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PORT PERRY PUBLIC SCHOOL

In 1827, forty years before Confederation, Elder Scott of the American Missionary Society established a school on the lake-front where Port Perry now stands. A son of Abner Hurd was the first teacher of this school where the pupils were practically all Indians.

In 1828, the Crandells, Hurds, and Dayton's got together and built the next school at Dayton's Corners, now Prince Albert. The schoolhouse was constructed of logs and a Mr. Cull a Scotsman became the first teacher. Mr. Cull boarded around among the neighbours and as there was no fixed salary he depended on them for remuneration for his services.

The furniture was of the rudest description, consisting chiefly of long pieces of deal supported by wooden pins inserted in the wall. These served as desks. The walls were utterly blank, maps, charts etc which are now standard equipment in even the remotest of Ontario schools were missing in this humble schoolhouse. The one room was heated by means of an immense fire-place. Tradition tells us that the first stove was made from an old potash kettle which boasted two accidental holes suggesting to some ingenious settler the stoking hole and flue.

The next schoolhouse to be erected was situated at Borelia northeast of the present water-tank. It was also built of logs and excepting the Indian school at the water-front in 1827 may be termed the first Port Perry School house. One of the first teachers was Mr. Skinner. He was followed by Mr. Livingston. Next came Mr. Baird with Miss Oakley as his assistant. Mr. Baird, later bought an interest in, 'The Observer' with Mr. Parsons.

In 1867 application was made by the Local Legislature for a charter to build a railway from Port Whitby to Port Perry. Messrs Bigelow and Paxton were the men who started this project. At this time Prince Albert was the most flourishing of the three villages, Prince Albert, Manchester, and Port Perry. It was decided that Port Perry should become the terminus of this railway. The railway flourished and practically all the business enterprises of Prince Albert moved to Port Perry. Along with this rapid advancement on the part of Port Perry her schools kept pace.

Port Perry High School opened in 1868, then known as the Grammar School. The first teacher was Mr. Youmans. At that time the pupils, that is High school, were accommodated in the east room of the Public school upstairs.

In 1873 the Board of Trustees determined to erect school buildings in some degree corresponding to the enterprise and prosperity of the village and the result was a two story brick building used for both High and Public Schools. In our day (1937) this building is commonly referred to as, 'The Old School.' (Extract taken from the Toronto Mail and Empire Oct. 2nd., 1886 re- Port Perry.) 'It has been the unflinching determination of the townspeople to have one of the best schools and the latest advancements in education could supply. Their experience has been that in the long run the best is the cheapest. It is one of the county Model Schools instituted by the Education Department for the training of Public School Teachers. With one exception, the lawns, shade trees, flowers and shrubbery are according to inspectors' reports the finest possessed by any school in the Province. The class-rooms are supplied with flowers and pictures; vocal and instrumental music are taught. All the scholars are furnished with a good supply of the best papers and magazines and once a month each division of the Public School gives a literary entertainment at which friends and parents are present. The Principal of the Model School is A. Marshal Rae, a first class graduate of the Normal School; he has been in the service of the Board since 1873.'

THE NEW SCHOOL 1927

In April 1926 the 'OLD SCHOOL' (see picture on previous page) was burned. Of course something had to be done. There was insurance amounting to \$35,000 towards defraying the cost of a new structure. Considerable discussion raged about the type and location of the new school to be erected. The present building was erected and equipped at a cost of \$105,000 and is said to be one of the best in the county. A year after the fire the New School was opened by the Hon. John S. Martin. The Board of Education at the time was; E. B. Walker, chairman, W. A. Christie, sec'y, Mrs. F. Brock, Mrs. A. B. Foreman, Mrs. G. Jackson, Samuel Farmer, R. B. Smallman, A. B. Cawker, W. J. Anderson, Dr. MacMaster, Frank Shepherd, J. Nasmith, and George Davey.