

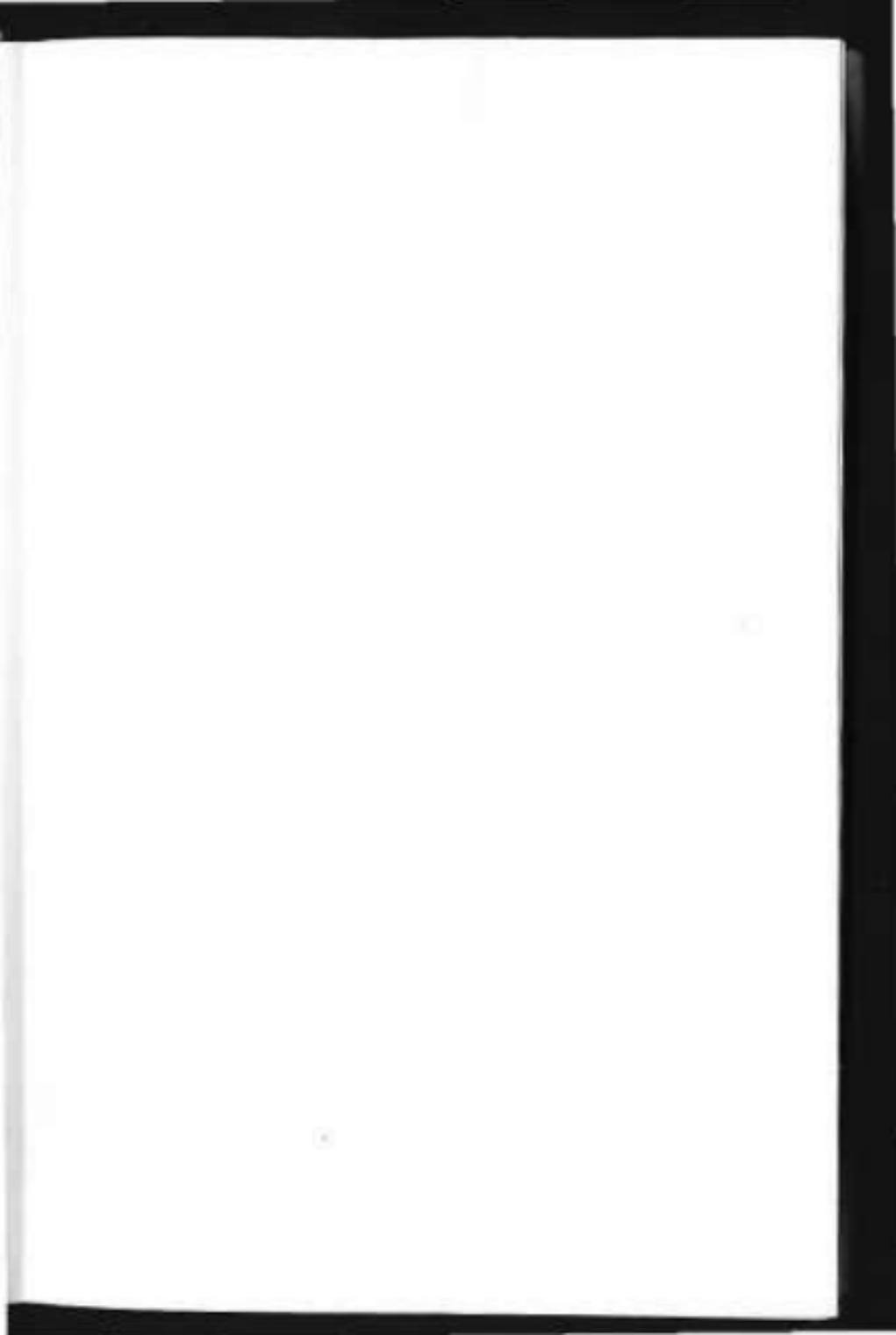
The History
of
STEPHEN TOWNSHIP



SUSAN MURIEL MACK



Canada





The History of **STEPHEN TOWNSHIP**

Crediton, Ontario, Canada
The Corporation of the Township of Stephen

STEPHEN TOWNSHIP



SUSAN MURIEL MACK

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THE TOWNSHIP OF STEPHEN

LAURENCE E. BROWN
Administrator
Chair Trustee
LEONIE L. OLIVER
Deputy Clerk
MARG KELLY GRIER
Deputy Treasurer

16 VICTORIA ST. E., CROFTON, ONTARIO N0J 1M0 (519) 524-6261 / 521-0706
22N/TH - 2100 / FAX (519) 524-6261

To the Residents of the Township

It was with great pleasure that Council chose Mrs. Mack's history of Stephen Township as our Bicentennial project. This book is a story of how our Township was formed and how it has developed from the time the first settlers arrived, to the very progressive municipality it is now.

