, married, died in Calgary.

Division 3—Maud McNabb; Augusta Jacob, living; Bertha Smith, married, living in Michigan; William McMaster, deceased; Tirza White, Mrs. Louis Bennett, deceased; Bertha Guest, living; May Watson, Mrs. Thos. Shaw, who lived in Thamesville, now deceased; Minnie Gage; James McGregor, living.

Division 4—Robert McEwan, living in West Lorne; Bertha Bentley; Dollie Davis, married, living near Welland; Artie Lang, deceased; Mabel

Gray, Mrs. Ed Reycraft, living in Windsor; Kate Hamilton; Rose Bellard; Annie Barr, deceased.

Division 5—Ernie Cole, deceased; Willie Baker, the celery king, Ridgetown, living; Percy Laing; Pearl Hooker; Cassie Cole; Mrs. William Prosser, Ridgetown; Cora Palfe; Elaine Paine; Alice Walker, Mrs. Chas. St. John, deceased; Bruce McNabb.

Division 6—Maud Downing; Allan Rodgers; Cameron Palmer, deceased; Mamie Waters, Mrs. Bragg, living in Chatham; Olive Baker; Mabel McEwan, deceased; Tillie Simpson, deceased; Frank Mickle, Ridgetown flour mills; Annie Baker; Elsie Crosbie, Mrs. Wm. McTavish, town, deceased; Laura McEwan, deceased.

Division 7—Annie Caldwell; Morley Chambers, living in London; Mamie Estlick, married, living in Detroit; Richard Rock; Beulah Mitton Mrs. W. E. Mac Niven, of London; Norman Benton, living in Chicago; Eva Baker, Mrs. Chas. Brien, living.

Division 8—Class A: Edna Brown, living in Spokane, Washington; Harold McFarlane, a doctor, deceased; Alma Winegarden; Fred Burt. Class B: Howard McGregor, living; Clarence Mitton; Thomas Bowman

An issue of the "Dominion" of November 12, 1903, contains a list of advertisements. L. J. Hummel, marriage licenses, L. J. Reycraft was a Barrister, Walter Mills was a barrister by himself, W. A. F. Campbell succeeded W. E. Gundy. Dr. Routledge and J. W. Coyne were dentists. Dr. F. B. Marr, Dr. D. Marr and Dr. T. W. Walker were physicians. The Misses Shaw advertised their millinery and fancy goods and Miss Armstrong her millinery shop. Dan Gilbert was auctioneer and real estate agent. Pat Mellon, barber, Charles Dunkley, shoe business, Eli Gillings, groceries. L. D. Parney was in the cement and coal business, Bawden and Eastlake were in the gent's furnishings and tailoring business. I. W. Norton was photographer. S. N. Parsons had a school of telegraphy. G. S. Dawe was in the tailoring business, J. C. Locke, furniture and undertaking and E. A. Taylor was operating a tailor shop.

The Lozar house had just been destroyed by an acetylene gas explosion. William Atkinson, a representative of the London Advertiser, and Alex Weir, Picture Dealer, were killed at the time. William Barclay the auctioneer, died a few days later. Ex-Mayor T. P. Watson had bad head wounds. John W. MacKenzie, farmer, had a leg broken and side and arm injuries. Many others had minor injuries. The explosion blew out the front of the hotel and damaged the adjoining blocks and broke windows of stores across the street.

I have an issue of The Dominion thirty years after its inauguration. This sheet is given over to local news with very few local advertisements. The Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal advertise. A. Beck

advertises men's clothing. T. G. Marks, who was operating a variety store, also advertises. There is a long list under the want column.

The Ridgetown Bowlers won the Rodney Tournament. The bowlers were P. Galbraith and H. Ingram, E. Reynolds, A. Laing, R. Dauphin, J. Bawden, A. Schindler and Dr. Marr.

CHARLES GRANT



CHARLES GRANT was born in 1811 in Sussex County, England. In 1832 he came to Howard Township. In 1837 he joined the Militia Company and held a commission as Ensign, made Lieutenant in 1838. He was located at Amherstburg with his family three years while in military service. In 1839 he returned to England, remaining there twelve years as an excise officer, returning again to Howard Township in 1851. He started a Union Sunday School at Ridgetown on Christmas Day, 1851, in the frame schoolhouse built by William Nash. In the Sunday School work he was assisted by John Scane, Mr. and Mrs. Brash, Mrs. James Watson and Miss Kate McKinlay. He taught Sunday School continuously for

fifty-two years. In 1852 he was made auditor of the Township of Howard. In 1856 at the time of the Fenian Raid he organized a Home Guard of fourteen men. He was a Justice of the Peace and acted as magistrate in Ridgetown. At different times he was secretary of the Agricultural Society, Township Clerk, Town Clerk, Librarian of the Mechanics Institute, Secretary of the Public School Board, Secretary of the High School Board. He died at the age of ninety-two years.

Since Ridgetown's incorporation it has had but four town clerks: John Law, the first, held the office for three years when he was succeeded by Charles Grant, Sr., who was also clerk of Howard Township. In 1884 Mr. Grant was succeeded by Duncan Cochrane, who served until his death in 1920, when the present clerk, Herb McDonald, was appointed.

PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Since the village was incorporated the Public School has had as principal: Eli Masales, Hugh McDiarmid, J. K. McGillivray, J. W. Bannerman, W. H. Bingham, John Pringle, J. W. Robinson, Ross Ellison, William Beattie, M. Clunas, R. S. McBurney, J. L. Mitchener, F. C. O'Brien, W. L. McNaughton, J. E. Walker, all able teachers, and the boys old and young say "expert wielders of the strap," but "Historian" is inclined to think none of them got as much as they deserved of the time-old remedy for cussedness.

CHIEF CONSTABLES

The coming of the railroad found Ridgetown with two officers of the law, Moses Millard and "Blacksmith" James Mitton, but incorporation demanded a younger and more vigorous guardian of the peace. Michael Tompkins, lately home from the mines of California and Nevada, was the man selected and he gave good service for a quarter of a century, barring a couple of brief intervals during which Henry and John B. Grant carried the baton. John Mannix, an ex-British soldier, acted as night watchman and street lamp lighter for many years. Charles Tye served as chief constable for several years at different times. James Blake, Albert Campbell and Ted Wheeler also had varying terms of office. Joel Wootton and Roy Squires filled the bill for several years until their resignations at the beginning of this year resulted in the appointment of the Provincial Police.

POLICE MAGISTRATES

Following the town's incorporation John P. McKinlay was appointed Police Magistrate and filled the office until he retired in 1914. Long known as "Ridgetown's Grand Old Man," the Squire was a popular and respected figure in the community from pre-village days until his death in 1923, at the ripe old age of 99 years. Squire George A. Watson succeeded to the office, which he held until 1915 when he also passed on. J. W. Murphy and C. A. Tanner had brief tenures of office, and in 1917 Robert Hall became Police Magistrate, serving until 1927 when he resigned. He was succeeded by H. P. Stennett. Subsequently County Police Magistrates took over, doing away with local magistrates.

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

As stated elsewhere, G. A. Chase was our first high school principal. He was succeeded in 1880 by J. G. Little, who ruled until he retired in 1911. Principals in succession have been Charles Potter, F. H. Frost, J. T. McLaurin, J. R. Cameron, Thomas Preston, R. H. Young. Mr. Norman Davies was the first principal of the High and Vocational School, and he was succeeded by the present principal, J. W. Edwards.

JOHN P. McKINLAY

JOHN P. McKINLAY was born in Scotland in 1824, came with his grandparents to the Township of Aldborough when a boy. He learned the trade of a carpenter. In 1847 he moved to Ohio and married Marry E. Ritter. In 1854 he returned to Howard Township and settled on a two hundred acre farm south of Ridgetown. On the death of his wife he left the farm and moved to Ridgetown. He was one of the backers of the Ontario Casket Company of which he was made president. He was made Police Magistrate about 1890 and retired in 1914. He was a member of the town council on different occasions and one of the founders of the Disciple Church in Ridgetown.

DENTISTS

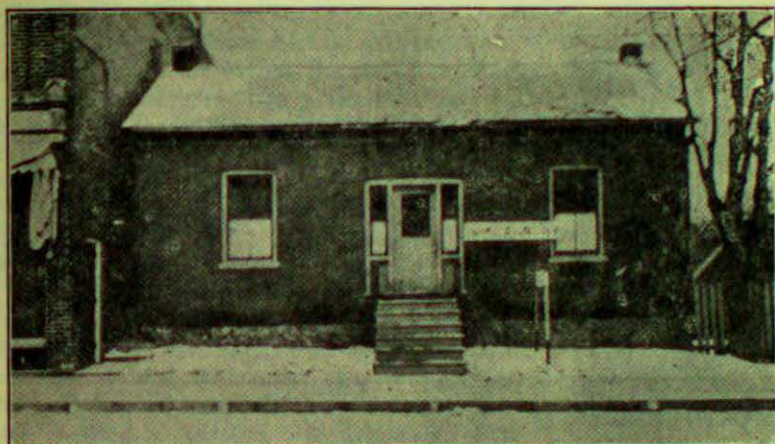
Ridgetown's first professional dentist was named White, but soon after village incorporation came Thomas Brown, P. C. Smith, A. S. Vogler, J. W. Coyne, and as vacancies occurred, came G. A. Bentley H. S. Billings, Ivory, Grey, Nelson Coyne, T. A. Routledge, M. J. Hooley and H. S. Feagan. The three last named are present molar extractors. The boys never cared about coming in too close contact with any of them.

MEDICAL MEN

The first local physicians of record were two brothers, Myers and James McLaughlin, who must have commenced practice here in the early 1850's. It is probable that they erected the first brick house here, one which yet stands to the credit of its buildeers on Main Street East, north side, nearly opposite the Presbyterian Church. The brothers must have sold out to Dr. Proudfoot, who died while in practice here about 1865. Dr. Jacob Smith came here in 1859, then we had too others, Dr. Fraser and Dr. Van Camp. Dr. C. B. Lake came in 1866, and Dr. F. B. Marr in 1871, followed at intervals upon removal or death by Drs. R. C. Young, R. A. Clark, John Stalker, M. McFarlane, —Wright, A. J. Stevenson, G. Golden. P. B. Robertson, E. D. Gillis, T. M. Walker, W. A. Groves, T. M. Lawton. S. N. Young, Delaski Marr, Walter E. Lake, R. A. Bayne, W. H. Orr, T. A. McCallum, Robt. Demary, S. P. Lazerson, J. R. Button. E. W. Irwin, Chiropractor.

In February, 1903, the whole town was quarantined for smallpox.

THE FIRST BRICK HOUSE



This brick house, now a dentist office, was the first brick house built in Ridgetown. It was erected about 1855. Mr. White, the Provincial architect, in March 1930, in passing turned to look at the building and made the following remark: "Fine piece of brick work, openings are the right size and correctly spaced. The building correctly proportioned architecturally. The man who built it must have known his business," recalling to our minds the fact that every mechanic in England had to serve seven years under articles before he was permitted to go out as a competent workman.

