Flesherton Advance.

"TRUTH BEFORE FAVOR."—"PRINCIPLES NOT MEN."

VOL 30, NO 1 Flesherton, Ont., Thursday, June 2 1910 W. H. THURSTON EDITOR and PROPRIETOR

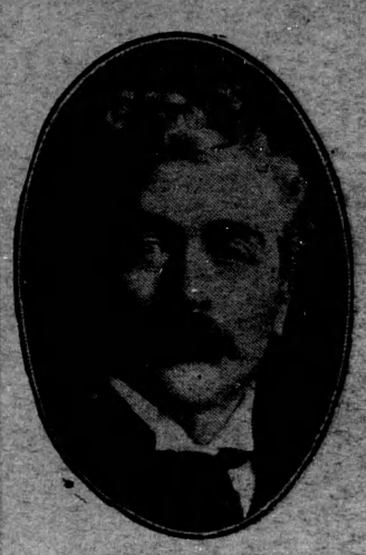
Our Jubilee Number

The Advance Has Completed Its Twenty-Ninth Year

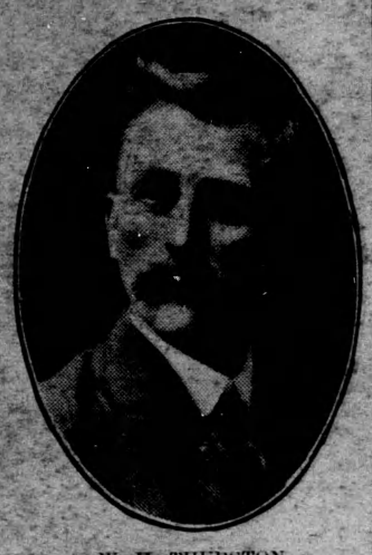
The Founder of This Paper Tells His Story---Reminiscences of Other Days---Some Facts Concerning the Present Proprietor and a Word from Him.

With this issue The Advance commences the thirtieth year of its publication. On June 1st, 1881, Mr. A. R. Fawcett published the first issue, and since then it has appeared regularly, with but one change of ownership. In consideration of this we thought a little jubilee might not be out of place. Many of the present readers of The Advance have very kind memories of the founder, Mr. Fawcett, and his reminiscences on this page will be found vrey interesting.

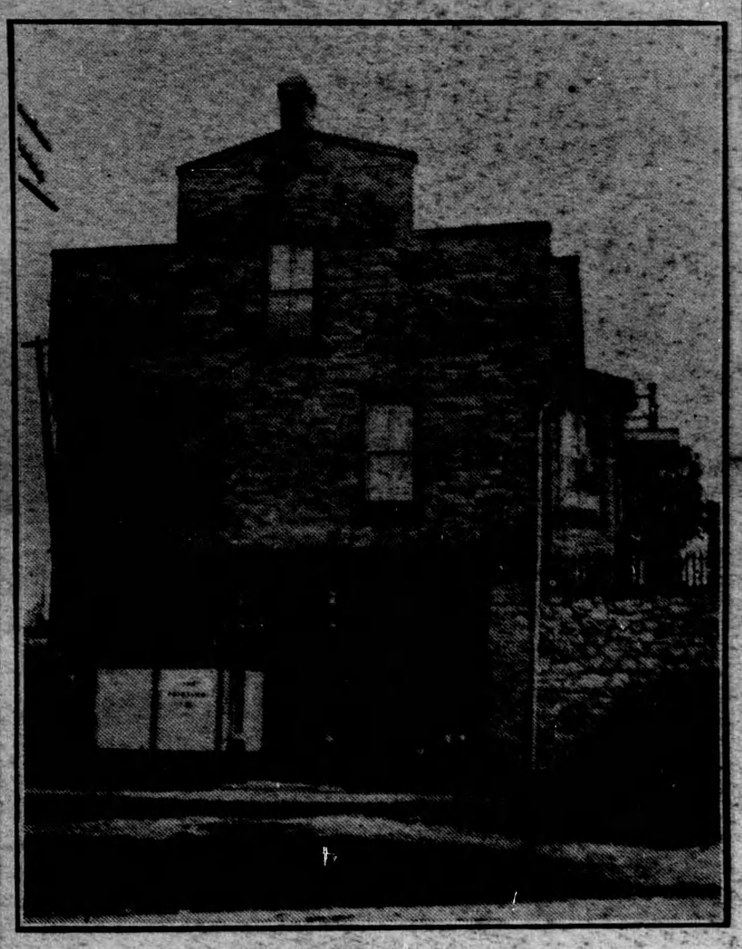
The Advance's history is one of gradual, and at times almost imperceptible, growth but the past year and a half has shown a remarkable increase in the number of readers. Today the circulation is over the 1000 mark, and we hope to see it touch 1100 before the present year is out. To do so we must produce a paper worth reading—and we are trying to do so. If you receive a copy of this issue and are not already a subscriber you are heartily invited to become one.—ED.



