

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

The Storey heritage

Friday's Globe and Mail carried a small item noting it was 100 years ago on March 7, 1898 that W.H. Storey of Acton died, which Nan Hurst brought to our attention. One has to wonder why The Globe, which calls itself Canada's national newspaper, would take note of the death in their pages of a man from a small village who was a successful businessman and politician at a time of rapid expansion in the Province.

However, when one looks back at the life of this remarkable man the connection is obvious. He was one of the leading leather and glove makers of the nineteenth century. He left his mark on Acton not only with the Canada Glove works (Storey Glove Co.) and his splendid home on Mill Street, Sunderland Villa, now the Shoemaker Funeral Home. He was also the first Reeve of Acton when the hamlet emerged from the shelter of Esquesing township and achieved Village status in 1873.

According to Acton's Early Days, W.H. Storey came to Acton about 1866 to open a saddlery and harness business. He erected the building now occupied by a clothing store "Clothes to the Edge" on Mill Street, where he built a large trade "by industry and manufacture of first class goods."

In 1868 he started making sheepskin harvest mitts as an addition to his other enterprises. The demand for the mitts grew so fast he disposed of the harness and saddle business and went into full production of gloves and mitts, specializing in buckskin gloves.

History records that Edward Moore of the Moore Brothers Shingle and Stove Company visited Storey's Saddlery complaining about the poor quality gloves he had to work with and the lack of a heavy glove on the market. Storey borrowed a frayed pair of gloves and used them as a pattern for the course gloves he created. It was go from that time.

Reeve Storey's new residence, Sunderland Villa, was named for his home county in England. Also in those years, the glove business moved from Mill Street, where it had out grown the accommodations two or three times, to a new factory, The Canada Glove Works on Bower Avenue. Hundreds of Actonians and other district people were employed at the Bower Avenue "glove shop" which was known throughout Canada for its fine gloves. It was a major Acton industry. Storey Gloves was later taken over by H.T. Arnold and sons who also had another glove factory in Georgetown. The Arnolds operated the business until it closed after World War 2. The building was occupied for a while by a TV operation with union problems. It moved away and the building sat empty until it was demolished and the present Acton Post Office was constructed in its place.

The factory had a commanding position with a full view over the large pond situated behind Halton Hills Hydro from the Grand Trunk Railway, now the CN. The first electrically lighted sign in Acton was erected on the roof of the glove factory. Over 100 feet long it "told all and sundry" "it was the home of "W.H. Storey and Son, Glove Manufacturers, Established 1868." At night the huge sign reflected in the pacid waters of Henderson's Pond.

W.H. Storey, the man who made this all possible was a businessman and manufacturer of exceptionally able qualities, Acton's Early Days observes, "No other man was so greatly missed, who ever passed away in Acton. The glove factory, under his management, gave employment to hundreds of residents here. Man and women, boys and girls, there made their livelihood. And this went on for several generations of the same families. Over 1100 attended his funeral at the United church.

No wonder he was so well respected that even The Globe and Mail would remember the 100th anniversary of his death. We could use more men like him today.



Storey's Glove Works as it appeared from the CN Railway tracks



Another indication spring is on the way - the dam spillway on Mill Street West which holds back the 88 acres of water from Fairy Lake is gushing with spring water flowing into the Black Creek. - Frances Niblock photo

Waiting for baby

By MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY
The New Tanner

What is there about being a grandparent that makes up for having to survive parenthood first?

I vividly remember wanting my first child and being afraid I'd never have any. Right now I am sharing the wait with my youngest step-daughter-in-law. Her first baby was due last week and she too, can't wait to get the birth over with.

Her husband brought her down for a visit Saturday. Killing time, I suspect since junior is already overdue.

We went through that, too. Indeed, my husband threatened to take me for a ride over the nearest railway track in hopes of shaking baby loose since she was so content with her first home.

I'm not admitting how long ago that was but she has a younger sister and brother as well as eight older step brothers and sisters. Okay, I made up for that slow start!

I laugh about it in fact, because a good family friend once told my mother "just wait till you have a dozen of your own" when they were discussing Lizzie's 12 grands. For a moment I thought that sounded pretty good. Then I remembered I was an only child and had second thoughts.

Now I've got 11 kids and can't imagine how I'd manage without them. Of course, I didn't go through dating, school, measles, mumps, the flu, teething and all those other "minor" things with most of them. I got them at the all grown up stage where all I have to do is love them, listen to them and lean on them when I get desperate.

Just as well when I remember the tests my own three used on us. First there was leaving Jess with my parents for three days when we moved south from Iroquois Falls. Moving was enough of a job without adding

a busy 14-month-old to the workload.

When we arrived back Mom didn't know how to tell me about Jess falling in the gutter in the barn in her white fur snowsuit. I discovered manure stains wash right out of acrylic pile without a trace. Mom was so relieved she never again worried about babysitting.

Julia went for a stroll down the street two days after we moved into our first house. She was one and I,

at seven months pregnant, was too big to give chase. Jess, who was just short of five, rounded up the neighbourhood kids even though no one knew us yet and they searched all the back yards. My Mother, who was helping me unpack, started searching in one direction with her car and my husband went the other way with our car. Julia turned up two blocks away dragging her trike in one hand and her shoe in the other, totally

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Trying our best to maintain downtown: B.I.A.

To the Editor,

I think you would have found streets in most areas in southern Ontario a little gungy and unsightly last week, after the snow suddenly disappeared to reveal all the trapped garbage and unsavoury messes that had been so nicely hidden by Mother Nature. Unfortunately, your last editorial focused on downtown Acton as the example!

The Acton BIA has just hired a street maintenance employee (we usually don't employ anyone over the winter months) who will hopefully get the streets ship shape again. We believe this is an important job, but it's a very difficult position to fill because there aren't men who can be counted on to do the job conscientiously and with minimal supervision. It also takes strong character to put up with some of the snide comments from a few of our own citizens, who have in the past chided our employees for being part of

"Workfare".

We have been very fortunate in the caliber of employee we have had and they deserve the community's encouragement and support.

The BIA has also worked with the Region of Halton to co-ordinate garbage pick up in the downtown core, so instead of seeing garbage bags out on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, pick up has been reduced to just Tuesday and Friday.

And you are right, we all have to take responsibility for keeping our community clean and tidy. To provide added incentive, in November the BIA purchased 10 additional garbage receptacles for the downtown, which we expect to be delivered some time this week.

So as you can see, we are trying our best to maintain our downtown, but we can't do it alone.

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Acton BIA Co-ordinator



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