

# Only 50 of 400 Survived A Trip of 18th Century

(This is another of a series of articles by Dr. Reaman, dean of men at Waterloo College, who has made an extensive investigation into the backgrounds of Ontario's early settlers.)

By G. E. Reaman

To those of us accustomed to the idea that it is possible to have lunch in America and dinner that evening in Europe, the length of time required and the hazards involved in the journeys of our forefathers to this continent are almost incomprehensible.

Since most of the earliest settlers in Upper Canada came from either Switzerland or south Germany, their only means of reaching a port of embarkation was to travel down the Rhine River in boats to Rotterdam or Amsterdam.

And even this was a disheartening undertaking, for it would take from four to six weeks and there were 36 customs houses that had to be passed.

What with tolls and dishonest agents, it was not uncommon for whole families to arrive at the port of embarkation with neither money to continue their journey nor to return home.

Those who found themselves in this predicament had but one alternative: In return for transportation for themselves and families, they had to sell their services to the ship's captain for from three to seven years without pay.

Upon arrival in America, he would auction them off to the highest bidder. Those who arrived in this way were called indentured servants, in reality white slaves, and were treated as such.

But of all the hardships, prob-

ably the voyage itself to America was the most terrible. It might last from 12 to 16 weeks and in the early 18th century the ships were frightfully overcrowded.

Provisioned for 160 persons, one ship had actually 229 on board. Not only was food scarce, it usually became unfit for human consumption.

When bad weather came, the passengers were shut up in the hold for days at a time, where lack of air increased, if possible, the misery from seasickness.

"One passenger wrote of the 'terrible misery, stench, fumes, horror, vomiting, many kinds of sickness: fever, dysentery, headache, boils, constipation, scurvy, cancer, mouth rot and the like.'"

Another described it thus: "We had enough in the day to behold the miserable sight of botches, pox, others devoured with lice until they were at death's doors."

"In the night fearful cries and groaning of sick distracted the whole company, which added much to our trouble."

It isn't any wonder then that smallpox, yellow fever, typhus and dysentery took a heavy toll in lives. In 1738, of the 15 ships that arrived in Philadelphia that year, only two came with those on board reasonably well, while 1,600 had died.

In one ship in 1745, only 50 out of 400 survived and in 1752 in another only 19 out of 200. In 1749, the year of the greatest migration, it is estimated that 2,000 died at sea.

Certainly our ancestors who survived must have had rugged constitutions, and we know that 68,000 did survive the voyage to Pennsylvania between the years 1727 and 1776. And this is

why we know: By 1727 so many immigrants were coming into Pennsylvania who didn't speak English that the government became alarmed and passed a regulation that each ship's captain had upon arrival to present a list of his male passengers and they in turn had to take the oath of allegiance to the British crown.

This was a fortunate act since it has made possible the collection of 68,000 names together with photostats of signatures by the Pennsylvania German Society.

These are in three volumes and are to be found in the Kitchener Public Library and anyone whose ancestors settled in Pennsylvania might well consult these volumes.

So much for transportation difficulties in getting to America. Let us now see how they got to Canada.

There were three ways of travel: On foot, on horseback and by conestoga wagon. The first two need no explanation except to say that it usually took at least three weeks to make the journey. The third is quite unique.

The wagon was made by hand in the Conestoga River district, hence its name. There were two kinds—transport and farm.

The transport had wheels five to six feet high and a wagon bed 16 feet long, dished both lengthwise and crosswise. Bows followed the lines of the body, slanting outward and giving the distinctive and unmistakable silhouette of the conestoga wagon. The top of the first hoop might be eleven feet from the ground while the homespun cover might be two dozen feet long.

The farm wagon that came to Upper Canada had the same characteristics as the transport but on a smaller scale.

The transport wagon was drawn by two or three teams of horses, known as conestogas, specially bred for the work, hitched tandem-wise and driven by a man who either walked, sat on a lazy board (a sliding board which was pulled out on the left side of the wagon between the wheels) or rode the wheel horse on the left-hand side.

He directed the horses by a check rein to the lead horse on the left and by the directional words "gee" and "haw", meaning right and left.

Driving as he did always from the left, it was more convenient for him to pass on the right than the left. In this way the pattern of passing on the right was set.

Usually in migrating, the man walked and the wife and children rode inside the wagon with a cow bringing up the rear, tied to the back of the wagon.

If a stream had to be crossed, the horses were unhitched and made to swim across. The wagon box was usually water tight and could be used as a boat.

Of the many conestoga wagons that came into Ontario, only two remain: One in the Waterloo County Historical Museum and one in the possession of Amos Baker, Concord, York County.