HOTEL KEEPERS

At one time Ridgetown boasted of having six hotels. \$1.00 per day, twenty-five cents per meal was the tariff, and a quarter would treat all hands in the barroom. This period is referred to by certain "old boys" as "the good old days." The Crooks' Act, and fire, cut the number of hotels to four and finally three. On the whole the old hotel men played leading parts in the local drama and to balance their faults had many good points. The following list is far from complete and the names may not be in exact order: Henry Reeder, Henry Dodge, Thomas Moore, Dugald Leitch, Charles Graham, N. S. Benton, Ephriam Lumley, David Smith, Duncan McNicol, J. W. Ross, J. T. Coffey, Lincoln Benton, Jacob Beedle, W. R. Peck, G. W. Lozar, Daniel Leitch, P. R. Campbell, Charles Underhill, Dan Silcox, John Wees, N. Pursell, E. E. Ingram, Bruce Cameron, Fred Miles, John M. Sheldon, W. Merrifield, W. Riddell, W. T. Campbell, Siskind Bros. Frank Green.

GEORGE LOZAR

GEORGE LOZAR came to Ridgetown about 1863. He was a native of Pennsylvania and a very energetic and progressive man. He was a cabinetmaker by trade and built the mill now owned by Frank Wheeler. He sold the mill to Charles E. Scane in 1874, who operated it for many years, finally taking in his son-in-law, Thomas Buller. The firm then became Scane & Buller. Scane later retired and Thomas Buller continued the business until his death on September 29, 1907. This is one of the two early industries that are still giving service. George Lozar also built a large hotel which is now owned by Frank Green. He started

and was active in a number of business enterprises. In 1870 he married Mrs. Leitch, who survived him many years.



Explosion of Acetylene Gas in the Lozar House, November 11, 1903

Two were killed, Col. Barclay, the auctioneer, and a travelling salesman. Several were injured. Jack McKenzie had his legs broken. The two adjoining blocks were damaged.

DRUGGISTS

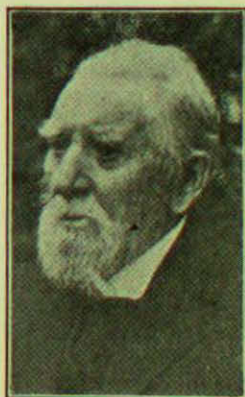
Before 1872 Charles Elford, an old country chemist, was compounding drugs while not making tintypes for the newly weds of the day, but in that year Ridgetown had a real drugstore, T. Parrish, proprietor, in the Smith block, on the south west corner of Main and Erie Streets. Within a couple of years T. Dykes opened another drugstore in the frame building just west of Dr. Marr's residence. A little later came John Chapman, Dennis Lake, R. A. Nelles, Martin E. Neads, Tom Kyle, Charlie Hoyt, F. Hurdon, P. Caughell, W. B. Graham, C. J. Reddy, W. H. Mutrie, E. D. Jarvis, U. M. Mitton, Peter Bawden, Roy Morris, A. D. Bruce. From early times Ridgetown has always had two drugstores, and sometimes three. The present druggists are H. D. Stewart, Frand Goodbrand, and C. R. Nelson.

MANUFACTURERS

Like most Ontario towns before the era of incorporated companies, amalgamations, mergers and stock flotations, Ridgetown had a number of more or less important industries which gave employment to many men and an air of smart importance to the place. The names of the men who did what they could to serve the town and push it along the road of prosperity should not be omitted from any "Story of Ridgetown." Descendants of these men and all readers of these pages can look back with respect at the names which follow:

Flour Millers — John Moody and Sons, George Gunder, J. H. Mitton, C. Cawthorpe, Watte Brothers, P. G. Buckberrough, David Simpson, D. P. McNorgan, A. S. Blight, Geo. T. Mickle & Sons.

Saw, Planing Mills, Sash and Doors—Coleman & Lozar, G. A. Watson, John Leitch, A. N. McLean, Watson Brothers, Tolmie & Martin, Charles E. Scane, T. L. Buller, J. B.



JOHN MOODY

JOHN MOODY was born in 1832 in Howard Township, was married and took over his father's mill at Ridgetown in 1858. He was eighty-eight years of age when this photo was taken. He died at Weston, March 31st, 1930. He was a Presbyterian.

Coates, McDougal & Fletcher, Charles Owens, Watson & Taylor, A. Warwick, F. Wheeler.

Carriage and Wagon Makers—W. H. B. Morgan, George Rockey, Lamont & Sons, Hoag & Baker, William Waters.

Foundry and Machine Shops—James Watt & Sons, Dan, Frank and Richard; James and William McMaster, George Middleditch, John T. Sales, J. E. Middleditch, Dell Cole, P. D. Bates, A. J. Sales Company, J. H. Dunkley Tool & Die

Brick and Tile—D. L. Campbell and S. Potts, Henry Howell, John Hitch & Sons.

Monuments—J. E. Thatcher and W. H. Ellsworth.

Handle Factory—Howard Dell Caskets—Ontario Casket Co.

Pop Factory—Aaron Musselman Ridgetown Canning Co.

Pump Works—Peter Cole Canadian Cannery Ltd.

Shoe Factory—J. M. Cronk P. D. Bates Mfg. Co.

Bean Pullers—John Yocum A. J. Sales Co. Ltd.

Woollen Mills—John Moody

Bean Elevators—J. A. Elliott, R. Hall, George Mickle, Thomas Steel, W. C. Newman, Cochrane & Willson, Dilliot & Schindler.

Grain Elevators and dealers in various farm products — Archie Patterson, Geo. T. Mickle & Sons.

MEN OUTSIDE THE TOWN BUT PART OF IT

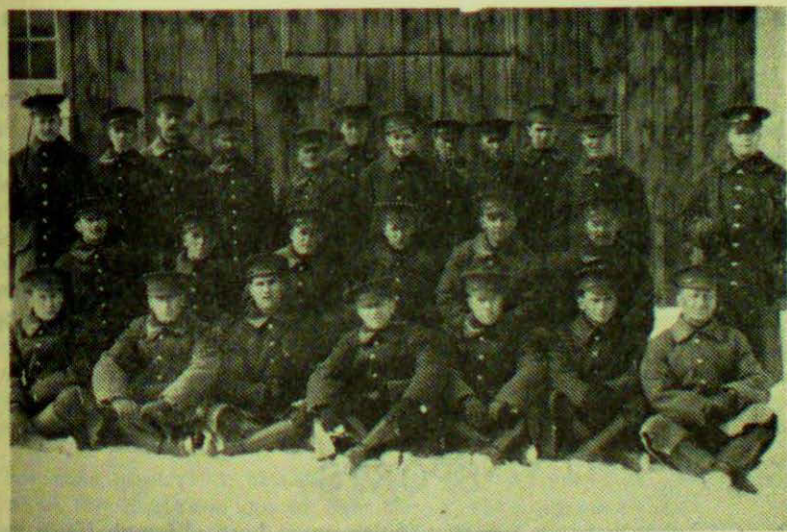
Close on the outskirts of the town at all times have been men who took an active interest in its growth and advancement and who should not be overlooked: E. B. Harrison, for many years Public School Inspector, and his son Harry; Alex Sinclair, S. B., Arthur and James Sinclair, Arch. McKinlay, D. F. and John A. McKinlay, Arch. McDiarmid and his son Duncan; John, James and Robert McGregor and the two latter's sons; the Scane and Brien families; D. G. Willson, John Paterson, the Buller family; Joe Weitzel, Whitman Brothers, and to mention a few more recent ones, J. C. Millar, Harold Willson, Gordon McGregor, John Cochrane, J. L. Devereux, Robt. J. McDonald.

LAWYERS

Ridgetown's first lawyer was Edward Tiffany, who came in 1870 and moved to Alexandria, Ontario, in 1874. Tiffany Street is named after him. Then came F. W. Ollard, who was followed by J. M. Carthew. As time passed they came and went. After village incorporation we had N. Mills, C. P. Simpson, D. K. Cunningham, T. B. Shoebottom, E. H. Ridley, Charles Macdonald, W. E. Gundy, Walter Mills, A. Bridgman, H. D. Smith, Freeman Harding, W. A. F. Campbell, J. W. Murphy, C. H. Tanner, S. M. Phenix. At one time Ridgetown had six lawyers. At present we have O. K. Watson, K.C., who commenced practice here in 1894; D. M. Shaw, K.C., who entered the arena in 1921; E. B. Stirling, and Carl R. Watson.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

John Watson made the first tintype in the old village and passed the camera on to Charles Elford. Then came Malcolm McDonald, J. W. Norton, W. Trott, F. Kiborn, Charles Gamble, C. Hiles, and George Merritt, who is the present professional photographer.



FIRST COMPANY TO ENLIST FROM RIDGETOWN IN FIRST GREAT WAR, 1915

Left to right, 1st row—Art Bright, E. Clements, Carl Randal, — W. Atkinson, J. LaCount, Frank McDonald; 2nd row—Walter E. Brown, J. Tuddenham, R. Priestley, Jack Richards, Roy Squires, J. Dingman; Back row, standing—A. Tye, H. Brown, A. E. Campbell, William Weston, Sid Shields, A. Pickering, — Harry Hildreth, Jim Gray, A. Wilkinson —.

CELEBRATING PEACE



The Saddest Memory of the Old Home Town—Celebrating the End of the Great War

These are the dead, their memory lives on forever and ever: Corp. Norman C. Stewart, Pte. William Storing, Corp. C. Mac Eastlake, Pte. Truman Frnch, Pte. Edwin C. Cattle, Pte. Roy Clingersmith, Lieut. Archibald Wagner, Pte. Leonard Clingersmith, Pte. George Peterson, Pte. John Linton, Pte. Charles Turner, Pte. Reginald Turner, Pte. Victor Pyne, Pte. Ernest Spooner, Pte. L. Bertram Smith, Pte. W. E. Osborne, Pte. John Tuddenham, Pte. Thos. Turner, Capt. C. W. Halstead, Sergt. Leonard A. Allen, Pte. Jas. Coveny, Pte. Henry Miner, V.C., Pte. John Martini, Pte. Murton Shore, Pte. John Dingman, Pte. Truman Priestly, Pte. James Willison, Pte. Thos. Ward, Pte. Harold Roach.



SPORTS

Cricket was never a very popular game here although there were cricket clubs functioning from time to time. It is a typically English game, but not suited to the temperament of the people of America. The people on this side of the Atlantic want more action and excitement than is seen in watching a game of cricket.

The Indian game of lacrosse was at one time very popular and this town had a very strong team but baseball seems to have been always popular.

Until the year 1900, Ridgetown had no playing field that could be exclusively used for that purpose, but in that year a strong popular demand for such a field resulted in the purchase of four acres of land north of the Pere Marquette Railway and adjoining Erie Street. From money obtained by popular subscription this was bought and on December 10, 1900, was conveyed to the Municipality to be used solely as a playing field. A great deal of voluntary work was done to level the ground and make it fit the purpose and some years afterwards, it was fenced. At the time of the purchase and for years afterwards, the game of soft ball was unknown here. It is now more popular than hard ball. It is played by both sexes on a small field and can be played in the evening with the aid of electric lights.

Until 1897, when legislation was passed making it easy and inexpensive to incorporate athletic associations not operated for profit, all our athletic organizations had no legal status and were not permanent organizations, but in or about the year 1904, a number of those interested in lawn bowling took advantage of the legislation and became incorporated under the name of "The Ridgetown Bowling Association." It would be interesting to give the names of the original petitioners for incorporation, but the early records are at present mislaid and the Provincial Secretary's office has no record of the incorporation. From memory I know that Robert Porterfield, now deceased, was very active in promoting the game and that the first green was on his back lot facing Head Street. This association has been a very successful club; some of our players have been on European tours with other bowlers and twice, at least, English teams have been entertained here.