A. R. FAWCETT
Founder of The Flesherton Advance



W. H. THURSTON
Present Proprietor of The Advance



THE HOME OF THE ADVANCE

Mr. Fawcett's Reminiscences

Early on the morning of Thursday, March 31st, 1881, I walked from Thornbury to my father's farm, a short distance south of Heathcote. The distance walked was eight miles and the roads were decidedly "sloppy," but I was young and optimistic, and moreover, I was about to embark in business for myself.

Borrowing a horse and buggy from my father, I drove to Flesherton the same day, arriving there early in the evening. Mr. Jack Mathewson, who was teaming grain to Flesherton Station for R. J. Sproule, was just starting out with a load and I accompanied him. After unloading the grain the first consignment of Flesherton's pioneer printing plant, consisting of a treadle press, several fonts of job type, etc., was loaded on the vehicle and safely conveyed to the village. In going down the "Orange hill," however, the wheels of the wagon slid on some ice, and only by great exertion was the top-heavy press saved from being dumped into the ditch. That night we unloaded the plant in an old lean-to on Sydenham street, but next morning it was removed to what was then known as the Sullivan block on Collingwood street.

On Friday, April 1st, 1881, the first job of printing ever turned out in Flesherton was successfully accomplished. It was a sixteenth sheet dodger for Mr. Fred Sarjeant, who was in the meat business in Flesherton at that time. When the first sheet came off the press was, I think, one of the happiest moments of my life. And what a flood of memories sweeps over me as I recall that, to me at least, memorable event. In a flash the intervening years are bridged, and the kindly faces of those dear old friends—Matthew Kendall Richardson, Dr. William S. Christoe, Wesley Armstrong, William Clayton, John Heard, Septimus Good, Fred Sarjeant, Robert Trimble, William Wright, William Barnhouse, Aaron Munshaw, William Richardson, Solomon Damude, William Elder, William J. Bellamy, John Gordon, Robert J. Sproule, George Keefer, and others—stand forth as vividly and cheerily as they did twenty-nine years ago. Alas, some have passed away since then, but thank God there will be a glorious re-union some day.

After carrying on a job printing business exclusively for two months, the first number of The Flesherton Advance was issued to the public on June 1st, 1881. By making a special offer of the infant journal to the end of 1882 for one dollar The Advance had soon a bona fide circulation of more than four hundred copies. And although the village contained a population of barely 400 at that time, The Advance carried twelve columns of advertising at the outset, and at no time in its history has it carried less.

Shortly after The Advance made its first bow to the public, the Owen Sound Tribune made this brief but cheering comment "Another candidate for the poor-house," which was true, but it wasn't the paper The Tribune thought that eventually made good the prophesy. The Tribune has long since disappeared from the journalistic horizon, but The Advance is still with us—stronger, brighter, and more energetic than ever. I am glad to see that it still has the old colors nailed to the masthead—"Truth before Favor, Principles not Men." In the twenty-nine years of its existence The Advance has changed hands only once, but so far as its principles are concerned it has never changed.

