

Kribbs' brothers make own Eden

Another of the series of essays written by students of the Rockwood school is reproduced here. Barbara Marshall picked Eden Mills as her subject.

by Barbara Marshall
THE OLD MILLS

Daniel Kribbs and his brother, Aaron, faced the dense, cedar swamp which they had recently purchased from Adam Stevens (1842). Bravely they prepared to set to work and clear the land, for they had decided to build a saw mill. This was a sensible plan since there was a convenient supply of pine trees close at hand, and a sufficient fall in the bed of the river for a dam to be built.

Accordingly on April 14, 1842 they commenced work. By October they had finished the mill and the dam was complete.

All fall and winter they worked steadily, the lumber being taken away as fast as it was cut.

Meanwhile many settlers were coming to live in the area and the future village was justly named "Kribbs' Mills".

Confident in their success with the saw mill the Kribbs brothers were persuaded to erect a grist mill. But alas, their good fortune was not to last. Due to many complications the grist mill was a dismal failure. (As far as I can conclude from my research their millwright was mainly to blame as he left them greatly in debt with an expensive mill on their hands.)

But, nevertheless, they struggled on with the saw mill.

At this point in my notes I feel obliged to give you a better picture of the mills (their position) as pertaining to present surroundings. The so-called saw mill was located in back of the present Barden home on lower Main Street. The grist mill was one quarter of a mile west of the old saw mill (where the mill now stands).

About this time there was also an oatmeal mill situated where the home of Mr. H. Shelke now stands. There is no date or information pertaining to the oatmeal mill but was presumed owned by Adam Argo, when he bought the mill from the Kribbs' brothers.

Finally, the Kribbs were forced to sell their property mills and all to Adam Argo in the spring of 1846. The whole deal cost Mr. Argo \$5,000, only half of what the Kribbs brothers had spent on it.

He took over, remodelled the grist mill, built the oatmeal mill and had a fair business going. He did not use the saw mill but gave his full attention to the other two mills.

In 1855, Mr. Argo sold the mills to the Hortops. For a long period of years the generations of Hortops owned the mill. They all took active parts in the making of the village and many places have been established by the help and generosity of the "Hortop Family". A good example showing their generosity is: On Sept. 8, 1832, Henry Hortop and his wife, Fanny, gave the land on which the town hall now stands to the trustees.

There are several others who owned the mill for a short period of time. A Mr. Leybourne, James Gray and Albert Tolton were just a few.

Finally in 1917 James Barden bought the mill.

EARLY BUSINESS IN EDEN MILLS

The First General Store and Post-Office

Adam Argo was the supposed owner of the first "general store" in Eden Mills. He built in the year of 1851, soon after he came to Eden Mills. The store was a low, wooden structure with a

huge fireplace at one end. It was north of the present-day Marshall's Store but was torn down in 1955.

It served as a welcome gathering place for the lonely settlers in the newly settled area.

Not much money was passed across the counter in the old store. A great quantity of things were traded. Sugar, tea, salt and clothing from the store were traded for meat, butter, eggs and maple syrup from the settlers.

In 1851 a post-office was established in the store with Mr. Argo as acting postmaster.

In 1855, a new store was built by Sam Meadows when Adam Argo sold out. (The old store was converted into a cooper shop.) After building the store (which had three stories) Sam Meadows was left bankrupt and Anthony Jackson took over.

The following is a list of the owners of the store and post office, up to the year 1925, when my grandfather, Norman S. Marshall, took over the business and has operated it ever since:

- Robert Cowan - 1880-1882
- Thomas A. Mason - 1883-1890
- John Roche - 1891-1892
- Thomas B. Coulson - 1892-1908
- George Spence - 1908-1911
- Joseph Moore - 1911-1915
- G.H. Webb - 1915-1918
- Robert Root - 1918-1920
- William Vance - 1920-1921
- Asa Johnson - 1921-1922
- Wm. M. Milne - 1922-1925

THE BLACKSMITH SHOP

There are not many records pertaining to this or there are no exact dates.

In 1891, J.R. Anderson owned the blacksmith business. (The original buildings are still standing, but one was torn down last year.) My uncle's father, LaFayette Pickett worked for Mr. Anderson.

The next blacksmith in the village was James Husband. Then Harry Macintosh took over but after a short time made a trip back to the "Old Country".

During his absence, Frank Palk, (who was Polish) carried on the business. He was said to have been an expert at handi-crafts with metals having learned his trade in Poland.

Mr. Macintosh returned and had the business until 1960 when he retired from his work finding no one had horses to be shod or had no use for the crude ways of working with metal. Harry Macintosh was said to be the finest horse-shoer Eden ever had.