In 1923, the golf fever struck the town in the person of H. H. Stevenson, new manager of the Molson's Bank. His arrival was very opportune and on November 13, 1923, the Ridgetown Golf and Country Club was incorporated by the following persons: Walter Edward Lake and Thomas Morrison Lawton, Physicians, Horatio Stevenson, Bank Manager, Edward Gordon Doe, Parish Priest, and Frederick Demo Bates, Gentleman, all of the Town of Ridgetown, in the county of Kent. Dr. Lake was the first president.

The first attempt to establish a Golf Course was on the pasture farm lying at the Southern end of Erie Street, then owned by Neil P. Campbell. Tin cans were sunk into the ground for cups. Subsequently they were replaced with sections of 4 inch iron pipe supplied by Fred Bates and Dr. Lake. There were plenty of hazards on this field, particularly after the cattle had spent a night lying on the greens.

On the 31st of May, 1940, the Ridgetown Playgrounds Association was formed for the purpose of establishing a playing field for the game of soft ball together with swings, slides and other appliances for the amusement of children. The Petitioners and first directors were the following:

Andrew Thomas Ward, Merchant, Jack Lightbody, Hydro Superintendent, Charles Russell Davis, Bank Manager, Henry Pomeroy Stennett, Justice of the Peace and Philo David Bates, Manufacturer, all of Ridgetown. The lands taken over by the Association were waste lands through which the town creek flowed in an irregular manner between high banks. All these lands became Municipally owned and administered by the Association. The area is called Churchill Park. It is centrally located and what was formerly an eyesore is now an useful and attractive play ground. Again it was private subscription and voluntary labor that altered the creek's course, levelled and fitted the grounds with seating accommodation and lights, setting up swings and slides for the children. Our community has never lacked popular support for any undertaking deemed necessary for the pleasure and health of the people. Those who claim that it is a good town to live in have the best reasons for their optimism.

In the early 1880's, a young man came here from Chatham and opened a fruit and confectionary store. He became a very prominent citizen and promotor of sports. The name Charlie Dauphin will sound familiar to many who read this article. He was the first merchant to risk his capital in perishable goods and his success proved to the older merchants that their methods of keeping a little thing that could be sold, but only in unperishable wares because of the slow turn over, was not the way to make money. He opened in a small one-storey building located on the North side of Main Street on the site now occupied by Korycan's store. All the children's pennies went to Dauphin's for ice cream, candy, peanuts and southern fruits, together with plenty of silver and bills from grown ups. A short time after he started, he was joined by his brother Fred, who stayed on through the years until Charlie's death and for a long time thereafter until he himself was called away. Fred was a powerful fellow, yet far removed from anything resembling a bully. I remember one occasion when he ran from in front of the store and grabbed a run-away horse that was carrying two helpless children in a buggy at a furious rate down the street. He was knocked about by the horse's hoofs and the buggy shafts, but didn't let go and finally brought the outfit to a stop. He had been a blacksmith and no doubt knew a great deal about holding horses in order to shoe them. He was a fearless fellow and not afraid of being hurt.

Charlie Dauphin built the first skating rink in Ridgetown. It was located on the lot facing York Street on which Shute's plumbing shop is now located, but the entrance to the rink was from Main Street. It was arranged for a gymnasium in summer and an ice rink in winter. As a rink it made money when there was ice, so much so, that another rink was built at a remote spot in Ward 4 by a man by the name of Martin, but his patrons consisted for the most part of the very young, who went there to escape the crowds of grown ups at the Dauphin rink.

Figure skating was introduced in the Dauphin rink by Ben Hagaman, son of W. E. Hagaman, senior partner of the firm of Hagaman & Jull, general merchants. Ben was not a normal youth, he did not mingle with the other young people. He had every advantage that any young man could wish for, yet he threw it all to the winds, and should any reader want to know more, let him get a copy of Detective Murray's book, "Memories of a great Detective" from any library and satisfy his curiosity.

The Dauphin rink finally went out of business. The site of the Martin rink next appeared as an ice house and pond owned for a long time by George T. Mickle.

The next adventure in rinks was a roller rink located on what is now the market reserve, built and operated by James and William McMaster. It was a money maker for some years, having the advantage of operating in all seasons, but it eventually also ceased to earn dividends.

The last rink was an ice rink built by little Joe Mitton on the lot just north of the regular Baptist Church. In it, the ancient Scottish game of curling was introduced. The game and the skating crowds made good money for a time, but as usual with sports, the people in time lost interest and craved something new. This rink passed into the hands of Joe Moore, Locke's helper. Joe continued with it in a delapidated condition, finally without a roof until his death. Now the site is turned into building lots.

The trouble with natural ice in this climate is the uncertainty of stable weather. We are too far south for continual ice making. Thus, artificial ice is the only remedy and it is expensive.

Charles Eastlake, who died a few months ago, was always a vigorous advocate of outdoor sports. He took part in all of these activities for many years and deserves a great deal of the credit for the splendid effort he always put forth to make these activities a success, not only in sports, but in all public efforts to improve the town and the welfare of its inhabitants. Hurrah for Charlie in spite of the fact that he was a great talker, but a poor listener, yet his heart was in the right place all the time.

The arrival of the bicycle introduced a new sport feature, namely, bicycle races and doing the country, which consisted in riding a bicycle a hundred miles between sun up and sun down, called a century. My recollection is that Pete Bawden and Sate Banker were the first to introduce the low wheel bicycle with hard rubber tires to Ridgetown, but neither of them ever rode a race or did a century.

Howard Bates was a fast and tireless bicycle racer, but his greatest exploit was the time when entirely unknown to the sporting fraternity

in the States, he went to New York to match his shooting ability at live pigeons against the whole United States and any other country that cared to enter the contest known as "Grand American Handicap." There were assembled two hundred or more of the best shots in the United States, including Annie Oakley, who was Buffalo Bill's crack shot, yet he beat them all, and after continuous shooting in which it was miss and go out, he was the only one left who never missed a bird. The grand prize I believe was \$100.00, but he was given a new gun made to measure by the manufacturers of the gun he used, a Parker. He was given other awards by the manufacturers of the shells he used, and in addition, brought to the attention of the Americans that there really was a place called Canada where the people were not all Indians and Eskimos, as many up to that time believed. Another crack shot was Charlie Gammage. He never won the grand American Handicap, but came very near it. He has broken as high as 394 clay pigeons out of a possible 400 in continual shooting.

Harry Scane had a great line-up of silver trophies won with his shot gun in various contests, both here and in the United States. This has always been the centre of gun lovers and many are the names of those who have been outstanding marksmen, both with rifle and shot gun.

RIDGETOWN AND WESTERN DISTRICT



AFTER Canada passed out of the hands of the French and into hands of the British in 1759, isolated traders carrying trade goods in Batteaux, followed the water ways, trading goods for furs. These Batteaux were flat bottomed skiffs about forty feet long, sharp at both ends, six to eight feet wide, capable of carrying about five tons of cargo. They had a mast and lug sale for a favorable wind but for the most part were propelled by four long oars: the crew consisted of four men and a pilot.

On the lakes the crew usually went ashore at night and might remain in shelter for several days in case of unfavorable weather. When rapids were encountered, a line was run from the boat to the shore. One man remained in the boat while the others hauled on the line. Some of the men who went with the traders became squatters, particularly along the rivers where they carried on trade in a small way and were feeders for the Batteaux.

It is claimed by the Peck family, long known in Raleigh Township and Chatham, that the ancestor of John Peck, who was with Wolfe's

army at Quebec, settled in Raleigh on the Thames in 1768. If that is a fact, he must have been the first white man to settle in this county.

After the war of 1812-14 was over, settlers from the British Isles as well as from New York State swarmed into Southern Ontario. Up to that time settlers were coming in from time to time, but not in the volume in which they subsequently came.

In order to accommodate these people, colonization roads were struck out across the country with a row of farm lots staked out on each side. The one we are best acquainted with is now No. Three Highway, formerly known as the Talbot Road. This road was blazed through our district in 1804.

The earliest crown deed in Howard Township was granted to John Parker on June 26th, 1817, but Parker was located on the land for several years before that date in order to do necessary settlement duties. Other Patents were issued in 1817, but later than June of that year. By 1822, every lot on Talbot Road from Port Talbot to Windsor (at least on such portions of it as had been surveyed) had a settler on it or had filed on it. It was impossible to run the road through Harwich Township for a time because large sections there had been granted to absentee owners, men who had never seen the property. These claims had to be settled with before the crown could throw the township open for settlement.

After the colonization, roads were surveyed. Next came the roads separating the Townships from each other called the town line roads. Many of these also had a row of farm lots struck out on each side, called still the town line range of lots. The final act in the County's survey consisted in the division of the interior of the township into farm lots.

By 1822, it was necessary for the settlers coming in, to look for locations in the interior of the townships. The survey of the interior portions of Howard was not completed when the men who secured the land on which the town was built visited the site and filed their claims as intending settlers.

All settlers coming in to this section of Ontario had to apply to Colonel Talbot for permission to locate. He had to be satisfied as to the loyalty of the applicant and that he had a reasonable chance to succeed. The Colonel was a pint-sized autocrat who was very pompous and undiplomatic to say the least, he was very insulting in addressing the applicants and was hated in return. He wanted them all to know that he was the boss of the settlement and if he saw fit to take one settler's farm away and give it to another, that was his privilege, but one day he tried it on a big raw boned highlander who picked him up and shook him as though he were a rat. The Colonel gave him back his farm, then wrote back to England to send no more Scots, they were the worst type of settlers. To protect himself from too close contact with his settlers in the future, he had a pane

of glass in his office window arranged so that it could be opened or closed from the inside. Those who have an opportunity of visiting his residence at Port Talbot can still see the window and the hinged pane.

Taken as a whole, however, his management of the settlement was in the best interests of the Country.

What caused Talbot to bury himself in the wilderness of upper Canada was never explained by him. Mrs. Jameson, an English writer, spent a week in 1837, as guest of the Colonel. She wrote that his resemblance to the King (William IV) is so very striking as to be something next to identity.

The Colonel returned to England accompanied by George Macbeth for the years 1848 to 1850, spending his time in London, but there is no indication of his visiting his birth place which was Castle Malahide in Ireland.

In the year 1822 there arrived at Colonel Talbot's place, four intending settlers from England. These men all had farming experience. The four consisted of three Scanes, Thomas Sr., Thomas Jr., and John, the other was James Watson. The last three named were young men, twenty-two to twenty-six years of age. Thomas Scane Sr. was fifty-seven. These men before approaching the Colonel had made extensive enquiries as to the best locations available and decided on the new survey in the Township of Howard. So when they approached the Colonel, they were able to satisfy him that they were all desirable settlers. He gave them permission to locate in Howard if they found the place to their liking.

These men made their way towards the West along the Talbot Road which at that time was more of a trail than a road. In passing through the Township of Aldborough, they were joined by one Edmund Mitton, who was already located in Aldborough but wanted to change to a new location. In time they came to the cabin of John Shippey, who was living on the Talbot Road about two miles East from what is now the village of Morpeth. Shippey was a trapper and in pursuit of his calling became familiar with the interior of the Township, so they hired him to guide them to a suitable area and it was he who brought them to the site of Ridgetown. This area was heavily timbered with hardwoods, the size of the trees indicated very fertile land, the drainage was good, in fact, he had brought them to the crest of the watershed from which water flowed North to the Thames and South to Lake Erie. They were on what has since been called the Ridge.

