

Good times at SS number 10

by DR. R. STEPHENS
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The quaint village of Dartford lies in a valley in the rolling western hills of Percy Township. After crossing the Dartford Creek with its beautifully restored old mill, the road winds up a steep hill, turns and then proceeds west for a couple of serpentine kilometers. Then it straightens out at the base of a long hill, known as Atkinson's Hill, after the family that lived on the hilltop for several generations.

At the base of the hill lies a white frame building, now a home, which was once the local brick schoolhouse - S.S. #10. The school was opened in 1871 and holds many happy memories of days bygone, when the air was filled with laughter and

song; when the children came and went each day, laughing and jesting on their way.

The original floors of the school consisted of wide plank boards. Of course there were a few knotholes. One of the older boys was given a desk beside the largest knot because he chewed tobacco from time to time. An old piano adorned one corner - the site of singsongs and piano lessons. There was a stove in the other corner and on the teacher's desk an old hickory stick useful for rap-

ping knuckles - or even behinds.

The steep road up Atkinson's Hill was a favorite spot for sleigh-riding in the winter. There were no snow plows then so often when parents met their children with a sleigh, the kids would run behind, slipping and sliding down the hill. Although it was forbidden, the kids often sleighed down the hill but when a car or cutter came in sight it was off to the side with a great spill.

The school served as a strong fort for snowball

fights and the schoolyard made a great hockey rink. Any crooked old piece of wood could be used as a stick and the horses provided an endless supply of pucks.

The school closed in 1967. At that time, a local resident of Dartford, Mary Ward, who raised five children who attended S.S. #10, recalled the grand old days;

As a mother, I know I'm old-fashioned, By some, I might seem like a fool,

But I'd like to thank God for the privilege I had Being taught in a small country school. We are happy to be parents



Illustration by Audrey Caryi

of children Who attended this Old Number Ten; And if we had to live this life over - Know what? - we'd do it again!

Readers can share their own memories of Warkworth and Percy by contacting Dr. Robert Stephens, RR 4 Warkworth ON, K0K-3K0

next?

patient on some of these issues," he says, adding that humour often comes to the rescue.

Asked what the impact on his personal life has been over the past year, Warden Boycott, smiled his special grin and listed the following:

- "I gave up privacy."
- "I learned to take an insult without getting upset," and (like the song says)
- "I learned you can't always get what you want."

His wife and real estate company partner, Susie, made it possible for him to take the time for his warden duties.

"She's brilliant," he says, adding "she's a sweetie."

The next Warden, to be chosen Dec. 9, will face the challenge of continuing down the road begun this year in revamping the waste service delivery system throughout the county, streamlining provincially downloaded services and working through municipal restructuring.

While several eastern and central municipalities have launch plans to pair up in time for the next election in two years, Warden Boycott predicts there won't be any amalgamations in the western part of the county unless they are forced.

Unlike most county politicians, Warden Boycott believes in the need for county government and questions the continuation of municipal ones.

"You don't need both," he says.