Mrs. Mack spent much time and energy gathering and compiling information for the book. To recognize her contribution, we have established a scholarship at Centraite College of Agriculture. The Hazel Mack Award is to be given annually to a deserving student from Stephen Township.

To those who assisted with writing, to those who shared your photos, histories, etc., and to the many others who contributed to this book, we say, "Thank You".

We of the Council, hope that in sweeping with the past, our generation will exercise vision and desire to leave values which will serve the future generations of Stephen Township.



Thomas J. (Tom) Tassie
Chairman



Members of the 1989-91 Stephen Township council are: (back row, left to right) councillors Bill Weber, Gary Engelsen and Pat O'Rourke and (front row) deputy-reeve Garry Baker, reeve Tom Tunes and administrator and clerk-treasurer, Larry Bevan.



The office staff at the Stephen Township Municipal Office in Crediton are (left to right): Eleanor Rader, deputy-treasurer Mary Ellen Grib and deputy-clerk, Linda Oliver.

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Members of the Stephen Township works department include (left to right): Peter Waerff, Don Clarke, Lloyd Bender, Ron Pickering and roads superintendent Eric Finkbeiner.



The Stephen Township recreation department includes (left to right): arena manager Frank Funston and assistant arena manager, Rob Funston.



The road department's new works garage was opened in 1991. The department looks after 120 miles of roads and 100 miles of underline in Stephen Township.



The Stephen Township volunteer fire department, photographed in the summer of 1991, included: Back, left, Tom Tones, Cam Steverdson, Doug Lightfoot, Don Clarke, Bill Hodge, John Bruls, Brad Skinner, Peter Martin, Peter Waerth and Dennis Pfleff. Centre row, left, are: chief Robert Pertschy, Murray MacDonalid, Mark Cronyn, Dave McDonald, Bill Van Bergen, Brian Disney and Dennis Masse. Front, Norm Hyde, Mike Cronyn, Gary Giles, Jim Finkbeiner, Lynn Clark, John Robinson and John Gieden. Missing: Dave Coffel, Barry Becker and Tony Jones.

*This story is dedicated
with reverence and respect
to those early settlers:
whose courage, determination,
endurance and vision
made Stephen Township
a wonderful place
for all those
who followed them.*



*We, who have received
this Heritage,
have the duty
and responsibility
of guarding
and preserving it.*



Foreword

Preparing this history of Stephen Township and the people who shaped its destiny has been a lifelong interest. I hope this work will provide some insight into the lives of the men and women who struggled to carve farms and villages out of the wilderness of the Huron Tract. Their perseverance, industry and ingenuity, combined with a faith in the future, provided the life we enjoy in Stephen Township today.

My interest in local history was fostered by my years compiling the Tweedsmuir history for the Crediton Women's Institute and during my time as archivist for the Huron County Historical Society.

In this history, I have particularly focused on the early years of township life, from the arrival of the first settlers in the 1830s, to the golden years of Stephen Township's villages at the turn of the century. This was the era when the township was still dotted with community-based industries such as saw and grist mills, brickyards and flax mills.

Stephen Township has always been a strongly agricultural area, noted for crops like flax, sugar beets and, more recently, corn and soybeans, as well as for its prize-winning livestock. Although farmers have been challenged as never before in recent years, the township maintains its fine agricultural tradition today.

I have perhaps omitted some names and events that readers feel should have been included. This is a problem when working with primary documents, often faded with age, and I do apologize for omissions. The spelling of family names in the township has changed over time; whenever possible, the names are spelled in their original form.

I wish to thank all those have assisted me over the past decades in obtaining information for this book, and in recent years, for assisting its evolution into published form. A special note of appreciation is offered to Reg Finkbeiner of Crediton, for his encouragement and help all along the way. Donald Finkbeiner compiled and completed the chapter on the township schools. They, along with other township residents, kindly loaned documents, pictures and provided photo captions. The Huron County Museum

and Archives copied and made available a large number of pictures collected by local residents.

Five others who deserve mention for their efforts in publishing this history are Edward Phelps, librarian at the Regional Collection, The D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario, and fellow Londoners, Pat Morden, who assisted the author; final editor Alice Gibb, photo researcher Glen Phillips, and photographer Stephen Harding.

My very best wishes to Stephen Township on the occasion of its sesquicentennial celebrations. I hope this work will provide some insight into the lives of the pioneers whose vision for the future left the wonderful legacy that we enjoy today.