Establishing a country weekly is one of the most strenuous jobs a man ever tackled—especially with limited capital, or rather, shall I say, without any capital at all save a stout heart and an unlimited amount of—well, call it nerve, although that is not precisely the word I intended to use. And yet some of the happiest moments of my life were experienced in that little town nestling among the hills of Centre Grey, and where I cut my eye teeth in journalism with a fair measure of success despite my youth and inexperience. I must certainly have been a juvenile looking editor, for I remember one irate lady from Markdale dropped into The Advance office one day, and, after looking at me very sternly a few moments, exclaimed fiercely, "Boy, go and tell your pa, the edithur, that I want til see him immajetly."

* * *

I think it was on the twenty-fourth of May, 1885, that the famous sham battle came off in Flesherton and neighborhood. Excitement in connection with the second Riel rebellion was at its height just then, and it was decided to have a sham fight between Her Majesty's loyal Volunteers of No. 6 Co., 31st Batt., under command of the late lamented Lieut. Field, and the rebel forces under command of the writer as "Louis Riel" and Mr. Sept. Good as "Gabriel Dumont." Hundreds of people came in from all parts of the country to witness the affair.

Several skirmishes took place on the outskirts of the village, but finally the rebels were compelled to fall back upon "Flesher's Park," upon the highest eminence of which many citizens stood eagerly watching the movements of the opposing forces. One prominent citizen had swung his hammock high up between two trees at the highest point in the Park and was enjoying his pipe and the sham battle at the same time, and occasionally giving vent to shrewd but somewhat sarcastic observations as to some of the movements of the volunteers and rebels. Suddenly a crowd of spectators rushed past, and one of their number—who shall be nameless here—whipped out his knife and cut the strings at one end of the hammock in a twinkling. Down came the prominent citizen "kerflop" on the ground, and he rolled half way to the bottom of the hill before a conveniet hollow arrested his progress. As he started back up the hill to recover his pipe and his equilibrium, he was heard to exclaim with much emphasis "By George, I'd like to know the chap who did that."

It is not generally known that a serious mishap—perhaps a tragedy—was narrowly averted by the presence of mind and prompt action of Lieut. Field, but such was really the case. The volunteers had made good their entrance into the park and had cornered the rebels at the western extremity when somebody thoughtlessly gave the order to "charge." Instantly, and with the fierce light of battle in their eyes, the Volunteers dashed forward towards the rebels many of them (the Volunteers) actually with bayonets fixed. For the moment the mimic warfare had become very real to the Volunteers and they did not recognize in the painted and be-feathered Indians and half-breeds in front of them their own neighbors and fellow-citizens.

At this very critical juncture, Lieut. Field arrived, took in the whole situation at a glance, and called out in ringing tones the one word:

"Halt!"

Instantly, and when within fifteen to twenty feet of the rebels, every member of this splendidly disciplined Volunteer Company came to a halt as ordered. And it was then the Volunteers realized how narrowly they had escaped converting a sham battle into something very closely resembling the real thing. One of the volunteers actually came within the length of his gun and bayonet of "Gabriel Dumont" but was suddenly brought to his senses when the latter good-natured Yorkshire giant grabbed his gun by the barrel, swung it over his head and yelled "Stop right theer, I tell you, or I'll knock you into a cocked hat!"

* * *

And talk about your trout fishing. Why, one fine afternoon in early summer Mr. M. K. Richardson, Master (now Dr.) E. K. Richardson, Mr. Sept. Good, Mr. John Blackburn, and the writer drove over to where the bridge crosses the Beaver river near the Meldrum farm, a short distance above the justly famed and beautiful Eugenia Falls. Four of us stood on that bridge and Mr. Blackburn took up a position on the shore close by, and fished for perhaps two hours without shifting our relative positions once during that time. And what was the result, think you? It was this—Mr. Blackburn caught 48 speckled beauties, the writer 36, Mr. Richardson 34, Mr. Sept. Good 32, and Master E. K. Richardson 28. What do you think of that for a catch, oh ye disciples of Isaac Walton? A total of 178 speckled trout from one fishing place, and all caught within the short space of two hours, is a record, I think, that would be hard to beat even at one of those "preserves" we hear so much about these days.

