Kent Historical Society

Papers and Addresses

Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Six

Kent Historical Society

PAPERS
AND
ADDRESSES

CHATHAM, ONTARIO, CANADA

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Contents

62 Year Record Of Sugar Beet Labour Force In Ontario and Kent County 1902 - 1963

Start Of Sugar Beet Industry

The beet sugar industry in Canada received its first real start in the year 1901, at which time four factories were constructed and made ready for operation the following year. These were at Wallaceburg, Dresden, Berlin (now Kitchener), and Wiarton.

At the commencement of operations in the year 1902, a great number of technicians were secured from Germany and Holland to operate the various factories. Mr. Wiese was first superintendent at Wallaceburg coming from Germany.

For the first five years of operation, 1903-1907, the Ontario government granted a bounty on domestic beet sugar. Not withstanding this assistance however, the factories in Dresden and Wiarton were unable to survive the trying period of experience gaining. The Wiarton factory was closed after two seasons. The Dresden factory was dismantled in 1904. Misunderstanding with owner re fixed taxation was a factor in closing. The Berlin (now Kitchener) factory drifted along until the year 1909, when it went into liquidation and was taken over by the bond holders of the Wallaceburg company.

Wallaceburg Sugar Company Limited, established in 1901, by the Smith family of Bay City, Michigan, was able to resolve a number of difficulties which beset it in its early years and began a period of growth and expansion in Ontario under the guidance of its first President, the late D. A. Gordon, then a prominent Wallaceburg industrialist. Upon acquisition of the Kitchener plant, the company's name was changed to Dominion Sugar Company Limited.

The Dominion government called for increased production of sugar during World War I with the result that the Chatham factory was built in 1916. At this same time head office was moved to Chatham. Plants at Chatham, Wallaceburg and Kitchener were now operating. Lack of local acreage and increased freight rates on sugar beets, forced closure of the Kitchener plant in 1920, and it was later dismantled and sold. In 1930, the company, looking for expansion eastward, merged with The Canada Sugar Refining Company Limited, Montreal, Quebec, which had its origin in 1854 when a cane sugar refinery was built by the late John Redpath, the merged companies operating under the name of Canada and Dominion Sugar Company Limited. The head office of the new company remained in Chatham in the heart of the sugar beet country. Canada and Dominion

Sugar Company Limited today operates one sugar beet factory at Chatham, Ontario, and two cane refineries, the original one at Montreal and a new refinery at Toronto, put into operation May, 1959. Had the Wallaceburg sugar beet factory not been successful, the present company would not have come into existence.

Almost from the start of sugar beet growing in Kent County, it became apparent that to successfully produce the crop in the field, experienced beet workers were essential. The procurement and policies in regard to labour will be described in detail in succeeding paragraphs.

Kent County; First In Agricultural Production In Ontario

Kent County is one of the most productive farm areas in the Dominion, possessing fertile land and an exceptionally long growing season which combine to provide wide diversification of farm produce. The investment in farm plant and equipment is among the heaviest in the Province and there is also an unusually large investment in industrial plants processing the products of the farm. To illustrate its agricultural wealth, more fertilizer is used each year in Kent County than in all of the Maritime Provinces.

Because of the nature of this production, demand for farm labour has been exceptionally heavy. Much hard labour is required from early spring to late fall, the cycle beginning with the preparation and care of tomato and tobacco seedling beds; then blocking and thinning of sugar beets; the planting of tobacco and tomatoes; harvest of hay crops and peas; harvest of grain crops; picking of small fruit and harvesting of early vegetables; picking the tomato crop along with lesser canning crops; the harvesting of tobacco; the harvesting of sugar beets; harvesting of the corn crop; then the fall feeding program of livestock.

The backbone of the labour supply has been the skilled sugar beet workers in the peak years, numbering approximately 3000 to 3500 hands in the entire sugar beet growing area of which Kent County represents about two[thirds. The supply of labour and the type of crops grown are interdependent. That is to say that when labour is in adequate supply, farmers are encouraged to plant the type of crop which draws more labour to the district; conversely when the labour supply is diminishing, less and less high labour crops are planted and labour, even that already in the district, turns to other work. In the past 62 years the industry has experienced both shortages and oversupply of labour caused by two world wars and the depression of the thirties.

Because of this unique situation the securing of skilled beet workers has consisted of bringing in experienced hands from Europe and using emergency local forces when European help was not available.

History Of Company Sugar Beet Labour Procurement

In the succeeding paragraphs it will be noted that the company encouraged the importation in the early years of skilled workers from Belgium, Holland, and Bohemia (Czeckoslovakia) when possible and practicable. In later years a successful movement of families was sponsored from Northern Italy (Istrians) to good advantage. It will also be noted that there is a striking similarity to the labour situation existing prior to and during each world war and the period immediately following.

The company's immigration program had two objectives: (1) to recruit the best available labour force to handle the high labour-requirement sugar beet crop while mechanization of the crop, which was proceeding slowly in the case of spring work but at a more promising rate with respect to harvesting operations, was being developed. New Canadian farm families had proved to be the most reliable and satisfactory source for such labour.

(2) to ensure a continuing interest in sugar beet culture; families with a large number of workers were able to earn, collectively, lucrative wages for their work in the numerous cash crops of the area and with their natural thrift and ambition many of them were able to purchase farms of their own within a relatively few years. It was anticipated these new farm owners would turn to sugar beets as a reliable and constant source of income. This actually happened and the cycle was repeated. These experienced workers, some eventually becoming new farmers with enthusiasm, helped develop and formed part of the backbone of this wonderful crop area.

To assist the various agencies procuring labour from Europe, the company from time to time sent representatives to Europe to select families suitable for the agricultural conditions prevailing in this district. On their arrival in Canada, the company, through its large agricultural field staff, was able to place the families on farms, assist them in obtaining credit at local grocery stores, and in some cases arrange for the loan of furniture and other necessities needed to set up housekeeping. Every possible assistance was given during their first year in Canada and invariably they soon became acclimatized and on their way to becoming first class citizens.

Pre World War I - Years 1902-1913

While the Wallaceburg factory was being built, there is evidence that a Belgian family by the name of Van Damme came to the area, followed in 1903 by two sons and their families. These pioneers were among the first to show Ontario growers the skilful way of blocking, thinning and harvesting sugar beets.

Quite a number of families arrived in the following years; some of them named VanDommelen, Waterschoot, Roels, VanLinden, Modde and Seys. Practically all were from Belgium and Holland and became the mainstay of the emerging labour force.

The existing agencies to assist in the recruitment of workers from Europe were the Agricultural and Colonization Departments of both railways; namely, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. As the scope of specialized cash crops expanded, more workers were brought in and assimilated into the community life of the area.

Some of these early arrivals soon purchased farms and became sugar beet growers. Their names appear on barns and well kept farmsteads today as evidence of this.

It is interesting to note that in 1912, the company, desiring to further process one of its by-products, molasses, constructed a building to house the barium-potash process. Several experienced Italian families were recruited and brought to Wallaceburg to work in this plant. A direct descendant of this group, Vince Riccotti, is one of the company's best division key employees at the present time. This process was continued until 1929.

World War I And Period 1914-1920

Immediately prior to the starting of World War I, the immigration of European workers diminished and of course, during the war was abruptly halted. In the meantime the industry continued to grow, this requiring more labour. In 1916 the Chatham factory was constructed to provide more sugar and help the nation's war effort.

As the United States was not yet geared to war production and many experienced Belgian sugar beet workers had emigrated to the U.S. and settled in the Great Lakes area, this was a natural source which was tapped by the Ontario industry. Workers were recruited in the city of Detroit and as far as Moline, Illinois, and South Bend, Indiana. They came over at the start of the sugar beet blocking period in late May and stayed to assist in the production of the other crops being grown, returning to the United States after the sugar beet harvest in the late fall.

It is interesting to note that to assist in the production of sugar for the war effort, school boys and men, too young or unfit for war service, were recruited and camps were set up for pools of agricultural labour. These young men were called "Soldiers of the Soil" and assisted materially on an emergency basis.

As the labour crisis grew and more men were needed in the services and in war production industries, extreme measures had to be employed. The company, through the Dominion government, obtained permission to bring in Mexican National agricultural workers. The first of these labourers arrived in Chatham in 1918 about mid-May. The first party arrived on several Southern Pacific coaches from El Paso, Texas, and numbered about 200 including wives and children. The workers were allotted to different field districts and accommodation arranged by the beet growers in

the area. In 1919, about 325 men, women and children from Mexico arrived and after the beet harvest many of them were returned home. Camps were built on the Chatham and Wallaceburg factory grounds and a few stayed over each winter. An additional 250 to 300 Mexicans arrived in May, 1920, and all returned to Mexico at the end of the sugar beet harvest. This was the final use of this source of emergency labour. They travelled in bond through the United States and the whole movement was closely handled by United States and Canadian government officials with the company supplying interpreters and persons for administrative purposes. Jack Foex, the company superintendent, accompanied by Dr. A. E. Northwood and O. J. S. Butler from Chatham, acted in the above capacity as did Frank McDonald then on the staff of the company's sales department.

Post War Period - 1921-1929

After World War I, the industry decided to again encourage recruitment of experienced beet workers from Europe. The railways again became active in selecting agricultural workers and were given the full responsibility by the government for bringing in these people.

The company sent representatives to Europe on three different occasions to help in selection of experienced workers. On the spot they were able to describe working and living conditions at home and answer the multitude of questions which arise when people are asked to uproot from their birthplace and come to a new land. Mr. Jim Mowbray was the first of the company's representatives to go to Europe, followed by Charles Secord and Albert Soens. In many cases fares were advanced and credit given at local stores to help immigrants get started. Accommodation was provided for single men on the farms in small cottages supplied by the company, and in the case of families, in existing houses which were available throughout the district. Many growers built small houses to accommodate families and thus have workers living on their farm, not only for beets, but for other crops. The age of sharecroppers for tomatoes and tobacco was born.

It is estimated that several hundred agricultural workers came in to Kent County during this period; many of them being relatives of the original stock that arrived shortly after the turn of the century. In 1931 a population figure showed the breakdown of the major ethnic groups.

1931 Population Kent County of New Canadians

	Male	Female
Belgium	1266	1101
Dutch	1042	855
Bohemian	478	303
German	962	926
Hungarian	149	80

Roumanian	63	39
Russian	70	36
Polish	86	76
Ukrainian	81	33

Besides those of British stock and those of French extraction, there were representatives from 21 different countries, including the above groups. When one went to the excellent farmers' market at Market Square, Chatham, it was amazing to hear the number of different languages spoken in this area.

It is impossible to name all the families, but some of the successful ones who established fine homes and farmsteads after coming out as workers are as follows: VanRaays from Holland, Korpans from the West Ukraine, Samsons, Czeckoslovakia, VanDammes, Belgium, Delanghes, Belgium, Hanusczaks, Ukraine, Litsckos, Sudetenland, Germany, DeBeers, Belgium, Delrues, Belgium, VanBastelaars, Holland, Dekonings, Holland, Caziers, Belgium, Burms, Holland, and a host of other families with similar experiences.

During the twenties, Kent County had a colonization board the secretary was Father Dignan, Blessed Sacrament Parish Priest from Chatham. This board consisted of representatives of all religious denominations and thus the group consisting of the railways who recruited the help, the sugar company helping them to get settled and find early work, and the Colonization Board to assist in their settlement, became an important team in this active period of European immigration.

Depression Years And Pre-World War II - 1932-1939

After the crash of 1929 and start of the depression of the thirties, recruitment of workers from Europe practically ceased. With unemployment growing in Canada there was no incentive to bring workers here. Workers themselves were reluctant to take the chance of coming with the possibility of low employment and the fact that conditions were sometimes even better at home.

It is interesting to note however, that in spite of the drying up of families from Europe, many who had migrated to other parts of Ontario and other provinces, drifted into Kent County due to the stability of its agricultural industries. There is evidence of people coming from the Canadian west mainly because they had heard there were crops of sugar beets, tomatoes and tobacco that required seasonal workers. Having worked in sugar beets in the old country, they came where they knew they were most likely to get work because of their previous experience. Many workers from Ontario worked in industry when they could during the winter months and then came to Kent County for the attractive cash crop wages in the spring. Some stayed and some even bought farms during this trying period. Some Dutch settlers in 1931, moved away from Kent to

Holland Landing, Bradford Marsh, north of Toronto to assist in the development of that new vegetable growing area.

The sugar beet industry's only strike of field workers happened in 1935 when some paid organizers were sent into the district to try and get these workers to organize and demand more pay. Although a few workers supported the movement, the attitude of most of them, having been treated fairly by local farmers and the company, was to pay no attention to the agitators and the strike was broken.

A few years prior to World War II, the government gradually relaxed controls against immigration of farm workers. It is interesting to note that during this time of uneasiness in the European countries, 162 families were brought out by the Canadian Pacific Railway and 50 of them purchased farms in Kent County. These families were mainly from continental countries, particularly Holland, Belgium, Czeckoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The railway people state that the beet industry was a principal factor in enabling these energetic people whose capital was limited to make a success of their venture. Many such families were similarly brought in by the Canadian National Railways.

Percentage of Sugar Beets Thinned by Various Nationalities Ontario

Year	Belgians	Czechs (Bohemians)	Hungarians	Dutch	Canadians	Home Labour	Others
1932	33.7	17.7	10.6	3.0	6.0	26.0	3.0
1933	31.0	19.0	16.0	3.0	6.0	22.0	3.0
1934	25.8	15.0	12.7	2.8	7.7	33.0	3.0
1935	23.6	13.4	12.5	2.2	16.1	30.3	1.9
1936	28.9	9.4	15.1	3.0	10.2	32.6	1.8
1937	27.1	8.9	15.0	2.5	14.8	30.6	1.1
1938	23.8	11.0	17.9	2.6	17.2	26.3	1.2
1939	21.7	11.4	22.2	2.3	15.9	25.5	1.1
1940	21.6	11.5	22.4	1.5	16.1	25.4	1.5
1941	26.0	9.7	14.4	2.5	11.4	34.4	1.6

Native Canadians			New Canadians				
British Origin	French Origin	Negro Origin	Belgian Origin	Dutch Origin	Czecho-slovakian Origin	Other Nations Origin	Total
2369	814	136	224	142	136 96	3917	
60.4%	20.7%	3.5%	5.8%	3.6%	3.5%	2.5%	100%

15.4% of total growers new Canadians

World War II - 1939-1945

As the effect of World War II was gradual, it was not until 1941 that growers in Kent County started to feel the pinch for field labour. As a result, sugar beet acreage dropped in 1942 which again points out the interdependence between labour and cash crops. During the season of 1942, there was an acute shortage of farm labour and a careful estimate by Canada and Dominion Sugar Company's field staff indicated that approximately 2000 of the area's skilled sugar beet workers were missing from the district. In addition many hundreds of young farmers had enlisted in the armed forces or had been called up for military service. The only

replacements available to plug this serious drain on the labour supply was the force of young Japanese Canadians brought from British Columbia and established in labour camps in the country and adjacent areas. In Kent County camps were located at Chatham (Harwich Township), Wallaceburg, Valetta, Dover Centre, and Dresden. This force proved very helpful and saved many hundreds of acres of valuable crops, but they were, however, inadequate in numbers and experience to more than fractionally relieve the manpower shortage in the district. This point was forcibly demonstrated by the urgent necessity of mobilizing numerous groups of volunteer labour from the towns and cities to save the crops. Hundreds of salesclerks, storekeepers, office help, factory workers, and even housewives helped where they could. Even so, some valuable crops were partially lost.

In 1943, existing camps were manned with limited access by conscientious objectors. A team consisting of R. E. McPherson presenting the Ontario government, and B. E. Easton, the sugar company, was sent to British Columbia to survey possibilities of Japanese families being available for the area. The beet industry of the western provinces had concentrated on Japanese families rather than single men in camps and that plan proved more satisfactory. A few families came from temporary camps in British Columbia and were placed on local farms. Some of these families are still in the Chatham area and their children have been outstanding in school and sporting events. All families were accepted and assimilated very easily. The Baba family was one of the first to arrive in Ontario.

The drain on farm labour continued and in 1944, sugar beet acreage reached an all-time low as did the acreage of many other labour-requiring crops. The first prisoner-of-war camp was established at Chatham in 1944, with over 300 prisoners being located on the English farm in Harwich Township. In 1945, there were 3 other similar camps located in the surrounding districts. The use of this labour helped the situation generally, but discouraged many beet growers from staying in the business having to depend on that source for labour.

The Ontario Farm Service Force organized school children and students. In Kent County the Farm Commando Brigade was of significant help. A city businessman, Jack Teahan, took a personal interest in the project and was of tremendous help. Some adults were encouraged to work in the evenings and on weekends, but it was predominately the youth that provided the main supply.

Post World War II Years - 1946-1953

Shortly after World War II and late in 1946, a great number of naturalized Canadians, particularly those originally from Belgium and Holland, endeavoured to assist relatives to come to Ontario, and especially to Kent County. This was natural because times were difficult in Europe and help was badly needed here. The company assisted sugar beet growers to apply for these relatives and from past experience, had no hesitation in

assuring the government that these new workers would not become wards of the country. At one time, the company even guaranteed this, showing their confidence in this type of movement. Several hundred families came to Canada this way and quickly, like their relatives, earned ready cash almost immediately after their arrival and before long, started to look for land to purchase.

During this vulnerable period the sugar company field staff surveyed the Delhi-Simcoe tobacco districts and larger cities of Toronto, Montreal and those in the Niagara Peninsula. Many recently arrived farm workers and new immigrants who settled in parts other than Kent County, were encouraged to come to Kent and help with the specialized crop labour requirements.

In the meantime there were thousands of refugees in Europe with no homes or no hope of employment. Various world organizations, including the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IRO), started to move these people gradually to lands of opportunity such as Canada and Australia.

During the years 1947 to 1950, Canadian immigration offices were reopened in Europe. In 1950-51 the Immigration Branch was incorporated into the new Department of Citizenship and Immigration and more offices opened in most countries except those behind the Iron Curtain. In 1951, the assisted Passage Loan scheme helped considerably to increase the flow of immigrants to Canada.

The pools of labour that came into being during the war years were still required for the necessary increase in agricultural production. In 1949, the first displaced persons' camp was set up at Chatham in conjunction with Department of Labour and Immigration of the federal government. These people were selected for farm experience; were brought in first for the beet blocking period and subsequently directed to complete their first year on other Ontario farms as general farm labourers.

From 1949 to 1952, there was evidence of a strong Dutch movement to Kent County. The number of potential workers was greatly increased by the loss and flooding of thousands of farms by the German armed forces before retreating. Many farmers, for the benefit of their children and future generations, sought to come to a country where they could still buy land. Four thousand came to southern Ontario and many to Kent County. It is interesting to note that farm land values were jumping and many of them who wanted to get into farming quickly, eventually moved east of Kent County where land was considerably cheaper, although less productive. Former Dutch citizens formed their own organization to assist in this movement. The name of John Vellinga, Chatham, must be recorded as a strong leader in this local project.