Muriel Mack

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the support of the several people who made the publication of this book possible. Reg Finkbeiner and Wilmar Wein both volunteered their services to read drafts of several chapters of the book. Ross Haugh of Crediton generously offered photo and research assistance. Donald Finkbeiner compiled the school history chapter and located illustrations. I would also like to thank the many other Stephen and McGillivray Township residents who answered questions about the Corbett and Greenway schools. Kathy Monk of the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority provided valuable information on the authority's role in the township and photos of conservation projects. Photos of contemporary life in the township were obtained from The Exeter Times-Advocate.

I would also like to thank Margaret Stotesbury-Leeson of Special Collections, The D.B. Weldon Library, the University of Western Ontario, for her help in locating material in the London Free Press collection of photographic negatives. Alan Noon of the university reproduced many of the historic photos used in this book.

Also, staff of both London Public Library and the Regional Collection, The D.B. Weldon Library assisted with research. Paul Miller of the Lambton Heritage Museum, Beth Ross of the Huron County Library and staff at the Huron County Museum and Archives in Goderich provided photos and answered queries on township history. Winnifred Jette of London provided many photos from family sources. Finally, I would like to thank Larry Brown and the staff of the Stephen Township office for their patience and perseverance in helping identify photos and in providing answers to so many questions about township life.

— Alice Gibb, Editor

Biography of the Author

SUSAN MURIEL MACK

Susan Muriel Mack, the principal author of *The History of Stephen Township*, devoted four decades to researching the history of this unique part of southwestern Ontario.

Muriel Mack, the daughter of Godfrey and Evaline Nicholson, was born in November, 1900 in Hay Township. Godfrey, of Irish descent, farmed in Hay for some years. Evaline taught at the Bronson Line School.

After graduating from high school, Muriel attended London Normal School during 1919/20, earning her teacher's diploma. She taught at S.S. #7, Stephen Township (Shipka) during 1920/21 and for two years at S.S. #1, McGillivray Township, both one-room schools.

In 1923 Muriel married the late Wilfrid Mack and left teaching to raise a family. When her four children Bryce, Evaline, Winnifred and Rosalie were older, Muriel Mack drove a school bus transporting children into Crediton for 18 years. The Macks first resided on the farm, later moving into the village of Crediton. Wilfrid and Muriel Mack retired to London in 1974.

Muriel Mack's mother was one of the founding members of the Crediton Women's Institute, which first met on April 4, 1919. The author was also very active in the Huron South District Women's Institute, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and the Associated Country Women of the World. She is a charter, branch and district life member.

Mrs. Mack's interest in local history led to the organization of the first Tweedsmuir History workshop in Ontario. She was Tweedsmuir curatoe for the Crediton Women's Institute for many years. A highlight of her Institute involvement was serving as a delegate to the Associated Country Women of the World conferences in Toronto, Edinburgh, Dublin and Lansing, Michigan. Her reports on these conferences were published by *The London Free Press*.

For many years, Muriel Mack was also Crediton correspondent for the *Free Press*.

A longtime dream of Muriel Mack and other dedicated local historians was the rebirth of the Huron County Historical Society.



The society was started in 1924, but ceased meeting in the 1930s.

On May 6, 1964, at a meeting sponsored by Huron County council and Huron South District Women's Institute, Muriel Mack moved that a historical society again be formed in the county. At the first executive meeting, Muriel Mack was elected president, a post she held from 1964 to 1967. She then served as the society's archivist-historian for the next decade. In this role, she was very active in collecting and preserving material on the history of Huron County. This information now forms a part of the Huron County Museum and Archives. After retiring from the executive in 1979, Muriel Mack was named Honorary President of the society, a title she still holds.

Muriel Mack began collecting and organizing material on Stephen Township's history in the 1950s. Her first historical publication was *A History of the Creditor United Church*, published in 1959. This was expanded ten years later as *A century of service: Creditor United Church, 1869-1969*. Muriel Mack also wrote several articles for *Huron Historical Notes* and for other publications. Her abiding interest in Stephen Township's past initiated this comprehensive township history, published by Stephen Township council.

Muriel Mack now resides in London and continues her research into local history. She is widely known in Huron County for fostering an appreciation of local history and its preservation. This work is a fitting reflection of her lifelong interest in the history of the community around her.



Stephen Sesquicentennial Committee — Back, left, Jack Malone, Stefan Pertachy, Reg Finkbeiner, Don O'Rourke and publicity chairman Ross Haugh. Front, left, Evelyn Pickering, chairpersons Karen Tieman and Alan Walper and secretary-treasurer Wilmar Wein.