* * *

I do not know how things are now, but I well remember when the fame of Flesherton as a musical centre had spread "abroad throughout the land." It used to be my delight to walk about on the streets on some of those entrancingly beautiful moonlight nights in June, when gentle zephyrs rustled softly among the leaves as though fanned by the wings of celestial visitors from the bright starry worlds away up in the deepest blue of God's great dome. And wherever I walked my ears were greeted with music—vocal, instrumental, and sometimes both together. The whole place seemed saturated (if I may use the term) with sweet sounds.

It was not surprising, therefore, when the ambitious project of presenting the fine oratorio "Queen Esther" was suggested. Yes, and it was actually carried to a successful conclusion in the drill shed before an audience of one thousand people. By special request the performance was repeated in the same place the following evening in the presence of an audience of nearly six hundred people. This performance was given under the auspices of the Ladies Aid of Flesherton Methodist church, during the pastorate of the Rev. Walter Ayers, another very dear old friend of the writer's. And of the one hundred persons who took part in "Queen Esther," every one, including the musical director (Mr. D. S. Munroe) resided in or adjacent to Flesherton. It was really a wonderful piece of work for a small country village.

I fear I have trespassed too freely upon your space, Mr. Editor, but permit me to remark in closing, that I have always felt myself under a debt of gratitude to old and very dear friends in Flesherton and neighborhood; and the invitation kindly extended to me to jot down a few reminiscences for your anniversary number was so graciously given, that I was only too pleased with the opportunity thus presented of once more getting in touch with them through the columns of The Advance.

To the one especially dear old friend to whom I owe more than to any other man living the success achieved in establishing The Advance upon a solid foundation—to say nothing of his helpful sympathy and cheering words of encouragement during some of the darkest hours of my life—in short to my noble old friend, Matthew Kendall Richardson—the following lines are applicable:

"I live for those who love me,
For those who know me true,
For the Heaven that smiles above me,
And awaits my spirit, too;
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do."

Faithfully yours,
—A. R. FAWCETT.

THE IRONY OF FATE

What peculiar twists fate performs in the affairs of man! The item in The Owen Sound Tribune referred to by Mr. Fawcett above, in which The Advance was quoted as a candidate for the poor-house, was published at the time when W. H. Thurston was editor of The Tribune, and written by him. To-day he is editor of "the candidate for the poor-house" and The Tribune has been dead this long since. —S.

A Sketch of The Present Editor

Over thirty-years ago a young man left his home on a farm in the Kimberley valley en route for Orangeville to begin his life work, and to make his fortune—as a printer. He was right about the "life work," but as for the fortune—well, the roseate dreams of youth do not always meet with fulfilment. The young man, then seventeen years of age, was W. H. Thurston, who had been attracted, as so many others have been, by the halo which surrounds the newspaper office—and especially so in the older days when the personality of the editor dominated to a greater extent the columns of the newspaper. A few weeks sufficed to rub off the glamour which was, so to speak, replaced by the usual "Devil's" coat of ink, but the case and pen have always retained a portion of their charm, and the man of fifty is as fast at the case and as ready with the quill as the youth of twenty.

After a year in Orangeville the firm by which he was engaged dissolved partnership and Mr. Joseph Townsend, one of the members of the firm, started the Dundalk Guide, taking with him the subject of this sketch. Those were changing days in newspaperdom and the new journal lasted less than a year, when the staff and plant moved over to Durham, where The Grey Review was started by Mr. Townsend. Some time later Mr. Thurston's connection with The Review ended. However, The Review appeared to be unaffected by the change and is still being published in Durham.

