

On The Main Street



with FORD
MOYNES

Citizens of Lindsay and district who are close to being octogenarians will remember World War I and World War II because many of their kith and kin served the empire in these two conflagrations. There are many senior citizens who recall the return of soldiers to Lindsay from the Boer War in South Africa and some pioneer residents talk about the Riel Rebellion.

It will come as news to many local people to learn that the old village of Lindsay suffered four invasions. This bit of interesting history was revealed Monday by the visit to Lindsay of Professor Watson Kirkconnell, a Lindsay boy who retired a few years ago as Dean of Arcadia University at Wolfville, N.S. Professor Kirkconnell was introduced at the Rotary dinner by his friend Dr. R. M. Parker.

It is worthy to note that Dr. Kirkconnell's history of Victoria County, published a quarter of a century ago, is being brought up to date by the gifted historian at the request of Victoria County Council as a centennial project and that the writer has been working on the edition for the past year.

The four "invasions" mentioned in the History of the County make interesting reading and are as follows:

The first was in 1837 as the result of a rumour spread by a Major Murphy that William Lyon McKenzie was hiding in Lindsay. A detachment of militia 300 strong, stationed in Peterboro, marched upon Lindsay and when they arrived at the bridge, made their presence known by wild cheering, the blowing of trumpets, the roll of drums and a salvo of musket-fire. The rumour was false.

The second "invasion" was in 1838. The Purdy dam had backed up the waters of the Scugog over 60,000 acres of land along the lake and river. The forest was drowned out and all vegetation rotted and a plague of fever and ague carried off one third of the population. On one Sunday eleven deaths were announced in Ops; on another Sunday seven heads of families died.

Armed with muskets, axes and pitchforks, a large band of farmers from Ops, Manvers and Cartwright marched upon the village and destroyed part

of the upper works of the dam.

Hazard Purdy repaired the dam and built it at a lower level.

The third "army of invasion" threatened Lindsay on July 12, 1846. The date may be a clue to its cause. A certain Billy Parker, a noted Orangeman, had been rudely manhandled in the village. To avenge this insult and injury, several hundred of the Battle of the Boyne celebrants marched upon the hamlet. However the villages had been warned of the impending attack and prepared to defend themselves.

All who had muskets loaded them with powder and ball; Thomas Keenan prepared make-shift swords out of scythe blades, and pitchforks were to be used as bayonets. As in the defence of Rome against the Tuscans, the old log bridge across the Scugog

was chopped down into the river.

Sharpshooters took their places along the river bank. At the last minute a peace overture was made to the attackers. A party led by Alexander Bryson was sent into "no man's land" to confer with the foe. Wise counsel prevailed and no violence occurred.

The fourth and last "invasion" had to do again with Purdy's dam whose ownership had been transferred to Mr. Bigelow. The latter, with permission of the government had placed a line of planks one foot high along the length of the dam to maintain in the dry summer, a spring time flood level. Again the farmers, armed with axe and muskets, marched to the dam and removed the planking. This occurred in 1847.