Stephen Township Council, December 1991-94 — Back row, left to right: Eric Finkbeiner, Road Superintendent; Harvey Ratz, Councillor; Gary Eggleston, Councillor; Wilmar Wein, Councillor. Front row, left to right: Rev. Robert Degrau; William Weber, Deputy-Reeve; Tom Tennes, Reeve; Larry Brown, Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer.

Chapter One

The Township and Its Beginnings

*"How wonderful a thing it is to look back
into the past, as it actually was."*

G. M. Trevelyan

Whenever pioneers have settled in new worlds, the environment has presented a major challenge. Ontario was no exception. Its southwestern section supported a formidable forest of primeval trees, remarkable in size due to the rich soil from which they originated. On the northwest, this abundant expanse was lapped by the sparkling waters of a great lake, called Huron — the name given by early explorers to the original inhabitants of the land. Along the central portion of this lake's eastern shore, a British land company, the Canada Company, purchased a sizeable acreage and designated it the 'Huron Tract'. Stephen was among the many townships surveyed in this territory. The story of its settlement and growth to a land of fertile farms and prosperous industries reflects the legacy of its physical beginnings.

THE PHYSICAL ORIGINS

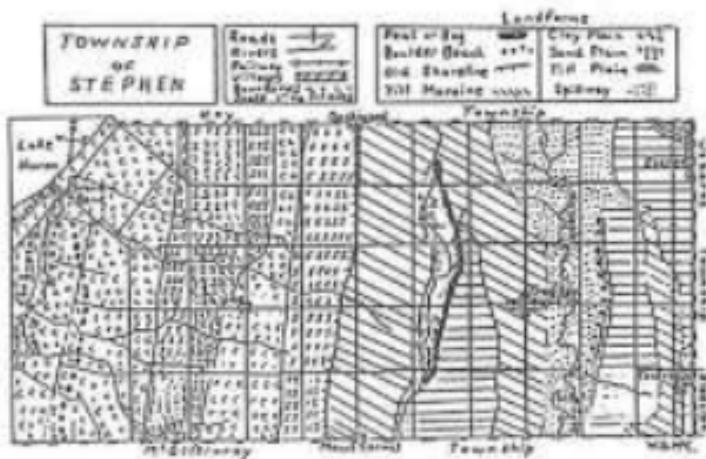
The land in Stephen rises slightly from the west to the east, but the most prominent physical features are a series of north-to-south moraines, formed during the Ice Age. These moraines cause the Ausable River and the Mud Creek to flow in a southerly direction, rather than westerly with the general slope of the land. The most westerly ridge enters the watershed north of Khiva, and continues almost due south. A second moraine includes a small area on Concessions 9 and 8, then gradually moves east to Concessions 7 and 6, where it continues south through the village of Crediton

to the boundary. Between these two moraines was once a swampy area, now drained by the Mud Creek and its tributaries.

East of the centre ridge is the valley of the Ausable, and beyond the river is a fairly level till plain. Within the first concession, there is a small moraine, on which the London, Huron and Bruce Railway was constructed. From the western moraine, the land slopes gently to the lake.

Several sections of swamp were left in Stephen as a result of glacial action. This delayed settlement in those areas. All of this land has now been drained. Besides the Ausable River and the Mud Creek, there are many miles of municipal drains, most of which flow in a westerly direction.

The heavy clay soil on the uplands is difficult to work, but very productive. On the till plains, the soil is clay loam. In the western part of the township, there are strips of sandy loam between the clay areas. In the centre of the township, adjacent to Mud Creek, there is an accumulation of decayed black organic deposits, commonly called muck.

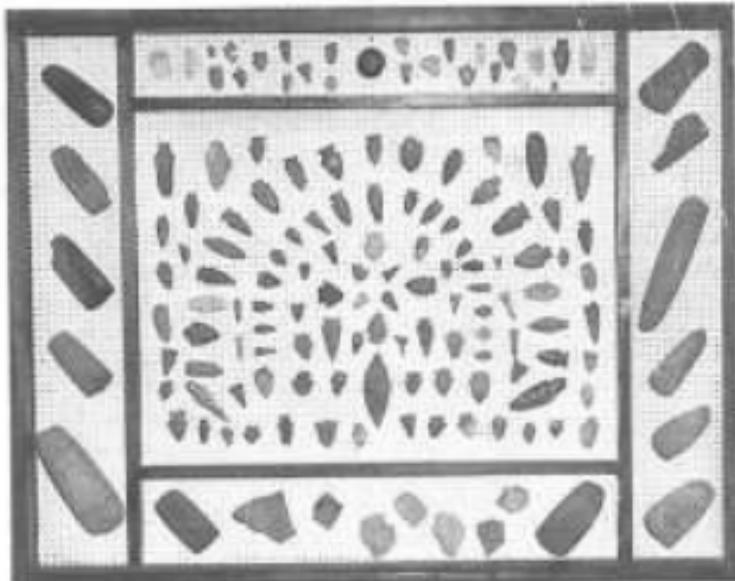


Stephen Township inherited its physiography from thousands of years of glacial action and weathering by wind, rain and stream. Courtesy W.D. McLaren.

