

"Milton in the past"

by R. M. Clements

Town's early lighting system fire brigade, water reservoir

(Continued from last week)
In the minutes of the Town Council of 1886, you will find it recorded that the tender of Thomas Turner for lighting the street lamps, supplying oil and wicks and chimneys, be accepted at four cents per lamp per night.
I don't remember just how long Tommy Turner had this generous contract, but I was a pretty small boy when I saw him tending to the lamp post at the end of our street.
However, in time a company known as the Ball Electric Light Co. negotiated with the town and set up our first electric light plant in 1891 in a frame building at the west corner of Elizabeth and Victoria Streets.
This concern carried on for

a few years and in 1895 sold out to a company known as the Milton Light and Power Co. (capital of \$15,000). The principal stockholders were John Stewart, Robert Stewart, John Hunter, Sidney Young and Duncan Dewar.
Street lights by now were very much improved and expanded. Shortly after, this plant was moved to a site at the rear of the present creamery on Commercial St., and by this time the lights were up on very high poles and the electrician went around from pole to pole and lowered the light with a rope to renew the carbons.
This company sold out to the Corporation in 1899 or 1900 and shortly after this, the

town built a new light plant just east of the town hall.
Riby Ellis was the electrician at this time, at a salary of \$50 per month. The Ontario Hydro Electric, which was expanding very rapidly in the province at this time, was in touch with the town and after negotiations and a plebiscite of the ratepayers in 1913, the town was finally connected to the Ontario Hydro.
Before the town took over, and for a few years after, the lights were all turned off at midnight and the town was in darkness and the electrician went home — that is except Sunday night. Then they were turned off at 11 p.m. If there was a big dance in the town hall, for a tip of two dollars, the electrician would keep the lights on an extra hour.
After the Milton Light Co. moved out of the building on Victoria St., a company known as the Milton Metal Shingle and Siding Co. started up, but they didn't seem to last very long. I remember the place quite well, for I worked there one summer holiday as a riveter. The \$2.50 to \$3.00 a week I got seemed a lot of money.
Before the days of mechanical stone crushers, we find in the record of council minutes of February 1886, that tenders were asked for delivery of 30 cords of large stone to the jail yard.
This tender was awarded to a Thomas Johnston at \$1.99 per cord.
The stone, once in the yard behind that high stone wall, was broken into small pieces by prisoners who were under sentence of hard labor. This broken stone was later teamed out by the town and put on our streets. It made a good foundation for present paved roads.
The cracking of the hammers on the stone could be heard for some distance outside the jail yard. (Hard labor today seems to mean pushing a gasoline lawn mower or raking up leaves.)

A man named John Irwin was hired as inspector at 75 cents per day.
About the author
Editor's Note: As his own centennial project, Russell M. Clements of 192 Queen St., Milton, has compiled a colorful glance into Milton's earlier days. We hope readers will find his recollections interesting.
Mr. Clements was born in Milton and apart from the time he spent with the 3rd Canadian Mount Rifles in South Africa and overseas with the Canadian Army Service Corp in World War One, he has spent his entire life in Milton.
He was a member of town council for five years some time ago, and a member of the fire brigade around 1905. He attended military school in Toronto and London, and for several years was captain of the Milton Company of the Lorne Rifles Regiment. He has been a member of the Masonic Order for over 61 years. He joined the lawn bowling club in 1924 and has been an enthusiast of that sport ever since. He retired as Postmaster in 1953.
The Champion would welcome written recollections of the town's early days from others interested in having such history preserved and published.

Many today will remember that very sanitary cup that thousands and thousands of children and adults used — before the days of germs.
FIRE BRIGADE
I didn't find in any of the old town minutes where this town ever had one of the old type hand pumps for fire protection, but in 1890 a fire brigade was organized with two reels and one ladder wagon.
These the men pulled by hand with a rope. The fire chief was to receive \$6.00 a year, each captain \$4.00, and the firemen \$2.00 a year.
This was raised, for by 1906 when I was a member, we got 50 cents a fire call and the same for a practice night. It usually came to between \$8.00 and \$12.00 a year and our chief was getting \$50 a year.
Milton has gone a long way since that day.
We now have a full time fire chief with 29 firemen on call in our present brigade, with the very latest up-to-date equipment and a spick and span fire hall.
The firemen today receive each around \$350 for their year's service.
Our fire protection cost for the year 1967 is estimated at \$15,575.52. However, in my day as a fireman, we serviced only the town.
BOARD WALKS
Before our sidewalks were paved many years ago, our walks were all wooden and it was a daily common sight to see two of the town workmen, Walter and Harry Pitcher, starting out from the rear of the town hall with a wheelbarrow load of planks and spikes to repair any broken ones all over town.
An item in the council minutes of 1890 shows that a contract was given to supply the town four-by-four cedar scantling at \$11.85 per thousand and two-inch pine planks at \$12.85 per thousand.
Today four-by-four inch cedar costs around \$180 per thousand, and two-inch pine planks of a good quality are around \$375 per thousand.
In 1899, the town employed two auditors to check up on our books, and they each received eight dollars.
In 1909, or 20 years later, this was raised to \$12 each. To audit the town books for 1906, it cost around \$2,100.
Here's another little item for you to ponder over. In 1886, our county rate was \$184.57, and this year the county rate is \$59,014.11. (Continued next week)



