



LOOKING FOR A BARGAIN?

With prices so much higher than they were before the war, bargains are hard to find these days.



For example... materials used in building houses have gone up 179 %.



Food is up 107 %.



The average wholesale price of all the things people buy has gone up 116% (and those are government figures) but



during the same period the price of gasoline has gone up only 35% (less than one-third of the average).



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Halton's Pages of the Past

Village of Ashgrove Has Interesting Historical Background, Once Occupied by Missisaguas

BY GWEN CLARKE

Continuing our historical travels along the Seventh Line, Esqueping, we come to the little village of Ashgrove. Here we find a church, a school, a garage and a welding shop, but nothing to indicate that Ashgrove has an interesting historical background.

The village is situated at the intersection of No. 10 Sideroad and the Seventh Line, Esqueping. The settlement dates from 1819. It derives its name from the large number of black ash that used to grow in the vicinity, the two roads through the village actually running through groves of ash trees.

The first known inhabitants of Ashgrove were a tribe of Algonquin Indians—probably Missisaguas. Their main camping grounds were on the east half of Lot 16, Concession 7, and the east half of Lot 11, Concession 7. Here they cleared a circle in the bush where they held their powwows, danced their weird dances, invoked the aid of the medicine man or smoked their pipes of peace.

Indian Relics Found

Many Indian relics have been picked up on the old camping grounds and the bare circles are still visible to the discerning eye. The Indians made wonderful baskets from a native red shrub that grew in the district. These baskets were bartered by the Indians among the settlers in Ashgrove and vicinity. And these Indians used to grow corn. In fact it is said that the first corn ever grown in Canada was sown and harvested by the Indians at Ashgrove.

"Jimmy, the Weaver" was a colorful character, whose story has come down through the ages, but unfortunately, with many of the details missing. Jimmy must have been one of the first white settlers—probably a "squatter." He lived in a log cabin on the east half of Lot 12, Con. 6—later, the homestead of John McColl. Jimmy was an excellent weaver and settlers for miles around used to bring their wool for Jimmy to weave into homespun. His real name was unpronounceable so he eventually became known only as "Jimmy, the Weaver." What finally happened to him no one seems to know. Possibly he just moved on, perhaps, in more ways than one, weaving his way through the wilds of Upper Canada.

Two weeks ago we mentioned George Cook's sawmill at Farlow. This sawmill was later moved to a location west of No. 10 Sideroad which became known as "Green Valley." Green Valley did not reach the status of a village but it was certainly a very busy little community, most of the activity being centred in and around George Cook's mill.

Features of Illustration

Featured in the illustration, photographed from the Halton County Atlas of 1877, we see, practically in the centre, a large shed which houses the sawmill. To the rear, slightly to the left, is a blacksmith's shop. In the background, an ox-cart, driven by John Cameron. At the top right, two dwellings: one occupied by George Stoneman, manager of the mill, the other by a Mr. Hughes, the engineer. To the left there is a track for

carrying away slabs for burning. In the background a great number of logs are waiting to be started on their way along the elevated track to the hungry saw of the mill. In the foreground we see the outcome—stacks of piled lumber waiting for transportation down the Plank Road to Oakville. Also in the foreground, to the right, is a large double house where lived Dick Stoneman and his son. The other double house provided a residence for the families of Inch and MacFarland.

Apparently there were large families in all these homes so more schooling accommodation was necessary. For this reason the present school was built at Ashgrove in 1870 and added to in 1878. At that time there were two rooms, but for awhile only one teacher, Miss M. Howson who later became Mrs. S. R. Ruddell.

The First School

The first school, a log building, was built in 1840, and of course was a private school. The first public school was a frame building, with clapboard siding, a cottage roof, and a porch over the door. It was on the south corner of the present school yard. The yard was enclosed by a twelve-foot board fence. Whether this high fence was built to keep children in or the wild animals out is open to question.

Be that as it may, the boys had a great time walking the fence, their popularity depending to a great extent upon their prowess in accomplishing this gymnastic feat, and abetted by feminine "Ohs" and "Ahs" from the playground. In those days school bells did not exist. The

teacher recalled her pupils to classes by banging on the wall by the front door with a ruler. There were no desks and only low benches to sit on. No scribes, all the work being done on slates held on the knees. No real blackboards, just part of the plaster wall painted black.