INDIAN HABITATION

To date, no archaeological digs have been conducted in Stephen to establish Indian habitation. Many arrowheads, as well as some stone tools and pottery shards, have been found along the banks of the Ausable River, the Mud Creek and some of the smaller streams, and around Grand Bend. Indians obviously travelled through and camped in the area.

From James Handford, who was born in Stephen in 1839, comes this story. When the 1837 Rebellion began, Louis Holman and Richard Handford, settlers on the Front Road, enlisted in the loyalist forces. The Indians who were camping on the banks of the stream which crossed their farms, cut wood and did the chores for the two



Although the archaeological record has yet to offer evidence of any sustained Indian occupation, Stephen Township did present itself as an ideal hunting ground. Bands of migrant hunting and fishing parties frequented the area's wooded pitches and streams, leaving behind numerous artifacts as a cumulative record of their travels. Artifacts from the A.J. Savitt Collection: Centre top panel - arrowheads and an oil tanning stone (maul); Side panels - skinning stones; Centre panel - arrow and spear heads; Bottom panel - two skinning stones and pottery shards. Photograph by Jack Doerr, Excite.

families until the men returned. The Indians often stayed in the woods there, and the Holman and Handford boys knew them well. They were able to speak their language and learned much Indian lore.

When the Prince of Wales visited London in 1860, the Chief, Sarponace, took his braves to see the visiting royalty and they performed a war dance for the Prince's entertainment. James and Richard Handford Jr. and Richard Holman accompanied them to London, and the two "Dicks" danced with the Indians.

THE CANADA COMPANY AND THE HURON TRACT

John Galt, Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop, John McDonald and the Canada Company are names associated with the earliest settlement of the Huron Tract. The Canada Company was formed in London, England in 1824, and incorporated on August 29, 1826. John Galt, who was secretary for the Company, came to Upper Canada in the fall of 1826 to begin the work of settling the Huron Tract.

Stephen Township was a small part of the one million acres of unsurveyed land in Upper Canada sold by the British Government to the Canada Company. The Company agreed to pay 295,000 pounds in 16 equal instalments. The government was to pay for surveys and one-third of the sale proceeds was earmarked for public works and improvements. The acreage, known as the Huron Tract, had been purchased from the Chippewa Indians on April 26, 1825, for a price of 1,100 pounds. The Company was a commercial venture, with the goal of producing a profit for its shareholders. It advertised extensively in the British Isles and had special agents at Quebec, Montreal, and New York to direct immigrants toward this virgin land.

On September 4, 1826, Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop was appointed Warden of the Company's Woods and Forests in Upper Canada. John McDonald was the Company's surveyor. McDonald assisted Mahlon Burwell, a deputy surveyor for Upper Canada, who was in charge of the surveying party which accompanied Dunlop on the expedition to run a Proof Line from Wilmot Township to Lake Huron between May 15 and May 27, 1827.¹

The diary of this survey is full of interesting information. The party reached the shore of Lake Huron some distance north of the mouth of the Menesetunk (Maitland) River.² The following day,



To help relieve a portion of its burdensome debt, the Government of Upper Canada sold over one million acres of crown land to the Canada Company in 1826. Under the dominion of its proud coat of arms, the Canada Company undertook the responsibility of bringing settlers to its newly purchased lands, which stretched from modern-day Waterloo Region to the shores of Lake Huron. Courtesy Lambton Heritage Museum.

they proceeded south to the mouth of the river. Burwell spent the next three weeks in the area, working on his map and notes and directing the construction of a log house. The house was 22 feet square, with a 15-feet square kitchen, and was located on a beautiful site on the bank above the lake.

On Monday, June 18, he took the skiff and five men and proceeded to map the shore of the lake southwards. On Wednesday, June 20, he recorded:

Set off very early, and completed the scaling of the Shore

until I met the Transverse line which I made in 1826, at the Portage, about 10 miles above the mouth of the River Aux Sable.¹ The Post which I planted at this place last year being gone, I renewed it. I went over the Portage to the bend of the River Aux Sable where I found a number of families of the Chippewa encamped. The men were all drunk and part of the women also. The distance scaled today is about 10 miles.