In 1951, the labour camps in Chatham and Wallaceburg were manned by Italians who generally did good work in sugar beets, but quickly gravitated to industry after they had completed their agricultural contract. This same year, through the Canadian National Railways, a group of Bretons from Brittany, France, came to Kent County and fitted in naturally

in the French-speaking farm area around Paincourt. Some of them actually bought land but most drifted to Quebec during the winter months. Some of them still come back to Southwestern Ontario each year for the lucrative sugar beet season.

In 1953, first signs of higher unemployment in Ontario started to show and the use of workers from this source was tried out. Initially, it was generally unsuccessful, largely due to the fact that many of them were drawing unemployment benefits and agriculture was not an industry that qualified them for future unemployment payments. The men were also reluctant to work out of camps and with no discipline, control of them was limited.

The use of unemployed labour subsequently was used to much better advantage. Learning how to use them, complete co-operation of local government officials and industrial benefit payments being depleted, all helped to make use of this force more effective and efficient.

As it was now several years after the war finished, the source of workers from displaced persons' camps in Europe had practically dried up. World organizations had by this time placed most of the fit workers in various countries around the world.

It is interesting to note that about this time, for emergency forces, school children of Kent County were still being employed when practicable. Many acres were saved by this source of labour in the short period that work was available after secondary schools were out for the summer.

Company Assists In Recruiting Overseas - 1956-1960

In 1949, the federal government had set up overseas offices to process and select immigrants desiring to come to Canada. The railways again became active and had men in each country selecting prospective new Canadians. Although many European countries were represented by the new arrivals, a significant number of Danish workers landed in Kent County during this period. Their sugar beet experience proved valuable and they quickly fitted into the cash crop picture. Several fairly wealthy Northern Italian farmers purchased farms about this time and many are well established citizens today with large acreages. The company, realizing that beet growers were most anxious to secure experienced workers, again assisted the government by sending a representative over in 1956, concentrating on Belgium and Holland for new workers. Two recent immigrants, Jules DeBrabandere from Belgium and George VanderVeen, Holland, accompanied B. E. Easton as living testimonials of those who had come to Kent County after World War II, worked in cash crops, and subsequently purchased farms. These men were able to give first hand answers to a multitude of questions prospective new settlers asked. About 15 families came to Ontario that year under this scheme, several to Kent County.

Early in 1957, due to the fateful uprising in Hungary, there was an influx of refugees concentrated in the Windsor district. A few families

were placed in the area and a few single workers employed during the summer. In general these people were from towns and cities and thus did not take to agricultural employment.

In 1957, a new source of workers from Northern Italy was investigated with great success. In the long-troubled area near Trieste, between Yugoslavia and Italy, there were many farm workers of Italian birth who had been forced off their land in the Istrian Peninsula when this area was given over to Yugoslavia. They were sturdy farm workers and two company representatives, B. E. Easton and Neil Shaw, selected 45 families that year. Most of these were settled in Kent County. This force of workers has proven very successful and many are still working in agriculture. That same year the Ontario government brought out a number of Portuguese single workers and camps were reopened at Chatham and Wallaceburg on the sugar company properties. Southwestern Ontario Field Crops Association (SWOFCA) was organized to supply farm help to Kent County and generally was quite successful. Mel W. Davidson of C. and D. Sugar was first President of the new organization, which also consisted of vegetable processing companies, Libby's and Heinz.

In 1958, no organized selection of workers from Europe was carried out, but a few families arrived through the auspices of the federal government and the railways. That year, Ontario and Manitoba Indians were tried out in the existing camps but generally were not found to be satisfactory. The main reason was separation from their families, strange areas, strange work, and in many cases a longing to be back on their native reserves. Northern Indians had been used with success by farmers in Manitoba and Alberta, but the difference was that they were brought down as family units as compared to the singles tried in Ontario.

In 1959 and 1960, C. E. Broadwell from the sugar company, travelled to Trieste and again assisted the government in selecting 76 Northern Italian families and 98 single workers of whom many are today the foundation of the present labour force in Kent County.

At this same time through the Ontario Farm Labour Committee in Toronto, and in conjunction with the special services department of the Dominion Department of Labour, French-Canadian workers were brought from Northern Quebec (Beauce area) to Kent County. These men worked well on piece work in sugar beets, but did not take to camp life and the project was only partly successful.

During these various settlement periods, considerable help was given by all religious groups. New immigrants seek spiritual help soon after arriving. Monsignor E. A. O'Donnell and his associates of St. Joseph's Parish, Chatham, were particularly helpful to single workers located in camps.

Less Immigration From Europe - 1961-1963

By this time conditions were improving rapidly in most European countries. Conversely unemployment was growing in Canada. As a consequence less workers were interested in coming to Canada and the

Canadian government was anxious to use as many unemployed as they could at home.

About this time there was a significant change in the sugar beet industry caused by two factors. The low world price of sugar discouraged some farmers from growing and the acreage dropped from an average of 30,000 acres to about 18,000. As a consequence the Wallaceburg factory was closed permanently and therefore, less field workers for the beet crop were required. At the same time the harvest of the crop had become almost 85 percent mechanized and with the advent of Monogerm seed and mechanical thinning, less workers were able to block and thin more acres of beets in the spring period. It is estimated that the number of workers required had been reduced by one-half compared to the early fifties.

In 1961, the railways withdrew from overseas selection of immigrants with the Dominion government taking over complete responsibility. There is a natural movement however, of some workers to the cities as this is one source that industry looks for replacements. If there is not a continued influx of new Canadians an imbalance of agricultural workers gradually occurs and their lack of numbers start to be felt. This has been recorded by the vegetable growers in 1963 and the situation may worsen in 1964.

Conclusion

The beet sugar industry in Ontario undoubtedly would not have been a success without the help of thousands of field workers from Europe who assisted in the production of the raw material. They came to this county eager to work, willing to sacrifice and save, eventually buying land and themselves becoming employers of labour. They were hard working, thrifty, honest, law abiding, healthy people, readily adjusting themselves to our laws, customs and method and hence quickly assimilated. They have been coming into Canada for many years ever since the industry was established and hundreds of them have taken up farms in the vicinity of Chatham and Wallaceburg. The second and third generations are true Canadians, stand high in the schools, and a credit to any country. The workers themselves are skilled agricultural labourers and of great assistance to the farmers of the district in handling other crops besides working in sugar beets which now requires services mainly in the spring. Thus there has been a continuing stability to the industry by the influx of these new citizens.

The sugar beet crop gave a start to several thousand workers because it was the crop that first needed them. There is a close relationship between beet labour and that available for other agricultural work. The canning industry could not have developed as it has without beet labour. The same applies to tobacco, corn and other vegetables. Even the multi-million dollar flue cured tobacco industry of Ontario has its share of former beet workers.

These new Canadians have helped to make Kent County the top cash crop producing area in Canada and certainly are a credit to their respective homelands.

They have brought some of their old country customs and culture, but more important they came to work and many eventually bought land.

Acknowledgements

At this time I would like to record the great assistance that various organizations and people have given our company during this interesting period of history.

A. **Railways**

Both the railways have been for years maintaining very active colonization departments and have always been of great assistance to the sugar beet industry. Of the C.P.R. staff, Mr. Arthur Creighton stands out for his long and faithful service to this end. The Canadian National Railways will long be remembered for the help given by Mr. L. C. Roy. He was directly responsible for the French Breton movement. Many other individuals helped materially, but these men many times went beyond the call of duty to help in the program.

B. **Dominion Government**

Particularly during the last war and the years immediately following, the government of Canada took a very active part in this whole program. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration was organized in January 1950, and through the respective ministers and civil servants, authorization to assist in selecting proper immigrants for this area was very much appreciated. The name of Don Reid of Ottawa should be recorded as he actually brought to our attention the large Northern Italian movement starting in 1957 which still forms a good part of our local labour force.

The Department of Labour organized a special services branch and Mr. W. Dawson of Ottawa was very helpful during the years that labour camps were required. Mr. W. Davison (Taffy), a former resident of Kent County, was the area representative both of this branch and the National Employment Service and did outstanding service in helping to alleviate our labour shortages.

Most of the offices of the National Employment Service in Southwestern Ontario have been, at various times, contacted by our staff and have always been extremely co-operative in trying to help us recruit local people in time of emergencies. Several local managers have been especially co-operative and our present Chatham manager, Owen Cook, has been most helpful. Through his co-operation local suboffices have recently been set up at the company's Chatham and Wallaceburg offices, particularly for sugar beet help in the spring and this is going to grow in importance and certainly will help alleviate the labour problems of today.

C. Ontario Government

The Department of Agriculture has always been sympathetic to our industry's labour problems and the Dominion-Provincial Farm Labour Committee, centered in Toronto under the guidance of Gordon Bennett, has given us great support and undoubtedly has done a great deal to help in time of shortages. Jim Garner, our agricultural representative of the war years, started the first Japanese emergency camps. He also took the local responsibility of running the prisoners- of-war camps, a very heavy task. The above committee calls a meeting once a year to review our labour situation in the county in order to make plans when any labour shortage is apparent, all of which is greatly appreciated.

D. The Company

This report would not have been possible if it had not been for the records of the late A. W. McIntyre and the late Dr. H. D. Brown. The Mexican movement was recorded by Mr. Frank McDonald, formerly of our Hamilton office, who had an active part in the administration of the movement at that time. Our former employee, Mr. Vic Aylesworth, who looked after refunding of fares advanced, was most helpful in recording this history. Our former fieldman, Mr. C. C. Coutts, was a great aide in describing the early labour movements, particularly from the United States, in which he took an active part. C. A. Neil of our Wallaceburg Office recently interviewed some of the original Belgian and Dutch families in the Wallaceburg area to good advantage as accurate records were skimpy.

The officers and directors of our company should be complimented for the attitude they took in promoting movements of agricultural workers to this area, not only for the benefit of our company, but as it turned out, for the important part it played in the growth of our whole community. Our former president, Mr. W. J. McGregor, was a strong supporter of this plan. Through this support, the company fieldmen were able to assist growers in getting the necessary help. These fieldmen, many times at great personal efforts, played a significant part in the settlement of these new Canadians.

Respectfully submitted,

B. E. Easton,
Agricultural Superintendent,
April 20th, 1964 Canada and Dominion Sugar Company Limited.

The Use of Native Plants for Food, by Indians and Early Settlers of Kent County

By Charles Hand

There are certain fundamental facts to be considered in explaining the relationship of the Indian to his native environment. First, the Indian civilization had not advanced beyond the early Stone Age. He still depended on crude stone implements. Second, he had not domesticated any animal except the dog. These two lacks limited his agricultural activities. Third, only the most primitive money system had developed, the use of certain shells as wampum. Lacking this, they had no means of levelling off their economy, from month to month, or year to year, and were dependent on their immediate environment. Fourth, the males had succeeded, like most primitive peoples who survived in that blissful state without arriving at civilization and ulcers, in relegating agricultural pursuits to the care of women, on the theory that women knew more about reproduction and fertility than men; a convenient theory which left them free for the most interesting pursuits of hunting and fishing, and generally sitting around waiting for the proper conditions to pursue them. Most primitive peoples have achieved some advanced art, and this one seems to have been the Indians contribution.

It is not surprising that the Indians remained few in numbers since in temperate climates the food a man can produce without labour saving tools will just about keep him alive in times of abundance. A crop failure, or decrease in game, meant famine and death to many of the tribe. Under these conditions, every source of food was carefully investigated, and since the early settlers faced almost the same conditions of hardship in getting established, they were forced to learn much from the Indians on how to live off the land.

The Indians, then became very much dependant on herbs, roots, and fruits for food. In Kent, some corn or maize was cultivated and stored for winter in the long houses of the Neutrals, in bark chests, or in pits, or sometimes in separate granaries, along with wild seeds and dried fruits and roots. Since only light soils could be cultivated with their crude tools, the tribes had to move frequently, usually about every ten years. It took several years to clear off a piece of ground to be used for the next site. In addition to maize, the following plants were cultivated for food:

Beans, which were cultivated by sowing with the corn, and allowed to climb up the corn stalks.

Squashes and pumpkins, which were usually grown in separate gardens, though sometimes with the corn. These were preserved in pits, covered with bark and earth, much as is often done today.

Sunflowers were grown, yielding seeds to be eaten, as well as an oil used as an ointment by all the Algonkian tribes.

Jerusalem artichokes - Helianthus tuberosus - were cultivated here by the Indians, for their thick tubers, which were cooked for eating.

Tobacco was also grown - a practice adopted by the white man.

NUTS were more used than fruits by the Iroquois and similar tribes, according to Jennes. This probably applied to the Neutrals also. The varieties used were:

Black Walnut - Juglans nigra

Butternut - Juglans cinerea

Shagbark Hickory - Carya ovata -- the kernels and shells were pounded together for a long time in a mortar, then water was added, and the mess called "pawcohicora", hence the name hickory. The wood of this tree was then used for handles, as it is today.

Hazelnut or filberts - Corylus ramericana and the Beaked Hazelnut - Corylus rostrata.

Beachnuts - Fagus grandiflora - eaten raw, or delicious when roasted.

American or Sweet Chestnut - Castanea dentata - also often roasted.

Acorns - from various Quercus species - were dried and ground into flour, mixed with cornmeal, and baked into cakes. The flour was usually leached with water to remove the bitter substances.

BERRIES eaten by the Indians, and later used by the European settlers, included the following:

Gooseberries and currants --

Prickly Gooseberry or Dogberry - Ribes cynosbati.

Missouri Gooseberry - Ribes gracile.

Smooth Gooseberry - Ribes oxyacanthoides

Wild black currant - Ribes floridum

Swamp Red Currant - Ribes triste, var. albinervum

Juneberries - Saskatoons, Service Berries, etc. - Amelanchier species. These species intergrade, and are difficult to separate.

Wild Strawberries - Fragaria virginiana, which is round, and Fragaria vesca var. americana, which is elongated, and usually found in deeper woods, and more common northward.

Elderberries - Sambucus canadensis - berries dark purple or black Sambucus racemosa - Berries red, or sometimes white, more common northward.

Mulberries - Red Mulberry - Morus rubra, with blackish fruit, and White Mulberry, with a whitish fruit.

All of these berries were either eaten fresh, when in season, or else dried, and preserved in this fashion for use in winter. This method of

preserving fruit by drying was in common use by settlers in the early days, as well, as glass jars for canning were hard to come by, and sugar, except for maple sugar, very expensive.

OTHER FRUITS, and their uses, were as follows:

Rose Hips - Rosa species - These were cooked for eating, and could be collected over a long period.

Pawpaw or Custard Apple - Asimina triloba - this fruit was relished by the Indians, and has probably been tasted by many here.

Mayapple or Mandrake - Podophyllum peltatum - This sweet and slightly acid fruit ripens in July, and is eaten raw.

American Crab Apple - Pyrus coronaria - and closely related species were usually buried till spring by the Indians. Settlers cooked them into preserves.

Hawthorns - Cratageus species - These could be collected late in the fall, and could be kept for some time, even all winter, if buried in pits. Settlers used them for jellies.

Wild Plums - Prunus americanus - These are very good, but pucker the mouth. They were common along streams, and much used by Indians and settlers, though newcomers from England objected to them as biting hard, sour, and objectionable.

Wild Black Cherry, Rum Cherry - Prunus serotina - good both raw and dried - used by settlers to sweeten rum and whiskey, making "cherry bounde".

Choke Cherry - Prunus virginiana - very astringent, but could be eaten raw or dried for later use. Used for jams or jellies by the early settlers.

Pin Cherries - Prunus pennsylvanicum - red and sour, used much the same.

Sand Cherry - Prunus pumila - good, but bland. It remains on the prostrate or creeping bush all winter, and is still very good in spring. It could be dried for winter use.

Wild Grapes - Vitis labrusca, from which the Concord grape was derived, and Vitis aestivalis, the summer grape, and other species. These grapes, and the cherries were used by settlers to make wine. The grapes also made good pies, when other fruit was scarce.

Wintergreen berries - Gaultheria procumbens - also called checkerberry, partridge berry, mountain tea berry, tea berry, and twenty-five other recorded names, has a wonderful wintergreen flavour, and was common in the swamps of this area. They remain on the creeping plant all winter, till far into the next year. Its popularity can be guessed by the variety of names given it.

Several Cranberries - Vaccinium macrocarpum and others, and several species of blueberries, also Vaccinium species, were collected when the tribes moved about in the fall on hunting expeditions, during which they ranged almost to Georgian Bay.

Highbush Cranberries - Viburnum opulus and Viburnum acerifolium - These are very astringent and sour, but could be dried and kept for long periods, and were used also by the settlers for pies.

EDIBLE SEEDS AND GRAINS, used by the Indians were:

Wild Rice - Zizania palustris, and Zizania aquatica, were gathered in the fall, on trips made to areas where rice grew plentifully, and was gathered by bending the heads or ears over into the canoe, and beating them so that the grain fell into the canoe. Much grain fell into the water, which insured a harvest for future years.

American Lotus - Nelumbo lutea - These large seeds were highly prized. These swell up when boiled, and are excellent when roasted. The large fleshy root is edible, but it is not known if it was used or not.

The Black Locust - Robinia pseudo-acacia, and the Honey Locust - Gleditsia triacanthus. The seeds of these were gathered and cooked with meat. The pods were eaten when young, and were also dried and preserved for winter use.

Goosefoot or Lamb's Quarters - Chenopodium species - produces plentiful seeds which were gathered in large quantities, and eaten parched, or ground into meal and cooked into cakes, or made into a sort of gruel.

Wild Lupin - Lupinus perennis - produces seeds which were cooked as we cook peas.

Vetches - Vicia species, such as Vicia americana and others, were eaten by the Indians in many of the ways described above.

HERBS AND SALAD PLANTS

Ferns - Young shoots of several ferns, particularly Bracken, Pteris aquelina, and Sensitive Fern, Onoclea sensibilis, were cooked and eaten as greens.

Marsh Marigold - Caltha palustris. The leaves and stems were boiled as pot herbs.

Bitter Cress - Cardamine species - were eaten raw, as we eat radishes or young onions.

Milkweeds - Asclepias species - The tender shoots were washed, mashed, and boiled with frequent changes of water. The pods and stems were also eaten when young. The roots of the Butterfly Weed, Asclepias tuberosa, were cooked as a pot herb.

Dandelions - Taraxacum officinale - were cooked as greens, and were also much relished by the early settlers. Dandelion wine was also produced by the settlers from the flowers.

Soloman's Seal - Polygonatum biflorum and P. commutatum. The tender young plants were boiled as greens, and the starchy roots were used by both Indians and early settlers when other food was scarce.

Perfoliate Bellwort - Uvularia perfoliata - Both shoots and roots were cooked.

Wood Sore - Oxalis species, were used raw as a sort of salad plant, and go well with sandwiches on a hike, as I have used them many times. Both Indians and settlers used them. Other plants used in this way by the Indians, but not much by the settlers, were the Waterleafs, Virginia Waterleaf, Hydrophyllum virginianum, and H. appendiculatum.

