THE TOWNSHIP OF ARTEMESIA

A HISTORY

BY W. S. CHRISTOE

NOTE—In last week's article. 20th line of 2nd column, read 1851 instead of 1857.

Artemisia is a flourishing and well settled township of the County of Grey, and contains 68,262 acres of land In 1861 she contained 2576 of a population, and now contains somewhat more than 3500, which, with that portion of it which now partly forms the village of Markdale, would not fall far short of 4000.

Before proceeding with her municipal history it may be well to enquire as to the orthography of its name. Smith's Gazeteer declares its true orthography to be Artemisia. The name is from her whose devotion, in memory of her husband, Mausolus, gave to the ancients and to us a new name in mortuary architecture. It is also the name of a plant, but it is never spelled Artemesia, and the author contends it should not be so spelled. In perusing the early records of the township we find it spelled Artemisia, latterly and occasionally the e instead of the i was used. The post-office department, however, fell into the error, and spelled it Artemesia, and this method now generally prevails. In these notes it will be spelled according to its true orthography.

Artemisia was surveyed in lots in 1849 and 1850. The Toronto and Sydenham Road and the Durham Road were surveyed in lots of 50 acres each, and were apportioned to actual settlers. The late George Snider, Esq., who subsequently became M P in the McKenzie government, and then Sheriff of the county, was agent. He was a fairly shrewd man, affable and approachable, and was universally respected. He then lived at Inistioge. In passing, it may be noticed that George Price, Esq., of Owen Sound, lately deceased, then lived with Mr. Snider. It is evident that he had an antipathy against a mixed nationality, hence in distributing lots to applicants tried, as far as possible, to place them separately. The colored people he placed on the old Durham Road, the Roman Catholic near the Irish Lake, and the Scotch element in Priceville and vicinity. The balance of the township was pretty generally mixed. Sales and transfers since that period have erased very largely those distinctive lines. The township became very early and largely inhabited.

It may be remarked here, that the different surveys of the township render it very awkward and embarrassing to strangers to locate particular lots. First, there is the Toronto and Sydenham Road survey, running diagonally through the township from north to south. Second, the Durham Road survey, crossing it a few miles south of Flesherton, and third, the general survey, numbering from the west. And as if to increase the difficulty, there is the Collingwood Gravel Road. It is evident that in forming an approximate square township, a multitude of angles or gores necessarily occur, and lots are comprised of different areas, some containing not more than five acres The first two surveys were made up of tiers of lots of 50 acres, each side of the line named, whilst the general survey was in 100 acre lots, with the angulations excepted. Very few, unless it be assessors or collectors, presume to master the question of location. It is no wonder that, to a stranger, the nearest village is used as a guide or else the name of the person living on the lot or near it. Settlers in the township of 25 years residence do not become familiar with concessions, side lines and lots of the township.

The township has been described as uneven and hilly, and a wise man will not contradict the assertion, although there are isolated settlements of beautiful rolling lands, and many farms unsurpassed in the county.

The township is exceedingly well watered by numerous creeks and two rivers. One creek of considerable size, named the Boyne Water, passes through Flesherton, and finally empties into the Beaver River, which latter rises in the township of Osprey, in its course becoming enlarged by several creeks, and passes over the Eugenia falls, and onward north-easterly to the Georgian Bay. Then there is, about 4 miles south of Flesherton, one branch of the Saugeen, running in a very meandering fashion through Proton, and onward to Durham and thence to the lake. Another branch of the Saugeen crosses the Toronto line 2 miles north of Flesherton and again a mile north of Markdale, and runs westerly until it unites with the other branch in its journey to the lake. Excellent drinking water is obtained almost anywhere at a moderate depth. The Eugenia falls is a very picturesque place, and tourists frequently visit and admire the falls and surroundings. There is about 70 feet of a perpendicular fall. The town of Eugenia—for so it was laid out to be—has never risen to much importance, a mere village, with but comparatively few inhabitants.