They camped north of the bend of the river, and during the night there was a very severe storm with thunder, wind and rain. Twice they had to move the skiff to higher ground.

It rained all the time, but we ascended the bank and made a camp to keep out the wet. The wind came from the North-West, having an immense sweep of the whole width of the Lake. When the wind was at its greatest height, Lake Huron exhibited a tremendous wave, coming in successive ranges three or four chains distant from each other lashing the clay cliffs and fallen cedars at a frightful rate.

When he returned to the mouth of the Menesetunk, he found it "...much altered by the violent storm."



The Canada Company divided the Huron Tract, the western most portion of its land, into twenty-one townships. Stephen Township was named for James Stephen Jr., the Under-Secretary of State for the English colonies in the Province of Canada.

On Friday, June 29, John Galt arrived by boat at the Establishment, their headquarters at the mouth of the river. While there, he named the place Goderich, after Viscount Goderich, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

By the autumn of 1828, the Huron Road had been surveyed. The next year, a sleigh track was opened from Wilmot Township in Waterloo County to Goderich. The Canada Company arranged for three inns to be erected along the road for the convenience of settlers and other travellers. The first was run by Andrew Helmer on Lot 1, Con. 1, South Easthope Township. The next, on Lot 14 of the same township, was opened by Sebastian Fryfogel. Some distance to the west, the third inn was constructed by Andrew Seebach on Lot 13, Con. 1, Ellice Township.¹⁰ All three were in Perth County, which was part of the Huron Tract. Colonel Van Egmond, the contractor who opened the road, operated a fourth inn on Lot 4, Con. 1, Hullett Township.¹¹

Thomas Mercer Jones was the commissioner for the Canada Company when the London Road was surveyed in 1829. On November 9 his report to the Canada Company's office in London, England, read: "In the Surveyor's report the land on the London Road is very satisfactory, the prospect of the road being cut out has excited a good deal of interest in that part of the country... We have already heard of several families who will settle along the road when made passable."¹² This road ran straight south from Rattenbury's Corners, now Clinton, to Clandeboye, where it turned east to the Little Sauble, then angled southeast to meet the London Road at Elginfield. It was opened in December, 1832.

It was along these two roads, the Huron Road, now Highway 8, and the London Road, now Highway 4, that the settlers came to occupy the Canada Company lands. At first, the response was slow. It was not until the 1840s and '50s that the full tide of immigration began to flow into the southern townships of the Huron Tract.

THE BOUNDARIES

Stephen Township was very much a part of the colourful Huron Tract. It became the most southerly of the Huron County townships by an Act of Parliament on January 31, 1863, which transferred the townships of Biddulph and McGillivray to Middlesex County.



This map displays the well-defined townships, the travelled roads, and the post offices that were found in the Huron Tract in 1851. Note that the site of Grand Bend is marked by the words *Port Francis*.

On its western boundary, the village of Grand Bend developed. To the south of this village, the Ausable River divides Stephen from Bosanquet Township in Lambton County.⁴ To the north of Grand Bend, Lake Huron washes Stephen's sandy beaches. To the east are the town of Exeter and the townships of Osborne and Biddulph. Hay Township lies to the north, and McGillivray to the south. The perimeter encompasses an area of slightly more than 56,900 acres. It is 6.25 miles from north to south. On the north side, it is 13.25 miles from west to east, and on the south, 15.75 miles from west to east.

THE NAMING

Stephen Township was named after James Stephen Jr., the Under-Secretary of State for the colonies. He served under Lord Goderich and Lord Glenelg, and had a considerable impact on the affairs of Upper Canada. According to the evidence of his contemporaries, he did not achieve success or popularity. Sir Francis Bond Head, then Governor of Upper Canada, wrote to the Colonial Secretary in 1837, complaining that "...Mr. Stephen's conduct, sentiments and political character were detested by the people of Canada." In 1838, *The Montreal Gazette* criticized him: "Mr. Stephen has for many years been the confidential advisor and director of the Colonial Department and to his evil influence must be ascribed all the misgovernment which these provinces have suffered for so long a period. It is time that the baneful domination of Mr. Under-Secretary Stephen should be gotten rid of and an entirely new system of things adopted." Happily, the township of Stephen has not been affected by the stigma attached to its namesake.