EDIBLE ROOTS:

Arrowheads, or Wapatoo - Sagittaria latefolia and others, produced tuberous roots which were boiled or roasted, and were in general use, and called Katniss by the Algonkian tribes.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit or Indian Turnip - Arisaema triphyllum. The roots were boiled to get rid of some of the burning flavour, then dried and ground into meal, which was made into cakes or gruel.

Wild Onions - Allium cernum, Wild Leek - Allium tricoccum, and Wild Garlic - Allium canadense, as well as several other species, were used much as we use young onions now, both by the Indians, and the early settlers.

Indian Cucumber Root - Medeola virginiana - was relished raw, as were the Wild Ginger root - Asarum canadense, and the Toothworts and Crinkleroots - Dentaria diphylla and half a dozen other species. Early settlers also used the Wild Ginger as flavouring.

Ground nuts - Apios tuberosa, and Hog Peanuts - Amphicarpa monoica were used by the Neutrals, but I haven't so far found them here, but they probably occur on light soils, and in very thick woods.

Edible Valerian - Valerianus edulus - the roots, though not common, were baked, and considered a delicacy.

Jerusalem Artichokes, as mentioned before, were esteemed enough to cause them to be cultivated.

Cattails - Typha species - produce rootstocks which were dried and ground to a meal, and were sometimes so used by the early settlers, who sometimes also used many of the other roots mentioned, either for variety, or to supplement foods in short supply.

Wild Arum - Calla palustris - The roots of this were first cooked, then ground to a meal after drying. The boiled spadix and berries were considered a luxury when found.

Turk's Cap Lily - Lilium superbum - The large fleshy bulbs were eaten alone, and also often used as a thickener in soups, as was also the bulb of the Yellow or Canada Lily - Lilium canadense.

Yellow Adder's Tongue bulbs - Erythronium americanum - were eaten when cooked, and the leaves often eaten as greens.

Bristly Greenbrier - Smilax bona-nox - The tuberous roots of this vine were dried and ground into meal, and then baked into cakes, or used in making gruel.

Spring Beauty - Claytonia virginiana - The small starchy bulbs of this common spring plant were much prized as food.

Evening Primrose - Oenothera biennis - the roots of this plant were thought well enough of to cause it to be introduced into Europe. They were boiled like potatoes.

BEVERAGE PLANTS

Black Birch - Betula lenta, Yellow Birch - Betula lutea, and Paper Birch - Betula papyrifera. A tea was made from the young shoots, bark, and roots. Wintergreen oil can be derived from these, and the sap was made into sugar by both Indians and early settlers.

Sassafras bark - Sassafras variifolium - was distilled for the oil which rose to the top, and was used for medicines and for flavouring, and as a scent.

Spicebush - Benzoin aestivale - leaves, twigs, and berries were used to make a tea.

Kentucky Coffee Tree - Gymnocladus dioica - produced large seeds which were roasted and eaten, and the settlers used them as a substitute for coffee.

Staghorn Sumac - Rhus typhina, and the Smooth Sumac - Rhus glabra - produced berries which made a drink by infusion in water, called by the settlers "Indian lemonade".

New Jersey Tea - Ceanothus americanus - the leaves of this plant and the following ones were used as a tea substitute by the early settlers.

Sweet Goldenrod - Solidago odora.

Hemlock - Tsuga canadensis

Oswego Tea - Monardia didyma and other bergamot species. This last was also used as a flavouring by Indians and settlers.

SUGARS AND GUMS

The Maples, Sugar Maple - Acer saccharum, Black Maple - Acer nigrum, Red Maple - Acer rubrum, and Silver Maple - Acer saccharinum, all yielded a sweet sap from which sugar was obtained by boiling away the surplus water.

Canada Balsam - Abies balsamea - produced a gum along the trunk, where wounded, used as a chewing gum.

Reed Grass - Phragmites communis, produced a sweet gum when the stems were injured, which are used as a sweet by the Indians.

Puffballs, morels and some coral fungi were also eaten.

Reminiscences Or Three Blocks In A City

I having been Assistant Secretary the previous year, and having offered to resign several times to make place for new younger members, had an apparently secure feeling, that my name wouldn't be on the 1973 Program. I was shocked to find it there, and for the first meeting. I was given by the Twentieth Century Club this title "Reminiscences" for a paper. It seemed an impossible task. On returning home, I tried to write down what reminiscences entailed. I was so upset, I couldn't spell 'it'. The definition is: one - recollections; two - recollections of the past; three - recollections of past personal experiences. History, personalities, travel, situations, etc. all passed through my mind. I finally choose three. Then I "reminisced' if there is such a word. I wasn't even supposed to be alive now according to one woman with whom my father and I boarded, when I was a little girl of eight years. She told me many times that I would never see my sixteenth birthday. But I managed and here I am.

After much thought I decided to tell you chiefly about my section of North Chatham, particularly the three blocks surrounded by Victoria Ave., Thames St., and Grand Ave. East. This section was first surveyed in 1837 and bought by Mr. Joseph Tissman, who was one of the first purchasers of land in North Chatham in 1839. I have been told that the first man to buy, was a coloured man and the property is where the Aberdeen Hotel now stands. After the bush was cleared, the land was made into blocks and lots, then gradually sold, until in the 1890's all he had left was the large corner lot at Victoria, which extended along Thames St. to the McRobbie Guest Home, and along Victoria Avenue, to the Chatham Revival Tabernacle, which I knew as the beautiful home of the Pennyfather family. I came to know it around the 1900's. (John A. Wilkenson was the surveyor in 1837).

Chatham houses in those days were chiefly frame, due to the quantity and availability of wood. In thinking back of the streets I knew, I realized that most houses had verandas. Wonderful places to chat with the neighbours and keep up with the news. These were used by the whole family. Usually there were wooden chairs, large and small, straight or rocking, with often, a couch demoted perhaps from the front parlour, and of course, a string or cord hammock at one end. A wooden slat hammock would probably be found in the backyard under a tree. Most backyards were enclosed and protected by high board fences, where the children could safely play. The front yards, had mostly shorter slat or picket fences, some iron, or a hedge. Many of the former, were later replaced by posts with gas pipes between. Later no fences, and verandas were glassed in to make an extra room. Many an evening the playing of a piano, and happy

singing voices could be heard. A wonderful way to relax and throw off tensions. I sometimes wonder if the living room wasn't the best place for a piano after all.

To get milk for the day, one took the milk pitcher out to the milkman. He had large cans of milk on a cart, horse drawn, and he measured the required amount from a tap into tin pint or quart measures.

Jimmy Coaloil (Armstrong) sat between two huge barrels or large kegs on his cart and let the oil out with a spigot into the containers.

Recently in the paper I read this. "The whole world started going to pieces about the time it abandoned the hand-cranked ice-cream freezer. That was the finest device ever invented for teaching youth that work has its rewards".

Do you remember having a dress maker come to the house, spring and fall, spending a week or so, depending on the size of the family to prepare your clothing for summer or winter, making one new good dress and one for school.

I musn't forget Calling Day. It was Wednesday in North Chatham. The house was made spic and span, special cookies, etc. were made. With best dress on, the hostess sat in state waiting for callers from the other parts of the city. In the hallway a special plate was placed for the 'Calling Cards'. This was a ritual of the times.

I would like to take you first to Wellington Street West, where I spent my earliest years in a frame house, surrounded, of course, by the picket fence. There was a large yard, apple trees, pear trees, a strawberry patch and, of course, flowers and vegetables. My father's hobby was the growing of roses, so he had a small green house, and sold roses. We had a real family yard of that time.

One night while I was still teaching, a vacuum cleaner salesman came to my door. In conversation, I discovered that he lived next door in my grandmother's cottage. We chatted about the houses and the old trumpet vine on the porch. These were very popular then, and also my grandmother's dutchman's pipe that climbed up and around a post each year. The next day I found a six quart basket of pickling pears on my front porch. No doubt the tree had grown from a seed of the original.

Across the street there was a high board fence enclosing a bush of young trees. Later two houses were built on this property for the Misses McNaughton and Mr. Wm. Richards. Next to this was a large brick boarding house, owned by the Wemps, and beyond to West Street the land had been cleared for a lawn, garden and a tennis court. Tennis was the popular game. It was fun to go out an evening to watch the young men boarders and their girl friends at play. There was also, another court near by, a hidden court. It was behind the Lacroix Street houses where King

and Wellington Streets widen. A most popular gathering place for young and old of a summer evening.

Due to the fact that parents were given at that time, their choice of school to send their children, many of this district went to McKeough School in North Chatham. I was the 'little girl' in the neighbourhood and was often taken by them to this school on Friday afternoons. Friday afternoons always seemed to be special somehow. Perhaps because the senior classes could take their little brothers and sisters as visitors, or perhaps because school was let out at three p.m. The seats were double and made slat-type. But there was ample room for two pupils and a little girl between for a short time. This was my introduction to McKeough School. The principal was Mr. Jimmy Bracken, a well known and popular man, as was also, the McKeough School band which he organized. This school also had a whole day picnic annually in June. It was a big day in Chatham. It started early for the teachers, but pupils arrived any time from nine a.m. on - already excited to have a holiday. The previous day they were given two lists. They were to bring a cup or glass, spoon serviette to be put on a clean sheet of foolscap, on their desks. They were also to bring a can of salmon or a loaf of bread, a pound of butter, pound of sugar, six lemons or some cookies. The salmon, bread and butter went to one room for sandwiches, the others to another room for lemonade. The pupils, except the older ones of Grades 7 & 8 were free until two p.m. The girls helped make the sandwiches and lemonade while the boys handled the bushel baskets, the brown fibre tubs, the large flowered black enamel trays, and ran errands to get extra supplies, lemons, vinegar, etc. if required. Each room was allotted so many bushels of sandwiches, so many tubs of lemonade and so many trays of cookies. '300 plus' pupils. It was a tremendous job but a happy one looking back. There was also an ice-cream parlour in the kindergarten. After six p.m. ice cream and cake were served for 10¢. Any pupil selling 10 tickets got a free dish. The teachers remained at school for lunch. Two prepared the meal. The menu was always the same. But it <u>always</u> included new spring lamb, new garden peas and freshly picked strawberries. It was appreciated!

At two p.m. the pupils arrived, dressed for the occasion. Some of the teachers had to look twice to recognize the pupils. Mothers must have dug deep into the rag bag to get material for the many curls that day. The pupils were privileged to sit on the front lawn that day, and play quiet games or just visit until four p.m., then they marched to their rooms to the music played by a senior pupil.

It was supper time. Weren't those sandwiches good? And the lemonade! Not a complaint! The bushel baskets of sandwiches, the tubs of lemonade and the trays of cookies were passed up and down the aisles until all were full to over-flowing.

At six p.m. the relay race was on! It covered several blocks of North Chatham. Many people lined the streets to cheer the boys on their way. At seven p.m. the boys became the highlight, where many types of races were run. People came from all over Chatham to see these, taking a lively interest in it all, particularly enjoying the fat boy who couldn't run but tried, and the little one who didn't get up courage to start, until the others were half way to the finish post.

With the races completed the young people were ready for the ice-cream parlour, but the older people turned to the huge school shed. What a wonderful shed it was! Lines were formed here daily for entrance into the school. Games played there on rainy days and in the winter were fun. It had huge sliding doors to let the sunshine in and to keep the rain out. The band struck up a lively step and it wasn't long until the shed was filled with happy dancing people in spite of the knobs on the floor, and those people who took time off to visit the ice-cream parlour.

At eleven p.m. there was a gathering on the front lawn. Of course, an affair such as this couldn't end without fire works - fire crackers, stars and candles. It didn't come near to the perfection of the wonderful shows of today, but to those of us watching, it was a "wonder of wonders'. When it was over, one relaxed with a sad sigh for it was the end of a glorious day. Then suddenly the band played God save the Queen. As a little girl possibly of four or five years, I had watched this from my father's shoulder.

When I was eight years old, my father and I moved to North Chatham St. to a three storey brick house by Chatham St. Hill, on Thames St., where the Carlton Arms stands today. The kitchen and dining room were below street level. In fact, I could watch the feet of passers-by.

My chief memories were of being plagued by, not flu, but the grippe and having to have ice pads to bring the fever down. No wonder Mrs. Richardson felt I wouldn't reach my sixteenth birthday! She, like many others in those days, was terrified of electrical storms. She always went to bed in her darkened room and had the maid apply cold wet cloths to her eyes and forehead for the duration of the storm. If I was home, my father took me to the front steps and had me watch and count the minutes between the thunder and lightning to learn how near or far away the storm was.

The river during the January thaw flooded and often came up to the kitchen door, forming a very wide river. This usually froze over, making a wonderful place for children to learn to skate using a chair, and right in their own back yard. In later years, sometimes the river remained frozen all winter. We used to walk across the river to go to high school. In the evenings we put our skates on in the house, struggled to the river and then skated to Crow's Dock and back, six miles. Mother's hot cocoa awaiting us was ever so good!

At the junction of Thames St. and Grand Ave. there lived a Mr. Jones, a coloured man who was a gunsmith. He made medals, repaired watches, and did the most beautiful engraving. My father sometimes took me to see him, to watch him at work. He loved children and I was fascinated with this kindly old Black man who turned out to be one of Canada's best gunsmiths.

Sometimes I wandered a block farther along Thames St. to Van Allen. My great-uncle Henry Van Allen had a lumber mill (Drader's). Here he and his family lived in a large octagonal house, most unusual in those days. It was fun looking out of the many windows, each with a different view. I remember being given games to play - quoits and a walnut marble game, in the museum.

Later when we lived on Grant St. and the mill was 'Drader's' there were what seemed to be annual fires during spring, summer and fall. Every so often, we piled out of bed, in the night, tossed on coats and went to the fire. Father stayed home with a hose handy as the sparks from the burning lumber floated over our house.

Coming back to Chatham St. there was what we thought to be an elderly lady living there. She turned out to be fifty years old and on her fiftieth birthday came down to breakfast dressed for the day, announced to her two grown up daughters that her working days were over and that they would have to take charge from then on. On hearing this, the children of the neighbourhood, I was one, made it their business to walk by on the other side of the street to see her rocking in a chair on her porch smoking a pipe.

We later moved to Thames St. and Victoria Ave., to the Tissman property, which was later owned by the son, a John Tissman, City Clerk, who had recently died.

The corner lot where Dr. Graham now is, was a dear little park of flowers and shrubs. It was fenced in. The 'Little Rebel', the small gun in the museum today stood at the point and usually there wandering about at leisure were two birds, a crane and Billy the gull. I was given 5¢ to buy a liver for Billy from the butcher at the foot of the bridge. It was as much as an eleven year old could carry. The butcher shop had large beef, pork, etc. carcasses hanging on huge hooks along the front. It was frightening to a child and certainly unsanitary.

Miss Mary Anne Tissman and her sister Miss Fanny came into this property, so we went to live with them. Miss Mary Anne, tall, thin and ever so kind, was the housekeeper. Miss Fanny, short and a hunchback, who wore her hair hanging to her shoulders, managed seven green houses. She had one man to help. She was a most wonderful person. Remember wood and coal were the only fuel in those days.

There were six green houses along Thames St. and one across the road. The first green house of the six, you stepped down into. It was quite a sight. Potted plants filled the side and the end benches. In the centre there was a trellis, 6 x 10 x 5. Vines climbed up the arranged strings. It was smilax - a small green leaved traily vine with small green flowers. The more you cut, the more it grew. It came off in long traily pieces and had great power to hold freshness. No quality dinner was ever, or seldom given without smilax garlanding the table. Newspaper items often read, "Mrs. so and so entertained last night, or Tuesday evening. Covers were laid for eight. Decorations were smilax and carnations".

The perfume when you entered the various green houses was 'delicious' - carnations, sweet peas, violets, mums, and one green house had its whole ceiling covered with yellow marshaneill roses. She dearly loved primroses and grew many varieties. Her best roses were grown in the green house across the street. And even today, when I think back, I wonder at it. She grew poinsettias at least 4' high - a wonderful sight at Christmas. Not only was there beauty of flowers in this place, but the house was filled with old family silver, glass china and furniture. The dining room was most lovely. It was used as they say for 'High days and Holy days'. I felt I had to step softly when in it.

When we moved to Grant St., there was an apple orchard at the corner of Grant St. and Grand Ave. A path separated the orchard from the old farm house, the barn, and stable. The barn was on Grant St., next to where we lived. It had been made into a bakery by Lenore's uncle, Mr. Harold Poile, who was the baker. He made the most delicious bread, buns, bread doughnuts, and delivered them to all parts of Chatham, in a horse-cart. I often wakened in the night to hear him weighing, pounding or kneading the dough, or to the smell of freshly baked bread being taken from the oven. It was all so interesting. Even the whinnying of the horse in the stable was a delight.

Behind the shop on Grand Ave., there was Manning's store, where one bought - well everything fresh. They had a farm at the edge of town. The whole neighbourhood bought at Mannings. Mrs. Manning and her two daughters ran the store. Two teachers in McKeough school, to make a little so called "pin-money", delivered fresh yeast to them twice weekly. They were Miss Helen Young and Miss Georgie Morrison, both excellent teachers. The Board of Education heard of this and told them to either teach or go into business. They resigned in June and went to the New York Presbyterian Hospital to train as nurses. Miss Young became superintendent of this outstanding hospital, and Miss Morrison, Head of the nursing staff.

A railroad once ran down the centre of Grand Ave., taking freight to the lumber mill, and down Kent St. to the Steven's mill. It was a 'spur'

line from the Pere Marquette at the waterworks. When I think of it, I can almost hear that train chugging along Grand Ave., back of our house.

Next to Mannings' store, towards Victoria Ave., there was a wide, wide lot. In the centre stood what was left of the old Head St. School, (Grand Ave. was originally called Head St.), which had been named after a past Governor general. A resident went to visit in California, where he stayed on a very lovely street called Grand Ave. On his return to Chatham, he had his neighbours sign a petition to change the street's name from Head St. to Grand Ave. With little thought, it was done. Head St. School was not a large school. As it began to deteriorate, and the population around increased, pupils were sent to the new McKeough School. A man from Detroit named Shoenith bought the school and made it into a brewery. It didn't last long. Mr. Blonde of Blonde Lumber Co. bought it. He built a lovely home for his family, and eventually built three other houses.

As I look out my windows today to see cars flying or shooting by, the roads of those past years come to mind. Were they muddy? 'Stuck in the mud' was a good expression. I think of a gentleman, Mr. MacDonald the cab man for many years. He was always tipping his hat to greet his passengers, and he never minded getting his boots dirty, as long as he got his passengers safely into his horse drawn cab. He sat on a raised seat outside, in all weathers. Winters in those days seemed to have more snow. I have gone to school in 12" to 18" deep to find only 6 pupils out of 48 were there.