My grandfather tells an amusing anecdote to prove this: "I had just purchased a fine specimen of a horse for an exceptionally cheap price. I wondered for there seemed to be nothing whatsoever wrong with it. But since I had purchased it from a notorious horse dealer I was wary. On the journey home, however, I soon found out what was wrong. At every stop the horse took, his hind feet knocked hard against each other, indeed his ankles were cut to ribbons and bleeding. Well, I stopped in at Harry's on the road home. He took one look at her, took off the shoes and did the necessary repair work in a matter of minutes. That horse never touched the side of her foot together and she was as fast as a horse worth three times as much as I had paid for her."

OTHER SMALL BUSINESSES OF LONG AGO

The Cooper Shop

This was in the building which had been the first general store. The last owner was John Webb. He had a large business in the making and selling of barrels. (There was a long runway to the flour mill and barrels were conveniently rolled down.)

But in the early 1900's cotton sacks and such were being used

so he closed down. The huge old fireplace in the building is still standing.

EDEN MILLS HOTEL

The hotel was built in 1867, across from the Marshall's store on Main Street. It had twelve large rooms including a dance hall and a bar where liquors and wines were sold. In 1869 J. Harris was the hotel keeper. In 1883 Charles Ingles owned it. Joseph Zinger was the last owner. It is now a private home owned by Oscar Neville.

There was an array of other small businesses, shoemakers, jewellers, wagon-makers. These are just a few.

The Toronto Suburban Railroad ran through Eden and the station was located where Edgewood Park now stands. This helped business.

PRESENT BUSINESSES

The Saw Mill

In 1917 when James Barden



EDEN MILLS OLD GRIST MILL is now operated by Ted Barden. He constructs vegetable crates for shipment to market-gardeners along the golden horseshoe. The mill still uses water

power in its operation. The original part of the building is to the right, beside the stream.

(Staff Photo)

\$30,000,000 system of dams Figure cost-sharing formula

A cost-sharing formula for a \$30,000,000 system of dams will be put before directors of the Grand River Conservation Authority at a meeting Nov. 16 in Kitchener.

The formula has been approved by the authority's executive committee and sent to the 71 member-municipalities who will contribute 25 per cent of the scheme. The remaining 75 per cent will come from the provincial and federal governments.

The formula has a built-in flexibility clause which will result in charges based on size.

The charges will be reviewed annually.

In areas of rapid growth, this will result in increased charges, based on population and acreage. Municipalities which remain about the same size will pay proportionately less.

The provincial government has approved the first stage of the

scheme, costing \$17,074,000.

This involved building two of the dams, at West Montrose, north of Kitchener, and at Everton, north-west of Acton, and buying the land for the other three, at Ayr, west of Galt; at Guelph and at Hespeler.

Federal government approval has not yet been received.

Rockwood athletic field receives \$1,618

The Hon. Wm. Stewart, Minister of Agriculture and Food, has advised John Root, M.P.P. for Wellington Dufferin, that a cheque for \$1,618 has been forwarded to Eramosa township treasurer, L. T. Hindley.

The money is ticketed for the area athletic field at Rockwood and is presented under The Community Centre Act.



GEORGE KERR, M.P.P.



ONE OF THE FINE STONE houses typical of the Eden Mills area. Scottish masons were responsible for the design and construction of many of the houses. (Staff Photo)

OTHER SMALL BUSINESSES

- The Coffee Shop and gas station owned by Norman Thomas.

- Garage repair work on cars operated by T. Clifford.

- George Hampson has a fine show of stuffed animals to prove he was once a taxidermist.

- Lowrie Brothers' Construction.

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toned general store. Lately it has been modernized.

Everything from "pickles to paint" is sold including hardware goods. There is a regular postal service. Last year my grandfather retired from being a post master and my grandmother took over becoming the first official post mistress in Eden Mills.

My grandfather thinks of selling soon but has enjoyed his business for forty years.

WILSON'S STORE

Anna Wilson owns this grocery store on Cedar Street (just off Main Street). I found this statement in a book: "Eden Mills displays a fine show of Scottish Masonry." Anna Coulson's store is a shining example. She has been in the business a fairly long time and the store is quite old. Her business is concentrated on groceries (mainly).

MARSHALL'S STORE

In 1925, Norman S. Marshall (my grandfather) took over the store. It had two apartments. He lived in the lower one and the other was rented. (Recently he built a home and consequently both apartments are rented). I can remember when the store seemed to be a typical old fash-

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- 8.15 - Call to Order
- Executive Reports
- Election of Officers
- General Business
- George Kerr
- 9.15 - Dancing - STAN BERNARD ORCHESTRA

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