-
1. A Proof Line is an exploratory line used to mark locations along its course. It may or may not be used in later surveys of the territory.
 2. Meneseturik is Burwell's spelling.
 3. In September 1826, Burwell marked the boundaries of the Kettle Point Reserve and other lands in that area. He also scouted the shore of Lake Huron as far north as the Indian carrying place at the head of the Ausable River.
 4. Information re: lens from W. Stafford Johnston, Stratford, Ontario.
 5. From Canada Company - The Prospectus, 1830.
 6. On May 5, 1835, Saugeen, which originally was part of the Huron Tract, was attached to Kent County by an Act of Parliament. Kent was divided on May 30, 1849, and the northern part, including Saugeen, was established as Lambton County.

Chapter Two

Early Settlements, 1832-1852

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Proverbs 29: 18

SURVEYORS AND SURVEYS

When the first lots in Stephen were sold in 1832, the land was covered with virgin forest. Only the Indians knew the streams and trails.

When the London Road was surveyed in 1829, lots of 100 acres were laid out. The North Boundary was staked to the lake, and the South Boundary to Lot 21. The following year, Concessions 2 and 3 were surveyed by John McDonald. His field book described the surface and quality of the land. The stands of maple, beech, basswood, butternut, elm and white ash all indicated the richness of the soil. The remaining Concessions, 4 to 23, were surveyed in 1837, except for a flooded area in the southwest corner of the township.

The comments made by the surveyor in 1837 are varied and interesting. With a little imagination, one can imagine him trudging over hill and dale, through the woods, swales and swampland, with his notebook in hand, recording his observations. A brief summary of his notes gives valuable insight:

Commencing on the Northern Boundary of Stephen on the centre of the road allowance at the west side of the London Road, surface descending slightly, very fine land, timber includes maple, beech, elm and basswood.

A little further on, he came to a brook "...six links wide with the trend to the left." and then, "...uneven land to the main branch

of the River Aux Sable (sic) where the trend is westerly." He crossed an open flat and some good level ground, then, climbing a steep ascent, found more good land to Concession 3. He turned south on the road allowance and noted that the land was mostly good, with a few low places toward the south end, and on the McGillivray side, a marsh of alders and willows. (The terms brook, creek and stream were used without explanation of the distinction, if any, between them.)

There was no mention of flooding on Concessions 4 and 5. The surveyor noted that it was mostly good land, with numerous creeks, all flowing toward the river. There were black ash swales on virtually every concession.¹ On Concessions 6 and 7, he saw hickory and ironwood trees. On Concessions 8 and 9, there was a willow marsh on Lot 4, and some large pine, cherry and oak on Lot 20. On Concessions 10 and 11, he found tamarack and willow marshes at the south end, then black ash and elm swales, and good to excellent land from there to the North Boundary. Concessions 12 and 13 were noted as having mostly good to excellent land with some hemlock and blue beech, as well as other hardwood varieties. On Concessions 14 and 15 the land varied from indifferent to good, with cedar, hemlock, buttonwood, whitewood, white and black ash, beech and birch trees. He continued on to the Ausable Concession, where he found the land flooded from Lot 12 to the South Boundary, and "...the water too deep to proceed."

The blocks in Stephen are more uniform in size than in some other townships because all the roads as far west as Concession 19 were laid out on the square. These blocks of land, each with ten 100-acre farms, are 1.25 miles square, with the concession roads running north and south. In the first three concessions, all the lots number from the concession roads, except in Concession 3 next to the North Boundary. On this townline, the lots number from four to 38, and the last lot numbers off the Lake Road. On the South Boundary, they are from six to 43, with the last two numbering off Concession 22 and the Ausable Concession.

In the northwest corner of the township there is a rectangular area of approximately 2,260 acres laid out on an angle to the other roads and almost parallel to the lake shore. The reason for this variation is not clear, but as early as 1840, the Canada Company maps show this block as the Port Franks Reserve. It is quite possible that William "Tiger" Dunlop was responsible for this plan; he was



The map of Stephen Township from the Huron County Atlas shows the survey and road system that was laid down by the Canada Company during the 1830's.

familiar with the area, having surveyed here in 1827. This place, and others in the Huron Tract, became known as "Canada Company Map Towns", sites laid out for towns which never became a reality. In Stephen this led to considerable confusion. Port Franks, when it did develop, was located at the mouth of the Ausable River in Lambton County, several miles distant from the bend of the river — certainly not where it was located on the early maps.

The roads in this block are not numbered as they are in other parts of the township. The one nearest the lake, now Highway 21, was called the Lake Road, and the lots were designated East and West. The other road in the block is known as the B line. The lots on the west side of this road are A lots and those on the east side, B lots. As this parcel of land is on an angle to the other blocks in the township, the lots in Concession 20 north of the Third Side-road vary in size. Because the Ausable River flows slightly to the east as it nears the bend, the lots in Concessions 21, 22, and the Ausable also are not uniform in size. Lot 19, the most southerly

one in the Ausable Concession is the largest lot in the township; it has 238.5 acres.