The road which is now our Main Street was called in the original survey the Middle Road, but subsequently called the Ninth Concession Road. Mitton and Watson took lots ten and nine North on the Middle Road, while the Scanes took lots about a mile further West, their holdings eventually amounted to five or six hundred acres.

Lots nine and ten South of the Middle Road were taken up by William Marsh on Lot Nine and Ebenezer Colby, an American from New York State on Lot ten. These four farms now form the four wards of Ridgetown.

A great deal could be written about the hardships and privations suffered by these men, including the difficult journey to get to Canada. Once located the land had to be cleared of the forest before anything could be planted. They were beset by pests of all kinds and by fever and ague. All the settlers being in the same boat, so to speak, banded together to help each other and they came through slowly at first, but always gaining ground.

Ebenezer Colby seems to have been the man with the most vision. He was the first to suggest offering free building sites for churches, schools and public buildings, and did donate sites for two churches and the Township Hall, while Watson donated a site for the first school house, as a result the nucleus of a village was well underway by 1850.

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EARLY "CHARACTERS"

RUSSELL—YOUNG



LADY who was interested in the early days of this community said to me "You are probably the only person who remembers anything about the people who came here early; the stories you remember about them are interesting, and are in reality legends, and should be preserved."

In looking up the word "legend" in Webster's New International Dictionary, I find "legend"—(1) a chronicle or register of the lives of the saints. That settles it, there is no need of preserving any records. But let's see, perhaps the original meaning has changed: yes, there are several changes. (4) "any story coming down from the past, especially one popularly taken as historical, though not verifiable by historical record."

The last definition is broad enough to cover the doings and sayings of those of the old fellows now long since gone, who refused to be bound by any rules of conduct and are usually referred to as "characters."

Life in the early settlement was very humdrum, communities were isolated from each other and there was a lack of either educational facilities or of amusements to break the monotony of existence. It is not strange then, if some, who craving excitement or a break in the monotony of existence, either said or did something that overstepped the bounds of

good conduct, while on the other hand, some others were so steeped in religious zeal that they also became "characters."

The first to gain Notoriety was the earliest settler, always called "Daddy Marsh". He was notorious for his tall stores, some of which would rank well with Major Hoople's alleged exploits. When Daddy got his imagination in good working order, his wife, to save the family reputation, would burst the bubble with "Daddy you'm th' wost ol' liar the Lord ever let live." I am sorry he passed away before I arrived, as I would have been an eager listener. I was present, however, in 1880 at the public presentation to his widow of an address and medal when she had attained the remarkable age of one hundred and two years.

The next character that comes to mind is Russell Young who gained distinction in an entirely different way from Daddy Marsh. He came here in the early 1850's or possibly earlier, but spent his youth somewhere near St. Thomas, a centre of unrest in the MacKenzie rebellion of 1837. He, with many others, were linked with the rebels. On the collapse of the rebellion, any supporters of MacKenzie who could be caught were arrested and some were hanged in London. Russell slipped quietly away and vanished from sight, and after Lord Durham's report on the causes of the rebellion reached the British Parliament with his recommendations those who took part in the rebellion; not of much benefit, however, to those who had already been hanged; but there was then no longer need for Russell to keep under cover and he finally made his permanent home in Ridgetown. He was a brick mason by trade and owned the property which now belongs to Capt. Day.

His trade was a seasonable one and the long winters left him to find other employment, but when spring opened up, he was swamped with orders by people who must have the work done right away. For a time he would work long hours in order to satisfy them, but when they got too importunate, he would balk, refuse to work for anybody, and go on a spree.

Invariably, he started his holiday by buying something for the house, no doubt to modify, if possible, his reception when the holiday was over and what he usually got for the purpose was a cod fish and a broom. As soon as he was seen with this equipment, everyone knew what was up and prepared to be amused. The spree would last as long as his money held out, but there always came a time when he had to face the family at home. sometimes he could recover his cod fish and broom, but sometimes he had to go home without them.

He had one daughter who had a splendid command of English ready for the return trips, but who was very secretive about her age. She wouldn't tell her age to anyone, even the census taker had to use his own judgment on that point. She was a school teacher and also a very good artist and musician. If she happened to be home when her father came back from his spree, she fairly burned him up for his conduct. If it got

too hot for him, he would start back up town, stop everyone he met and tell them the news, "Harriet will be forty-five tomorrow" or whatever age he thought would annoy her the most, knowing the neighbors would be only too glad to carry the news back to Harriet.

THE SALVATION ARMY BAND



The young lady occupying the extreme right position in the front row is now a member of the Town Council. She has the distinction of being the first woman to be elected to such a position in Ridgetown, and is now serving her second term.

Captain Brewer, the leader, was an unusually versatile man, born and raised in Newfoundland, he finally found his way here shortly after the Army acquired the site where the barracks and dwelling are now located. He immediately started in to tear down the old livery barn which stood on the property and setting aside such of the material as could be used again, built the present barracks and dwelling house, both almost entirely by his own labor. He didn't ask for financial assistance in the usual way, but offered the people a chance to make an investment which would pay good dividends in the benefit each conferred on some less fortunate person than himself.

His attitude seemed to interest an old retired farmer, Robert Hepburn, a Scotchman who had no immediate relatives. He used to loiter near

the busy captain and finally asked him where the money came from. Brewer replied that people gave the Army a little money sometimes and so they kept on going. Hepburn replied, "Well, I gie you some mysel." Brewer, in telling me the circumstances, said that from the appearance of the old man, he took it to mean \$2.00.

The old man died before the entire work was completed and by his Will, bequeathed his entire estate, amounting to between four and five thousand dollars, to the Army.

The old man was as good as his word, he really did "gie" him something.

JOE WHITESELL

The next character that comes to mind bore the familiar name of Jos Whitesell. He had a most harrowing experience in his early youth. It happened in the month of June, 1848, when he was eighteen years of age and living in the Township of Malahide in the County of Elgin. He with two others, Daniel McCrimmon, who had a wife and seven children and John Freelan, probably a single man, but older than Joe, started out on Lake Erie in a single row boat to fish. A gale came up from the North West and carried them out to sea. The oars were either broken or lost. McCrimmon apparently became panic stricken, jumped overboard and tried to swim to shore, but drowned. The other two continued to drift and bail. On the second day or night, Freelan died from cold and exposure, leaving Whitesell still alive with the corpse for company. On the third day, the weather moderated and on the fourth day, the wind shifted to the South East carrying the boat back towards the North shore from which they embarked. On the moonlight night of the fourth day, the boat grounded. Whitesell still had some life left and managed to crawl out on land and by slow and painful effort drag himself a quarter of a mile or more to a house where he was taken in and cared for. He was young and must have had extraordinary health and stamina, otherwise, he would have joined the others in death.

As a result of this experience, he jumped from obscurity to fame, which having once tasted, he always enjoyed the limelight, which in my opinion accounts more than anything else for the fact that everyone knew or had heard of Joe Whitesell. He never sought public approval of his doings, but he did seek publicity, and when as an old man with his fortune gone, he retired to spend his last days in Morpeth, he was given the title of Mayor of Moperth.

I first heard of Joe Whitesell nearly seventy years ago, when I was still in public school. He owned the farm about three miles West of Ridgetown, now owned by F. A. Lenentine. Besides the farm, he had two saw mills, one on the farm, the other in Highgate. He was doing a lucrative business and always had a gang of men working for him. He had never

been to school and could neither read nor write, yet his memory of his business deals was much more accurate in detail than many people's books. He, however, generally had someone who could write down items of account as he related them, in case someone wanted to settle when he was not around. He had a ready wit and was quick in retort.

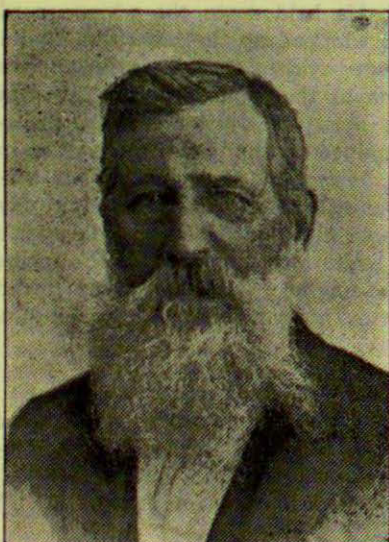
On one occasion he was moving a barn along the Orford Howard town line when there was snow on the ground, he had runners under the barn and was hauling it along with several other teams of horses for motive power. Everything was going nicely until he had to cross the Canada Southern Railway tracks. Unfortunately there was not much time in which to manouver as a freight was coming down grade from Highgate. when the engineer saw what was ahead. He held down the whistle cord and began to apply the brakes. The men whipped up the horses in a vain attempt to avoid the crash. When it became evident that the collision was bound to come, Joe called to his men, "Unhook the teams boys and let them take a bunt at her." They did, and the barn was scattered in all directions. The engine and cars, however, remained on the tracks and the train came to a stop a short distance beyond the smash. The engine was battered, head light and smoke stack gone, but still able to proceed. Next day a representative of the Railway came up to get a settlement. Joe wasn't sure of his rights, but didn't intend to make any admission. The agent wanted Joe to pay for the damage to the engine. Joe's reply was, "who is going to pay for my barn? It didn't run into your engine, your engine ran into my barn."

"Why didn't you send the Company word that you were going to move the barn and we could have arranged for it," and more on the same line, but getting no satisfaction, the agent's final crusher was, "if the company has to sue you Whitesell, it will cost you more than you are worth." Joe shot back, "Well in that case, you will have to wait for part of it." I never heard that Joe ever had to settle.

One event, that is hard to credit, but actually happened, was related to me by Nick Ferguson who was at Joe's place mortising timbers for a building. He was using a large framing chisel when Joe came by limping. Ferguson asked what the trouble was and Joe said a corn on his little toe had been hurting him and he wished the toe was off. Nick said jokingly, put it up here and I will cut it off with this chisel. Joe stripped off his slipper and put his foot on the timber. Nick made some feints with the mallet and the chisel, but was careful not to hit the chisel. Joe became annoyed and said, "hit it or give me the mallet." Nick handed him the mallet and chisel and immediately the toe went flying off the foot.

As time went on, the need for Joe's saw mills became less, so he closed out the Highgate mill and gradually the one on the farm and looked for a new line of business. From that time on his star began to wane.

He conceived the idea of building a hotel at the Railway station in Ridgetown at the foot of Albert Avenue and Palmer Street. These two roads met at an angle. Joe built his hotel so that the west and north sides formed an acute angle and in consequence it became an oddity and much talked about. Once more Joe was in the lime light. Albert Avenue was laid out by Horton & Cunningham for a grand boulevard and it looks good on the map but has never been used as a highway. Joe's hotel was without a tenant for a long time after it was built, but was eventually taken by Mrs. MacIntosh and her sons who had formerly carried on a hotel business at



L. S. HANCOCK

LEVI SHREVE HANCOCK was born in New Jersey in 1819, learned the trade of a tailor. At twenty-five years of age he went to Colgate University for four years. In 1851 he came to Canada as a missionary. In 1854 he settled in Ridgetown. In 1861 he was appointed postmaster. In 1865 he married Sarah A. Sumner, who was born in the County of Middlesex. They raised a large family. Mr. Hancock was one of the charter members of the Baptist Church in Ridgetown and lived to a ripe old age. He was a familiar figure in Ridgetown for many, many years. He was followed by Robert Tape, who in turn was followed by Captain C. F. Day, April 6, 1933.

the Village of Cashmere located on the Thames a few miles west of Wardsville. This village was commonly called "Sucker Town" from the quantity of river fish caught at the base of the dam in the spring of the year when they were going to spawn. I visited the site of this village a few years ago when all that was left of a once thriving community was a single apple tree.

