

THE LINDSAY HOME

## DOCTORS UPPERMOST

# Brooksdale Has Famous Persons

By STEWART MacKAY  
The hamlet of Brooksdale, nestling in the north-west section of Oxford county carries no taint of falsehood in its nomenclature because, right beside it, there is both a brook and a dale. The name was given to it by one of its sons, Dr. Hugh MacLeod, who was first a teacher in the closest school, and later became the family doctor in the community, achieving some fame, other than in doctoring, from the horses he drove — night and day.

The early history of the settlement follows the general pattern throughout most of the county, in that in the early, early days, 1810 and thereabout, there were a few families of United Empire Loyalist stock, to be engulfed, not much later, by the flood of Sutherland Highlanders. To such an extent did the engulfing process take place that common gossip has it that the U. E. L. pioneers became more Scottish than their engulfers — in habits, beliefs, and even in dialect.

Like most of the modest corners and hamlets throughout the county, Brooksdale never became famous because of its great industries, its beautiful buildings, or those sort of things, but in its exports — of its sons and daughters, to places of high performance in the world of science, medicine and the like. Not least of these is Dr. Gordon Murray, who, as a boy, attended the 7th line school, just north of Brooksdale, later went on to achieve considerable fame as one of the outstanding 'blue baby' doctors in Toronto and in greater fields. Our historians, for Brooksdale's past, were Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Lindsay, pioneers in the settlement, and now retired and living in Embro.

They recall that in the early days, there was a well-beloved blacksmith, at that time an important cog in the wheels of community activity — one John

Begary — who took upon himself the task of seeing that the new, and often crudely manufactured, modern machines, such as the first reapers, were kept in operation in the community and would work night and day to accomplish his goal.

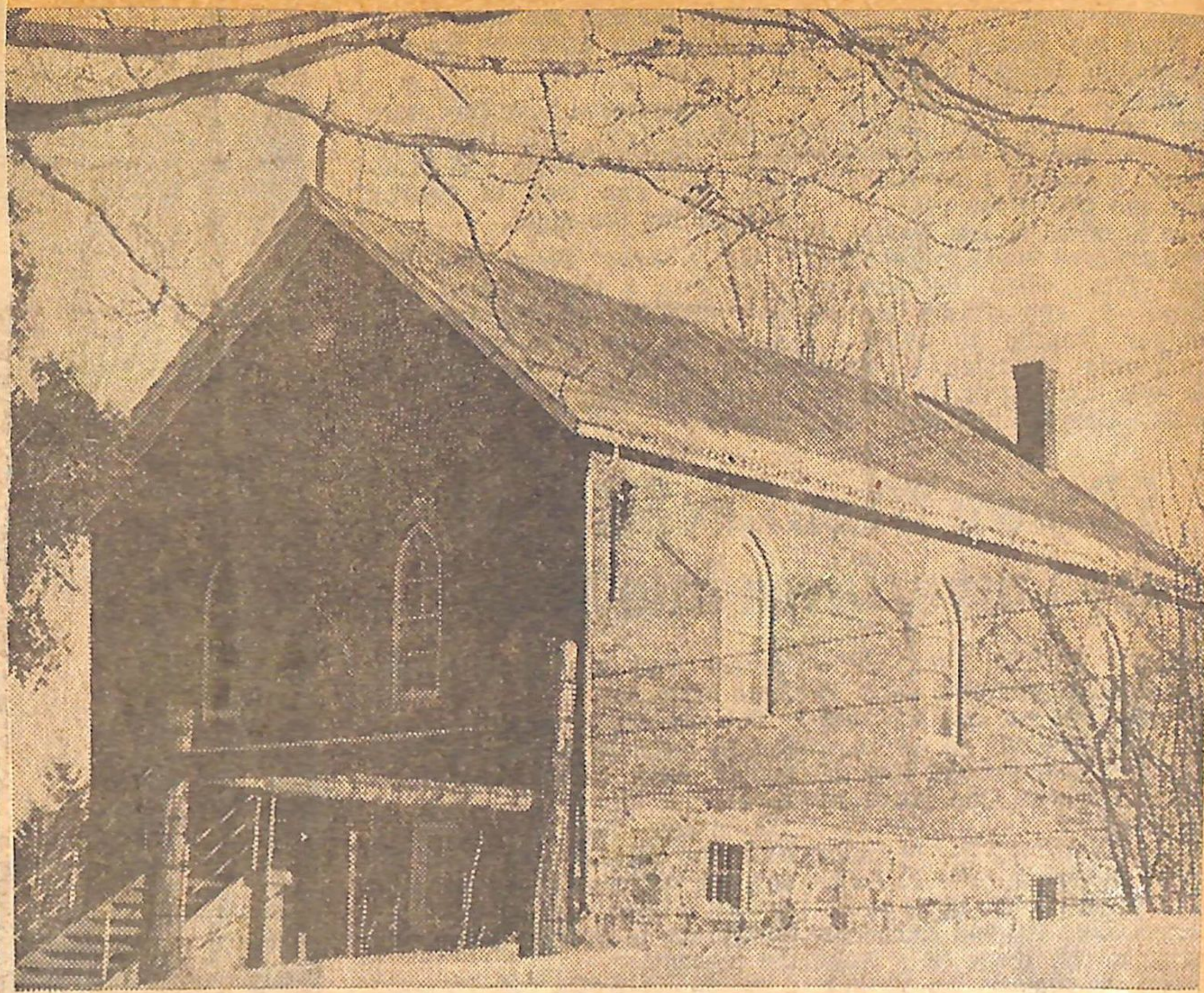
Being a man of unusually high standards in formal education, where begotten it was not known, he also took upon himself the task of keeping the books for St. Andrew's church, then the focal point in the social, if not the economic life, of the community.

Mr. Lindsay, whose family was one of the earliest to settle in the community, retains many of those loves common to his time and era and is himself a great lover of horses. He has in his home an unusual statuette of the famous horse 'Man of War' but confesses rather sadly that there have been horses in more recent times that were able to better the record of his favorite.

Also having some respect for the accomplishments of those persons who had to depend on their own inventiveness for production of essential tools, Mr. Lindsay has preserved a carpenter's tool of early vintage — a square — made of walnut cut from the trees of the family pioneer settlement, made by hand and beautifully carved, with an ingenious device of wedges to keep the square in perfect position in all weather.

Reflecting the type of settlement, the area still retains the family names in abundance and includes in the list the MacKays (apparently most prolific) Murrays, Lavertys, Reids, Youngs, Mathesons, Greens, Innes's, Chenoweths, Meadows, Whites and many more.

Also reflecting the heavily weighted Sutherland highland population the church, St. Andrew's, was for many years the central social life spot. Top photo shows the gathering to celebrate the 75th anniversary



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

of the church founding, held in 1958 and attended by hundreds of sons and daughters from near and far-away places.

The family store in the community is run by the Dawsons, and Mr. Dawson, besides helping his wife in the store when he can, is a decorator, and travels far abroad in his trade.

The original Lindsay farm was owned by one John Laverty, who obtained the appropriate title papers in the manner of a crown grant, with, thereon, the signature of Sir Frances Bondhead, one of the earliest governors of Upper Canada, dated 1837. The Lindsays have that document in their possession.

Last, but by no means least, in the list of characters well-known in the community is that of Captain Thompson. The title was no empty one, he was actually a captain on the Great Lakes in the summer and a Brooksdale farmer in the winter. It is thought his fame was achieved by being unique in his dual profession.



PIONEERS MR. AND MRS. G. LINDSAY