

Johnston in 1937. They had two of a family, Josephine of Auburn, and John R. who resides in London.

— *From the Auburn History Book of 1973.*

HARVEY MCGEE

Mr. Harvey McGee, "Huron's Harry Lauder was always his jovial self!" He was a highly respected citizen of this community. He worked several years with the Old Grand Trunk Railway, and later with the Canadian Pacific Railway, before returning to operate his father's farm located one mile east of Auburn. He was born in Kincardine, Ontario. His mother was Scotch, and his father was Irish, so Huron County's Harry Lauder used to intersperse his program of Scottish songs with lilting Irish tunes. "There was nothing like variety," said genial Harvey. He looked back with great pleasure upon the days when in swinging tarta, and a tam-o-shanter he imitated the famous Scottish comedian and singer at fall fairs and garden parties, also concerts all over Ontario. No matter where he was entertaining, he always finished the program with a sacred number.



HARVEY MCGEE
Canada's "Harry Lauder"

Mr. McGee was a member of a touring group, managed by the late Raymond Redmond during the 1920s. This group delighted many audiences. Harvey recalled a red letter day when he went to Toronto to the Royal Alexandra Theatre to see the famous comedian, "Harry Lauder" in person, he commented, "I sat in the front row, and joined in the choruses."

"Times have changed" said Mr. McGee, "Television has sort of done away with the need for local entertainers, but I would be glad to get back into the harness again, providing my good accompanist would be available." For many years Mr. McGee was the main entertainer throughout the county with Mrs. Robt. J. Phillips of Auburn, as his accompanist.

After his closing number on his program he was always encored back and he sang, "Auld Lang Syne" and his favorite chorus -

I'm going away, but I'd like to stay longer with you,
I don't like to part with friends so true.

For old friends are best friends in sunshine or rain,
So good bye, good-bye, good-bye, till we meet again.

After the death of his wife, the farm was sold and Mr. McGee left for the West, returning home by way of North Bay, where he made his home for several years. He then came back to Auburn for a short time. Later he made his home with relatives in Galt, where he continued using his talent as a member of a Senior Citizen's Choir until his death in 1968.

— *From the Auburn History Book of 1973.*

FIRE HALLS AND FIRE PROTECTION

In 1896 one of the first transactions of the Board of Trustees was to purchase a hand pumped fire engine for the sum of \$260.00, which gave service for a number of years. At the time of one of the fires, the fire chief, Thomas Adams was asked by an onlooker, "Wherever did you get that machine" to which Tom replied, "Be Gorrah, we bought it from Barnum Bailey circus, they used it to give "Giant Enemas."

For some fifty years the old fire hall stood on the corner lot across from the Anglican Church. It was from time to time used for several purposes. At the one and only celebration of the 12th of July, in the late 1890s, in Manchester (Auburn) an intoxicated man became unruly. The fire hall was used as a lock-up. Feeling certain that the man was in safe quarters, the authorities joined the fun on the flats, but to their dismay they found on their return that their prisoner had escaped through the window, and was down on the flats with the crowd.

A sitting of the court of law was at one time held there with a Justice of the Peace in charge.

The present fire hall was erected in the 1930s. It is situated on Goderich Street, next to the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. The bell on the fire hall was for many years on the blacksmith shop of John Ferguson's, later on Edgar Lawson's stable. For many years it was rung at meal time. This custom has fallen into disuse.

Before 1948 there were three underground tanks in the village, each holding some 350 barrels of water. One situated at the east end at the corner of Turnberry and Goderich Street, one at the west end on Goderich Street, between Ross Robinson's store and Wm. Straughan's residence, the third is central at the corner of Loftus and Goderich street.

In 1950, three more tanks were installed, one under the fire hall, one at the south west at Alma and King Street and the third at the north east end on County Road 25 and Egmont Street.

Assistance is received from the Blyth, Goderich and Clinton Fire Departments. The Fire Chief for Auburn is Mr. James Gloucher.

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HURON COUNTY ROAD MAINTENANCE

The first County Engineer of Huron was Donald Patterson appointed in 1906. A telegram was sent to D. E. Munro, who, at that time, had a Telegraph office in the Post Office in Manchester (now Auburn). It was addressed to Donald Patterson. The message was "Come to Goderich at once you have been appointed County Engineer" signed: W. Lane, County Treasurer.

As there were no telephones, this message was delivered by Roy Munro on his bicycle to Mr. Patterson's farm, third concession of East Wawanosh - the first corner north of Auburn.

As county Engineer, his work required him travelling throughout Huron County and until 1918 he used a horse and buggy. When the County provided Mr. Patterson with