MILTON OPTIMISTS made the first installment for their donation to Milton District Hospital. The Optimists have pledged a new patients' room to the hospital. Here Charlie Thomas, secretary of the Optimists presents the first cheque to Hospital Administrator Dalton McQuaig. (Staff Photo)

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* OPTI Mist NEWS *
* Club *

The big news for this report is the successful White Elephant Sale held at the fair grounds on October 28.
In spite of the inclement weather, there was a good turnout and there was some spirited bidding for some of the items. Gross receipts were \$463 and although all bills have not been received as yet, it is expected that we will realize about \$400 profit, which of course is earmarked for our youth work and civic projects.
We certainly wish to publicly express our appreciation to Jack Elliott, Chris Schouten and Tiny Hopkins who once again volunteered their services as auctioneers and who of course did their usual capable and proficient job, and we would certainly be remiss in not thanking those people who turned out to give us this fine support, the general public and also chairman of the committee Ian Robertson, who deserves a great deal of credit for the effort he put into this campaign.
The past two meetings, we have had a real good turnout of members, although there are still several amongst the missing. We are all anxious to see and greet them again as soon as possible.
We all survived Hallowe'en without picking up any serious harm and I am pleased to report that the children who were in Milton District Hospital were not left out, as president Herb Higgs and vice-president Jack Pettigrew presented baskets of goodies on behalf of our club.
Herb and Jack and yours truly attended the recent meeting of zones 2 and 3 held at the Optimist Youth Centre in Burlington on Saturday, October 21.
It was nice to have our good friend, and the fellow responsible for organizing our club, Bill Vivian, past president of the Burlington club in attendance at our last meeting and also several prospective members.

A most enjoyable evening was spent hearing of the work done by our very special guest the Rev. Douglas Hall, who was introduced by his cousin, Optimist Ken Orr. Great interest was shown by all present and considerable discussion ensued with Rev. Hall after his formal talk.
Although the Rev. Hall's basic trade is architectural drafting and building design, he spent five years with the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department until ordained five years ago as an Anglican priest. He is presently rector of St. Dunstan's Anglican Church in the centre of the "Little Italy" area of Toronto and is police chaplain and court chaplain, as well as a chaplain to the Anglican Young People of Toronto Diocese.
Previous to his present location, he served for two and a half years as chaplain of Millbrook Maximum Security Reformatory at Cobourg with special calls to Kingston Penitentiary and two years at St. Andrew's in Scarborough, and visiting chaplain at Don Jail. In Toronto, he is known as the "Fuzz Priest."
Our membership drive is slowly building up in interest, but we all must put a little more effort into it if we wish to build a real strong club, so let's all set a goal for ourselves and see who can bring in the most new members by the time we complete our first year of operation.
Also let's see you fellows out at the next meeting who have been so noticeable by your absence.
—The Post Office reminds us to mail letters and parcels for Christmas early if they are bound for foreign countries. Deadlines for surface mail to Britain, for instance, are Nov. 21 for parcels and Nov. 29 for letters.

Sleep in comfort

with an electric blanket

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MILTON HYDRO ELECTRIC COMMISSION
250 MAIN ST. E. TELEPHONE 878-2345

He was a member of town council for five years some time ago, and a member of the fire brigade around 1905. He attended military school in Toronto and London, and for several years was captain of the Milton Company of the Lorne Rifles Regiment. He has been a member of the Masonic Order for over 61 years. He joined the lawn bowling club in 1924 and has been an enthusiast of that sport ever since. He retired as Postmaster in 1953.
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It was estimated the springs they intended to use would produce 20,000 gallons per day. The survey showed an estimated fall from the reservoir to the Town Hall of 200 feet and this gave good sufficient pressure for many years.
The cast iron water fountain that was presented to the town by the Royal Templars of Temperance Society in 1889, and now sits prominently in the Costigan Memorial Garden at the entrance of our Town Hall, was first placed quite close to the roadway and was certainly a welcome oasis to passing horses and cattle. It also had at its base a small cast basin for dogs. This basin is now covered with cement.
And we musn't forget the cast bronze cup that was fastened to the top with a chain for the general public to use.

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Notice to Electors of the Town of Milton

NOMINATIONS

FOR

MAYOR, REEVE, DEPUTY REEVE, SIX COUNCILLORS, SIX PUBLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEES, TWO HYDRO ELECTRIC COMMISSIONERS

For the Municipality of the Town of Milton

FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM

will be held in the

General Purpose Room of the Martin Street Senior Public School
MARTIN STREET, MILTON

ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1967
From 7.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m., E.S.T.

The Voting Will Take Place on

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1967

at the Following Places:

NORTH WARD: General Purpose Room, Martin Street Senior School

EAST WARD: Union Hall, Pine Street

SOUTH WARD: Agricultural Hall, Fair Grounds

● At the same time, the opinion of the electors upon the following question will be obtained:

"Are you in favor of the Province taking over 100% of the cost of education in Ontario?"

Electors of Milton are hereby required to take notice:

1. The above is a correct statement of the question to be submitted.

2. Monday, the 27th day of November, 1967, at the hour of eight o'clock in the afternoon, in the office of the Clerk, Town Hall, Milton, is appointed as the time for the appointment of persons to attend at the polling places and at the final summing up of the votes by the Clerk.

Polls Open at 9.00 a.m. and Close at 7.00 p.m., E.S.T.

AUDREY B. BRUSH, Deputy-Clerk of the Town of Milton.

Milton, November 1, 1967