It was a short walk to Fifth St. Bridge, where Collin's Park now is. Here we see a row of shops, looking not too solid at first glance. They were an important group of buildings in the life of Chatham. The old 24th Kent Battalion barracks were moved there from Tecumseh Park. The stairs along the back porches at the top, gave the appearance of stilts, were not too safe. Another part of the barracks across the street was a boat house, where canoes and boats were sold and rented. A summer Sunday afternoon was colourful on the river with the many boaters enjoying a trip on the water. Looking down river you might see at the Rankin Dock, the City of Chatham or later the Ossafrage. These boats were a wonderful asset to the city. They were comfortable and gave people a delightful whole day outdoors, away from the 'busy world'. It also gave full enjoyment of our Thames River, with all its bends and turns amid lovely trees and wonderful farmlands. Many people bought season tickets and went weekly, as a summer holiday. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, these were Detroit Days. Thursdays were mostly Sunday School excursion trips to Belle Isle or Walpole Island. The boat left the dock at 7:30 a.m. and returned 9:30-10:00 p.m. An evening walk was to see the boat come in. It was a scramble in the morning to get the lunch packed for the day, and be at the dock on time, even though sandwiches, etc. were prepared the

previous evening. Coffee could be bought on board. There was a warning whistle from the boat at 7 a.m., which meant 'hustle'. Mothers' main trouble on the trip was to keep the lunch basket intact, for the children were always hungry an hour after leaving. Another worry was the St. Clair might be rough, and it often was.

Crossing the more or less wobbly bridge, especially if a truck was crossing at the same time, to King St., with the Merchants Bank on one side and Central Drug store on the other, one saw three grocery stores in one block, Anderson's Malcolmson's and Andrews. It's quite different today. The store managers were more like hosts, often standing near the front door to welcome customers. The shops were top quality too. The aroma of freshly ground coffee lured us into the grocery stores - the large open-topped grinder, no doubt, being the reason. The big round cheese on the counter, a thin slice of each, was given to the customers to taste and decide which he preferred.

But I'll not give any more details except the Christmas order. It contained, as well as the groceries, enough holly to decorate the living-room curtains, as well as the dining table, an ample sprig of mistletoe tucked carefully in the side of the basket, a bottle of whiskey. 'Merry Christmas' from the store.

The Ark, Parsons Fair, were store names. Although the Ark's chief purpose was to sell all household articles, china glass, even McClary stoves, it had another interest for Chathamites. A young clerk, Mr. Jim Gray later developed his own store, Gray's China Hall. His enthusiasms for beautiful glass china and silver, instilled in many Chathamites the love for these. I have heard out of two visitors say "You have such lovely china in this city". His store was known in many countries. Thanks to Mr. Gray this is so - and also the Ark.

In passing I think Mr. Chapman of Austin's Store should be mentioned too. His interest was linens. When a new shipment came in, we would hear Mr. Chapman's voice on the telephone saying, "Just come down to see the new linens". We did and we bought.

Another place that stands out in my mind is the Somerville's Restaurant. It had an air about it that made 'Restaurant', not quite the right name. There was the beautiful hand carved woodwork, the glass sparkling clean, filled with tasty arranged home baking; uncrowded tables with flowers. Oh! Lunch was .25¢.

You may be thinking of Drug Stores. At one time there were three of these in one block, too. Do you remember the row of the beautiful glass jars of coloured candies, so popular today? It's strange to think of candy being in a Drug store. Well I suppose as Julie Andrews sings 'A little bit of honey makes the medicine go down', a friend said her thoughts went to 'Licorice sticks'.

There too is the old market, with the Indians and their baskets, etc.

Walking along King St. one sees at the end, or at the bottom of, as the English say, on 4th, 5th and Market Streets, a church. Although many shops are gone these churches, built as early as 1847, still stand strong and healthy - 'Four square to the wind'.

June Weir

Address Prepared and Delivered by C. D. Sulman on the life of his Father

George William Fuller Coker Sulman (to give the full but little-known complete name of my father) was born in Burford, County of Brant, on July 4, 1866, son of William and Sarah (Coker) Sulman and a grandson of William Sulman, whose place of abode was Overstand, England.

William Sulman, the father of George William, came to Canada on a sailing vessel during the summer of 1854 and, for a short time, located in the city of Hamilton, later moving to Burford to settle and engage in a bakery and confectionary business. We still have in our family one of the original notebooks containing his bakeshop recipes.

It was in August, 1860, that my grandfather married Sarah Coker and from this union five children were born - three boys and two girls. The mother of the family was a native of the County of Brant, a daughter of Julia (Dutcher) Coker, hailing from Norfolk, England. Of United Empire Loyalist stock the Dutchers settled in Brant and a section of the County was for many years known as the Dutcher Settlement.

George Sulman was educated at the Burford Public School and had passed his entrance when tragedy hit the family - his father contacted pneumonia and died a few days later. Just at this time, his father was preparing to move and establish a bakery business in the city of London. His early demise left a mother and five young children with but very little to live upon, so George and his brother Charles were sent to live with their grandparents for a few years.

Wood was cut and meals prepared on Saturday and no work of any kind was indulged in on Sunday. The boys accompanied their grandparents to church three times on the Sabbath, as well as having to attend regular prayer meetings during the week. Father received a penny award for attendance at Sunday School and at Bible Study. One day, in his innocence, he took home a joker from a deck of playing cards which he had found on the street. Thinking it very pretty, he showed it to his grandparents and was forced to carry it in fire tongs to the back yard for burial and, as a lesson, a tiny mouth was washed out with soap and water.

At the arly age of twelve, dad uput out on his own, taking his first position with Phillips and Kincaid of Brantford, druggists. After two years in the drugstore, wider fields beconed and he accepted a position in Toronto with William Croft and Sons, a fishing tackle company, at a salary of $4.00 per week. This amount had to pay board and lodging of $3.00 per week, laundry, and incidental expenditures. His contract stated that he was to work for one year and could not leave his position during that time.

There was however, a clause which stated that he could be dismissed at any time. Out of this meagre sum he always managed to save 25¢ with which to attend the opera or theatre on Saturday night. This procured for him a seat in the top balcony where it was his privilege to see and hear many of the famous and fienst artists of the day. His year completed, he left for a slightly better-paying position with Copp, Clark and Company, Toronto.

At the approximate age of seventeen a position as a commercial traveller was offered him by R. Henry Howland and Company of Montreal. This position was accepted and he remained with this firm for several years. One interesting experience he had while travelling for Howland and Company which made an impression on him was when he sold a prominent merchant in Toronto a very substantial order for combs. His joy was dampened, however, when the office advised him not to call again on this customer, as his credit was shaky. The same merchant, in later years, built a tremendously successful business.

While living in Toronto, he had many interesting experiences that taught him much about human nature. His first landlady was very close and careful. Before a meal she would place a large plate of dates on the table and delay serving the food as long as possible so that the dates would be eaten and smaller courses could be served for the meal. One of her boarders did not like pie, so he was always offered the first piece. When this chap refused she would hurriedly say to the others, "Nor you, nor you, nor you? Well, I will put it away for supper, then".

It was at this boarding house that the foundation of a life of reading was started. The chap who shared dad's room noted the fact that he was not much of a reader and, throwing a book on his bed, said, "Read this". It was a copy of "The Count of Monte Crisco". Dad read this book until the early hours of the morning and it laid the foundation for the life of reading and self-improvement. This fellow was always fairly flush and dad used to wonder how he made his living. "George," he said, "it is a secret, but I will tell you. It is sent in a plain wrapper for a charge of only a dollar, and upon receipt of the dollar, I mail them back a 25¢ Bible".

While in Toronto he joined the famous 10th Royal Grenadiers Ambulance Division and I have a certificate of profiency, signed by the Commanding Officer, dated October, 1884. During the time he travelled for Howland's he had a regular customer living in Strathroy, named Jack Meekison. Dad became very friendly with Jack and one evening was asked to his home for supper. Entering the house dad saw a tall, strikingly beautiful young girl crossing the other end of the hall and said to himself, "That's the girl for me".

This girl, Mary Agnes Meekison, daughter of Margaret (MacPhee) Meekison, eventually became my beloved mother. Her father was Scotch and hailed from Dundee and her mother from the lowlands of the same

country. Grandfather was an elder in the old Kirk and both of mother's parents spoke Gaelic, using Gaelic prayer books at worshop. The marriage took place in 1889 and I have still in my possession the written proposal and mother's acceptance which, to me, are masterpieces of Mid-Victorian letter writing. From this union four children were born: Margaret, deceased at age of 7; George, deceased at age of 16; Dorothy, deceased at age of 12; and Charles Douglas, surviving.

Many people ask me why I am called Ted. The name was inherited from my Uncle Charles who was teased by his school chums and nicknamed Ted after a local town character called Teddy Sullivan. When I was born, I was named after my Uncle Charles, and dad at once started calling me Ted. This name has always stuck with me and I like it.

My father's business was established in Chatham in 1886 and was called the "Beehive", the naming of businesses being common practice at that time. Like his father, he had considered London as a good spot to locate, but told me that at that time Chatham seemed to be the more progressive city of the two. He never regretted his choice. Many novel and different methods of advertising were used to get the business known, such as chalking the ads on the board sidewalks. But the most effective one was when he wore a pink frock coat; this produced many laughs and much comment. By word of mouth and inquiry, the citizens got to know who the young fool was and what business he was in.

A premium business was later started called the Great Western Silverware Company, requiring that a number of bicycles be given away. Dad decided to go to Chicago and make arrangements with the firm who manufactured them. While stopping over in Detroit to await train connections, dad went into a fortune teller who, upon seeing him, said, "Hello George, you are on a business trip to a large city. You will have trouble, but you will finally accomplish your purpose". This prediction seemed to be foolish but, before closing the deal, the firm required that dad produce some person who could identify him. A stranger in a large city, he was at a loss. What to do? Leaving the office to figure out this dilemma, he bumped into an old friend who had made his headquarters in Chicago and whom dad had not seen in years. They returned to the office together and his friend supplied the necessary identification, without which dad would not have received the merchandise he needed. The result of this incident made him believe in the power of thought transference, and he told me that it would be developed in years to come. I saw a program on television just recently based on this very theory.

The business at the Beehive prospering, he felt an urge to serve his chosen city in some tangible way and offered himself as a candidate for alderman. His first effort was unsuccessful, but from then on he was never beaten at the polls. He served both Wards 3 and 4 but, disliking the ward system of elections, was one of those instrumental in having this system abolished and replaced by the present city-wide election. During the vote in

council on this question, one of the alderman leaned over to dad and said, "Sulman, you have dug your own grave". Despite this, he was later elected in the first large city-wide contest. In 1901 he contested the mayorality and was returned over a very prominent man, a member of an old-established Chatham family. In 1902 he was returned to the same office by acclamation. It was during his term as mayor that dad suggested the name "Maple City" for this area and his idea was adopted - our city still retains that name. Industrial progress was very great during his tenure in office. He was a strong advocate of a bridge from "over the creek to over the river" and stressed it strongly in his inaugural address. Nothing has ever been done about this project, although it has been mooted several times since by civic candidates and was included in my inaugural as mayor. The opening of the first council meetings with prayer each year started during his term of office. I regret that space does not allow the listing of his many achievements during the period he was alderman and mayor, but excellent progress was one of the features of his administration.

In politics, he was a Conservative by choice, though his decision was influenced a great deal by Sir John A. MacDonald, whom he greatly admired. He served his party locally as Secretary for many years and was called to contest the Provincial Election in 1908. In this contest he defeated (by substantial majority) a native citizen, Fred Stone. Two further elections were won, the second against Ed Hea and the third against R. L. Brackin. In the last contest the majority was only thirteen. The reason for this narrow margin has often been misquoted. The real cause remains a secret trust, known only to me. Dad used to say this was his 13th election and his signature, George W. Sulman, contained 13 letters. He was elected by 13 votes, so the number 13 was never regarded as being too unlucky.

The early elections were fought with a vim and vigour not known today. At many rural meetings different factions lined up on either side of the hall during the other party to come on and settle, by fists, the merits of the party. Dad's political career was marked by his Yes or No answer to any question, a policy he always adhered to in his everyday life. No quibbling -- once a problem was deliberated and studied, one knew exactly how he stood. There was a great to-do on one of his first votes in the House when he bolted his party on a question relating to his riding. He had given his promise to the electors and, even though his action was against party policy, he kept this promise regardless of pressure from party Whip, Prime Minister, or cabinet members.

As a member of the House his efforts to assist West Kent and its electors were untiring. Although capable of making a very strong address, he preferred to work for his friends and electors quietly rather than express himself in lengthy debate. I remember his returning from one of the sessions and telling me that the government was going to spend millions of dollars on a concrete road from Windsor to Toronto "just for the Americans

to travel on". Tangible recognition was given to him by the Province naming a township, in the district of Temiskaming, "Sulman Township". While I was mayor, the Council further recognized him in a small way by renaming Gore Park, in front of his home on Stanley Avenue, Sulman Park.

Dad was a man of hobbies and they were many and varied. His thirst for knowledge was never satisfied. Self-educated in the college of hard knocks, he gathered a library over the years containing the best in Literature, History, Travel, and Geography -- the reading of which led him to take several globe-trotting world tours. He visited practically every country in the world except Russia.

Before leaving for a trip to foreign lands, he would make an intensive study of the places he planned to visit and the things that he wished to see. Many a guide was astounded by the fact that he knew more of the interesting sights of the area than the guide himself. Rising early to see the native life on the streets and in the market places, he gained a deep insight and understanding of people in many lands. Quick to make friends, I have seen him meet fellow travellers and induce them to change their itinerary in order to accompany him to more interesting places he had described to them.

It was through one of these trips that we discovered the English branch of the family. When dad was overseas I used to forward his mail to Thomas Cook and Sons, Ludgate Circus, London, and they forwarded his letters on to him. By coincidence, there was a George Sulman who was chief cashier for the firm and he became interested in this Canadian globe-trotter and one day asked to see dad when he stopped off in London to pick up his mail. Dad was just returning from Africa and, much to their mutual surprise and pleasure, they realized that they were cousins. Through cousin George we learned of, and later met, our English branch of the family -- becoming very much attached in the following years.

In many cases, we found the same Christian names had come down in the Canadian line of the family and we also learned of, and later met, Sir John Sulman, an architect and engineer. Sir John was knighted for his work in connection with the designing of the new capital of Australia, Canberra. At a later date the family tree was forwarded to us from London and for the first time we recorded the Canadian branch of the Sulman family.

Many were the arguments regarding our ancestry. Dad contended that many years before we had come from Persia or Turkey. The English branch were firm in their belief that they were original English stock, stating that our ancestors were farmers or "Soil Men" from which the name Sulman was derived. The great tomb of Sulman Pac, a Mohammedan Shrine, allowed no Christian to enter, but dad, after great persuasion and, because of the fact that he had travelled all the way from Canada to see his

ancestor's tomb, was granted admittance. Until that time, no other Christian had been allowed to enter this venerated building.

Many books could be written on his travels and I sincerely regret that the only one penned by him was on his first trip, "A Ramble Through Europe", written for his friends. His experience and travels were not lost to all as he gave many lectures and received great acclaim not only in his native city but in many communities throughout Canada and the United States. He was a great story teller, full of wit and wisdom, and was considered one of the most entertaining banquet chairmen in this area. He possessed such lucid descriptive powers that even statistics, usually a very dry but essential section of many lectures, came alive with a clarity and understanding that enabled his listeners to visualize the people and buildings about which he spoke. His travels never took the place of his love for Chatham. On his return home from one of his trips he was asked, "What is the most beautiful sight you have seen?" His answer, "The old C.N.R. station right here in town".

The establishment of a local museum was always one of his strong desires and he had collected many novel and interesting items in his travels hoping to one day establish one in Chatham. Toward this end he called many meetings of interested persons but nothing tangible ever came of his idea until the Milner Estate gave their homestead for this purpose. I have been most happy to serve on the Museum Board since its inception placing therein many items of interest, particularly the Shrunken Head from South America and the Mummy which dad had brought from Egypt.

His love of art and music could never seem to be satisfied. Dad could hardly carry a tune, but he appreciated classical singing and music to such an extent that the slightest sound or word during the course of an aria would bring a strong reprimand. Any opportunity to see a good play, hear a great artist, or visit an artistic display of any nature was never missed. Stamp collecting was probably his greatest joy. This hobby was actually started by my brother, George, who asked dad to place a foreign stamp in his album. Dad became interested in his son's collection and soon started one of his own which in time became one of the finest philatelical collections ever formed in this district.

During his travels he picked up many valuable and interesting stamps and his collection was eventually sold in England by auction. The expert who came to arrange the sale stated that there were fewer fake stamps in this large collection than in any he had ever seen. This man has a very strange and interesting collection of stamps; they are all excellent fakes or forgeries and the collection is very valuable. Realizing the educational value of his hobby, father encouraged stamp collecting among the children he knew. Before taking a trip he let it be known that he would send post cards from the far-off foreign lands he visited to any child who sent him

his name and address. Whenever I accompanied my parents on their trips, I helped dad in this very pleasant task.

Although dad was not active in sports, he enjoyed assisting those who were interested in furthering sports or any other activity which he considered good for the youth of Chatham. He was one of the prime movers in establishing the old pro ball team which finally gave up for lack of funds. I can remember his speaking of the time he was on the Peninsular Fair Board, which had been losing money each year, explaining to me how he gambled a large sum of money installing attractions that would draw people when the fair commenced. Due to his management the fair was the most successful ever held up to that time and the proceeds not only paid the old deficit but supplied each for the years ahead.

Dad was an ardent fraternal man. A member of the Freemasons, he attained many high honours and degrees. He also held membership in the K.O.T.M. (Knights of the Maccabees), the C.O.F. (Canadian Order of Foresters), and I.O.O.F. (Independent Order of Oddfellows), and for several years he was one of the supreme auditors of the Maccabees.

Never in his life did he carry a watch, but he never missed an appointment, a train or a boat, and he could always tell you the time within a few minutes. Mechanics were out of his line, nor did he ever attempt to make any study of them. He never drove a car, nor wanted to, though he finally purchased a talking machine. His favourite record was Home Sweet Home sung by Adeline Pattie. He never shaved himself. Returning from some of the wilder regions he had visited, his passport picture and his bearded countenance were always at variance; this led to some rather complicated discussions with a variety of immigration officials, but dad was always able to persuade them that he and the passport picture were authentic. Dad never overcame this habit, but he made certain that I would not do likewise by presenting me with one of the latest razors of the time, a King Gillette, when I was about fourteen years old. It was a few years before I could use the razor, but it was one of my proudest possessions.

My upbringing was kindly, but strict. I was nourished on the best literature and the soundest advice and help any boy could have. Sunday afternoons were spent reading poetry and literature with friends. A discussion as to the merits of certain passages were always held and I was encouraged to listen in at these sessions. If my food did not please me, I was told, "Your mother has gone to a great deal of work to prepare this meal; if you do not wish to eat it, you may leave the table". This disciplinary action taught me to appreciate any food placed before me. At no time did my dad give me a whipping, but I was told and a proper explanation was given whenever I had erred.

The study of the religions of the world gave him a strong belief in Christianity. His faith was in God, the Father Almighty. He was often criticized by those who did not know his intense religious feelings. Some

of his political opponents even called him an atheist. One of his great regrets in life was the fact that he had never taken up the study of nature, "God's Handiwork", as he used to say. If he could have lived his life over again I believe this would have been his greatest interest. Outwardly, he may have seemed hard and cold; inwardly, and at home, he was a loving father, very kind and considerate, and thoughtful of others. Often criticized for not wearing black when a death occurred in the family, nor allowing mother to do so, he would say, "It is in the heart, not on the sleeve". During one election certain persons used this as their reason why he should be defeated at the polls.

