



The Hamlet of Dobbinton was named after an early resident, James Dobbin, who settled on Lots 30 and 31, Concession 12, Elderslie Township in 1854. The Dobbins Donated land to have the Grand Trunk Railway build a line, the only stipulation being that it was to be kept in service. This line ran through the centre of good farming land. As there were no cars, busses or trucks in those days, nearly all travel was done by train. Goods and livestock also were shipped by rail. James Thomson and sons were the largest cattle dealers around, shipping out as many as eight carloads of cattle a week. Hogs were also shipped once a week. Eventually trucks replaced the railroad for shipping cattle.

Dobbinton was a thriving place in 1906. There were two stores, sawmill, a blacksmith shop, an implement agency, a church, a railway station and a post office.

The larger store was owned and operated by John S. Marshall, a native of Concession 12, Elderslie who also owned and operated a sawmill. Logs were hauled in during the winter from the surrounding area. The mill began operations about March and went to mid summer. Large quantities of lumber were made and piled along the railway siding for shipment to companies like Massey-Harris.

Mr. Harry Lavender operated a smaller store east of the tracks and this store remained until in the 1980's. Mr. Marshall was postmaster and changed mails with the train twice daily. Mail from this office was delivered twice a week by courier to Grimston, Salisbury (Salem), Willisroft and Mount Hope. Rural mail delivery was established in 1913 with R.R. #1, and R.R.#2, Dobbinton. Mr. Marshall also sold train tickets and looked after express.

George Tough was the local blacksmith until he sold to Percy McGillveary in 1918. A few years later, he sold to Archie and Ed Currie. As cars were then coming in and horses fewer in number, the Curries turned to a garage and repair shop which they operated until their retirement in the 1960's.

George Monkman had a farm implement business and the machine shop was later taken over by L.G.Palmer selling I.H.C. machines and Beatty Brothers barn