

W.H. Chambers - A Sawyer for Sixty Years

William James Chambers of Skipness saw timber felled and burned to clear the land. He was born near Hanover in 1867 and his parents, the late James and Sarah Jane Roe Chambers, moved to Amabel when William was six months old, so his earliest memories are of his Township home.

They settled on a farm near Mud Lake - later known as Marysville Lake. There, the family cleared the land. Most of this work was completed before he was old enough to help. But he could remember the fine timber being burned because that was the easiest way to get rid of the giant trees and clear the land for farming purposes.

When Mr. Chambers was eighteen years of age, he began his life's work as a sawyer, starting to saw for David Porter who operated a mill at Mud Lake. After several years with Mr. Porter, Mr. Chambers accepted employment with Charles Bowman in his mill at Southampton, remaining there for a number of years.

His next employer was Mr. Daniel Knechtel for whom he worked at Slabtown near Elsinore, and at Tamarack Island, Stokes Bay, on the Bruce Peninsula. Then his trade took him back to the district where he was born and he was employed for a number of years at Hanover by Mr. John Burrell.

Returning to Amabel, he worked for about a decade for Mr. Robert Walker of Allenford, at the mill south of Gould Lake until retiring due to ill health.

He was known to his friends as Willie Chambers and stated that during his sixty years as sawyer, methods changed very little, but machines were greatly improved making the work-easier.

Willie Chambers never married. He was the last surviving member of a family of ten. While employed at the Walker saw-mill he made his home with his sister-in-law, Mrs. R. J. Chambers, and his nephew, Graham Chambers.

When Graham Chambers married, Willie and his sister-in-law, Rachel Chambers, moved back to the farm where he first started his life's work, living in a house built on the Reid farm where the mill yard used to be.

Oliver Stewart (1891-1 947)

Mr. Oliver Stewart, after moving TO THE SKIPNESS area with his mother and sister, Jean BECAME QUITE popular as an entertainer through his ability to recite and take part in dialogues and plays. He was especially good in comic parts.

Some of Oliver's recitations were: THE DARKIE'S Sermon; The Boss's Welcome Home; THE LAMB IN Church; The Church Choir singing; and the Debating Society.

The Stewart family were staunch Presbyterians and attended Skipness Church regularly by horse and rig. (The horse's name was Tony.) Oliver sang in the choir as did his brother Duncan. Oliver married his neighbour's daughter, Reta Hunt. They moved to Hepworth in 1941 where they lived for six years.



Margaret Reid - SEDGWICK

Margaret Reid is the daughter of John and Jessie Reid of Lot 18, Concession 6. In 1969, at the age of seventeen, she was an Ontario Scholar, obtaining ninety-one per cent in ten Grade Thirteen subjects at Owen Sound Collegiate and Vocational Institute. She was awarded an entrance scholarship to McMaster University in Hamilton.

Margaret kept up an eighty per cent average throughout her high school career. She was awarded a trip to Germany by the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians; her final mark in German was ninety-five per cent. She was one of 100 students from Ontario who made the tour, to Germany, Switzerland, Austria and France.

AFTER GRADUATING FROM MCMASTER, MARGARET HAD ANOTHER TRIP TO GERMANY. SHE LATER TOOK A LIBRARY COURSE AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY, LONDON, ONT. AND WAS HIRED AS A LIBRARIAN IN FORT FRANCES, ONT. SHE MARRIED DAVID SEDGWICK OF FORT FRANCES.



Reta (Hunt) and Oliver Stewart with son BILL IN 1941