The latter is in such good condition that in 1952 when Waterloo County had its centennial, this wagon was borrowed, taken down to Pennsylvania and drawn all the way by a team of horses from Harrisburg to Waterloo over the same route it had travelled in 1797 when it brought the Bakers to their new home in Vaughan Township, York County.

In all probability, the many wagons that came up were dismantled for their iron and lumber. This would explain why there are so few in existence at the present time.

## HUMAN DEATHS ARE FROM VARIOUS CAUSES

Death comes to Canadians in uncommon as well as usual ways.

Last year, for example, two persons died from bunions. One Canadian died of radiation in 1954. Boils and carbuncles carried off 137 in the six years 1950-55. In the same six-year period 174 persons died of acute nasopharyngitis—better known as the common cold.

Hay fever took 16 lives in 1950, one in each of 1951-52-55. In the 1950-55 period mental, psychoneurotic and personality disorders were given by doctors as the underlying cause of death for 2,491 Canadians. Alcoholism took 77 lives in 1950, rose to 132 in 1953 and eased back to 98 last year.

Indicator of Trends This information is included in a recent report issued by the Bureau of Statistics giving detailed causes of death among Canadians in the 1950-55 period.

A bureau official told a reporter this extensive interest in death was not inspired by any macabre twist. The report is intended as an indicator of the trends in disease and death causes for health departments, medical researchers, doctors and others.

It was compiled from reports by doctors or coroners on the cause of every death recorded in Canada during the period. The bureau official said it gives what was considered as the underlying, or original cause of death.

In the case of the two bunion deaths, for example, it was probably complications resulting from the bunions—such as gangrene—that eventually killed the victims. But in the doctors' opinion, the bunions started the fatal chain reaction. The same principle applies to the other causes.

As the bureau reported in its regular publications throughout the period, diseases of the circulatory system—heart disease and so on—caused most of the deaths in Canada during the last six years, rising from 43,059 of a total of 123,789 in 1950 to 47,284 of 128,154 last year.

Cancer was the next largest single cause of death. It took 17,808 lives in 1950 compared to 20,658 in 1955. Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs followed increasing to 15,981 in 1955 from 14,629 in 1950. Accidents of all types were next, rising to 10,079 deaths last year from 8,757 in 1950.

The bureau said the figures do not include deaths in the Yukon or the Northwest Territories. They were measured against population estimates of 13,688,000 in 1950 and 15,573,000 last year.

Suicide Total Steady The report shows that the number of suicides remained fairly constant during the six years. In 1950 a total of 1,060 persons died of self-inflicted injuries. By 1954 the number had risen slightly to 1,102, and last year to 1,103.

There were 129 deaths "purposely inflicted by other persons"—murders and so on—in 1950, rising slightly each year to 146 in 1951, 148 in 1952, 166 in 1953, 168 in 1954 and levelling at the same figure in 1955.

During the six years, there were, by years respectively, 11, 6, 10, 11, 8 and 8 executions—a total of 54.

Under accidents, falls from ladders took 114 lives in the six years and accidental electrocutions 489.

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## HORSE AND BUGGY DRIVER FINED FOR CARELESS DRIVING

For the first time in the memory of Kitchener police court officials, a man was convicted yesterday of careless driving of a horse and buggy.

Nathan Clemmer, a teen-ager of R.R. 1, New Hamburg, pleaded guilty to the offence, which occurred June 10 on Highway 86 near Elmira. He was fined \$10 and costs.

Mrs. Eleanor Hunt, court reporter, got into difficulty as she read the charge. She stumbled at the part where she usually warns the accused that a conviction means he will lose his licence.

"Buggies carry no licence nor do drivers need a permit. Mrs. Hunt looked questioningly at Crown Attorney Daufman as she began to repeat the warning. He quickly decided no warning was needed.

Police said Nathan Clemmer was not keeping his horse under control or his eyes on the road as a car started to pass the buggy June 10. The horse suddenly jumped on the car, trampling in the hood and roof. Damage to the car was estimated at \$150.

No matter to what extent automation may be developed, it is sad and true that people will have to depend in some degree upon people.



Gladys Glad, the former life story will be made into a Katcher, Hollywood film writer. Hollywood's most successful and beloved producers who was a famous New York newspaperman and columnist before moving to the film capital.

Ziegfeld Follies beauty who lives near Pickering, looks at some photos of her late husband, Mark Hellinger, whose film soon by a Hollywood studio. The interested spectators are Arthur Gottlieb, left, who is married to Gladys, and Leo Katcher, who is married to Gladys, and Leo Katcher, Hollywood film writer. Hollywood's most successful and beloved producers who was a famous New York newspaperman and columnist before moving to the film capital.

