

Milton saw mill completely destroyed by evening blaze despite speedy response by the community's firefighters

Time Capsules are gems of information extracted from past issues of The Champion and other publications to provide a window into Milton's past. Explanatory comment is sometimes provided to place the situation in context.

November 1891

On Saturday afternoon and evening the wind was blowing a perfect hurricane and at about 6 p.m. an alarm of fire was sounded. James Lindsay's saw mill on the corner of Pearl and Fulton streets was on fire. Mr. Lindsay and his men had been turning heading (material for making cask-heads) for barrels during the day and all hands were at supper when the fire started. The mill was built of heavy timbers and was filled with heading and other light stuff. The two hose reels were quick on the spot and soon two streams were playing on the burning building.

Although the firemen worked willingly and hard against the strong wind, smoke and heat in their faces, it was utterly impossible for them to save the mill which was completely destroyed. One of Dr. Robertson's houses, occupied by J.S. McCannell was also burned to the ground, the house being in the direct course in which the wind was blowing across the street from the mill.

...

There was literary entertainment at the school house on Friday, prepared by pupils of model and public schools. Selections for the programme were excellent. The effect, however, was lost to the immense gathering on account of a continued disturbance made by the town roughs who were present in great numbers. They assembled in one corner of the building and did what they could to break up the programme. They drowned out the chairman's voice while he was talking. Dr. Robertson and teachers many times requested them to desist from their racket.

On Monday the head teacher of the public school had a contract on hand when he thrashed no less than 32 (corrected in the next issue to 11) of the boys that misbehaved at the entertainment on Friday evening. The second teacher took a hand in and repeated the dose to some of the boys that made some remarks about him and a young lady that he was escorting home after the entertainment. At a meeting of the

Milton Time Capsules



School Board on Tuesday. Mr. Porter made a charge against Mr. Gray, head master, and Mr. Miller, second teacher, for whipping his son George without any cause, but if they had cause, then too severely. The board declined to take it up unless Mr. Porter formulated his charges in writing. Mr. Porter did not do this but stated he intended to lay an information against Mr. Miller before a magistrate for assault.

On Saturday Mr. Henry Gray, headmaster of our Public School, had six of the young lads before the mayor who were said to have assisted in the racket at the literary entertainment held the previous week. After hearing a number of witnesses the case was adjourned until Tuesday evening when it was again adjourned until Saturday, since the mayor was confined to his house. On Friday night last the mayor ended the adjourned sittings. He found the boys all guilty and the fine and costs amounted to \$27.25.

December 1891

On Tuesday the Patrons of Industry of the county will hold a convention at the town hall here to choose a candidate to contest the county in their interest at the coming bye-election made necessary by the unseating of Mr. David Henderson, ex. MP. The organization is a strong one having between 400 to 500 members and if all these stand by, work and vote for their candidate they will make the coming contest an interesting one. Which of the old parties will lose most by the third party movement we are not in a position to say.

Mr. Richard Graham, of Ashgrove was chosen by the Halton Patrons of Industry at the convention. He was not present at the nomination meeting and later declined to stand. Another convention was held and John D. McGregor of Trafalgar accepted. He was a young man and a clever one but the editor commented that "no third party man can carry Halton."

This material is assembled on behalf of the Milton Historical Society by Jim Dills, chair of research, who can be reached by e-mail at jdills@idirect.com.

OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Growth plans not in keeping with theme: reader

Dear Editor:

'The Best of Town and Country' is Milton's motto and plans for growth were to be consistent with this theme.

Well, you could have fooled me.

We have houses being built on Thompson Road with their front porches almost sitting on what will be a busy street. A drive through many new areas shows single-car garages with single driveways destined to be overly congested.

A new wrinkle in the Drury development will become obvious this week as hundreds of students realize their walkway from Gowland Crescent and Beaver Court onto the Drury property is about to be closed off.

What was a 10-minute walk will become as much as a 30-minute hike. Going home for lunch will also be greatly restricted due to time constraints.

This closing seemed to come as a surprise to some of our council members. I guess our out of town staff didn't consider it important enough to clue in council or Milton citizens.

This latest part of the Drury tragic comedy is due to the Ontario Street entrance now being built.

It's being built as a result of a miffed council that refused to give the developer the Childs Drive access. The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) recommended Childs Drive and not Ontario Street, but council said no.

The developer goes back to the OMB and guess what? — he gets both accesses. Of course council was consistent and lost this battle along with hundreds of thousands of our tax dollars.

Yes, they will defend us right down to our last tax dollar. And now they plan to do a retail survey.

What in blazes do they know about retail sales? The old line about downtown being the retail centre of town is being bandied about?

Most downtown merchants know this is nonsense and it's been proven in other communities.

Burlington spent millions on its downtown but its citizens went to the malls. Milton will be no different. Spend the survey money on new fascia for downtown stores and fix up the parking problem.

That's the level of control given to town councils. They're not in charge of anything else.

New development can provide us with some real benefits. I don't know what they are, but council says it's true. The retail giants are going to determine where and when they decide to come to Milton — not town council.

Patrick Kelly
Milton

Reader voices opposition to quarry expansion plans

Dear Editor:

I, too, am opposed to the proposal to change the protective zoning of the Niagara Escarpment Plan to allow mineral extraction from Dufferin Aggregate lands described in Amendment No. 18.

In Dufferin's project summary, it puts forward persuasive arguments for the enlargement of its quarry.

It also promises that when it ceases to quarry, it'll rehabilitate the sight, or restore it.

To extract the limestone, Dufferin must first remove the soil layer and all bush upon the land. This bush land represents 50 to 70 years of transformation of habitat to harbour many interdependent eco-systems.

Dufferin can't restore this.

Dufferin can't restore the quintessential mixture of hardwoods, shrubs, flowers and conifers — not to

mention the fallen, mouldering trees that replenish the earth, the standing dead trees that provide homes and food for birds.

Dufferin can't restore the unbroken tract of wildland that animals and birds require, the small obscure wetland nurseries hidden among mature trees that wood ducks prefer. At best, they're only replacing the natural environment with a man-made, rather sterile habitat that lacks the qualities inherent in the original.

To borrow from Gwen Isings and Patricia Guenther, "it must remain an area of undisturbed landmass with all its wildlife and beauty intact. This is our biosphere, a delicate eco-system that needs to be protected by everyone."

Margaret Wilkes
Milton

Thanks for ruling on gay and lesbian studies, says reader

(The following letter was addressed to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and a copy was filed with The Champion.)

Dear Editor:

Please accept this letter of congratulations on your recent vote in favour of a resolution for public school boards to fund and make accessible literature reflecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered lives.

The overwhelmingly positive support for this resolution by your federation is groundbreaking and reflects a deep concern for equality and human rights.

The Halton Anti-Homophobia Committee is a community group comprised of educators, health care providers, police personnel, social service providers, volunteers and Halton youth who're committed to raising awareness around the very real concern over prejudice and

violence directed at the homosexual community as well as serving as a support network for anyone who has been victimized or is vulnerable to homophobia.

The support of your federation enhances and validates the hard work of committees like ours. Thank you.

Julie Pehar
Halton Anti-Homophobia
Committee chair



Charley FitzWhiskey's
TAP & EATERY



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