

A L T O N

Alton is situated in a valley, on the main branch of the River Credit, and is about a mile and a half from the widely-famed Shaw's Lakes, the origin of the celebrated River Credit. Those lakes are three in number and are almost circular in form. The water is pure spring, clear as crystal. The largest lake is about two hundred acres in extent, so large that a small yacht might be easily handled on it. All these lakes abound in speckled trout, and are annually the resort of disciples of Isaac Walton, from all parts of the continent. A large hotel is proposed being erected close to their borders, which will be a great convenience to the many visitors who flock to this beautiful picnicing place.

Alton was first settled by Thomas Russell, Esq. who located in 1834, and he and his family were the only inhabitant of the immediate village for nearly three years. He also owned the land on which the village now stands. In 1837 several more families came in, and in 1851 Messrs. Shrigley and Farr built a grist mill. Mr. Robert Meek opened a store and things commenced to open up lively. It was about this time that the inhabitants thought of applying for a post office. A public meeting was called for this purpose and for giving a name to the village. After considerable discussion and a different variety of names suggested, it was finally decided to call it Alton. The post office was established in the year 1855 and John Meek Esq. was appointed post-master. He kept this position until his death, and his widow succeeded him and now holds the position.

The first church in the settlement was the Congregational, which was erected about the year 1846 and is still standing, and has been used till this year. The congregation have erected a fine brick edifice which is a credit to the inhabitants of the Village. There are two other churches in the town, the Canada Methodist and Presbyterian. The pride of the village is the beautiful school house, which certainly is a very commodious building and an ornament to the place. There are five stores in the village kept respectively by Robert Meek, Mrs. Haddington, E.A.Morse, Nelson Smith and G.F.Holden; besides tin shop, harness shop, shoe stores, blacksmith and waggon shops, etc. Close to the village are situated two very large patent lime kilns, the property of Messrs. Jamison and Carroll, giving constant employment to a large number of hands. The firm does a large business with Toronto where the lime is eagerly sought after in consequence of its beautiful whiteness. We were shown over the premises by the local manager, Wm. Hawkins, Esq. The Toronto Grey & Bruce Railway, which has a station at Alton, runs several switches to these works. There are three large grist and flour mills, that of D. & L. McKinnon being the largest and contains four run of stone. This mill does no custom work, but is kept constantly grinding flour for foreign markets. Walter McClellan's mill has two run of stones, and does both gristing and flouring business, as does also Mr. George Alanham in his mill. Mr. Alanham has also a large saw mill attached which is constantly running. These mills together makes a fine wheat market, and do much towards the property of the place. The Messrs. King Brothers have started a steam furniture factory, which will no doubt reach large proportions. Their show room is in Orangeville, which is five miles from Alton. James Steel carries on the tanning business in all its branches. A.Dick has a large foundry which manufactures plows, saw mills, cultivators, and a general jobbing business is done.