My father had a deep-seated loyalty to the British Crown; his pride in the achievements of the British Empire was beyond question. A favourite poem which he frequently quoted at conventions and patriotic gatherings was, "It's only an old piece of Bunting". To him the Union Jack stood for everything that was right and just. Like Sir John A. MacDonald, his motto was, "A British subject I was born, and a British subject I will die". A firm believer in the brotherhood of man, his was a great and noble life. He was a self-made man with a compassionate understanding of others. He gave freely of his services and talents to his family, country, community, and friends.

C. D. Sulman

Housekeeping and Entertaining in Chatham 1840-1845

by Miss Helene Pilkey

One of my sources of both information and inspiration has been found in "Early Life in Upper Canada" by Guillet - Toronto Publishing Co. 1933 - now out of print - Chapter X - Amusements and Social Life in the Towns.

"With the exception of settlements long the Detroit River where French influence predominated and a few backward villages where American influence made itself felt, the social life of the towns of Upper Canada during the first half century after the creation of the province was patterned largely after that of the English towns of the same period. This was largely a result of the official class and the military. When the province of Upper Canada was established in 1791 the chief inhabitants were a few thousand U.E.L. who had settled during the preceding seven years along the shores of the St. Lawrence River, The Bay Quinte, the head of Lake Ontario and the Niagara and Detroit Rivers. When Detroit was surrendered to the U.S.A. in 1796 it had a population of 2200 but its population decreased to 500 - the exodus of the French and British loyalists to the other side of the Detroit River where they could remain under British rule. By 1823 the population of Upper Canada had increased to 130,000 Kingston being the largest with 2336 inhabitants. There was a steady but slow growth of the western villages of Chatham, Amherstburg, Richmond (Windsor) none of which had a population of more than a few hundreds until the late forties."

P. 327 - Early Life in Upper Canada - I again quote.

"The wayside tavern in the town was the centre of the social life of the community. That is hard to realize in modern times. The inn , like the mill, formed the neucleus around which developed many a village and not infrequently the tavern keeper was the best known and popular man in the district. The first church services and circuses were held in taverns as well as banquets, dances, theatricals, banquets and meetings of Agricultural societies, lodges, and other social organizations. In addition to the usual pleasures of eating, drinking, and smoking, there was evidence of a spirit of conviviality in many a hostelery. The roaring logs of the winter fireplace added zest to the discussion of clergy reserves, bad roads, and European news three months old."

Mine host of the inn was always ready to develop any subject of interest, for the hotel keeper was in close touch with everything that affected the life of the community and the first informed of news of distant parts.

Lodges and fraternal societies played a very important part in early social life, especially after settlements had grown into thriving communities

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Masons - Wellington Lodge first, 1853 -
Odd Fellows
Organgemen
St. Georges
St. Patricks
Firefighters

Prominent among associations which aimed at Mutual Improvements was the Mechanics Institute first established in York in 1831. In Chatham, the Chatham Public Library has grown out of the local Mechanics Institute.

It was from Samuel Strickland who wrote in 1853 "Twenty-Seven Years In Canada West" Vol. IX that I obtained the following description of the pioneer home.

"A hole in the roof formed the first exit for smoke from the centre of the room. Later slab stones of limestone placed upright in a corner of the shanty with clay well packed behind to keep the fire off the logs answered very well for a chimney with a hole cut in the roof directly above to vent the smoke.

Sometimes they moved in before the house was completed. A big log house could not be erected too high or the logs might decay and fall in, but was sometimes raised a few feet to provide a loft or upstairs bedroom approached by a ladder.

Later on in a log house a fireplace was built with a foundation of stone and this was the only means of cooking and heating.

The floor varied with the period and economic condition of the settler - most floors were very rough and scrubbing was difficult. In some houses there were painted floors imitating Yankee fashion.

The log home had seldom more than one window and often none at all - some settlers used oiled paper until glass was procurable.

The furnishings of the log cabins were necessarily varied. Some of the settlers from the old country brought with them furniture from their former homes. Bedding had to be provided for the long ocean voyage. Some of these pieces of furniture are now prized possessions of descendants of these hardy pioneers.

I am the fifth generation to own a mahogany chest of drawers that was brought from Edinburgh to the log shanty on the river St. Clair at Mooretown just below Sarnia where my great, great, great grandparents settled.

Story of Bell Pulls -

Foods - Ref. Samuel Strickland - 27 Years in Canada West.

Apart from Indians the soldiers usual food was bully beef, pea soup, hard tack, salt pork, salmon, sturgeon, and other fish, wild turkeys, ducks, pigeons, game, deer, racoon, rabbits.

The voyageurs used bear grease, coarse oatmeal, raw pork and hard biscuits.

Fur traders sometimes had feasts for high officials at the main posts but in the county of Kent they were not so frequent. Beef and mutton were scarce since food for farm animals was hard to come by. Salt pork, relieved by fish and game provided plenty of meat. In preparing pork, the hams and shoulders were usually smoked, the rest preserved in strong brine. The smoke house was generally used in April and the meat would keep through the summer. Pies of wild fruit and cakes of various kinds were made when fine flour was available, but wild strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, black berries and blue berries were near at hand and largely used.

EARLY LIFE IN CANADA - BY GUILLET

"To grind wheat into flour was a matter of great difficulty in early time. A crude type of hand mill or honing block supplied a very coarse wheat flour called "samp". The bread was usually baked in kettles in the fireplace and though later a clay oven was usually erected either cut in a wall near the fireplace or outside the home (Quebec) - and hot coals were placed above and below while the bread was being baked.

House in Brockville -
Golden Apple - Gananoque -
Cup -

Then came the reflector which was an oblong box of bright tin on all sides but one running through was a small iron bar terminating in a small handle or crank or spit. By turning the handle the meat could be browned on all sides.

Cornmeal was used by pioneers as corn was easier to grind. Porridge was made of the meal. Plenty of maple syrup was served. For supper the hardened porridge was cut in slices and fried, while cornmeal and buckwheat griddle cakes eaten with wild honey, were frequently served - also Johnny cake - except in ultra Loyal sections where an American dish was considered disloyal. Wild rice, highly prized by the Indians, was used by Loyalists. Tea was too expensive for a common drink so a substitute of hemlock, sassafras, whiskey or rum was used at meals and elsewhere.

These are some of the advertisements that appeared in the local paper - the Chatham Journal, June 21, 1844 -

The Scotch Store - Gilmour and Morton

The subscribers have opened that store lately occupied by Miss Gouin where they have now received a full and complete assortment of new spring goods consisting of all kinds of Dry Goods, Groceries,

Crockery and Hardware. Wheat, produce of all kinds taken in exchange for which the highest marked price will be given.

A Card - Witherspoon and Charteris have now the pleasure of acquainting their friends and the public generally that they have just received a well selected stock of Dry Goods which they will sell on very low terms; and as their stock of goods from Britain was purchased before the advance took place in the market, they feel confident they will be found on inspection to be so.

Chatham Journal - May 23, 1843 - The wheat crops on either side of the Thames and through the country generally never looked better. Kent is a wheat growing county, not to be equalled on the continent, but the failure of last year, and the low price given for wheat had cast a gloom over our best farmers. Their prospects look flattering at present to a more than average crop.

Market Report from Montreal - Provisions - Butter 6d - lb., Lard 5d - lb., Peas 2s. 3d. per bu. from wharf.

Aug. 12, 1843 - New Store - new goods - Dry goods - crockery - groceries. Store lately operated by James Burns and now under supervision of Mr. Samuel Poole, well known in this community for his correct and business habits while in the employ of Mr. James Read. The advertisement ends by saying - Call and examine for yourself - Burns and Poole.

An advertisement August 12, 1943 - G. & J. Hill, 120 Jefferson Ave., Detroit, complete assortment. We pledge ourselves to our friends in Canada and to all others who may favour us with a call to sell these goods as low as they can be purchased in Buffalo or any place west of New York. Also dealers in drugs, medicines, paints, oils, glass. Refer to W. W. Eberts, Chatham.

A. R. Robertson, M.D., Chatham
Detroit, July 24, 1843.

Sat., Dec. 23, Chatham Journal - Kingston Market - Potatoes 2s. 6d. per bu., flour 10 to 12s. per cwt., Pork 20 to 22s. 6d. per cwt., Beef 12s. 6d. per cwt., Oats 1s. 3d. per bu., Hay 40s. per ton.

Notice W. W. Eberts has now taken a new partner and the firm has now become Eberts, Waddell and Co. on premises lately occupied by Messers Witherspoon and Charteris. They are wholesale and retail merchants, forwarders and Commission Agents who invite the attention of merchants and others to their well selected assortment of merchandise comprising Groceries, Liquors, Hardware, Delph and Chinaware etc. which they intend to sell at the very lowest prices for cash or produce. - Eberts and Waddell - Chatham, Nov. 24, 1843.

Witherspoon and Charteris have evidently gone into the grain business. Will pay cash for any quantity of merchantible wheat delivered at their storehouse opposite Mr. Wm. Dolsen's tavern - Dec. 8, 1843.

An ad for Nov. 28, 1843 - Furs - Highest cash prices will be paid for fox, deer, mink and rat skins - Eberts, Waddell and Co.

Some prices from an earlier source from Can Emigrant published in Sandwich Dec. 13, 1834. Detroit prices current Dec. 13, 1834. - Potatoes per cwt. 3.25 - 3.50, Cider per bbl. 3.00-5.00, Corn per bu. .56 to .63, Cheese per lb. .06-.08, Flour superfine per bbl. 4.00-4.25, Hams per cwt. smoked $9.-$12., Lard per lb. .06-.07, Oats per bu. .31-.38.

Quotation from the Western Herald, Sandwich, June 30, 1841 - "Chatham, though only 8 years old has produced 5 steamers and about the same number of schooners."

"The Chatham Weekly Journal edited by Dr. Fulford was received here today. It is a good looking sheet about the size of our own. We can only wish it every success at present."

At this early period there was no society page and it was considered very bad form for any women's name to appear in the paper so there were no accounts of private parties but there is a report of a public dinner given in Chatham on Thursday, July 16, 1841, in honour of Jos. Woods, Esq., M.P.P. the representative of Kent.

The table was laid within an arbour formed by oaken boughs extending about 150 feet in length erected on the market square reserve. On entering this rustic hall of festivity our eyes were greeted with a sight which very far exceeded anything of the kind they had ever beheld. The table which was about 120 feet long, was literally covered with the products of the farmers barnyard dressed in most approved style of culinary art, the dishes being tastefully garnished with flowers and greens and bouquets of flowers being placed in tumblers at regular distances, the array of shining plates "armed to the teeth" with glittering forks and blades altogether exhibited a most pleasing and animating sight. At the head of the table was placed a roasted baron of beef weighting 120 lbs. The party sat down at 3 o'clock, between 80 and 90 in number and after a suitable address from the president, Daniel O'Reilly, Esq., the work of demolition and deglutition commenced. My eyes! what havoc was made among the savoury objects of attack! and it was really surprising to witness the dexterity with which the hungry "raw militia men" handled their weapons intimating an intimate acquaintance with their use either in camp, the field or the woods. For our part being exceeding "sharp set" we paid our respects to the juvenile swine whose pleasing exterior told us plainly much satisfaction would result from his acquaintance; and certainly our expectations were fully realized.

Having satisfied the wants of the inner man, being relived of the disfigured remains of viands, fowls, pastries, etc. the elements of conviviality were brought forward in taper necked bottles and toasts, songs, and speeches resounded along the board. It is not our intention to particularize what was said or sung as our contemporary of the weekly Journal will do that in his next paper but we cannot omit expressing the thrilling pleasure we felt at hearing the song "the flag that braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze" which was sung with good effect by Mr. Slagg. Among the standing toasts were His Excellency the Governor General by Col. Prince and Hon. S. B. Harrison which were drank with great enthusiasm.

About dusk the company separated, of course, highly delighted with the evening's entertainment.

Now ever time you park in the market parking lot, just remember the entertainment that took place there July 8, 1841.

A notice of another public dinner was reported by the Chatham Gleaner July 13, 1844 - The coloured population of the town of Chatham and neighbourhood will celebrate the approaching anniversary of Emancipation of Slavery in the British Colonies by a public dinner on Thursday, August 1st. Dinner will be on the table at 4 p.m. Managers - L. Taylor, Geo. Ramsay, C. Sherman, R. Davis.

Excerpts from the Chatham Journal printed and published every Saturday Charles Dolsen and J. F. Dalmage, 15 s. per annum, July 9, 1842, gives us the following: Prospectus of Chatham.

We have seven taverns with Groceries, Graineries, Bakeries in abundance. An advertisement under same date - Groceries and Liquors to suit the Chatham market. Eberts and Dolsen.

Another ad - The subscriber will pay the highest in cash for good merchantible wheat - delivered to their warehouses. - Witherspoon and Charteris.

Salt - Nov. 5, 1844 - 500 barrels of American and Liverpool salt just received per schooner San Pariel from Kingston, Oswego for sale cheap for cash in small lots. Also 400 bbls. Liverpool salt being balance of cargo of schooner Lord Seaton - Extremely low for cash - Eberts, Waddell and Co.

Chatham Gleaner - Sept. 14, 1844 - We are requested to state that a Sabbath School Festival will be held in Wesleyan Methodist Church on Tuesday 24 inst. to commence at 4 p.m. The Rev. Wm. Ryerson is expected to attend.

A Collector's Sale - To be sold by auction at the store of Mr. Jas. Archibald in the town of Chatham on Monday, Sept. 24th at the hour of 2 o'clock in the afternoon the following goods forfeited for the breach of the Revenue laws - 8 chests of tea, 3 doz. pr. boots, 3 boxes tobacco.

Cheap Rent - House and lot to rent - a comfortable commodions house containing 5 rooms and kitchen with 1/2 acre of land can be had by applying to Messers, Eberts and Robertson at $3.00 a month. This ad appears repeatedly. Either the paper din't change its type or the house had drawbacks.

The paper of Dec. 24 was late being published - cause unavoidable, absence of one of the proprietors. Next day was Christmas Day so the Chatham Gleaner was published on Thursday instead of Tuesday the regular day - with profuse apologies - probably a pre Christmas celebration!

The following advertisement I found very intriguing.

Magical Pain Extractor Salve - Reduction four fold in price or nothing if the user is not delighted with it. An article every family must consider indispensable when they know its power and value, has now been reduced four fold in price so that every human being may enjoy its comforts. We assert without the possibility of contradiction that all burns, scalds, every external sore, old or fresh, and all external pains and aches no matter where, shall be reduced to comfort in five minutes saving life, limb or scar. No burn can be fatal unless the vitals are destroyed by the accidents. It is truly magical. It will cure the following:

Burns, Scalds, Chilblains, Chafe, Galls, Frosted Parts, Chaps, Pimples, Blotch, Felons, Ulcers, Sprain, Erysipelas, Stabs, Cuts, Bruises, Strain, Ear and Toothache, Sore throat, Run Arounds, Ring Worm, Salt Rheum, Barber's Itch, Carbuncle, Weak Sight, Sore Eyes and Lids, Sore Lips, Puncture, Warts, Fever Pains, Pain in Back, Pain in Side, Tender Feet, Tic Doloreax, Inflammatory Rheumatism, Ague, Fever Sore, Sore Corns, Small Pox Marks, etc.

Though we have numerous afflictions not one too many to cure. Enquire for Connels Magical Pain Extractor at Comstock and Co. - Price 25¢ or 4 times as much for 50¢ and ten times as much for $1.00. All country merchants are requested to take it to their towns on commission as the greatest blessing to mankind that has been discovered in medicine for ages. This is strong language but you may depend its power will justify it. The same to be had only of Messers, Eberts and Robertson, Chatham, May 10, 1844.

The Chatham Gleaner advertises as follows - 59 bbls. Prime Whiskey for sale by Joseph Tissman.

July 29th, 1845, Mr. Tissman advertises again. "The persons who have purchased beer at my brewery are particularly requested to return the casks without delay. Should they not do so "I Know Who Will Suffer" - Joseph Tissman, Chatham North, July 29, 1845.

Same date he advertises - A large assortment of dry goods Groceries at his store opposite the Brewery North Chatham an unexampled variety of

all kinds of teas 3s. upwards - Joseph Tissman, Chatham North, July 29, 1845.

For sale - Salmon Trout - Lake Huron North Shore Salmon Trout for sale by subscriber - J. Pickering, Chatham, Sept. 1, 1845.

The Chatham Fair and Agricultural Show took place 2nd inst. (Sept. 2, 1845). Considering the state of the weather and the roads there was a good attendance of farmers with their cattle and produce. The most valuable prize was carried off by B. Bell for the best cheese -- the amount given for that article having been swelled by a handsome donation from the amateur theatrical society of our town.

From time to time choice recipes appear -- "Apple Bread" as described in "Can. Emigrant" Sandwich W. D. Dec. 1831.

A very light pleasant bread is made in France by a mixture of apples and flour in the proportion of 1 lb. former to 2 of latter. The usual quantity of yeast is employed as in the making of common bread and is beaten with flour and warm pulp of apples after they have been boiled and the dough is then considered set. It is then put into a proper vessel, allowed to rise and is then baked in long loaves. Very little water is requisite, none generally if the apples are very fresh. How anyone ever followed such a recipe is a tribute to the pioneer housewife!

Mrs. Keil's files furnish another recipe - this time it is Pumpkin Bread. This, Mrs. Keil states, appeared in the Can. Emigrant, Feb. 1832, which journal was published every Thursday by John Cowan, Sandwich U.C. office in the warehouse of the late John McGregor Esq., corner of Russel and Mill St. 12s. 6d. currency per annum in advance.

Pumpkin Bread - Feb. 2, 1832. The pumpkin is first deprived of its rind, afterwards cut in slices and boiled. When soft enough it is strained through a colander and mashed up very find. In this state it may be used in pies or mixed with wheaten flour in proportion 1/3 to 1/2. The **spunge** must be set in the ordinary way with yeast in the flour and the pumpkin worked in as it begins to rise. My wife's rule is to bring the dough to a proper degree of stiffness without water. Care should be taken that the pumpkin is not so hot as to scald the leaven. It requires more baking than bread made entirely of wheat. I am informed that Pumpkin Bread is nothing new but I am also informed that farmers in the county use Indian meal instead of wheaten flour which makes it more like pudding than bread. -- Yours respectfully, T. Bridgman, New York, Nov. 31, 1831.

The following article was very enlightening entitled "The Convenience of a Dish Kettle".

You want nothing but a dish kettle said an old housewife to her daughter who had just got married. "Why, when your father and I commenced I had nothing but a dish kettle. I used to boil my coffee in it and pour it into a pitcher, then I boiled my potatoes in it and set them on a

warm plate, while I stewed up the meat in it, and always after a meal I fed the pigs out of the dish kettle. You can do a great deal with a dish kettle, Sally, if you are only of a mind to." -- The resourcefulness of the Pioneer Women! Dec. 3, 1844, Chatham Gleaner.