Mrs. MacIntosh operated the hotel for some few years, but after she left, it remained vacant and finally burned. His next venture consisted in the erection, on Jane Street opposite our Public School, of a large building in which to manufacture window blinds. These blinds were something like the venetian blinds now on the market, but no blinds were ever made there. The building was used by various persons as a storage

place. The walls were made of 2" x 4" scantling laid flat and nailed together, a very unusual method of construction. It was another loss to Joe. Old age was coming on fast, his debts were more than he could meet and he was done. He and his wife were supported in their declining years by a young man they had adopted as an infant. He grew up to be short in stature about five feet, four or five inches and was given the same name as his foster parent who was nearly six feet tall. The two were currently spoken of as little Joe and big Joe. The circumstances surrounding the appearance of this boy as an infant in the home of Joe Whitesell and his wife who were childless was the subject of plenty of publicity at the time.

Joe had been having some fun with his doctor by sending word to him, when any accident happened at the mill, to come at once as the old woman (meaning his wife) was expecting a baby.

A chance to turn the joke on Joe came when an unwanted infant arrived from a source unknown to Joe and his wife. The doctor arranged with one of Joe's boarders to take the child at night and deposit it in Joe's bed while he slept.

The crying of the child awakened Joe and his wife and the confusion and surprise it caused furnished no end of merriment for all concerned, except Joe.

The news spread rapidly the next morning and visitors came from all quarters to congratulate the alleged parents on the birth of a son after so many years of childlessness.

No work was done that day in the mill you can be sure. The Doctor arrived uninvited this time saying he had just heard of the extraordinary happening and wondered if it was true. Joe looked steadily at him for some time, speechless for once in his life, then went to where the women were gathered and asked them to show his wife how to feed and care for the child for he said, "we are going to raise him, if possible."

MORE "CHARACTERS"



THE FACT that formality has always accompanied public worship has furnished fertile ground for some people to look upon the formalities more important than divine worship.

The formalities have also been a source of division in Protestant denominations by constantly increasing but never diminishing the number.

When an individual becomes so pronounced in his adherence to one set of forms that he sees all others as the works of the devil he becomes a character.

I am going to introduce two of our former people as candidates for the distinction or otherwise of being called "Religious Characters."

In 1854, the Presbyterian settlers were sufficiently numerous hereabouts to form themselves into a congregation and erect a place of worship. They acquired from Ebenezer Colby two building lots facing Ebenezer Street, at the rear of the present church, on which they built a frame church with seating capacity for two hundred. The conveyance was made to John MacKenzie, Duncan McKinlay and John McKerracher, Trustees and their successors for the sole and only use of the Free Presbyterian Church forever. This John MacKenzie was the grandfather of the John MacKenzie injured in the gas explosion at the Lozar House in 1903.

The system of Presbyterian worship brought from Scotland was far removed from anything resembling levity or joy. No musical instrument was permitted in the church nor was the singing of hymns. The Psalms could be sung by the congregation without offence to the Almighty for were they not God's very words dictated to his servant King David? The word "Sunday" was taboo, it was a pagan word connected with sun worship. The Sabbath is the Lord's day and must be carried on with great solemnity, the congregation being admonished with long sermons and equally long prayers.

The very opposite of this method of worship was introduced by the Methodists. They went in for musical instruments and hymns, plenty of emotionalism and hurrah. All this to MacKenzie was nothing but the work of the devil, but it caught the young Presbyterians who wanted a little more joy and a little less solemnity, but any talk of introducing an organ into the church service was looked on with holy horror by the older members, particularly by MacKenzie. This movement was not confined to Ridgetown alone, but was going on all over Canada wherever the two churches were in competition. It was the old struggle between the conservative type of mind and the liberal, between those who never want to change and those who want to progress, and in the end the conservative has always been forced to give ground, and so it happened here. The organ was introduced without MacKenzie's knowledge and when he attended service as was his wont, the organ struck up and MacKenzie angered almost beyond his power of control, stood up and condemned the whole proceedings and wound up with this stern warning, "Whoever brot that thing in here had better tak it oot agin." But when it remained, MacKenzie left and never came back, since the devil had got possession of the church it was no place for MacKenzie.

The success of John Wesley's attempt to establish a new method for bringing the Gospel to the people resulted in raising a multitude of Methodist denominations, "Wesleyan Methodist," "Methodist Episcopal," "Primitive Methodist," "Free Methodist," "Independent Methodist," "New Connection Methodist" to mention a few of the best known.

Ridgetown had three of these in operation at one time, namely: "Wesleyan," now incorporated into the United Church of Canada, "New Connection", never strong enough to have a place of worship of their own and "Methodist Episcopal." This latter body had the Episcopal form of government with Bishops, Superintendents, Elders and Deacons. The first Bishop, the Rev. Thos. Coke was appointed by John Wesley and is today the strongest and most numerous and influential branch of Methodism in the United States, while in Canada the Wesleyan's became the strongest Methodist body.

In 1875, the present United Church building was built. The former frame building on Ebenezer Street was handed over to the Municipality to accommodate the primary classes of the Public School.

The building of the new and commodious Methodist Church stimulated not only the Presbyterian body to a like effort, but the Methodist Episcopal body to do likewise and on the 31st day of March, 1876, James S. Mitton, the owner, conveyed the two lots at the corner of York and Albert Streets, now occupied by George Poag & Son's Cement Works, to John W. Hawkins, Samuel Ryckman, William Kerly, Thomas Schlenker, William Tape, Samuel Crouch and John Wesley Gosnell, Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada and upon this property they erected a somewhat smaller but very imposing brick church building which must have cost five or six thousand dollars. What I remember about the interior of the church was the fact that the pews were equipped with kneeling benches similar to those used in the Catholic Churches today.

Everything was going along smoothly until 1883 when the governing body of all Methodist Episcopal churches decided to amalgamate with the Wesleyans, apparently the congregation here had very little to say about it. They suddenly found themselves out in the cold. Some members, however, had no difficulty in adjusting themselves in the Wesleyan congregation, but others stopped church going altogether and one in particular that I have in mind, namely: Abraham Young, was so incensed that although he had been raised here and was over fifty at the time, sold out his holdings, abandoned his friends and relations and all the familiar scenes that go to make up what we call "home", shook the dust of Canada from his feet, left for the United States and never came back. In consequence, I am nominating him as a candidate for the gallery of Ridgetown "Characters."

John Hawkins, Sam Ryckman and William Kerly also left for the land of the free where the Wesleyans had undoubted supremacy over all other Methodist bodies.

What became of their honored pastor, the Rev. Mr. Parsons and Mrs. Parsons, I am unable to say, but I believe the Rev. Cheney Burdett, a retired minister who spent his declining years here, had been a minister of the Episcopal body.

After the amalgamation, so called, there was no use for the church building and it was eventually sold to the municipality in 1889 for \$1,500 to be used thereafter as the town hall until it was destroyed by fire in the conflagration that wiped out the three-storey buildings on the North side of Main Street in 1899.

TWO DEACONS



HE HAD two fellows, neither of whom was a resident of Ridgetown, but both well known here. They were farmers and each had the Christian name of Thomas and both were commonly referred to with the appellation of "Deacon", but from opposite reasons.

Deacon Carey was in all respects entitled to the name as properly describing a man devoted to the Baptist faith. He was a progressive farmer residing just east of Palmyra, who in addition to the Church took an active interest in politics, both federal and provincial. He was a prominent liberal or reformer as the party was originally called and a strong supporter of the Hon. David Mills.

On one occasion he was making a visit to England and while aboard the train that carried the passengers from the boat to their various destinations, a loquacious individual in the compartment where Carey was riding, without any apparent provocation, started to abuse the Grand Trunk Railway and its operation in Canada. The deacon was right at home in an argument of that kind and supported the Canadian Railway and its management so effectively, showing clearly that he knew much more about Canadian affairs and the operation of the Railway than his opponent that he caused the opponent to shut up. The Deacon knew none of the people who were riding in the compartment with him, but when he reached his station and stepped from the train, a man and his wife who had been in the compartment and possibly, known to the individual who started the tirade, introduced themselves to Carey.

The man's wife was the daughter of one of the high officials of the Railway which was built with British capital and was British controlled. They thanked him most heartily for his defence of the system and invited him to visit them at their home.

Carey explained that he was just a common clout of a Canadian farmer and not used to the social amenities, so asked to be excused, but they insisted and he did make a call upon them before returning to Canada.

The Deacon was quite a horseman and so was Harve Lumley; the two of them were in Blenheim on one occasion as related to me by Lumley,

when some one who knew Carey got after him for a contribution to foreign missions. He surprised Lumley by handing out ten dollars on the spot. On the way home, Lumley began to joke Carey as an easy mark. Carey's reply was, "Lumley, donations to the Missions are not lost money to the giver, but invariably come back multiplied! That ten dollars will come back and perhaps even before I get home!"

They stopped at the Benton House in Ridgetown for Lumley to get out when a man who was a stranger to the two of them asked Carey if he would care to sell the horse. Carey's reply was that he would sell any horse he had if he got his price. "Well, what's your price on this one?"

"\$160.00 and that doesn't mean \$155.00 either!" After further examination and trial, the horse was sold at \$160.00 to be delivered in a day or two. The man was a horse buyer and bought a number of horses before he left the district.

When Lumley and Carey got together after the sale, Carey said, "there is the ten dollars, my price for that horse was \$150.00, but when that man suddenly appeared out of no where, I knew that he had the extra ten dollars that I had just given to the Missions, so you see, he has really been the man who donated the ten dollars to the Missions. Although if any one would ask him for a donation he would probably refuse absolutely to give a cent. "Now on my part, I have without loss of time, sold a horse I didn't need for cash and without effort." How many of us have seen a better example of Religious faith than Lumley did on that occasion?

Thomas Barnes, on the other hand, who resided east of Ridgetown on the Ridge road, was a non believer in all those spiritual things the Christians believe in. His idea was that this world and all things in it are governed by fixed laws, that none of these laws are set aside to accommodate any individual or group. In other words, there are no miracles.

The propogation of this and similar gospel caused him to be shunned by many who would otherwise have looked upon him as a person of exceptional ability and a valuable member of the community.

Mr. E. McKay, owner and editor of our local paper "The East Kent Plaindealer", was invited by Barnes on occasion to tea. Barnes then proceeded to put McKay right on the religious question. When the next issue of the paper came out, it had an item to the effect that the Editor had been entertained by 'Deacon Barnes'. The readers knew at once what had happened at the visit and the name 'Deacon Barnes' stuck.

Barnes and Mr. B. L. Chapman, a retired newspaper publisher, held the same or similar beliefs. I was present at the funeral service for Chipman. It was a private service held in Ridgetown and was conducted throughout by Barnes. His manner, tone, and substance was not particularly objectionable, but there was no mention of eternity or a future life.

Barnes accounted for his official presence there to an agreement between the two, that the survivor should conduct the funeral service for the other. It was a very unusual proceeding to say the least. Two of Tom's sisters who survived him did not subscribe to Tom's views and when it came Tom's turn to die, he had a Christian funeral.

