



Overpass at Ferguslea

Photo by Hinchley

## Old K and P overpass is but a memory now

by Harry Hinchley

"Steam from the whistle -  
smoke from the stack

The train is gone and will  
never come back"

-Old song

All is quiet at the old crossing at Ferguslea. No more do trains run on the K & P and the old railway station of Opeongo has long been closed. No more do long lines of teams from daylight till dark go up and down the Opeongo Line. Such traffic as does use the road, takes a shorter route that bypasses Ferguslea.

But it was not always so. Travel was heavy on both routes. For many years there were 2 scheduled trains daily on the K & P and there was a steady stream of teams over the Opeongo.

For a long time the K & P was the line of communication between the back townships of Renfrew, Frontenac and Lanark Counties and the outside world. It also was the railway route between Renfrew and

Toronto and brought passengers, mail, express and freight by the shortest route from the cities.

The Opeongo was the great colonization road that connected the settlements around Shamrock, Mt St Patrick, Dacre and beyond, with Renfrew. It was also the route for men and supplies to the lumber camps up the Bonnechere and Madawaska rivers. It was at the Ferguslea intersection that many a boy who had grown up on a settlement farm had his first look at a railway train.

The K & P builders very wisely had built the railway over the road. This made it impossible for nervous horses frightened by a train to get into an accident by being struck at the crossing. Many a teamster when going through Ferguslea was glad to know there was no danger of being hit by a train.

The story is told of an old settler from somewhere along the Madawaska

coming to Renfrew in a sleigh. He had his grandson along for his first trip to Renfrew. The old man was letting the boy drive, a job which he was well able to do.

Just as they were approaching the crossing, a train came roaring along with a stream of black smoke. When the whistle gave a blast it was too much for the team and they wheeled and headed for the side of the road.

The boy jumped to his feet, yanked on the lines and yelled "Whoa, whoa, whoa". The horses paid no heed and it looked like they would leave the road and upset the sleigh.

Then the old man spoke up to shout encouragement: "Hold t'em, Baptiste, hold t'em. I know they never saw a t'ing like that. But neit'er did you."

1980

**BUILDING,  
REMODELLING  
CUPBOARDS.**



IN DAYS GONE BY . . . The entire camp taken at Webbwood in 1916 included James Moore, second from right in the second row, Jack Tucker and many Renfrew area men.