Chatham Journal, Saturday, Dec. 8, 1843. -- Water Grist Mill known as McGregor's Mill has now made necessary repairs to the Water Grist Mill and has now got the same into complete operation, and trusts that all may favour him with their custom work to given them entire satisfaction. N.B. - Oatmeal on hand and for sale. Geo. Wilson, Chatham, Dec. 8, 1843.

Chatham Recess and Merchants and Mechanics Retreat. The subscriber would most respectfully beg leave to inform the inhabitants of Chatham and vicinity that he has taken the Recess formerly occupied by Messers Carter in the basement of W. Smith Saddlers Shop where he intends to keep constantly on hand every variety of eatables that the luxuries of the market afford such as Roast Turkeys, roast duck, roast chicken, roast beef, roast pork, roast pork and beans, pickled tripe, pickled tongues, pickled pigs' feet, pickled oysters, pies, cakes, custards, which will be served up at all hours and the utmost attention paid to those who may favour him with a call. His prices will also be found moderate and hopes by being strictly attentive to business, to receive a liberal share of public patronage. Thos. N. Johnston, Chatham, Dec. 12, 1843.

Chatham Gleaner, Jan. 5, 1844 - How to Keep Butter Fresh and Sweet For Years.

Good butter is to be well churned and worked and packed hard and tight in kegs of seasoned white oak. The head is then put in, having a small hole into which the brine, which will float an egg is poured to fill the vacant space. The plug for the hole must be made of cypress wood as it lacks the pyro ligneous acid which decompose salt. after which the kegs are placed in a hogshead well filled with brine of full solution which is then headed up tight and close. This is the mode pursued in Orange County, State of New York, and the butter will keep at sea and in a warm climate and command a very high price.

$50. Reward - Whereas our storehouse was broken open last night or this morning and 13 barrels of whiskey stolen therefrom we offer a reward of $50. for such information as will lead to the discovery and conviction of such person or persons who broke open such warehouse. -- Eberts and Waddell, Chatham, Aug. 9, 1844.

Entertainment Sports - Source - "Early Life in Upper Canada" Guillets, 1933, Toronto Pub. Co. - now out of print.

One of the first sports to be developed in Upper Canada was horse racing which with sailing and fishing formed the chief diversion of the garrisons at Kingston, Niagara, Amherstburg, and York during the first years of existence of the province.

In the so called backwoods settlements like Richmond (Windsor), Perth and By Town (Ottawa) horse races were not nearly as aristocratic events as in Cobourg and Toronto, and commonly resulted in fighting and brawls, and in all parts of the province gambling and drunkenness were characteristic of sporting activities. In the pioneer period the gambling element which has always been pre-eminent in horse racing was productive of a great deal of evil. Men had little actual cash to wager but bets of 10,000 feet of lumber, barrels of pork or flour or even land grants were quite usual. During the winter months horse racing on the ice was early a popular sport in all parts of the province.

Valuable purses were awarded at these meets which were long characteristic of the Canadian winter season.

Inter club games of cricket and curling were sometimes played in the 30 and 40's but the difficulty of transportation placed such competition in the category of half week's holidays. It took 3 days for the curlers of Toronto to engage with the Hamilton Club and when the Cobourg cricket club visited Bowmanville in 1846 it was most convenient to travel the day before on the steam boat America though the distance was only 25 miles.

Football, bandyball, and tennis were usually played more informally and seldom resulted in the formation of clubs in the earlier period. Quoits and other hurling games were popular. Baseball was not introduced until the 60's.

One of the last and most notable of open air bonspeils was held on Burlington Bay in 1875 -- no less than 360 curlers were present for the east vs west match and the only prize was a gold medal to the Chatham Club for having the highest average score. The bonspeil followed almost immediately upon the organization of the Ontario branch of the Royal Caledonia Club formed chiefly because the earlier clubs were so far away and used iron in place of stones -- a description of this bonspeil in the first Ontario Curling Association Annual notes "The bay presented a most lively and festive appearance. Crowds of spectators including many of the fair sex, on foot and in sleighs, covered the bay during the contest."

Lectures, dramatic readings, and display of local and imported oratorical ability were popular forms of entertainment arranged usually under the auspices of a local church.

Chatham Journal, Sat. Jan. 8, 1842 - New Year's Eve Celebration - The public assembly given at Mr. Courtillets' in this town, on New Year's Eve to celebrate the event of the birth of the Prince of Wales, we are pleased to say, went off in fine style. About 10 o'clock a salute of 21 guns was fired, at the same time a brilliant illumination took place in different parts of the town and fire works let off, which gave to the tout ensemble a splendid and pleasing appearance. Much praise is due to our active fellow-townsman, Dr. Fulford, for the energy displayed in endeavouring to make

the arrangements as creditable to our little town as possible; to him are we chiefly indebted for the eclat with which the whole went off.

Chatham Journal, Jan. 20, 1844 - Young Men's Ball - At the British North American (the site of the 1947 Capitol Theatre Parking lot) on Monday evening last was a handsome affair. The music was good and the dancing room tastefully decorated, and everything appeared in good order to give eclat to the large assembly of youth and beauty of our town and its vicinity, who kept up the dance right merrily until the morn. More than sixty persons sat down to a supper that was superb, prepared by our host, Mr. Charles Smith; the managers also deserve good credit for the taste and good order in which the whole was conducted as the first assembly of the season.

Then I came across a story related by O. K. Watson of Ridgetown - London Free Press, Jan. 3, 1848 - Furs of skins were used for barter as coin was scarce so coon hunting became both a sport and profitable fun. Now requirement to go coon hunting is a gun license $1.00, a dog or two $2.00, a license $5.00 or more to take fur bearing animals. After having this equipment and permission is needed from the owner of the farm to hunt on his land. Then they just went out. This story was told to O. K. Watson and related by Him. In the fall of 1816 Tim Shortt 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 axe he took his rifle and went along. We had cut two trees and killed three coons when the dogs took after something that led them on a wild goose chase. In about half an hour we heard them baying away but at least two miles off. The night was dark, we travelled by 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 tree had grown up in an open place it had a large spreading top.

The Indian said, "You lose that coon if you chop down tree - better make it one big fire, then if me not see um to shot um me climb up and shakum off."

We built up the fire very soon and looking up saw not a coon but a huge bull bar -- he had backed out on a large limb and his forepaws on the crotch and his belly lay down between the limbs. "Ugh" said the Indian "Me no shake that coon." I said, "No, but you can shoot him." But Natchee 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 was to stand with his back to the fire and point the gun straight up. Apeche tried it once or twice. He said, "Me shoot, then me shump." He stood with his back to the fire, pointed the gun up and let fly. He tried to jump backward over the fire but his heel caught in a spice bush and down he came in the fire and the bear came down on top of him. The dogs jumped at the bar, the fire flew and the barking, screeching, and growling that rung out in that forest for about 3 minutes was most amusing. In about

that time I heard the bar go off and the dogs fighting him. It was awful dark but I gathered a few coals and banked them together and soon had a blaze. I found Apeche about a rod from the fire and at first thought he was a dead Indian I had 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 off - only that shirt tail flop up and let me down on fire and burn it and my sit-down. By the time I had Apeche straightened out Pete and Tim had found the bar and had crawled about 4 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 hid belonged to him. We cut off the hams and took them along. We then started for Singing Sol's four miles off but still bearing toward home. I don't know what Sol's other name was but he was named Singing Sol because the durned creature 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 dogs in and in about 15 minutes were heard a big fight going on in the middle of a field and as there was no tree 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 its back and fighting the four dogs with 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 his stumps was lifted clear off the ground and away he went on a voyage of discovery. It was rather an undignified ride, for his face went the wrong way. I hollered at him to drop the meat but he hung to that like a wool tick to a dead nigger. Pete's ride didn't last long for one of the dogs grabbed him by the calf of the leg and yanked him off. I suppose the dog 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 would have that dog's life as soon as he had a chance to take it. Just as the lynx jumped on the back fence, Guess - that was the dog's name, caught him by his hind quarters and jerked him back but the moment the lynx touched the ground he took the dog a swipe across the face and the poor dog lost his right ear and the whole skin off his face, one claw passed through both eyes and left the dog blind as a bat. Pete felt sorry enough for the poor thing and nothing more was heard about him killing the dog.

The other three dogs followed the lynx tracks near three miles and then the brute tried on a large oak. We had bound up Pete's leg with a handkerchief but it pained so much he concluded to go home and Tom went with him to help him along, so the Indian and me went for the three dogs. 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 1/4 mile off before the tree touched the ground so we kindled up two fires, one each side of the tree. It took a full hour to get blaze enough to shine through the top and looking

up and peeping and looking up for a long time I discovered him lying on the crotch of the 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, maybe you want me to burn my head cause I burn my tail, "you shoot him". I took the gun and pointing off hand blazed away but a white man always draws a finer sight on a rifle than a red man does so the ball went low passed up a forepaw and 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 Apeche. 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, bent it over, cut the top off and tied the hind legs of the lynx to the top of the stump and let it go and the lynx was held up 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 until 2 in the afternoon. I then told Apeche I would go back and fetch the lynx while he cooked some dinner, so I shouldered my rifle and started.

When I came in sight of the lynx I saw 3 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 leaf snapped under their feet they bounded up in the air 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 doe walked slowly up to a large credel. I drew a bead on her but the powder flashed in the pan. I hurriedly filled the pan again for it was such a pretty shot I became excited and my hand shook so 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 holes a little and again filled the pan and again lifted the gun but by this time I had backfired so bad the muzzle 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 somersault and fell on its head in the hole behind which it had stood. I dropped the gun and ran up to cuts its throat and in a few minutes it was dead.

Now as I could not carry both the lynx and the deer I concluded to let the lynx hang and take the deer home first, but as I was peeling some bark to strap the deer to my shoulders I saw Apeche coming on the run, a regular turkey trot. He had heard the report of the rifle and knew there must be something up, so now the Indian carried the deer and I carried the lynx. When we skinned the deer there was no sign of a bullet would 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 out 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 deer and we all retired to rest.

A lot of things can happen on a coon hunt, and I think O. K. Watson must have enjoyed telling this tale.

Chatham's Early Musical Life 1840-1850

by Mrs. W. E. Hanley
(Eleanor Hanley)

As a slight introduction to the main subject of my paper I thought it might be of interest to give a thumbnail sketch of the Chatham of the 1840's, from items gleaned in my search for musical information from the ancient files of newspapers of that day.

In the early 1840's, with a population of over one thousand, Chatham possessed: 2 bakeries, 4 blacksmith shops, 2 breweries, 9 merchant shops, 8 groceries, 2 flour mills, 1 sawmill, 1 printing office, 10 taverns, 1 tannery and one or more livery stables. The population of the town and its surrounding area, where most of the gentry of the town had their dwellings, was served by four schools, one Anglican church, one Methodist, and two Presbyterian in the process of being built. In 1845, with a population of 1500, Chatham was described as a wooden town with a little wooden fort on the point between the river and the creek. By 1850 the population had increased to 2000 and with Chatham North was incorporated as a town -- a flourishing, ship-building, industrial and exporting centre for the lower Thames.

The Chatham of that period possessed a town crier, who advertised in the **Chatham Journal** for a chance to merit and receive a share of public patronage. Through the medium of the weekly paper tailors, hat-makers, and wig-makers extolled the merits of their wares. Gunsmiths and blacksmiths apparently flourished, one poetic blacksmith advertising in the December 20th-1845-issue of the **Chatham Chronicle** as follows, and I quote in part...

"And as for pay I'll not be bad.
To get some cash I would be glad
But still will take corn, rye, or peas,
Wheat, oats and butter, eggs and cheese.
And I should like some coal or wood,
Or beef or pork if it is good.
I'll early rise and smile and smash
And work for those who's pay me cash."
(George Ramsay, Blacksmith).

It was a heyday for patent medicines which were constantly advertised, including positive cures for falling hair, rheumatism, corns, weak eyes and every kind of injury. All sicknesses and diseases were guaranteed assuaged, if not cured, by the specific use of Chinese Blood Pills. Not realizing that such an animal as a mouley cow ever existed, I was

enchanted to find the following advertisement in the **Chatham Journal**, May 18, 1843, of "a red mouley cow having strayed away and being earnestly sought for by its owner William Houston." A woman advertises the fact that her husband has left her, and while she vows never to live with him again offers a reward of two dollars of hard-earned money to anyone who will bring him back, just long enough for her to tell him what she really thinks of him. And one last gem from the **Chatham Journal** of Nov. 25th, 1843: NOTICE: I request the person who borrowed my HAY KNIFE some months since will have the goodness to return it forthwith. If he does not, I know who it will be the worse for. G. W. Foote.

They had their fast drivers in those days too, as we read in the **Chatham Journal** of October 7th, 1843, and I quote: "A case of furious driving, resulting in a frightful accident, occurred while drivers of two wagons were racing their horses over a causeway of logs. Five persons occupying the foremost team were violently thrown out and all of them more or less injured. A spectator with admirable presence of mind immediately bled with his pen knife one of the victims found lying insensible -- not being able to await the arrival of a medical gentleman."

Influenza at times plagued the little settlement and the year of 1743 is given as the time that it prevailed the world over, with its progress like that of most epidemics from east to west and preceded by great atmospheric changes.

In the **Chatham Journal** of Saturday, March 25th, 1843, is an article taken from the **New York Herald**, "Earthquakes and Comets in Advance. The Millenium approaching," and speaks of the time as being a most remarkable epoch in the history of the world, leading to the supposition that the last days were at hand. It was an era of illustrious men a century ago. Names such as Ralph Waldo Emmerson, Henry Ward Beecher, Alexander Dumas, Horace Greeley, Longfellow, Tennyson, Leigh Hunt, and Theodore Hood are among those found in the Chatham papers of that day.

An article giving specific rules for the preparation of firewood for winter states that firewood is as much a necessity of life in Canada as water, and pessimistically asks "if it is becoming scarce and dear this early in the settlement of the country, what will it be twenty years hence?" Another editorial voices the opinion "that a jolly farmer returning home in his wagon after delivering a load of corn is a more certain sign of national prosperity than a nobleman riding in his chariot to the opera or playhouse."

Going somehwat beyond my time limit, into the 1850's, I could not resist including the following item from the **New York Herald**, which appeared in the **Chatham Planet** of June 5th, 1856, regarding a proposed visit to Canada by Queen Victoria. "The great objections to the Queen's visit are the difficult navigation of the St. Lawrence, the uninteresting character of the country, and the astonishing inconvenience of the Canadian

climate. She would run the great risk of remaining a day or two aground in the shallows below Quebec, independly of the chance of shipwreck in the dangerous gulf. In August a torrid heat scorches the face of nature -- by the close of September a cold autumn has set in. And these inconveniences and dangers would be undergone for the sake of seeing a country which, though very interesting to the farmer and political economist, is really dull to the average traveller. When Quebec and the Thousand Isles have been 'done' nothing remains but a big river, big cakes, big rocks and no end of pine stumps." The article concludes by asking "But what prevents the Queen from visiting the United States and passing over to see what is worth seeing in Canada."

A quotation from the New York Tribune states that "In consequence of Reciprocity, the annexation of Canada will not take place before 1890."

Musical Notes On Chatham 1840-1850

Following Mrs. John Keil's paper of last month on "Little Theatre of Early Chatham" and closely related to it as another of the cultural influences in the Chatham of the 1840's, my paper deals with the music of this period. Many of the musical and theatrical performances took place in the Theatre Royal -- on the site of the present Post Office, on the corner of King and Fourth Streets; and in the Royal Exchange Hotel on the corner of King and Fifth Street, upon the site of the building now occupied by the Woolworth Five and Ten Store. Thus the cultural focus of the town was centred more or less in this area: and having established by process of elimination the probable whereabouts of the Theatre Royal, and until such time as evidence to the contrary should arise, we shall accept this as the site of most of Chatham's musical life.

In an endeavor to visualize how the devotees of theatre and concert might have dressed in the 1840's I found in Lucy Barton's "Historical Costumes for the Stage" a description of the dress worn by both men and women -- and while her book deals with costumes prevailing across the border, undoubtedly during this period Canadian styles followed the same trend. In Chapter XVI we find that warm rich colors had gradually disappeared from masculine wardrobes, but through the forties there did remain some elegance in the long-waisted, nipped-in coats, and in the close-fitting strapped pantaloons, while the more pleasing bell-crowned hat was still holding its own beside the uglier stove-pipe. Knee breeches were practically obsolete after the thirties.

From 1840 to 1850 women's costumes adopted a graceful, ultra-feminine and tasteful style, the distinguishing features being demurely parted hair, (arranged either in glossy curls or smooth puffs over the ears) over it a shallow-crowned gypsy hat; a tight smooth bodice with long slim pointed waist, long full skirts held out in moderate bell shape, while the materials included lace and gauze, satin, merino in deep and soft, or else light and silvery tones. Paisley shawls were in vogue, and ladies carried fans in the evening, while evening coiffeurs included jewelled bands,

combs, strands of pearls, flowers and foliage: while the men quite probably wore gaily-flowered waistcoats, embellished with massive and ponderous watch chains.

Concerning the musical instruments of the period there are two or three I should like to mention, first -- The spinnet, which was a miniature piano with a harp-like tone, having one octave less than the seven-octave piano of today. Originally it was called the couched harp. The zither, though of ancient origin, also belonged to this period, and is an instrument consisting of a shallow sound chest, its ribs having the outline of a jug. (Thirty-six, thirty-eight, or forty-two were the usual number of strings used. Over the finger board are four or five strings known as the violin, on which the melody is played, with the instrument placed on a table in front of the performer. The five melody strings are stopped with the thumb and finger of the left hand and plucked with the thumb of the right hand, which usually wore a thumb ring. Mrs. C. D. Kent of Chatham has in her possession one of these instruments which at one time belonged to her grandfather, William Henry Stevens. Later it was owned by Miss Harriet Elizabeth Stevens, and following her death became the property of her niece, Mrs. Kent. This particular Zither - the word, by the way, being spelled with a "C" before the 17th century -- is considered a splendid specimen of museum quality.

The Melodeon, another musical instrument of the period, was a wind instrument, the bellows being moved by three pedals pumped by the feet, and with a keyboard of five octaves. Mrs. C. K. Campbell of this city has in her possession a melodeon that at one time belonged to Miss Sarah Rolston, who lived near Fansher's Church in the Florence area, and who on her marriage with Mr. Kenneth Campbell came to live in Chatham. It was left to their son, Mr. Clair Campbell, and is now the property of Mrs. Campbell. Mrs. Campbell considers it to be over 125 years old, although there is no date to be found on the instrument; on a metal bar above the keyboard are the words "Improved Melodeon No. 1251. Andrus Bros., London, C.W." The bellows, by the way, were made of sheepskin.

Another old musical instrument was the music box - the beautiful specimen you have here heard, belonging to Miss Evelyn Stover of Chatham. Made in Germany, the date also unknown, it is called the "Symphonion Musical Automaton." As it was originally kept in public places, such as drug stores, etc., it was necessary to drop a coin in the little brass, saucer-shaped coin receiver on the front of the box to start the mechanism, which consisted of slotted brass discs revolving to connect with little metal points or teeth, thus producing the melody.