He had unusual mechanical ability and invented a machine that approached the phonograph and wax cylinder records. Tom built a machine capable of using the records which he bought, as soon as they came on the market. With others, I went to see and here Tom's machine. When we left, I remember his words. "If I had been the one who invented the



This building is still standing where it was built on Main Street opposite the Presbyterian Church about 1879. It no longer has its ornamental crown. It was built for the Molsons Bank and contained banking quarters downstairs front, with residence for the manager in the rest of the building. Mr. D. M. Shaw, K.C., now uses the banking quarters for his law office. The building is now owned by the I.O.O.F.

phonograph, the people here would have been sure that I was in league with the Devil."

He made many ingenious contrivances, was a good watch maker and when the self binders first came out, he was the only local person who could fix the knotter on binders when they ceased to function, a frequent occurrence in the early models.

He had the only plant in Canada for the making of peppermint oil. He grew the plants on a wet portion of his farm and at the proper season cut the new growth and distilled the oil out of it. An officer from the Revenue Department kept the key to his still. When the season was on, an officer came to the farm, unlocked the still, remained there until the season was over, then locked it up and took the key away. One drop of the oil in a glass of water makes a drink so hot, that one is inclined to add more water.

Barnes was a bachelor and a good living man who had none of the usual bad habits, such as drinking, gambling and the use of tobacco. He read extensively, particularly scientific periodicals, and was a good neighbor, helpful and honest in all his dealings. He had three sisters, but no brothers. The whole family had talent and a keen sense of humor as shown by the following incident. After Tom's death, Ridgetown was putting on an exhibition of antiques. Each place of business exhibited in its windows articles then out of date, but which had formerly been the regular stock in trade of that particular business. The late Dr. Young and I visited old farmsteads in search of material suitable for the exhibition. We called on the Barnes girls, who after listening to the object of our visit, namely the loan of antiques for exhibition, one said, "Well do you want one or both of us!"

NICK NAMES

The village had two Jim Mittons, no relation to each other. One was a blacksmith, the other a farmer, but didn't work at it. They were locally identified as 'Blacksmith Jim' and 'Jackass Jim.'

The latter was born here about 1830, the youngest son of the pioneer, Edmund Mitton and inheritor of the homestead. He sold enough village lots to keep him going and the balance of the farm to Horton and Cunningham, who subdivided into building lots.

Blacksmith Jim was born in England and settled here prior to 1850. He was our first blacksmith. His shop occupied the site now covered by the three brick blocks east of the Clark store on the south side of Main Street. His dwelling was on the area now covered by the Locke block on the North side of Main Street.

He was a most necessary and useful member of the community. He got his iron in flat slabs similar to boards and from these he cut sections with cold chisels to make up into horse shoes, bolts chisels, clevises, chains nails and all the various articles necessary for the settler's use. None of the iron came already shaped as it does now, but had to be laboriously cut out and shaped from the iron slabs described above.

Every blacksmith had to have at least one helper. Again worn out horse shoes were saved by the blacksmith and when business was slack, he and his helpers would weld the old shoes and other iron ends into rods to be used again for newshoes or any other purpose required. Iron was precious in the early days and there was none of it wasted.

Jim Mitton's blacksmith shop was on the lot east of the tavern where most of the breaches of the peace occurred. His proximity to the seat of the trouble caused him to be created a guardian of the peace with the title of constable. He didn't wear any uniform or carry a baton, but he wore a leather apron and had a pair of hard fists and strong muscles. His method of stopping a fight was not to arrest any one, for there was no lock up, but to knock them out with his fists. When the offender came to, he had usually forgotten what the row was about and was glad to go home sober.

In these early days, men judged each other only from the physical standpoint. Human muscle and endurance were the elements most needed to conquer the wilderness. The result was that some men wanting to show their physical superiority would get a few drinks for added courage, then start a fight. Two or three of the families in the surrounding district were given to this sort of thing. One family of Blairs were notorious for it. As a result, their reputation interfered on one occasion, at least, with their peaceably viewing another person's fight.

The Blacksmith was busy in his shop when he caught sight of people running past his window towards the hotel, shouting as they went, "fight, fight!" The blacksmith dropped his irons, rushed out and without waiting to see who was fighting, caught sight of one of the Blairs and knocked him cold. Although Blair up to that time was merely an innocent bystander, the Blacksmith explained afterwards that if he wasn't into it at the start, he would be, so he stopped him before he got going.

The other Jim Mitton, although a perfectly good citizen, was given to doing foolish things at times and one of these foolish things got him the nickname of "Jackass Jim."

In the early days, there was a shortage of articles that could readily be obtained in England, if there was any way of getting them out. Families already here had many inquiries from folks back home as to prospects in the new country and when they decided to immigrate, could bring along something to friends on this side needed or desired.

Shortly after the Great Western Railway reached Chatham, i.e. about 1854, one William Brown, calling himself 'Billie Brune', a Yorkshireman was coming to settle here and our friend Mitton arranged with him to bring a pair of that type of animal commonly called a Jackass. These small animals it seems were common in England around country villages, where they ran in the commons without any particular owners, but furnished great playthings for the youngsters who would ride them or hitch them up. Their docility made them great pets.

Brown, himself, was an oddity, in as much as he had the body of a large man, but his legs and arms were very short. His speech also was strange to this country. In due time he landed at Chatham from the train. His very appearance gathered a crowd of youngsters, especially little negro

JOHN MITTON

John Mitton, the eldest son of Edmund Mitton, the pioneer, was born in England in 1818, and was an infant in arms when his parents landed at New York and proceeded on foot to Col. Talbot's place on Lake Erie, to secure a homestead in Ontario. The Mittons first located in Aldborough Township but were not satisfied with that location and joined the group consisting of three Scanes and James Watson on their journey west to Howard Township where they finally all became permanent settlers.

John Mitton was a good farmer and a successful hunter of game and fur bearing animals. His exceptionally fine rifle with powder horn and bullet pouch is preserved by the family of his son, W. W. Mitton. The rifle is well worth examination because of its workmanship and silver inlays.



children, and when he unloaded his donkeys and started up the street to find a stable for them, he was followed by a mob of children. To them it was like a circus come to town. They naturally interfered with his progress and also with Mr. Brown's temper.

Questions were fired at him from all sides. "Where are you going Mr.? What are you going to do with the little horses Mr.?" His patience becoming exhausted, he answered the last inquiry to his own satisfaction, though not clearly understood by the little negroes. "I brought them over to improve the breed of ye black devils."

When Mitton got his donkeys home, they excited plenty of interest with the children, but scorn from the grown ups. It was not long before Mitton, like another man who had tied the calf's lead rope around his waist while he opened the gate and who said afterwards, "that calf hadn't taken me three feet afore I seed I'd made a mistake." So Mitton soon saw he also made a mistake and he got rid of the animals, but not the name. It remained with him to the end of his days.

A PROVOKER OF MIRTH

Ham had a nimble wit, but a strong aversion to hard work and in as much as work and cash seemed to be very closely linked together, he was usually short of cash, but never short of a desire for the things that the cash gets for you.

We had on the other hand a very virtuous Christian gentleman called Willie Mitton. He was called Willie as a child and never outgrew it although he lived until he was ninety. His farm at the east side of the town, or what is left of it, is now owned by Marvel Gage.

Willie could never have meditated on the full import and meaning of that portion of our Lord's Prayer which says "lead us not into temptation" or he would have never planted the peach orchard along the main highway with no better protection than the road fence and his own watchfulness. This orchard became a temptation to all the village boys as well a worry to Willie himself.

Ham was not a boy at that time by any means, but it got on his nerves too and caused him much concern, but he did not want to risk a night visit alone and finally picked on Harve Lumley as a person likely to be interested. "Say, Harve, I think Willie Mitton should give each of us a basket of peaches for he has more than he can use!"

"Well, why not ask him for a couple of baskets?"

"It's no use to ask him, he wouldn't give us any. Let's go and take some anyway."

"How do you propose to go about it?"

"That is easy. We are having some dark nights now and I have got the good trees located. What do you say, let's help ourselves to some. Will you take a chance with me?"

Harve hesitated a minute, then agreed. All right, I'll go in on it, but let me know when you are ready. As soon as Ham left, Harve hunted up a couple of chaps who had shot guns and who could easily be persuaded

hotel keeper was one, the name of the other I do not at present recall. They were to load with plenty of powder and wadding but no shot, conceal themselves in the orchard until he and Ham got on the job, when they were and watch the fun.

On the night arranged, Harve insisted in remaining at the fence while Ham went in to fill the baskets. He would, however, help Ham over the fence with the baskets when he returned. Ham was soon busy picking peaches when Benton, who was nearest, opened fire with both barrels. Ham broke all records in getting away, out and over. Harve had somewhat the lead in the race towards town as he had left Ham to get over the fence without assistance. Finally the two of them slowed up, puffing from the exertion. Harve spoke first, "What in the world was t?" "It's that old blunderbuss of Willie Mitton's. I have known it ever since it was a horse pistol."

When Ham found out that a great many people seemed to know too much about it, he surmised that it was a put up job and proceeded to turn the tables. He accordingly went to Magistrate Grant and laid a charge against Benton and the other fellow.

Under a bylaw which prohibited the firing of guns in or near any public street, the penalty was a fine, up to fifty dollars or twenty days imprisonment. This was a turn that had not been anticipated.

A hurried visit by the interested parties to the magistrate with the real storey resulted in no summons being issued. It was at least a vindication of Ham's nimble wit.

Until the fair grounds were purchased in 1882 providing a race track, all horse races were held on Main Street West. The 24th of May always called for a calithumpian parade and a horse race for runners as well a variety of other amusements. The horses were started in front of Josie Scane's farm and finished at the Disciple Church, three-quarters of a mile straight away. Both sides of the village street were lined with wheels of fortune, stalls for selling lemonade, pop, ginger beer, candy and various gewgaws. All the horses were locally owned. Both horses and owners were well known to the crowd and bets were in order. Five dollars would be a big bet at that time and equal to the winning prize for the successful horse and rider.

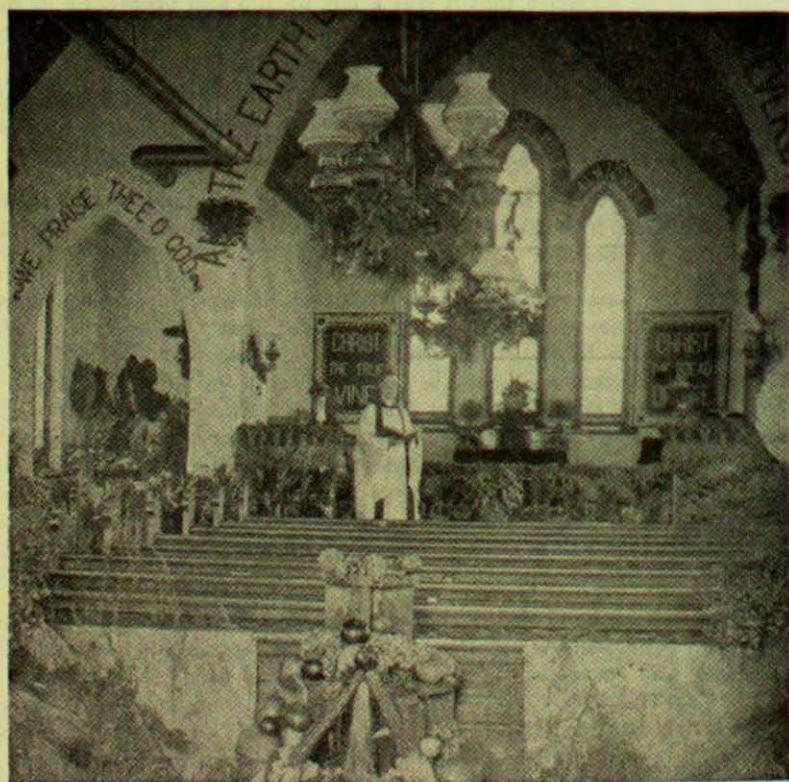
Ham was on hand with the rest, a red face, not caused from drinking pop, and supporting a big cigar. He was, as usual, short of cash, but full of ideas and conceived the idea of bluffing his way into a position of importance for the day by offering to bet a sum of money he thought no one could cover. He started shouting, "fifty dollars on Eddy Shaw's little bay mare!" One man offered to take five dollars of it. "No, fifty dollars or nothing." Presently he noticed this man getting loans from some of his friends and suspecting his bluff might be called, looked around for some

backing and decided to get close to Charley Scane, the mill owner and a prominent citizen.