Its early history, however, promised to be another Eldorado. The inhabitants of Artemisia and others became much excited over a supposed gold mine at or near the falls. A pilgrimage on a small scale was very quickly astir. The journey to the spot was made on foot There were no roads in those days; and there was a deficiency of food; but nothing daunted, they supplied themselves with potatoes and roasted them on the spot—any enough to obtain the precious metal—and there seemed to be plenty of it. With miserly grip they filled their bags, heavily burdened and left satisfied. But alas! It was only golden in color! When heat was applied, everything went off in smoke and vapor; the deceptive thing proving to be nothing but mere pyrites or some worthless colored deposit. There were so many in the camp the whole matter was taken as a huge joke. The falls drop into a public road so that the authority for their disposition belongs to the council only. A very excellent water power for centuries has been running to waste. This is the spot where the electric fluid is to be generated to run the electric cars to Flesherton and Meaford. But the matter at present is in a very chaotic state, and at this writing is likely to remain so.

No one who in years past visited the falls, failed to meet a very important gentleman in the person of Mr. Robert Purdy, who seemed at one time to have had care of the falls in question. It was he, who, by building steps from the bank, made it easy to descend below the falls, and who prevented as many as he pleased by lock and key. Second to the falls, was esteemed a collection of natural curios in possession of this gentleman. He was certainly an interesting naturalist—slow of speech; figure thin, aquiline nose, slow step, of sound judgment and possessed an endless fund of epigrams and curiously worded phrases, so that any document or communication from him abounded with them, to the extreme delight of his admirers. The gentleman still lives and is as honest and good as his inimitable style was natural and permanent. He was the postmaster for many years, until sickness prevented active service—the government kindly appointing an assistant.

EUGENIA FALLS—72 FEET

Those who have taste for natures freaks, will, when visiting the falls, not miss an adventure to the caves, so called. It would cost them about a mile's travel from the fall, but would amply repay the tourist for his trouble.

In every township the intelligence of its inhabitants is measured, more or less, by the status of its schools. At quite an early date Artemisia held no second place in this respect. There are now 13 schools, besides some two or three unions. The earliest report shows as follows: No. 1 was taught by Carey Threadgold in 1864. No. 3 by John Wright, Sr., one of our present collectors, who carried the mail from Orangeville to Chatsworth. He has a family of very clever sons. No. 4 was taught by Andrew Wilson, brother of Mrs. Wesley Armstrong, now a preacher in the U. S.; No. 5 by James Marshall, now in the U. S, a brother of Mrs. Johnson Cullins; this is the Flesherton section; attendance then 24; average now about five times as many No. 6 was taught by Ferguson Wright, who recently died. His daughter is the wife of Dr. Hutton, Priceville. No. 7 was taught by Mrs. Margaret Ludlow. No. 8 was taught by James Henderson, who is now the popular agent of the North of Scotland Loan Co Subsequently to his teaching he was appointed township clerk, a man of most tenacious memory of persons and things and well adapted for the position he now holds. No. 9 was taught by Miss E. A. Wright, who taught this school with much satisfaction—a lady of excellent qualities, having fair natural and acquired abilities. Wilmot Pickell, Esq., however, laid seige to this young lady, and successfully conquered her. She lives with her husband at Markdale. No. 10 was unorganized. No. 11 was taught by George Harrison. In No. 2 Thomas Flesher officiated for several years, a very prominent citizen as teacher and Loan Company agent, who removed to the Mantoulin Island. W. K. Flesher, Esq., was an uncle. Some of these schools were in operation before this date but there is no record of how many or by whom taught. Not one of the old school houses remain, having been replaced by more substantial ones, either stone, brick or frame.

Whilst upon the subject of education it may be mentioned that in those early days there was a township circulating library composed of 9 branches, each branch containing 75 volumes. The writer recollects examining many of these books, but the management was cumbersome and unsatisfactory, consequently the books were called in. It certainly expressed volumes for the intelligence of the inhabitants to sanction, as well as the councillors to grant the funds to obtain such a library. Such generosity is emphasized on recollection of its occurrance so early in the history of the township. Does this circumstance account for the proverbial statement that Artemisia always took a high rank in the municipal government of the county?

