

# Early Days Of Harwood Recalled

1956

A- Harwood (07-01)

This account was written by Mrs. Phyllis Sandercock, at present living near Camborne, who was born eighty-seven years ago at Harwood.

It gives me great pleasure and I consider it an honor to be asked to recall the early days of Harwood. I thank God that I was born eighty-seven years ago have been spared these years and am able to give you a brief account of the village as I remember it many years ago.

Being born here, I have many memories and recall many changes in the village. I do hope that no one thinks it has just become a pretty, thriving and prosperous village in the last 25 years. Although there was no tourist business then, the population was much larger 75 years ago than it is today.

My earliest recollections are of the old school house in the hill. There were two rooms at that time, and my brother taught in the larger room. I can remember there being eighty-five pupils crowded into that one room, with a total of around one hundred and fifty.

Of course the saw mills in the village were the one and only industry. I can well picture the one on Minifie's hill, known as Campbell's Mill. Some of you will remember the stone foundations where we now have trees and cottages. Above the mill on the hill, was a row of houses. These, of course, were for the mill workers and their families, the boss occupying the largest, most modern house, now occupied by Jack Minifie.

The other mill was on or near the McCurdy property and was owned by McDougal and Ludgate. The logs, which were sawed at the mill were cut and put on the ice up the river, and in the spring would be floated down in a large boom, the outside logs being tied together. It was a sight ever to be remembered as the boom of logs was seen coming down the lake.

The old railroad was a great attraction to the villagers, and was used in hauling out the lumber. Near the wharf was what would now be called a turntable and the engine would turn, switch and back into the mills for their loads. Lumber piles were seen everywhere, especially from the corner where our new school stands, to Eldon Hogg's house. The huge piles here were later hauled away by the train.

It was a familiar sight to see an excursion and picnic come out on the train from Cobourg. When some of the villagers heard of an excursion coming, it caused great excitement, and everyone put their fancy quilts and pretty things out on the clothesline.

Harwood village was an attractive spot. As we drove down the street past Tom

Boyle's hall, now O'Connell's apartment house, we came to nicely kept stores and gardens. First was Allen's store, now Baker's store.

At the north was Harston's store, post office and dwelling, with large verandah and lovely garden. Farther north stood the Fenex Hotel and open shed for horses. This hotel did a thriving business, especially on mill pay night, but when local option came into force, all hotels were closed. The open shed was even boarded up and then were later destroyed by fire.

The store now known as Holi-dae Holm was owned and operated by Mrs. Steele. Many of you will remember the leaning old boat houses that lined the shore down to the dock, where we now have attractive cottages.

The sawdust road, as I remember it, ran from Mitchell's store, over to the mill. Over this road, sawdust was drawn and filled in the swamp where we now have our Memorial Park.

The "V" corner in the village, across from Baker's Store was another beauty spot where an attractive house stood with a nice fence around it. This house was occupied by the village medical doctor, Dr. Day, being here for many years.

There were many boats on the lake in those days, "The Golden Eye" being the largest. Many trips and picnics were enjoyed up the river to Peterborough on this boat. The fee was twenty-five cents, return. Other boats were the "Daisy", "Dora", "Summerville", "Whistle Wing", "Rainbow" and many others.

I have many pleasant memories of Harwood, but there are also some sad ones. The saddest time in my memory was a cold Christmas morn in the year 1892. A sleigh load of happy young people from the village returning from a party at Bewdley, broke through the ice. Two loads were drawn by one team, owned and driven by Frank Johnston, father of the late Mrs. Mary Cook, who was also one of the party. This was a terrible experience, and many suffered from frost bite and exposure. The only life lost was the driver's daughter, Elsis Johnston, also his valuable team.

There is much more that could be said about the dear old village of Harwood, which is a spot dear to many of us. These few items may be of interest to you and to our descendants. We hope it may continue in beauty and prosperity.