Sure enough the chap came back with fifty dollars to take Ham's bet, and now we get one of Ham's quick comer-saults. The fellow demanded Ham to produce his fifty dollars to cover. Scane turned to see what was going on and immediately Ham pretended he was betting for Scane with the words, "produce your wallet Charley!" But Charley didn't produce any wallet and Ham disappeared in the crowd.

With one more of his exploits, we will let him drop from sight, if not from memory.

In the early days here, everyone burned wood. It was very cheap and every householder had a pile and an extra large one for winter. The best beech and maple in four foot lengths was delivered to your place at



First Harvest Home in the Church of the Advent

one dollar a cord. It had then to be sawed into stove lengths and split by the householder, or he could hire old man Boran to do this for him. This man could be seen at times with his saw-horse and buck-saw on his back, moving from one customer to another. A daughter kept house for him, who was said to have six toes on each foot. There was, you see, no chance to conceal anything from the neighbors, not even the toes.

It was quite possible for a person going out to find his wood pile on a dark night by mistake to get some sticks from his neighbor's pile to which no objection was raised unless the mistake got to be a regular habit, in which case the owner of the diminishing wood pile sometime tried the experiment of plugging a charge of gun powder in one or two sticks.

Ham, at this time, was living next to Jim Mitton, not Blacksmith Jim, but the other one, who thought his wood pile was diminishing faster than it should. He decided to load a stick or two. On a cold Sunday morning, Mitton heard a loud bang and general confusion next door and went out just in time to see Ham and some of his family pour out of the house. When Ham sighted Mitton, his comment was very expressive, "Damn you Jim Mitton!"

Ham had to have another stove at once and got in touch with W. H. Boughner who carried on a hardware store and tin shop, and from him he secured another stove on credit. Ham then proceeded to forget his obligation about paying the bill for the stove and finally Boughner told him that if the account was not paid without any more delay, he would sue him. Ham's reply was a surprise and a revolution to Boughner, who was not up in the law. "Don't be in a hurry about suing it Mr. Boughner, remember that contracts made on Sunday cannot be enforced."

Boughner got his money eventually, but it all goes to show that anyone who took Ham for a fool, was sure to realize his mistake. He depended more on his wit, than on hard work to get his living. His outlook, of, course, was wrong but in his efforts to best the natural law of existence, he attained plenty of notority, but not much prosperity.

WOMEN HISTORICALLY



ISS DOWN is entitled to a place of distinction in as much as she is the first of her sex to be admitted to the position she now holds as one of the governing body of this Municipality.

There may be many to follow her in the future, but no one can deprive her of the honor that goes with the first person who braves the criticism and reproach that invariably accompanies the individual who dares to break down a long established custom.

Human enlightenment has had to travel a long way from barbarism before any woman could be admitted as a member of any Municipal Council or any Legislative body.

An examination of English law discloses that up to the Reign of Charles II, the right of a husband to chastise his wife was never questioned. Until the reign of William IV, no marriage was valid unless celebrated in a church except by special dispensation obtained from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Upon marriage, the husband and wife became, by the marriage, one person, (that person was the man) because legal existence of the woman was incorporated into that of the husband under whose "cover" she did everything. She was known to the law as a "feme-covert", while an unmarried woman was a "feme-sole" and the word "coverture" is still used in legal parlance to indicate the marriage status.

Upon the marriage, the husband became the owner of the wife's chattels, but as for her lands, he had only the rents and profits while the marriage lasted, but if he survived his wife and she left a child or children, his right to the rents and profits continued for the rest of his life. This right was called "Curtesy" and can still be demanded by a surviving husband in the case the wife dies without making a will.

The husband, however, upon marriage, became liable for his wife's debts contracted before marriage as well as debts contracted by her after marriage, but he was not liable for his wife's crimes.

Since January, 1883, however, a married woman may now hold and deal with her property and earnings as if she were an unmarried woman, her property is liable for her debts and her husband is no longer liable except for necessities supplied to his wife.

The enactment of this law swung the pendulum far to the opposite extreme in the relationship of man and his wife in as much as the wife can now sell or will away her property without the consent or concurrence of her husband, yet the husband cannot so deal with his property, without the wife's consent.

It is only a few years ago that women were permitted to enter the Universities. A graduate of a University gets a "Bachelors" degree. When this degree was established many years ago, it was never even dreamed that it would some day apply to a woman. The M.A. degree at first sight might be supposed to belong to a woman graduate as a Maid of Arts degree.

The long struggle of Emily Panghurst and others to obtain the right to vote for women is quite recent.

Full and equal right for both men and women is not yet complete. I have in mind the legal status of those of illegitimate birth. They cannot inherit property from anyone and no one can inherit property from them unless they marry and have children. Two of our Western Provinces

now permit an illegitimate person to inherit from the mother and the mother from the offspring, but Ontario is not yet prepared to rectify this injustice to the innocent illegitimate person who is still being punished through no fault of his own.

It was impossible for the early settlers in Ontario to comply with the English marriage laws because of lack of Anglican Clergymen, so those desiring to marry sometimes went to an army officer to have the marriage ceremony of the Anglican church read to them, after which the officer would give them a certificate to the effect that he had read the church marriage service to them and they had signed their name to the certificate in the presences of the witnesses who had also signed. These mar-

RIDGETOWN BOYS' BAND



Tommy Crouch's First Boys' Band

Front Row, left to right—Charlie St. John, Keith Clark, Charles Dauphin, Alex Stevenson, Dana Gamage, Clarence King, Jack Orendorff, and Jack Rickard; Second row—(vacant seat for Gerry Field), Glenn Rumble, Doug Brown, Claire Scafe, Blake Ward, Joe Rickard, Thos. Crouch, Band Master, Roy Wilkinson, Leighton Rumble, Harold Buckberrough, Albert Jones, Eugene Field and Bill Dauphin; Back Row—Ken Smyth, Ross McLean, Ted Kearney, Vern Clark, Art Wills, George Griffin, Drum Major; Leonard Harris, Bill McCallum, Oscar Crouch, Jack Pook, Bob McTavish.

riages were not valid in the law and children of the marriage were in consequence illegitimate, but at the first Parliament in the newly Constituted Province of Upper Canada (now Ontario), an Act was passed validating all the regular marriages and power was then invested in Justices of the Peace to perform the marriage ceremony when there was no Anglican Minister within eighteen miles.

I am appending a copy of one of the certificates which in slang was called by the early settlers a "splice"

Upper Canada, Western District,

Whereas Thomas Scane of the Township of Howard and Charlotte Reader of the same place were desirous of intermarrying with each and there being no parson or Minister of the Church of England living within Eighteen miles of them, or either of them, they have applied to me for that purpose. Now these are to certify that in pursuance of the power granted by an Act of the Legislature of this province, passed in the thirty third year of His Majesty's Reign, I Isaac Bell, Esquire, one of his Majesty's Justices of the peace, having caused the previous notice by Statute required to be given, have this day married the said Thomas Scane and Charlotte Reader together and they have become legally contracted to each other in marriage.

WITNESS PRESENT

Benjn. Bell
Crowell Willson
John Scane

PARTIES SIGNATURES

Thomas Scane
Charlotte Reader

Given under my hand this 8th day of January in the Reign of George the fourth, the ninth year.

Isaac Bell, J.P.W.D.

So Tom and Lottie were legally spliced together in the reign of George the fourth and Tom got not only Lottie, but all her goods and chattels (if any).

COON HUNTING

In the early days of this settlement, money was almost non-existent, with the result that settlers were obliged to use the primitive method of barter in order to acquire what they needed, but could not themselves produce.

Furs, or skins as they were commonly called, were readily accepted in lieu of cash by the traders because of the steady market in Europe for the furs.

Some of the fur bearing animals such as the racoon were more numerous and more easily taken than others and in consequence we find coon hunting introduced, first as a necessity and later continued as an early fall and winter sport.

The expression often heard when a few young men got together in the fall of the year fifty years ago was "Let's go coon hunting tonight." This expression is not heard anymore because of changed conditions: first, there is the shortage of the coon and of corn fields with woods adjoining and on top of this comes the restrictions on the use of fire arms and dogs, to be equipped now for a coon hunt, one would require first a gun license, \$1.00, a dog or two at \$2.00 a license, then \$5.00 more for a license to take fur bearing animals. After having this equipment, then you must have permission from the owner of the farm to hunt on his land.

In order to show what a coon hunt was like in the early days in this country when the forest was still filled with wild animals of all kinds, I am taking the following story from the Gowman Manuscript referred to in a previous article. This story given in the vernacular in which it is written shows the extent or erudition, or lack of it, existing amongst our settlers before the introduction of schools and libraries, as well as giving a good picture of how a coon hunt was conducted and the many surprises that coon hunters could meet with in a single night. Here is the story:-

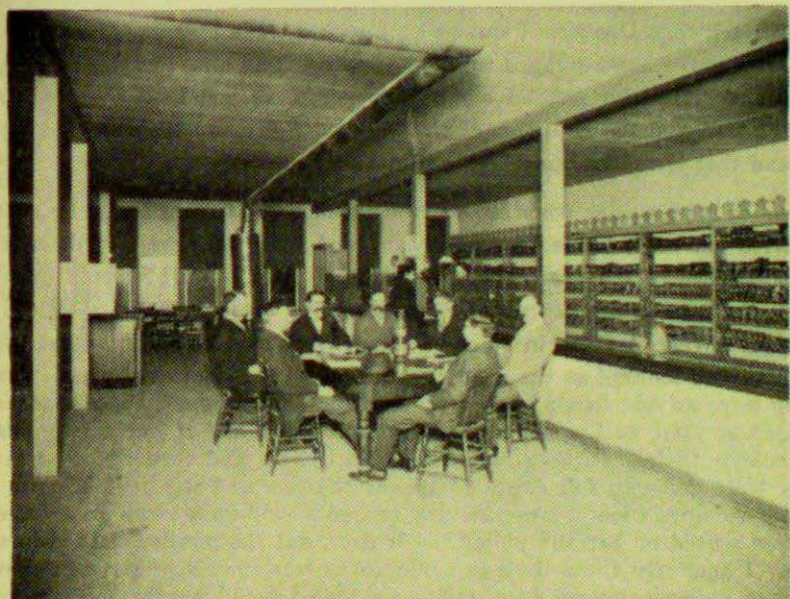
"In the fall of 1816, Tim Short and Pete Stubbs came to my shebang and we took our axes and started for a coon hunt. There was an Indian camping with me that night and as he had no ax, he took his rifle and went along. We had cut two trees and killed three coons when the dogs took after something that led to a wild goose chase. In about a half an hour, we heard them baying away, but at least two miles off. The night was very dark and we had to travel by the light of a hickory bark torch, but we got there as soon as we could. The dogs were barking up a birch tree and as the top of the tree had grown up in an open place, it had a large spreading top. The Indian said, 'You lose it a that coon you chop down tree, better make it one big fire and then if me not see um to shoot um, me climb up shakum off.'

