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IN DAYS OF YORE

Community Industries

Muir Saw-mill

In the early days a saw-mill was located on Lot 28 Concession 8 of East Nissouri on the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Norman Conn.

The first saw-mill started by Mr. John McLaren was built in the third field back from the present road on the south side of the farm - up from a pond called Beaver Meadows. It was built on a side hill so the logs could be rolled down the hill from the top to the saw. Mr. John McLaren sold out to Mr. Henry Muir, a son of one of the famous Scottish weavers who had come to Dalhousie Township near Ottawa and later migrated to the County of Perth around Avonbank.

Mr. Muir developed a prosperous mill which burned in the early 1890's. The mill was rebuilt, but this time it was erected just south of the lane into the farm in the first field and near the road.

Mr. Henry Muir with the help of his brother Thomas and two sons John and James had a flourishing business. Many local barns were built from lumber sawed at the Muir Mill; also a large trade was built up with the Richardson Dairy Supply Company at St. Marys, J. D. Moore Planing Mill, the Bain Wagon Works at Woodstock and some farm implement companies of Stratford. There being no railroad then between Woodstock and St. Marys, all the lumber had to be teamed to St. Marys. If going beyond St. Marys and vicinity, it would have to be loaded into box cars and taken by rail to its destination.

In 1908 with the supply falling off the machinery of the mill and part of the building was sold and moved to the Dorchester tile-yard.

The present drive-shed on the Norman Conn farm situated to the north and east of present barn was part of the former saw-mill.

Granthurst

Granthurst is a ghost "town" of East Nissouri. Its location is known only to a few nowadays. It was located on the corners of Lots 31 Concessions 8 and 9 on the Uniondale sideroad. The land on the west at the corner is now owned by Mr. Roy Cooper and on the east by Mrs. Norman Robbins.

As the township was opening up, the need for a store became greater. The trek to St. Marys or Ingersoll took more time away from the farm. Mr. Alex Grant opened a store on the corner of Lot 31, Concession 8 and was followed shortly after by a blacksmith shop on the opposite corner.

The store was taken over by Mr. Eli Day who eventually closed it.

In 1890 the post-office was opened in part of the store. Mr. Alex Grant, John Sheldon, George Hunt and Eli Day served as post-masters until the office closed in 1911.

In the blacksmith shop, Bill Kohn, Fred Hepburn and Arthur Knapton looked after the needs of the local farmers which included such names as Thomas Richardson, William Richardson, Martins, Greasons, Elliotts, McQuillans, McLaren's, Muirs, Scotts and Wells.