The early settlers of Artemisia underwent very many hardships, having no saw or grist mills and no roads. They went from place to place on foot paths, guided by the tree blaze. A few had oxen and more had none. Durham was the nearest grist mill and on back or oxen sled their slender grist was taken to be ground. Very graphic indeed were the incidents told in after years by those pioneers. Often they camped in the bush, mixed their flour and baked it on an impromptu fire; arriving at home next day with their grist, leg worn and weary, but only to find their hungry neighbors waiting to beg or borrow, to assuage their hunger, The little stock soon became exhausted, and the same thing had to be repeated in turn. They not unfrequently travelled in pairs. And this continued until other outlets and larger crops were forthcoming. In 1861 the gravel roads were being built at a cost $300,000, but before that, the trade had found an outlet to Collingwood. The Northern Railroad had then been built. It was a pioneer and universally welcomed. The new gravel road proved of immense benefit to the settlers in the country, but especially so to Artemisia. It was a bold undertaking in those early days to build 180 miles of road even if they were, as proved to be, inferior and expensive. But the most remarkable thing regarding them was that not a toll gate existed on them, from first to last. The roads now, and for many years, by virtue of a county bylaw have ceased to be county roads; and consequently are not so well repaired. Each township now supports so much of the road as passes through it. During the regime of gravel roads, the settlers thought that the facilities for trade could scarcely be excelled. Very soon, however, railroad schemes, like meteors began to appear. A prospective railroad at Durham, so near and yet so

Continued on local page

M. RICHARDSON, ESQ
General Merchant and County Councillor

Mr. Richardson was born at Culgaith, Cumberland Co., England, in 1839, and came to Artemesia in 1865. He has been a prominent man in public affairs, having served as Deputy Reeve two years in County Council, as Reeve two years, and is at present County Councillor of this division.

M. Richardson & Co

New Fall Goods

Every day sees the arrival of a fresh consignment of **New Goods,** suitable for the coming fall season. The excellent business of the past summer has reduced stocks to the vanishing point and now every department in our building is rapidly filling up with **New Goods.** Everyone has been busily employed in unpacking and marking new importations for some time past, and we can confidently announce that our 1897 fall display will be the most complete and comprehensive ever shown in the history of our store.

REMEMBER THE FAIR NEXT WEEK

We cordially invite all visitors to the fair to come and see us at the same time. Our splendid display of **Fall Goods** will be worth seeing, and it makes no difference whether you purchase or not—We shall be pleased to see you.

New MANTLES

We have just received an advance shipment of new Mantles direct from Germany and have them on exhibition. They comprise some of the latest novelties in leading styles and are eminently serviceable and handsome. When buying these goods we were offered some exceptionally good values and did not fail to take advantage of them. Full justice cannot be done in description. Come and see them and make your selections while the assortment of sizes and styles is full and complete.

Millinery Department

New goods for this department constantly arriving. New Velvets, new Silks, new Ribbons are all received. Everything is in full preparation for fall business. Some splendid values in **Ladies' Fall Underwear** are already to hand.

SPECIAL HAT SALE THIS WEEK

To make room for new goods we have cut down prices on a large number of Felt Hats and offer them regardless of first cost.

Stiff Hats in Blacks and Browns.

Fedora Hats in Blacks, Dark and Light Browns.

Hats costing all the way from 75c to $2 all selling at the same figure **25c.** There's money in this for **You** not for us.

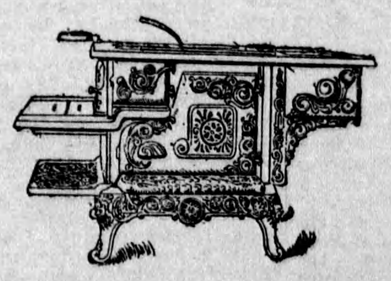
CLOTHING SPECIALS

Men's All-wool Tweed Suits, fashionable and reasonable patterns, regular $6 for $4.50.
Men's Tweed Pants, all sizes, 95c.
A line of Children's Blouse Suits clearing at $1.

HARDWARE DEPARTMENT

....BIG RUN....

COOKING STOVES



COOKING STOVES

We have just got in a few of the nicest and best cooking stoves made, such as Good Cheer, Famous Model, Regal Garland, Moffat's Pearl, and McClary's Presumption. Call and see them if in need.

BIG BARGAINS.....

In Crockery, Chinaware and Glassware, Dinner, Tea and Bedroom Setts for the next month. A good chance to save money. Headquarters for Threshers Supplies. Building Hardware and Tinware. Be sure and call when at the fair. We want to meet you all.