In the spring of 1879 he attached himself to The Owen Sound Tribune, and one year later, the owners failing, he and Arthur Pearce attached the paper to themselves. Newspaperdom in the county town at this period was a strenuous affair, especially for a young chap of twenty. Mr. Pearce looked after the mechanical end of the joint, while the subject of this sketch handled the quill and staved off creditors. Life here had its dark brown tones, but there were certain redeeming features (one of which he married five years later) and while the berth of an editor in Owen Sound in the palmy days of old was not a remunerative one, yet it was good training for the young and ambitious newspaper man. However, the demands of creditors became so pressing that the partnership was dissolved after two years' business.

Leaving Owen Sound, Mr. Thurston dropped in on Toronto one day and went to work the same night on The Daily World, where he hammered away for about seven years at night work. While working at the case in Toronto his lines were cast in pleasant channels, and in leisure hours he contributed verse and prose to various journals. (We hesitate to make this fact known, but "murder will out.")

In the summer of 1888, believing tha Toronto did not appreciate him sufficiently, he retired in good form and acquired The Flesherton Advance, which was then seven years old. For twenty-two years he has been a fixture in the town. In that time he has made many friends and a few enemies, but has always acted in good faith. The editor who could please everybody never was and never will be. Oftentimes hard words were exchanged when the editor was to blame and sometimes when he was not, at least so it appears to him, and he would not have it otherwise. To be a live editor, he believes, is to endanger friendships, but after all it is not a true friendship which falls before honest criticism.

In looking back, the old days have a wonderful charm. The rough spots have been smoothed down; the old time friendships are dearer; the disagreeable has faded into mistiness and leaves the agreeable—such is the magic touch of father time. But in spite of the mystic happiness of the past, the present is worth while. Life never meant more than it does today, and to have the old days back again would be to spoil a pleasant memory. The rough spots would crop up again and be rougher than ever. It is a kind providence which tones down the past.

—A.S.T.

o o o

A WORD BY THE EDITOR.

Mr. A. S. Thurston of the staff has insisted on writing what he calls an "obituary" of the proprietor of this paper, and has succeeded in doing so according to his best lights. We let it go, simply because, like the case of Halley's comet, we won't be here when it comes around again, and curiosity is a strong factor in these things. One likes to see in life what some things look like.

Mr. Fawcett has written a charming description of the founding of this paper and incidents connected therewith, which will make very interesting reading to many.

Since taking over the paper there has been a steady, though perhaps slow, advance along all lines. For years however, the staff "hoked" along with the old Hoe hand press, capable of turning out only about 200 copies per hour. A year and a half ago the installation of a machine capable of printing 1800 copies per hour made it possible to enlarge the paper and business, resulting in a very great increase to our subscription list, and the growth continues.

Ten years ago the premises, shown in our engraving, were purchased from Mr. R. Pedlar, now of Manitoba. The building was erected by Mr. C. Leitch, who is also now living in the West.

Nothing further needs to be said. Life means change and nothing living can remain changeless. We move along with all the rest. —W.H.T.

Contradiction and Warning

MR. EDITOR,—Allow me space in your valuable paper to contradict the statements I understand have been made by Messrs. Robson Fawcett and Thomas Black as to French Negro not being a French horse, and that he is from a bronco mother. Now, don't get sore, boys, because Negro is doing the business, as he will do it anyway, and I say without fear of successful contradiction that when these parties make such statements they are falsifiers and I can prove it. If this is not sufficient to stop it I will take another course to do so. As for Mr. Long, proprietor of the horse that Thomas Black is managing, he is a gentleman in every respect so far as I know, but as a friend I would advise him to get a man with his horse that talks his own horse and does not ridicule other horses. Yours, JNO. FINDLAY.

GET YOUR

WEDDING RINGS
JEWELLERY
CLOCKS REPAIRED
WATCHES REPAIRED
FOUNTAIN PENS
SILVERWARE

And everything in the Jewellery Line, from

ARMSTRONG

THE FLESHERTON JEWELER

DR. BURT
Specialist in diseases of the
Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat
Office 13 Frost St. - Owen Sound
At the Revere house, Markdale, 1st Friday each month from 8 to 12 a. m.