From his chapter on music, in the book "The Wisdom of Confucius," edited and translated by Lin Yutang, I should like to read the following excerpt: "Music rises from the human heart when the human heart is

touched by the external world, and finds its expression in sounds ... The music of a peaceful country is quiet and joyous and the government orderly, while that of a country in turmoil shows dissatisfaction and anger, and the government is chaotic, but the music of a destroyed country shows sorrow and remembrance of the past. Thus we see music and government are directly connected with one another. Similarly when you see the type of a nation's dance, you know its character. Character is the backbone of our human nature and music is the flowering of character. As the poem gives expression to our heart, so the song gives expression to our voice and the dance to our movements. These three acts take their rise from the human soul and are then given further expression by means of musical instruments." These lines by Confucius, who lived over 2000 years ago, 551-479 B.C., still seem applicable to any age and all time.

Quoting also from Luther, the German reformer, 1483-1546, we find in the **Chatham Chronicle** of April 16th, 1850, that when Luther was asked if dancing were sinful he replied: "Was not dancing allowed to the Jews. Dancing is a necessity of our state, like dress with women, like dinner or supper. I cannot see how dancing can be prohibited, it does not offend against faith and charity. Dance, then, my children."

Chatham's documentary history begins with a weekly newspaper, **The Chatham Journal** 1841-44, edited by Mr. Charles Dolsen. But the first newspaper of the Western District, The **Canadian Emigrant** and **Western District Advertiser**, published weekly in Sandwich 1831-38, by John Cowan, contained much interesting news of Chatham. This paper was delivered each week by stage coach or steamer to Chatham and was procurable through the agent, Mr. M. L. Freeman, proprietor of the Chatham House that stood on the site of the later Royal Exchange Hotel.

One item of interest appears under the date July 19th, 1834, as follows: "A person immediately wanted to assist as clark at the English Episcopal church at Chatham on the River Thames, who can undertake a Singing School. All possible encouragement will be given to any person of a good character who is qualified for this situation. Application for particulars to be made to the Rev. Thomas Morley, at the Parsonage-House at Chatham, or to the Editor of The Canadian Emigrant, Sandwich." Obviously the people of the locality had a deep interest in music, and this cultured resident missionary from England was endeavoring to give some form of expression to their inherent desire.

We read in the Chatham Journal of August 20th, 1841, of the celebration by the colored people of the town of the anniversary of their emancipation. They met in a large building lately occupied as a Military Hospital on the corner of King and First Streets, which later became the Theatre Royal, and forming into a procession, accompanied by an excellent band, paraded through the streets to the number of about one-hundred. The greatest decorum and regularity was preserved, and the appearance they presented was very respectable. In the evening they sat down to an

excellent dinner, after which they figured away in the merry dance till a late hour.

In the **Chatham Journal** of October 15th, 1841, we read "of notice of a meeting to be held at Wm. Dolsen's Tavern for the purpose of organizing a Lyceum or Debating School --- all interested to attend at early candlelight on the following Monday." In the July 28th issue of the **Chatham Journal** we find the account of a public dinner given in the Chatham Market Place for Joseph Woods, Esq., Representative of Kent. "After the feasting had ended, toasts, songs, and speeches resounded along the board, and we cannot omit expressing the thrilling pleasure we felt on hearing the song. 'The Flag that braved a Thousand Years, the battle and the breeze,' sung with great effect by Mr. Slagg (Miss Gladys Slagg's forebear). The company would have been much larger but for the haying harvest going on, many of Mr. Woods' staunch friends being engaged in this very important business. The greatest harmony and cheerfulness prevailed during the evening. Several national songs were sung, Mr. Slagg singing "God Save the Queen', following the toast to the health of our most gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria, long may she reign over a free, united and happy people."

Following the cultural inspiration of the military occupation after the military headquarters had been moved to Chatham, we find reference made to the formation of a "Free and Easy Club," by Edwin Latwell, an English tinsmith, Roger Smith, who claimed to have been at one time Queen Victoria's butcher; William Cosgrave, Customs Officer; Rev. William Hobson of St. Paul's Anglican Church; and Thomas McCrae, the magistrate. This thoroughly British "Free and Easy Club," met for singing and debating over a glass of beer in the British Hotel, which stood on the site of Williams Bakery of the present time, where here later was established the first library and Newsroom in the Counties of Essex, Kent and Middlesex.

In the January 1st, 1842, issue of **The Chatham Journal** we read that "The Public Assembly given at Mr. Courtellet's in this town, on New Year's Eve, to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Wales, (who later became Edward the Seventh) went off in fine style. At ten o'clock a salute of twenty-one guns was fired, with brilliant illuminations and fireworks in different parts of the town."

In the **Chatham Journal** of May 14, 1842, the following item appears, "There was a public dinner given on Friday, the 6th inst., to Captain Chambers of the Second Battalion Incorporated Militia at the British Hotel. The generous wine being freely circulated, and with the giving of toasts and some excellent singing, the greatest hilarity and happiness prevailed until a late hour. **The Chatham Journal** of August 6th, 1842, carried the following: "The colored company commanded by Capt. Cameron, was inspected by General Armstrong, who arrived on the

Steamboat 'Brothers'. A dance was held following the inspection in a room provided by the kindness of the officers whom, having procured some good 'fiddlers,' 'those gen'men of color' and their sable partners welted the floor for the remainder of the night. Many of the respectable people of the town attended early in the evening to witness the dancing -- and before leaving were regaled with 'lots of lush' by the officers."

In the Sept. 1st, 1842, issue of **The Western Herald**, Sandwich, we read, and I quote, "We are happy to inform our readers that the celebrated Mr. Braham will hold a concert in the Courthouse, Sandwich, at which he will be assisted by his son. We trust that our friends and neighbours will not let slip an opportunity which will probably never happen again, of attending the concert of Mr. Braham, who we hope and trust will perform to a numerous and eager throng of spectators, and if it be not so -- we shall, verily, set down the people of Sandwich among those who have not music in their souls." The **Herald** was later happy to report that the great vocalist was received with rapturous applause by a large concourse of townsfolk and people of the surrounding district. As a singer, Braham sang with magnificent energy, enormous force, vehement passion, and irresistible conviction. His intonation was perfect, his notes as true as his velocity was amazing. Charles Lamb, who was generally bored by music and Sir Walter Scott, another man without musical ear or mind, were both deeply impressed with Braham's singing. Said Lamb, "The Little Jew has bewitched me. I follow him like the boys followed Tom the Piper. He cures me of melancholy as David cured Saul. Braham's singing when impassioned is finer than Mrs. Siddons' or Mr. Kemble's acting. The brave little Jew."

From **The Chatham Journal** of Sept. 3rd, 1842, we learn that the celebrated Braham, the father of song, has stood unrivalled on the British Stage for over half a century. Born in 1774, he began concert appearances in 1794 so that when he appeared in Chatham on Sept. 6th, 1842, at the Royal Exchange Hotel he was sixty-eight years of age, having then been on the stage forty-eight years. In February 1843 he returned to England and continued singing until 1852. He is known to us chiefly as the composer of the song, "The Death of Nelson," and wrote more songs and ditties than any other musician of his period. His song, "Aileen Aroon" sold nearly one-quarter of a million copies. Braham gave his last concert in March 1852. Thus he was a public singer for fifty-eight years, and it is no wonder that he became a tradition and seemed immortal, for, old men at his last concert were unborn when he first appeared. His death occurred on Feb. 14th, 1856, at the age of eighty-two.

As a slight diversion on a whimsical note, I should like to read an editorial by the editor of the **St. John N.B. Herald**, which was reprinted in **The Chatham Journal** of Sept. 2nd, 1843, on "The Process of Singing a Song," (with a comment from the Chatham editor, "that he is

a funny dog. Hear how he quizzes the ladies at their piano). "The young lady on being led to the piano first throws a timid glance around the room, actually to see who is looking at her, then observing that she is not in very good voice having a slight cold, which she confirms by something between a smile, a sigh and a single knock cough. She then makes some young gentleman exceedingly joyous by giving him her bouquet to hold, and, drawing off her gloves and placing them with her lace-edged handkerchief where they will be seen to advantage, she takes her place at the piano which has been opened by an active gentleman, who pinches his fingers in the attempt. As she plays the opening chords of her number, she finds the music stool too high or too low and the pedals difficult to discover. Then at length, everything being still ... she brings out the opening note of a recitative, which makes the drops of the chandelier vibrate, and adequately silences the whispers in the back drawing room." Also in the **Chatham Journal** of March 1843 we find the following poem, entitled, **"Music Versus Women"** --

"Music, sweet soother of the heart
Acquainted with distress.
Misfortune's aching heart can ease
Or calm the throbbing breast.
Music! that charmer of the soul
Thy calm delights are good
The blessings under thy control
Are felt and understood.
Music! enchanting as thou art,
Yet something more I love,
A lovely woman's gentle heart
What is there, pray, above?
Ah! Nothing! Music indeed is sweet,
But sweeter still to me
Is lovely woman's fervent love
Untouched by coquetry." -- W. W.

We note that on April 29th, 1843, the Amateur Band attended St. George's dinner, and added to the general pleasure of the evening by their performance. The Sons of St. George and their friends, to the number of about thirty gentlemen, sat down to dinner at eight o'clock. The usual toasts were drunk and several excellent national and patriotic songs were sung. The greatest good humor prevailed throughout. In the **Chatham Journal** of Feb. 11th, 1843, we read of the retirement of Miss Adelaide Kemble, now Madame Sertoris of Covent Garden. Her last appearance was in the opera "Norma," which also was her first operatic appearance. "Amidst a hurricane of applause she retired forever from the eyes of the public, honored, regretted and beloved."

On January 20th, 1844, a Young Man's Fancy Dress Ball took place at the British North American Hotel to celebrate the New Year with Dr. Fulford as master of ceremonies. The music was good, and everything appeared in good order to give eclat to the large assembly of youth and beauty of our town. More than sixty persons sat down to supper which was superb, and dancing was kept up right merrily until the morn. From the August 17th issue of the **Chatham Journal** we find that The Gentlemen Amateurs presented a play at the Royal Theatre after which the Chatham Minstrels amused the audience by a rich display of negro characters and songs, accompanied by banjo, tambourine and jawbone, etc.

NOTE: JAWBONE -- A castanet. slang. Jew's Harp. Also jawbone lute.

On Sept. 14th, 1844, an English theatrical group played in The Theatre Royal. Included in the cast were Mr. and Mrs. Powell of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, London, with the musical part of the production being taken by the Powell family.

Moving on to May 27th, 1845, we find in the **Chatham** Chronicle that with the return of Lieut.-Col. Sir Charles Chichester on a visit to Chatham, and with many distinguished people living in the town, there were many occasions when concerts, balls and plays took place to suit the taste of cultured people. Of one such affair a guest writes, "that the gaiety of the numerous attendants, the management and arrangement of the room, and the music would do credit to any place ten times the age of Chatham." We are also told in Soutar's Almanac and in Mrs. Keil's booklet on the History of Chatham's Thirteen Libraries, that the inns of the town in the block between Third and fourth Streets were crowded with officers and their wives.

In the June 10th, 1845, issue of the **Chatham Chronicle** the Misses Barclay of the "Creek Cottage" advertised the opening of a school for the instruction of young ladies, comprising the usual branches of a genteel and useful education, music and dancing stressed.

The celebrated Hill family appeared in the Theatre Royal on Sept. 22nd, 1846, Mrs. Hill dancing the polka, and Mr. Charles Hill and his daughter Rosalee rendering songs for which they were enthusiastically encored.

The words of the song familiar to many of us, entitled "The Old Gray Mare," appeared in the **Chatham Chronicle** on May 26th, 1846. I quote in part –

"I love her, I love her and who would dare
To mock me for loving that old gray mare?
I've driven her long, both to church and to mill
In fair and foul weather, both up and down hill.
Say I am childish and call me coarse

For making a pet of a poor old horse.
But I love, I love her and cannot bear
To lose such a friend as that old gray mare."

In the **Chatham Chronicle** of May 4th, 1847, the following item appears: "We have great pleasure in announcing the fact that Mr. Mooney, the celebrated lecturer on Irish history and music, will deliver a lecture on Monday, the 10th inst., at the Royal Exchange." From an article taken from the **Kingston Whig** we learn that he is deservedly popular, and in addition to his many extraordinary merits as a lecturer on history, Mr. Mooney lays claim to the reputation of being, if not a good musician, a very accomplished singer of Irish Ballads. If vocal music consists of measured sounds and intervals forcibly and correctly given then Mr. Mooney is no singer; but, if, as we humbly conceive, good singing means expression, grace, correct articulation, feeling and expression joined to the sweetest and purest melody, then Mr. Mooney is one of the most delightful vocalists we have ever listened to ... So powerful is his expression that he changes the most humdrum ditty into the sweetest melodies, ... as offered in the delivery of "Cruiskeen Lawn" and others of the old commonplace Irish ballads, if any Irish ballad can be called commonplace." His concert announcement read as follows:- "Mr. Mooney has the honor to announce his popular entertainment of Irish history and anecdotes, etc., to take place at the Royal Exchange Hotel. Mrs. Kordes presides at the pianoforte. Tickets 2 sh. 6d. Family ticket to admit 3, 5 sh."

The February 19th **Chatham Chronicle** carries a notice of the second anniversary of the Loyal Chatham Lodge, I.O.O.F. M.U. "Following a procession and a church service, the Bretheren and their friends are informed that the Day's Celebration will be closed by a Ball and Supper in the Lodge Room at the Hotel of Brother Biles, with dancing to commence at eight o'clock precisely." We learn from the **Chatham Chronicle** of Dec. 26th, 1848, that a number of the sons of Old Scotia met in the Garrison grounds to play the national game of shinty. They ended the day with a supper and ball at Mr. Urquhart's Inn, at which several appeared in Highland garb, namely, John Robertson, U. McTavish, Joseph Grant and Charles Charteris (forebear of Miss Gwen Charteris) and did ample justice to the "Reel of Tulloch," to the great satisfaction of the company, and parted at a late hour the following morning, hoping to meet some other time.

Notice of the opening of another select school for girls appears in the **Chatham Chronicle**, Aug. 28th, 1849, by a Miss Gordon, late of Toronto, where the gentle arts of plain sewing, ornamental and fancy sewing, and music on the pianaforte at two dollars per quarter will be taught. Wood for the season, payable October 1st, accepted in payment.

There is an announcement in the **Chatham Chronicle** on September 11th, 1849, by a Mr. Schellahn of Toronto, late conductor of

Her Majesty's State Balls at Buckingham Palace, and member of the Emperor of Russia's Private Quadrille Orchestra, of his intention of giving a concert in Chatham, assisted by his brother, a distinguished pianist.

October 16th, 1849, brought notice of a concert given by Mr. Hess, a German singer, stating that "if reports and the press are to be relied on he is a performer of no mean reputation and possesses in an eminent degree that delicacy of feeling and touch so peculiar to his countrymen. We may add that as a composer he ranks high." The **Detroit Bulletin** says of Mr. Hess: - "Throughout all the pieces Mr. Hess attempted, the harmony was admirably expressed ... his fingering capable of almost any effort in the scope of the piano. Two selections, 'Mt. Vesuvius', and 'What the Falls are Saying', both pieces of his own composition, were the interesting features of the evening."

On October 31st, 1849, there is record of a musical entertainment given in the Royal Exchange Hotel by Mr. F. Gardner, from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and the Royal Academy of Music, London. His program to consist of Irish and Scottish songs, also some of the most popular of Henry Russell's songs, illustrated by anecdotes. Mr. Gardner is considered one of the best of tenor singers, second only to Braham.

In the Chatham Chronicle of October 16th, 1849 is the following poem on:

MUSIC

"Oh, there's music everywhere
In heaven on earth and sea,
Mid deserts drear and mountains bare
It fills the soul with glee.

- o-

The little birds its strains prolong
In sunshine and in shade;
Nor cease to sing their merry songs
In meadow and in glade.

- o -

Triumphant, as it sounds are swelled
Come, pealing to the ear,
The notes so long in silence held --
How sweet they are to hear'.

- o -

Music, oh may thy joyous smiles
Delight us on our way
As passing through this world of wiles
We march to endless day."

- o -

From the **Chatham Chronicle** of Feb. 17, 1846, I should like to quote a poem, dealing not with music but rather with human nature which was evidently pretty much the same then, as now:

SPEAK NO ILL

Nay, speak no ill -- a kindly word
Can never leave a sting behind,
And oh; to breathe each tale we've heard
Is far beneath a noble mind.
Full oft a little seed is sown
By choosing thus the better plan
For, if but little good is known,
Still, let us speak the best we can.

- o -

Then speak no ill, but lenient be
To others' failings as your own,
If you're the first a fault to see
Be not the first to make it known,
For life is but a passing day
No lip may tell how brief its span
Then oh! the little time we stay
Let's speak of all, the best we can.

- o -

In closing, one cannot help but wonder what changes may and assuredly will take place in the next century in the City of Chatham.

Will there be a Kent Historical Society meeting in the Museum in 2055? Will some members of the Society search through the files of the Chatham Daily News of the 1950's for news of interest of their forebears? It is an interesting thought. Will they summarize as quaint and almost beyond belief some of the customs of our time, and rather pity us for having lived in such a backward age? Doubtless they will!

Chatham, Ontario,
October 17th, 1955.

Flora, Fauna and Naturalists In Kent

by H. B. Wressel

Kent County is uniquely situated from a naturalist's point of view. Although much of the land is now under cultivation enough remnants remain in a natural state for us to envisage the area as it once was. We are led to conclude that it must have been a naturalist's paradise. For purposes of reference biologists have divided North America into life zones ranging from the Tropical to the Arctic. Kent is located in the Carolinian Division of the Upper Austral Life Zone. In Canada the Carolinian Zone is a narrow belt, a few miles in depth, extending along Lake Erie from Windsor to Niagara. Much of the flora and fauna found in this area is similar to that occurring in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. At the same time, Kent County lies at the confluence of two great bird migration routes - the Atlantic flyway on the east and the Mississippi flyway on the west. Thus, in spring and fall, we have at Rondeau concentrations of migrating birds which make this point scarcely second to Point Pelee as an observation post. At the same time we also have at Rondeau a magnificent stand of hardwood forest that is unexcelled in Canada.