## Crows Cleaning Up The Highways

It would appear that nature is taking a hand in clearing the highways of the bodies of many of her "children." Man has adopted a policy of leaving the remains of skunks, porcupines, racoons, groundhogs, etc., foolish enough to get in the way of the "superior being" and his snorting, racing, creations, to be ground up until they finally blow away as dust. But Nature, it would seem, has relegated large flocks of crows to the clean up job.

Large numbers of these big black scavenger birds are to be seen along the highways and other roads engaged in making a quite thorough job on the large amount of carrion flesh to be found along these thoroughfares. Their numbers seem much greater than usual and, it would seem, largely as a result of their activities, the bodies disappear much more quickly than in other years.

Skunks and porcupines, particularly the former, make up most of these victims of fatalities. They just have not realized that, unlike their natural enemies, these men creatures, in their heavily armored means of travel, do not fear either scent bag defences or suddenly flicked sharp pointed and barbed quills.

There are, of course, occasional dogs and cats in the motorists' bag. Strangely we have never found it necessary to run over any of these creatures. Guess our dodging ability is too good.—Owen Sound Sun-Times.



## Building a seaway

Hour after hour, day after day...GMC trucks slug it out on Canada's biggest construction job

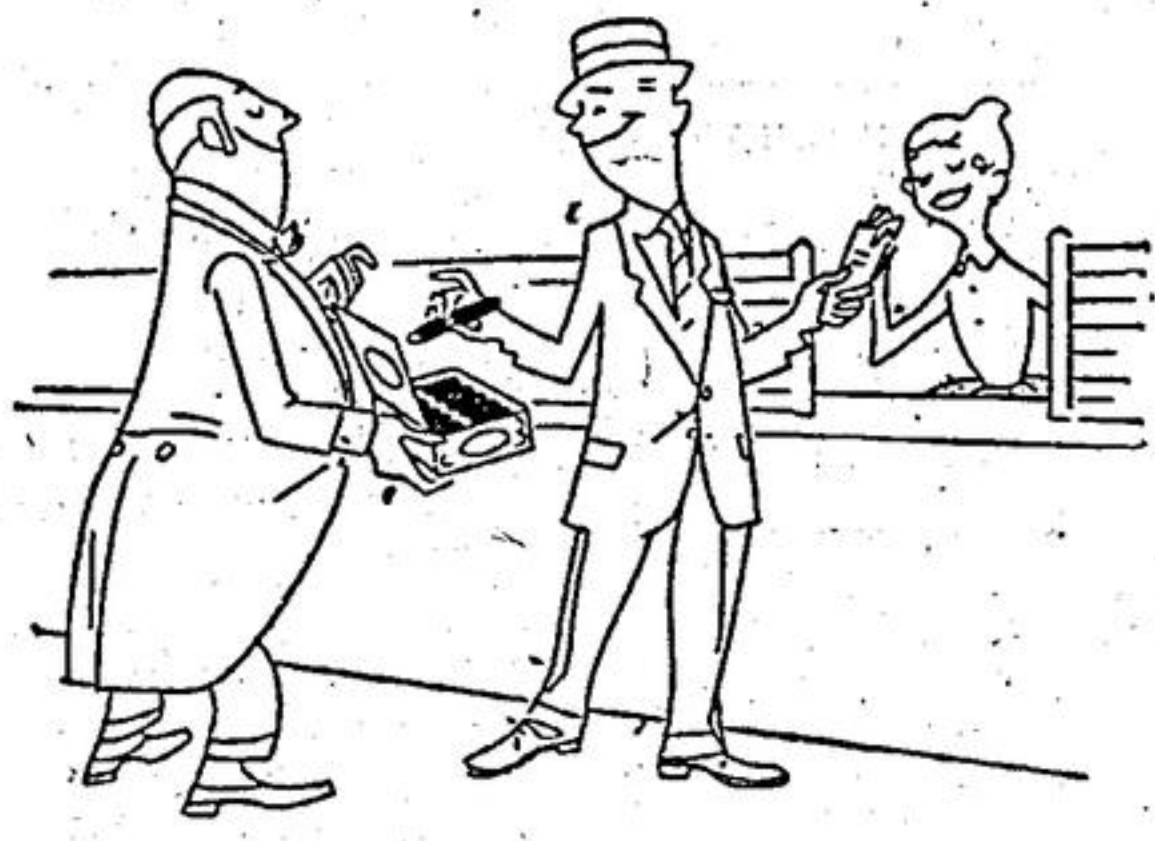
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