

OF EARLY DAYS

Vigilantes Mete Out Treatment to Wife Beater - - Murder, Fatality, Portrayed in Vivid Detail From Acton's Romantic Historical Past as Recorded in "Acton's Early Days"

Public Functions Held on Commons

All public functions were held on the commons which was the block bordered by Mill, Willow, Church and Gough streets. The first fireworks ever seen in Acton were let off there and the Orange parades used the commons as the rallying centre on the 12th of July. A little over 85 years ago the Grand Trunk came through and built their station and yards east of the commons.

Large Old Willow Gives Street Name

Willow Street received its name from the big Willow tree that stood from the corner of Mill and Willow. It was planted by the late William Steel in the spring of 1853 and was 16 feet 9 inches in circumference when it was cut down to make room for the Merchants Bank now the Bank of Montreal as part of the Warren Block.

Murderer Escapes Deed Is Revenged

Oliver Lurier, a plasterer of local renown lived on Mill Street. He had a daughter Tilley and a young fellow by the name of Martin Drougole became very intimate with her and under promise of marriage wronged her. About 22 years ago her baby was born but the baby's life cost Tilley her own. She died and Drougole professed great sorrow and on the day of the funeral essayed to attend. Tilley's uncle David Lighthouse of London who was greatly angered at the deceiving of his niece as well as with the effrontery of Drougole, met him, warned him to stay away from the funeral and told him frankly if he came he would be sorry.

Nothing daunted young Drougole came down Mill Street in his black with a band of craps on his hat. When he was crossing the lawn at the house of mourning Mr. Lighthouse, who was standing at the back door, raised his pistol and fatally shot him.

David Lighthouse was arrested and having no lock up here was in the custody of the local police. During the night Lighthouse succeeded in eluding his guard, made his way down through the lannery yards and to a grain field on the present Flynn farm. He lay concealed and finally made his getaway. It was hinted that he was not very seriously sought after.

Extraction Circus For Local Youths

In the days when local doctors were dentists for the community as far as aching molars were concerned the only treatment was to extract and when one young lad troubled went to Dr. McGarvin for the extraction the doctor took the lad to the door for better light. Attaching the forceps and exerting a mighty pull the lad was relieved of his molar and a yell at the same time. There or four lads across the street claimed it was as good as a cure.

No Fire Brigade As Factory Burns

A knitting factory operated by A. W. Green about 35 years ago, was destroyed by fire. This fire occurred before the Brigade was organized. Owing to the greasy wool and oils about the factory, the fire was a hot one and it was thought the nearby house could not be saved. A splendid bucket brigade was formed and the line from the neighbouring wells worked vigorously in passing water to the roof.

'Way Down Under Pipe Still Imbedded

The splendid residence of Acton's first reeve W. H. Storey is now the Victor B. Rumley Funeral Home, on Bower Avenue just recently, while digging out the roots of a tree one of the residents found that they had entwined a steam pipe that used to run from the Storey Gloyd building on Bower Avenue to the owner's residence on Mill Street. The pipe is still there.



FIRST SEWING MACHINES were brought to Acton by Mr. James Matthews and sold in a few days. As Postmaster for over fifty years he was proprietor of the post office, telegraph office, and grocery store. He lived in what is now the drug store of H. Baxter, and the second Eric's Building erected in Acton.

Business Section Moves From Main

Main Street was for years the leading business street in town in fact in the early days of 1825-35 it was the only street Acton had excepting Mill Street down to where the mill was then and still is. The first store opened on Main Street was Davy's Grocery where the Bell Telephone Office is now located.

Streets of Today Bear Adams' Name

If the Acton bear both the number 25 and the name such as 25 Adams Street, or Adams Street, then this is the New York State street that settled in this community, which carries the name of Adams. It is located on the corner of Church Street. The name was first used on the corner of John St. in the Adams family. Every year of the family names and they decided to immortalize a member of their children by naming Adams Street after them. So we have John, William, James, Maria, Anne, and Frederick streets in present day Acton.

No Sunday Route For First Dairyman

Mr. Peter S. Armstrong of Eureka was the first dairyman in Acton who operated a general milk route. He delivered rich milk with a push cart at 5c per quart but on week days only. He refused any Sunday delivery excepting where there were sick babies or old folk who were ill.

July 12, 1875 The pig pen on Frederick Street is an intolerable nuisance. Remove it.



PICTURES were quite an event when this one was taken. "The pupils and school of 1871" is all we can find on this subject. There have been some improvements in the school buildings since this photograph was taken.

Ransom Changes Now Fairview Ave.

Ransom Street that runs from Main Street to the entrance of Fairview Cemetery was one of the last streets named by the original founders of the village when they subdivided their farm holdings and Ransom Adams, one of the characters of Acton, was honoured by naming the street narrow street after him. When Fairview Cemetery was opened, however, Ransom had passed off the scene and the street leading to the entrance was renamed by W. H. Storey who was Reeve at the time Fairview Avenue.

Dark, Damp Cure Given Wife Beater

Take a crowd of Klax-Klan operators a group of dignified men gathered one dark night in 1871 for a prank on one party early married wife beater. The lark they hoped would drive him of the wife for want of a neck wife.

The crowd went to the residence of the Glanville house on Young Street. The party was in the usual and with it difficulty the crowd of Klax-Klan men led him to the old well and after explanations of the reason of this prank, the rope was removed and he was consequently dumped into the pond. As soon as his head would bob up out of the chilly waters someone would push it down.

This continued until the wretched fellow had not strength enough left to come up again. Then there was a flurry for fear he had drowned. The crowd finally succeeded in getting the unconscious man from the pond and not until Dr. McGarvin arrived did the wife beater regain consciousness. As he opened his eyes he gazed upon a crowd of Actonians, more scared than himself and before the week was over he and his family had left town.

Remember When...

- Back in 1878
- July - A big pig laid down on the side of Main Street and kicked the bucket.
- July - Twelve births, four marriages and six deaths were registered in this municipality during the six months ending 30th June.
- August - Mill Street is very much improved by the abundant coat of gravel it received.
- August - A young man with a long swallow-tail coat and high top hat created considerable excitement on Mill and Main Streets Tuesday evening.
- September - Hats in all the latest styles from 75 cents up.
- September - A large number of new hats have been worn since the elections—the outcome of bets on the results.



GREETINGS from Acton, England, accompanied the shield that hangs in the Council Chambers today. H. P. Moore accepted the crest which has become Acton's symbol given by Sir Harry Brittain. The crest above was on display at the Dedication Service when Acton became a Town.