"We built up a fire very soon and looking up saw not a coon, but a huge bull bear; he had backed out on a large limb to where the limb forked and there he lay with one hind leg on each limb and his fore paws on the crotch while his belly lay down between the limbs. "Ugh," said the Opeche (Robin) as that was the Indian's name, "me no shake that coon". I said "No but you can shoot um", but the Nitches tried every way to get the sights of his gun to jibe on that bar and failed. . The bar was so exactly over the fire that the only way to draw a bead on him was to stand with his back to the fire and point the gun straight up. Opeche tried it once or twice, he said "me shoot anyhow then me shump." He stood with his back to the fire, pointed the gun up and let fly. He tried to jump back-

wards over the fire but his heel caught a spice bush and down he came on the fire; the bar came down on top of him. The dorgs jumped on to the bar, the fire flew and the barking, screeching and growling that rung out in that forest for about three minutes was quite amusing. In about that time I heard the bar going off and the dorgs fighting him, it was awful dark but I gathered a few coals and banked them together and soon had a blaze. I found Opeche about a rod from the fire and first I thought he was a "dead Ingen" to bury but when I lifted him up he stopped groaning and after a while concluded he was not badly hurt, "I guess no bones broke, no meat tore, only that shirt flop up and let a me down on fire, an burn it a my sit down." By the time I had Opeche straightened up Pete and Tim had found the bar, he had crawled about four rods from where he fell but he was dead enough now, the ball had passed clear through from breast to back. We soon skinned the bar and as the Indian was the first to draw blood the hide belonged to him and we cut off the hams and took them along. We then started for Singing Sol's, four miles off, but still bearing towards home. I don't know what Sol's other name was but he was named Singing Sol because the durned critter was everlastingly singing when he was out of doors. Sol had a five acre field planted to corn back next the woods and we crept quietly up to the fence and put the dorgs in and in about fifteen minutes we heard a big fight going on in the middle of the field and as there was no tree there we knew the dogs had tackled something on the ground. We went over as fast as we could and as soon as the light shone on the squad we could see a big lynx lying on his back and fighting the four dorgs with his claws and teeth. As soon as the torch light shone on the scene the lynx jumped up and made a dash for the woods but not taking time to "look before he leaped" he went right between Pete's legs and Pete being rather short in the stumps was lifted clear off the ground and away he went on a voyage of discovery. I was rather an undignified ride for his face went the wrong way. I hollered to him to drop the meat but he hung to that ham like a wool tick to a dead nigger. Pete's ride didn' last long for one of the dorgs grabbed him by the calf of the leg and yanked him off. I suppose the dorg thought he was grabbing the lynx; that is what I told Pete anyway, but it didn't seem to satisfy him and he vowed he'd have the dorg's life just as soon as he had a chance to take it. Just as the lynx jumped on to the back fence, "Guess"—that was the dorg's name—caught him by his hind quarters and jerked him back, but the moment the lynx touched the ground he took the dorg a swipe across the face with his forepaw and he poor dorg lost his right ear and the whole skin off his face; one claw passed through both eyes and left the dorg blind as a bat. Pete felt sorry enough for the poor thing and nothing more was heard about him killing the dorg. The other three dorgs followed the lynx tracks near three miles and there the brute treed on a large oak. We had bound up Pete's leg with a handkerchief but it pained him so he concluded to go home and Tim went with him to help him along; so the Ingen and me went for the dorgs. We had a long

tramp and when we arrived at the tree we knew it was no use to cut it down for the lynx would be a quarter of a mile off before the tree touched ground so we kindled up two fires, one on each side of the tree. It took

RIDGETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY



Our Public Library started as a Mechanics' Institute in two rooms of the Porter Bock at the head of the main stairway leading up from Main Street. The first librarian was Charles Grant. In time, however, it outgrew its first quarters and was moved to very ample quarters over what is now Eli Gillings' pool room.

The picture shows the books arranged along the east wall. The Board of Management is seated at the table in the foreground. Starting at the first man on the left and proceeding clockwise are: Albert Savage, J. G. Little, High School Principal, John Poole, Manager of the Traders' Bank, Dr. R. C. Young, H. D. Smith, Fred Eansor, Harry Thompson.

Sadie Drake was the librarian. After the Municipal Building was completed the library was moved into its present quarters in that building.

us a full hour to get blaze enough to shine through the top and after peeping and looking up a long while I discovered him lying in the crotch of three big limbs and the only part we could see was the two eyes looking

down at us. I pointed him out to the Indian and asked him to shoot the beast. "Ca no, guess not, maybee you want 'a me burn it 'a my head, cause I burn it 'a my tail, ca, you shoot um." I took the gun and pointing it off hand blazed away at the two eyes, but a white man always draws a finer sight on a rifle than a red man does, so the ball went low, passed up one fore paw and on through the neck cutting his jugular vein right in two. The blood spurted lively as the beast sprang for my head, but I had better luck than Opeche. I sprang back with a clean leap and the cat lit in my tracks, the beast jumped up kept swaying from side to side, then fell over and kicked his last. I climbed up a sapling and bent over, cut the top off and tied the hind legs of the lynx to the top of the stub and let it go and that lynx was hung high and dry.

It was sunrise when we arrived home and after eating a breakfast of fried bar ham, turtle eggs and corn meal short cake, we lay down and slept till two in the afternoon. I then told Opeche that I would go and fetch the lynx while he cooked some dinner. I shouldered my rifle and started. When I came in sight of the lynx, I saw three deer that were peeping and looking at the dead cat as if they were not sure what it was. They were an odd looking lot, their hair standing forward, their heads up, stretching their necks peeping between the limbs, and if but a twig snapped under their feet, they bounded up in the air and then squatted as if they were going to fall down. I cocked the gun and was just bringing it to my shoulder when a large fat doe walked slowly up a large cradle knoll. I drew a bead on her and pulled the trigger, but the powder flashed in the pan. I hurriedly filled the pan again for it was such a pretty shot that I became excited and my hand shook so, that I could hardly hold the gun steady. However, I pulled away again and again the powder flashed. Then I took a pin and picked the hole a little and again filled the pan and lifted the gun, but by this time I had the buck fever so bad that the muzzle of the gun was going hither and yon, but I pulled away and the gun went off. The doe bounded high in the air and turned a complete somer-sault and fell on its head in the hole behind which it stood. I dropped the gun and ran up to cut its throat and in a few minutes it was dead, and now as I could not carry the lynx and deer both, I concluded to let the lynx hang and take the deer home first. But as I was peeling some bark to strap the deer on my shoulders, I saw Opeche coming on a regular turkey trot. He had heard the report of the rifle and knew there must be something up. Now the Indian carried the deer and I carried the lynx but when we skinned the deer, there was no sign of a bullet wound on it. I had missed the deer entirely, but the crack of the gun and the falling on its head bewildered it, until I had time to cut its throat. I guess that is the only time I ever scared a deer to death. By this time, the Indian had finished up the dead bear and we all retired to rest."

MAYORS, REEVES, AND DEPUTY REEVES—1882-1950

Year	Mayor	Reeve	Deputy Reeve
1882	H. D. Cunningham	J. P. McKinlay	
1883	John Whyte	John Leitch	
1884	John Moody	John Leitch	George Rockey
1885	John Moody	John Leitch	George Rockey
1886	John Leitch	James Rushton	George Rockey
1887	R. C. Young	B. W. Willson	L. G. Rowe
1888	B. W. Willson	James Rushton	L. G. Rowe
1889	B. W. Willson	J. A. Dart	J. W. Brown
1890	J. A. Dart	L. G. Rowe	T. P. Watson
1891	John Cochrane	L. G. Rowe	J. W. Brown
1892	John Cochrane	T. P. Watson	John Wallace
1893	John Cochrane	T. P. Watson	J. W. Brown
1894	Henry Porter	B. W. Willson	J. E. Thatcher
1895	John Wallace	B. W. Willson	J. E. Thatcher
1896	T. P. Watson	J. E. Thatcher	John Reycraft
1897	R. R. Lowthian	John Young	W. A. Gosnell
1898	J. A. Dart	A. F. McKinlay	J. E. Thatcher
1899	A. F. McKnlay		
1900	W. B. Graham		
1901	W. B. Graham		
1902	B. W. Willson		
1903	B. W. Willson		
1904	L. J. Reycraft		
1905	L. J. Reycraft		
1906	D. J. McLean		
1907	P. J. Henry	J. S. Dilllott	
1908	P. J. Henry	R. R. Lowthian	
1909	P. J. Henry	R. W. Stokes	
1910	P. J. Henry	R. W. Stokes	
1911	E. A. Taylor	R. W. Stokes	
1912	R. W. Stokes	George H. Grant	
1913	R. W. Stokes	Walter Purdy	
1914	P. J. Henry	Edward Brien	
1915	P. J. Henry	Walter Purdy	
1916	P. J. Henry	Edward Brien	
1917	John Sheldon	Edward Brien	
1918	John Sheldon	Edward Brien	
1919	John Sales	N. A. Roszell	
1920	P. J. Henry	N. A. Roszell	
1921	P. J. Henry	N. A. Roszell	
1922	P. J. Henry	A. Beck	
1923	P. J. Henry	D. P. Ferguson	
1924	P. J. Henryy	W. E. Galbraith	

No Reeve nor Deputy Reeve till 1907. County Commissioner system prevailed. Former system restored in 1907, but with no Deputy Reeve until 1949.

Year	Mayor	Reeve	Deputy Reeve
1925	P. J. Henry	W. E. Galbraith	
1926	P. J. Henry	W. E. Galbraith	
1927	P. J. Henry	Andrew Ward	
1928	P. J. Henry	Andrew Ward	
1929	P. J. Henry	N. A. Roszell	
1930	P. J. Henry	N. A. Roszell	
1931	A. T. Ward	N. A. Roszell	
1932	A. T. Ward	A. W. Orendorff	
1933	A. W. Orendorff	T. Hore	
1934	A. Warwick	T. Hore	
1935	F. G. Kennedy	T. J. Hedley	
1936	F. G. Kennedy	T. J. Hedley	
1937	F. G. Kennedy	T. Hore	
1938	R. W. Clark	T. Hore	
1939	R. W. Clark	T. Hore	
1940	R. W. Clark	Lee Simpson	
1941	R. W. Clark	Lee Simpson	
1942	T. Hore	Lee Simpson	
1943	T. Hore	Lee Simpson	
1944	T. Hore	Lee Simpson	
1945	G. M. Silcox	J. Hess	
1946	G. M. Silcox	J. Hess	
1947	G. M. Silcox	J. Hess	
1948	D. M. Shaw	E. L. Guyitt	
1949	D. M. Shaw	E. L. Guyitt	E. W. Irwin
1950	D. M. Shaw	E. L. Guyitt	E. W. Irwin