But whatever else was lacking in the pioneer schools you can be quite sure that part of the scholastic equipment was either a well-worn strap or a good stout willow switch. It is also worthy of note that in years gone by school children were given only two weeks vacation in summer. Later this was extended to a month, and great rejoicing.

Many Changes Seen

When the present school at Ashgrove was built the old building was purchased by Wm. McKinnon, moved up the hill and used as a hop-drying kiln. Later it was turned into a stable by Olonga Thornton. Once again it was moved, this time to Dan Wright's farm, now owned by John Ruddell, where the old building is still giving good service as an independent shed.

The four corners at Ashgrove have seen plenty of changes. Some say that at one time there was an hotel on every corner, including "Esqueping House" (1860) run by James Paine, and "Alexander's Hotel" (1870) where the stage coach always changed horses. The stage drivers were Joe Ruddell, Ronald Orr, and H. R. Thompson.

The post office, opened in 1843, changed its location several times. The postmaster was John Hunter. At or near the Corners there was also a wagon shop a blacksmith's,

a general store, a paint shop and a cabinet maker, by the name of William Drake. After moving several times Drake set up business in Thornton's old paint shop, where he had a workshop over the stable. This was entered by an outside engine which was used to drive his stairway. Downstairs he had a steam engine which was used to drive his wood-working machinery. This was a great attraction to the young lads who had to be watched to keep them out of harm's way.

One person we must not forget is Samuel Watkins. Mr. Watkins must have been an enterprising gentleman as he kept a sort of halfway house from 1840 to 1857. Farmers for miles around would team their wheat to Ashgrove and sell to Watkins, who stored it in large sheds on his premises. Sam teamed the wheat to Oakville where it was resold—no doubt at a profit. His astute business ability is not surprising considering he belonged to the same family from which came the Mr. Watkins who founded "The Right House" in Hamilton.

The church at Ashgrove was known first as the New Connexion Methodist and was built in 1840. But more about that later.

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DEER EXPORT

FORT FRANCES, Ont. (CP) — A total of 2036 deer and 100 moose were exported through four United States points of entry in this area by American hunters last fall, slightly less than the number taken out of northwestern Ontario the previous season.



It's a film to be fat
by Ann Williams-Heller

On a spring diet? This book is about what nobody HAS to be — fat.

It outlines two plans for slimming. One is fast, a 110 calorie plan to lose 20 pounds in two weeks. The other is the slower calorie plan for losing over a longer period of time.

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You never know what a library book will be able to help you with next.

HALTON CENTENNIAL MANOR

Burlington C.G.I.T. Girls Tour Manor

(Intended for last week)

On Thursday, April 21, 18 teenage girls belonging to the C.G.I.T. group of the Burlington Presbyterian church, motored to the Manor in order to be conducted on a tour of the building. The girls were accompanied by their leader, Mrs. Douglas and two other ladies.

The girls were conducted through the building by Mrs. Marjorie Brant, R.N., who is the head nurse of the Infirmary and Mrs. Viola Cavell of Milton. At the end of their tour the girls presented the residents with gifts of flowers, magazines and candy.

Sunday Service

On Sunday, April 24, the service in the chapel was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Blair, pastor of St. Paul's United Church, Milton. Mr. Blair gave a very helpful address on the theme of Jesus Christ Lord of All. Miss Milnes Wilson sang a very sweet and acceptable solo, "Bless This House." She was accompanied on the piano by her mother, Mrs. Campbell Wilson, who also played the accompaniment for the hymns.

POET'S CORNER

FOREVER GONE

by Mary Ellen Varley

Forever gone are the things we miss
The waking bird and its song of bliss,
And the starlit dark when all is still,
But the cry of owl and whip-poor-will.

Passing us by are the dreams of God,
Too busy are we His ways to trod,
Too busy to take a small child's hand
And lead him through "gates of" fairyland!

I'm sure when quiet of evening falls,
And power of youth no longer calls,
Then, reflecting on our life as such,
We'll wonder why we have missed so much!



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