The early records of natural history in Kent are buried in the memoirs and diaries of early explorers, travellers, soldiers, surveyors and pioneers. Many of these men and women were keen observers of natural although they were not naturalists either by vocation or avocation. Natural history records frequently occur quite by chance. For example, the remains of one of Kent County's earliest inhabitants were found in September 1946, when workmen widened a drainage creek on the farm of William Milne, in Romney township. As a result of this excavation we now know that the mastedon roamed this area in prehistoric times. The jawbone that was found on Mr. Milne's farm was identified as a mastedon; it weighed some 65 pounds, and now reposes in the Natural History Section of the Chatham-Kent Museum. We know, too, that the only place where white pine is indigenous in the county is the extreme tip of the Rondeau peninsula. The name "Pointe aux Pins" is found on old French maps, but who first gave this cape that particular name is not known. According to Hamil (The Valley of the Lower Thames, 1951) the Sulpician priests, Francis Dollier de Casson and Rene de Brehant de Galinee camped on the open sandy beach of Pointe aux Pins, so that they might have given the name to this place. This seemingly insignificant fact is of great interest to naturalists, who, visiting the Provincial Park for the first time are astonished to find an isolated stand of white pines growing in an area overwhelmingly dominated by southern hardwoods. We have definite record that the ancestors of these trees stood on the same spot, at Rondeau, some 300 years ago. A third record that occurs by chance, but correctly

identifies a species of insect, as well as a disease, is found in the records of the surveyor, Patrick McNiff. In his diary McNiff complains bitterly of the swarms of mosquitoes in the swampy lands along the lower Thames River. He also states that both he and his men were frequently victims of ague or shaking sickness. It is highly improbable that McNiff associated ague with mosquitoes; in fact a full century elapsed before Sir Ronald Ross demonstrated that Anophaline mosquitoes transmitted the malaria parasite. Nevertheless, because of McNiff's bitter remarks, we know that in 1790 the malaria mosquito, **Anopheles quadrimaculatus**, was very abundant in what is not Raleigh and Dover townships. Today very few malaria mosquitoes are found in Kent. The species that are present belong mainly to the genus **Culex**; they do not carry malaria.

Historians of Kent county, such as Hamil (1951) and Lauriston (1952) have written descriptions, based on early records of the area as it was in pioneer days. Hamil, in his "Valley of the Lower Thames" graphically portrays the primeval forest and from this author I have received personal communications of several facets of natural history. In particular, Professor Hamil has given me information about early bird records. These will be dealt with later. At the moment I would like to discuss the trees of the county. Except for the Dover and Raleigh prairies the greater part of the "area was covered with dense forest, intermixed with bogs and swamps, and open beaver meadows" (Hamil). Travellers coming from the east tell about the unending miles of forest and many different species of trees are mentioned although there is no effort made to catalogue them systematically. Generally speaking the early pioneers regarded trees as natural enemies. They retarded travel, interfered with progress and prevented the growing of crops. It was inevitable that before the early pioneer could be a farmer he had, perforce, to be a woodsman. Today, of course, we might regret that black walnut was used for rail fences, barn timbers and even hog troughs, but in 1850 there seemed to be no end to the supply. Nevertheless, here and there were heard words of warning. Pickering in 1827, in his "Inquiries of an Emigrant" expresses regret at the vast waste of valuable timber, and the little regard for soil type before the timber was taken off. He must have been one of the first Canadian conservationists. Reading his words today, they have a strange prophetic ring.

The dominant species of trees in the early 19th century were black walnut, butternut, various species of hickory, elm, maple, ash and beech. Sycamore, basswood and cottonwood were also common. Referring to Sargent's classic work, "A Manual of the trees of North America", published in 1901, we find a number of the Carolinian flora listed as native to extreme southern Ontario. These are: hop tree, cucumber tree, tulip tree, Kentucky coffee tree, papaw, redbud, sassafras, blue ash, pepperidge, flowering dogwood and chestnut. Of these, because of depredations by the

blight, the chestnut is now extinct. The only survivors are a few sprouts springing up from rotting stumps. Of the other Carolinian trees three, cucumber tree, Kentucky coffee tree and redbud no longer are found in a wild state in the county. In fact, there is no authentic record of the redbud existing in a wild state in southwestern Ontario, but, on the strength of the writings of so famous a silvaculturalist as Sargent it is generally conceded that the redbud is a native.

Among naturalists of recent times the late J. H. Smith took a great interest in the sylva of the county. Over a period of several years he accumulated data about native trees. His results were published in a series of articles in the Chatham Daily News and these formed a basis for a report given to the Kent Nature Club on March 13, 1933. Mr. Smith stated that there are 63 different species of trees native to Kent. According to R. S. Carman, formerly Superintendent of Rondeau Provincial Park, there are 43 species of trees in that sanctuary.

My information about herbaceous flowering plants is very scanty. In early days flowers grew in profusion only in open glades in the forest or in the prairies and marshes. I have no record of early botanists in Kent, which does not mean, of course, that none were here. The only definitive list of which I have knowledge is that published by Jas. H. Soper in1949, entitled, "The Vascular Plants of Southern Ontario." This work is based on the flora of the Lake Erie region; unfortunately this takes in a greater area than Kent County. More recently C. Harold Zavitz, formerly Zone Forester has begun a compilation of Kent County plants and R. D. Ussher, Park Naturalist at Rondeau has begun a list of the flowering plants of that area.

For nearly half a century the late Dr. C. C. Bell was a member of the Mycological Society of Ontario. He was undoubtedly the foremost authority of fleshy fungi in Kent. Dr. Bell used to tell me that the best way to test the edibility of a mushroom was to taste it, at least that was the method he employed himself. In fact Dr. Bell was fond of testing the gustatory qualities of many wild plants; I still recall with pleasure his candied wild ginger root. Dr. Bell was also an authority on the **Pteridophyta** or Ferns. From him we learned that there are thirty different species of these plants in Kent. Regrettably Dr. Bell did not gather together his many notes before his death in 1957. His knowledge of the natural history of Kent was unsurpassed but, man of many parts that he was, he always remained modest of his own attainments.

Mr. C. D. Hand, formerly a teacher at the Chatham Collegiate Institute is the recognized authority of the **Bryophytes**, or mosses, of Kent. A fairly comprehensive account of these lowly, but beautiful plants was published by Mr. Hand in The Chatham Daily News in several issues of a column entitled "Nature Notes", of which I was editor, during 1948 and 1949.

It is not my intention to dwell at length on the mammals found in the county, but a few remarks might prove interesting, and two or three items deserve to be preserved. According to all accounts, Kent, before the coming of the white man, abounded in big game. By 1750, according to Saunders (Notes on the Mammals of Ontario. Trans. Roy. Canad. Inst. July, 1932) the elk had disappeared from southern Ontario, but the white-tailed or Virginia deer remained in plentiful numbers until late pioneer days. A quotation from Saunders, however, is interesting. He states: "In 1889 I was told by the late John Burk near Blenheim, that the last deer was shot near Rondeau about 1881." Conditions are different today. Not only are deer plentiful at Rondeau, but they are found elsewhere in the county. It was only a few years ago that one of these animals wandered down Queen Street in Chatham, became badly frightened and crashed through the plate glass window of a butcher store, at the corner of Lorne Avenue. I recall driving from Stevenson to Tilbury in 1947 when a deer bounded across the highway in front of me, and disappeared across country, gracefully taking the fences in his stride as he came to them.

Both wolves and black bears were common in Kent until well into the middle of the 19th century. Victor Lauriston in "Romantic Kent" has given a number of graphic accounts about bears which made frequent depredations on pioneer pigpens. As a result, bear hunts were a feature of those days. Saunders informs us that the last bear hunt in southern Ontario occurred in nearby Elgin county in 1868. During winter, brush wolves or coyotes are occasionally reported today.

Not only were game animals abundant in Kent, but fur-bearing animals were also plentiful. I need scarcely comment on the commoner animals, among which, in by-gone days was the beaver; but another quotation from Saunders might be enlightening. He states "In 1889, I was told by the late John Burk at Rondeau, that both fisher and marten had been seen there since the otter had been exterminated, the last fisher about 1879." These animals are now only found, and that but rarely, in our northern provincial forests. Dymond and Cross in "The Mammals of Ontario" (R. O. M. Z. Publ. No. 1, 1929) report that in former times the Virginia Oppossum was a rare animal on the northern shores of Lake Erie. We have three records of this marsupial from Kent; two were reported from Rondeau in the winter of 1900. The third record is of recent date. An oppossum was found on the farm of Harry Blackburn, Chatham Township, on February 14, 1947. The 'possum lived for about a fortnight, but finally died; the specimen skin now reposes in the Royal Ontario Museum at Toronto. I managed to obtain several photographs of the living animal, one of which is in the Chatham-Kent Museum.

Class Insecta is the largest group of animals, and many species of insects are found in the county. A fairly representative collection is found at the Federal Entomological Laboratory in Chatham. This laboratory was

located in Chatham in 1927 when the European corn borer was seriously threatening the future of the Kent corn crop. The laboratory was first located in a house on Victoria Avenue. Later it moved to a frame house on Queen Street. In 1952 it moved to an imposing new brick structure on Park Avenue East. Scientists and technicians are engaged in finding control methods for many insects that attack vegetables and field crops.

We now come to the group of wild creatures that seem to attract most attention, and about which most is written, at least by non-professionals - I refer to bird life. The earliest record of bird life in Kent is found in **Life and Times** of Sir William Johnson (W. L. Stone, 1865), where we are told that Johnson, in August 1761, saw great quantities of pigeons (presumably passenger pigeons) at the west end of Rondeau Bay. John Porteous in 1766 and John Lees in 1768 also write of the abundance of wild fowl at Rondeau, and mention is also made of numerous wild turkey. David Zeisberger, the Moravian missionary writes in his diary on October 6, 1796, "Great numbers of turkey were about Fairfield and with other animals were destroying grain." In 1833, Patrick Sherriff (Tours of North America) wrote at length about game birds in the prairie region of Raleigh township. His account is of particular interest, however, because of the reference to two species of blackbirds that were highly destructive to crops, especially corn, at the mouth of the Thames. To this day redwings or grackles are pests in the same area and on the same crops.

During the 1840's, travellers passed through the county more frequently, and settlement was progressing rapidly. Hence references to bird life are oftener and in greater detail. We now find more attention being given to those birds which were shot for the pot, as was customary at a time when a traveller depended on the resident game for his sustenance. James Beaven (Recreations of a Long Vacation, 1846) writes at length about songbirds, and from him we learn that the "King of the Woods", presumably the Pileated Woodpecker was common in Kent in those days.

It was about this time that birds began to be shot for sport, and specimens were also taken for private collections. Kent County was singularly fortunate when the Rev. Francis William Sandys arrived here in 1847. Archdeacon Sandys, as he later became, was a keen naturalist and an ardent collector - taxidermist. During his lifetime he collected and mounted one hundred and seventy-five local birds. In this work he was assisted by his son Edwyn, who was at one time editor of **Outing**, an outdoor magazine published in New York. The collection was beautifully mounted and remained in the Sandys home on Stanley Avenue, Chatham, Ontario, until the death of Miss Lucy Sandys, the Archdeacon's daughter. In 1943 the collection was acquired by the Chatham-Kent museum; around it was built the Natural History Section of the Museum. Among the birds in this collection is a cardinal which is probably the first bird of that species ever taken in Canada. A note by F. W. Sandys reads, "Two (cardinals) taken at Chatham, May 1849." This southern bird is now common in southern Ontario, but formerly it was rare.

Space does not permit naming the many naturalists, taxidermists and gunners who collected specimens in the last two decades of the 19th century. One of the most famous naturalists, however, was the late Dr. W. E. Saunders of London, Ontario. Dr. Saunders often walked from Chatham to Rondeau and frequently travelled to Chatham from London by canoe, observing and collecting specimens. Dr. Saunders, or "W. E." as he was called, was well-known in Kent from 1880 until 1943, the year of his death. "W. E." was one of the first naturalists ever produced in Canada and those who were privileged to hear him give a campfire talk will carry that memory with them always. Professor Harry Attwater who lived in Chatham and later at Houston, Texas, collected the rare Hooded Warbler at Rondeau in 1884. The father of Ontario ornithology, Thomas McIlwraith of Hamilton also collected in Kent County, and left records of the Snowy Egret, Wild Turkey and Red-bellied Woodpecker. The Sam Hartford collection of birds is presently located in the home of Mrs. L. Walker, near Blenheim. These were well mounted by Mr. Passmore, a taxidermist of Morpeth, who also left a collection of birds taken by himself.

Bird collecting is no longer carried on as a hobby - for the mere sake of having a collection; today when specimens are taken it is for scientific institutions or for museums which need additions of local birds. Within recent years Mr. A. A. Wood, formerly of the Chatham Entomological Laboratory, collected many specimens, most of which were made into scientific study skins. These skins are found in a number of museums in Canada and the United States. They were beautifully made by Mr. Wood, who for many years, was engaged in exhibition work at the laboratory. As a result of his collecting Mr. Wood added several new birds to the county list.

The study of living birds in the field has developed greatly during the past several decades; in addition, several thousand people watch birds as a hobby, sport or simply for fun. Two well-known Kent County residents, who observed birds for pleasure for many years, were Dr. G. T. McKeough and Public School Inspector, J. H. Smith. These two naturalists gathered together all the information about local birds that was available at that time. The results of their labours were presented before the Kent Historical Society and published in Volume 6, 1924. The McKeough and Smith list shows 230 different species of birds recorded for Kent County. Two or three of these birds, according to R.O.M.Z. ornithologists, should probably be placed in the hypothetical list as they are based on rather slight evidence.

Recently, a more ambitious work than that of McKeough and Smith has been undertaken. Several members of the Kent Nature Club, under the leadership of A. A. Wood, conceived the idea of a book dealing exclusively with the birds of Kent County. Mr. Wood and Dr. G. M. Stirrett, being professionals have far-reaching contacts; as a result records,

diaries, correspondence and manuscripts of many ornithologists in all parts of Canada the United States were available for consultation. When the project was finally completed it approached nearly 300 typewritten pages. Consequently the work is still in manuscript form. Nevertheless it is a very fine, local, faunal study and it will long remain an important reference work for Ontario ornithologists. As a result of this research, which involved the collecting of many specimens by Wood, and to a lesser extent, Stirrett, as well as observations by many enthusiastic observers, the Kent County bird list was raised considerably. Counting hypothetical species for which no specimen is available, the list has been raised to 280 species. Obviously it is impossible to name all the birds in so short a paper as this, but I have grouped them for convenience, as follows:

Diving birds, 4; Gulls and Terns, 12; Pelicans and allies, 2; Ducks, Geese, and Swans, 32; Marsh birds, 14; Game birds, 9; Birds of Prey, 22; Shore birds, 27; Woodpeckers, 8; Cuckoos, Goatsuckers, Hummingbirds, 6; Flycatchers, Swallows, Larks, 17; Jays, Crows, Titmice, 6; Nuthatches, Wrens, Threshers 12; Thrushes and Kinglets, 11; Wagtails, Shrikes and Vireos, 11; Warblers, 33; Blackbirds and Tanagers, 12; Finches, 13; Sparrows, 19.

Of reptiles and amphibians I do not intend to speak, mainly because they have not been studied extensively in the county. Their probable numbers are: **Reptiles:** Lizard, 1; Snakes, 8 or 9; Turtles, 7; **Amphibians:** 11. In earlier days the Swamp Rattlesnake or Massasauga common in Kent, but no reports have been heard concerning it for many years, although they have been found at Newberry, near Bothwell.

I will close my remarks with a brief history of the Kent Nature Club and a few words concerning the future of natural history in the county.

The Kent Nature Club arose as a result of discussions among a number of people interested in the serious study of natural history. Included among these were: G. M. Stirrett, Dr. C. C. Bell, Wm. Anderson, J. H. Smith and Edmund Dorey. G. M. Stirrett was responsible for sending out invitations and calling the first meeting, which was held in the Chatham Public Library Board room in the late afternoon of November 27, 1930. Mr. A. A. Wood gave an illustrated talk on the birds of southwestern Ontario. For the record, the first elected officers were: Dr. C. C. Bell, President; Wm. Anderson, Vice-president; G. M. Stirrett, Secretary-Treasurer. Executive members, Dr. H. D. Brown and E. H. Dorey.

A constitution was presented and adopted at the third regular meeting of the club held on February 13, 1931. Article 11, Objects, stated: The objects of the club shall be to acquire and disseminate knowledge of Natural History: to stimulate public interest in nature and in the protection

and preservation of wild life. That the members of the newly-formed club were in earnest about living up to its objects is evident. Even before the constitution was drawn up, Inspector J. H. Smith presented a resolution at the second meeting of the club, which read in part: "Whereas from time to time reports appear in the Provincial press of the wanton killing of some of our large native birds of prey such as eagles, ospreys, and hawks, contrary to the provisions of the Game and Fisheries Act, R.S.O. 1927, Chapter 318, Section 8, subsection 1 -----, be it resolved that we, the Kent Nature Club, request the Department of Game and Fisheries to take whatever action may be necessary for the preservation of such birds by strict enforcement of the aforesaid act and by giving publicity to prosecutions for violation thereof, -- etc."

Article III, Section I of the constitution reads: "Membership shall be open to any person in sympathy with the objects of the club." It is evident, when one looks over the names of both past and present members of the Kent Nature Club that an interest in natural history is not confined to any one, or even a few types of people. Included in the membership have been members of both the medical and legal professions, clergymen, school teachers, industrialists, merchants, farmers, professional scientists and, what John Buchan so aptly termed, many plain folk.

Shortly after the Kent Nature Club was formed a group of provincial naturalists, principally in Toronto, decided that the interests of naturalists generally would be greatly strengthened if the various nature groups became federated. Accordingly, in May 1931, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists was formed. From seven charter clubs, of which the Kent Club was one, this organization has grown to forty federated clubs. Not all members of individual clubs are members of the Federation, but it now (1958) numbers over 3000 members. In union there is strength. Our members are indeed proud that the Kent Nature Club played a small part in getting this organization under way.

Although the Kent Nature Club has never developed projects to the extent that is found in some other clubs it has, nevertheless, always sought to interest the general public in nature study. To this end several members have contributed articles to the press and lectured before local service clubs and other groups. The late J. H. Smith and E. H. Dorey wrote many nature articles for the Chatham Daily News. In 1947 Dr. G. M. Stirrett began a weekly column entitled "Nature Notes". This column was later continued by the present speaker for several years. For eight years the Nature Club sponsored the Audubon Screen Tours, a series of illustrated lectures that were attended by hundreds of people from Chatham and Kent County.

There is a renewed interest in natural history in Ontario these days. The Provincial Government is well aware of this, and more land is being set aside each year for parks and campsites. At some of the parks, regular

nature programs are featured. At Rondeau Provincial Park, a part-time naturalist was appointed in 1947. Since 1954 R. D. Ussher has been permanent naturalist at the park; during the summer interest in nature study is keen, and a permanent museum is being planned to house the many specimens already located in temporary quarters. It is quite evident that Kent will be quite rich in natural history specimens when the nature museum at Rondeau is completed; it will harmonize nicely with the natural history section of the Chatham-Kent Museum. This latter museum, incidentally, besides the Sandys collection, has many other mounted bird specimens, as well as an excellent series of bird study skins and the beginnings of an zoological collection. A prime requisite, however, is a plant collection; the only worthwhile one, to my knowledge, is housed at the Entomological Laboratory.

This has been only a brief historical outline of natural history in Kent. There are many gaps in it, and some sections are not represented. Fishes, for example, are properly the field of Rod and Gun Clubs, and I am well aware that Rondeau Bay and Mitchell's Bay are famous fishing waters for bass, perch and pickerel. Ordinarily Kent is thought of as a rich agricultural county. This is true. Nevertheless, I hope that my remarks have shown you that Kent has also a rich and varied natural history.