Another result of the positioning of the Port Franks Reserve is that Concessions 20 and 21 end a little north of the Third Sideroad. From there to the Lake Road at Grand Bend is a gore road. When Highway 81 was constructed, this junction was curved for easier travelling. This gore road has never been named but could be the South Gore Road; the road which parallels it on the north side of the block would then be the North Gore Road. It runs from Brewster, now Port Blake, to Concession Road 18 and 19, where it jogs south to connect with the Fourth Sideroad, Huron Street West. The B Line Road dividing the lots in this block ends at the North and South Gore Roads. This arrangement also creates 13 irregular-sized lots.

ADDITIONAL ROADS

To the west of Lot 43 on the South Boundary, there is a short dead-end road which gives access to the rear of lots 17, 18, and 19, where the farm buildings were erected. There is also a dead-end road, known as the Gill or River Road, which follows the river south of Grand Bend to the Gill property. Originally, this road was connected to the Concession 21 road by a sideroad between Lots 5 and 6; this road allowance has been closed. To give Centralia direct access to the London Road, a short road was cut east from the village main street to Highway 4. The Centralia by-pass in Concession 1, also known as the Tasko Sideroad, is described in Chapter 4.

Originally, the sideroads were numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4, starting from the south. They are now 5, 10, 15, and 20. In Stephen, the sideroads also had names. The First Sideroad was Essery's. The second one was the Centre Road, and is now the Crediton Road. The third one was known as Mitchells', Sweitzers' and Haists', according to the family which lived on Lots 15 and 16. The Fourth Sideroad is known as Huron Street or Exeter Sideroad.

FROM THE DIARIES OF EARLY TRAVELLERS

Early travellers also described the land in Stephen Township. Reverend Thomas Whitehead, a Wesleyan Methodist preacher, travelled over the trail from Goderich to London in September 1831, when the road was being cut. He reported:

Four of us left for London, sixty miles, thirty miles without human habitation — hard travelling — roads blocked with fallen timber and shantymen. Never travelled over lands so rich — no danger of frost. Night in a shanty with seven good-feeling Scotch boys — God bless them! Fourteen in a shanty: short discourse and prayer..."

The next day, they passed through the "...settlement of colored people — clearings, cornfields, potatoes, sacks of grain, habitations comfortable and religious."

Rev. Whitehead made his second trip over the London Road the next year in June. He wrote:

...in saddle for Huron through Colored People's Settlement. Delighted with the promising fields and gardens. Had a solitary ride to Vanderburgs on the Huron Road.

Reverend William Proudfoot, a Presbyterian minister, journeyed from London to Goderich in February, 1833, in a sleigh pulled by a team of horses. Part of the return trip was made with a yoke of oxen at a very slow pace. He, too, reported that the timber indicated soil of the best quality.

The Canada Company has driven in mile posts which is a great comfort to travellers. The road is cut straight as a line for many miles. There is only one dwelling from the Black Settlement to McConnell's Tavern [the Black Settlement was the Wilberforce Settlement at Lucan].

This tavern, which was built on orders of the Canada Company in December 1832, was located on the London Road near the Ausable River. The exact location is not known: some local historians say it was on the Usborne side, while others place it on the Stephen side. If it was in Stephen, it was the first building erected in the township.

The McConnell family had the contract to cut out and construct the northern part of the London Road, so they had an excellent opportunity to select the land they wanted, and probably received their lots as part payment for their work. There were four McConnell brothers: George and David owned Lots 23, 24, and 25 on the Stephen side, and William and Andrew had Lots 17, 18, 19 and 20 on the Usborne side. Mill sites were designated on Lots 24 and 19.

THE FIRST LAND SALES

The first recorded sales of land in Stephen were completed in 1832. Isaac Rattenbury purchased Lot 25, Con. 2, on August 8th. On September 10, Dennis O'Brien, a London merchant, acquired Lots 1 to 6, Con. 1, as well as two adjoining lots in McGillivray Township. There is no evidence that either man ever lived on his land. In April of the next year, the McConnell land was recorded. Then, on June 10, 1833, Thomas Kessack obtained Lot 20; on September 3, Richard Handford took Lots 8 and 9; and on September 5, John Mitchell chose Lot 17. Thomas Kessack still owned his lot in 1837, but by 1842, John Diamond was assessed for Lot 20. He was listed as a tailor.

Apart from the record of land sales and a few assessment rolls for the 1840s, there is little accurate information to help recreate this early period. The stories and family traditions that have been handed down through the generations differ. No doubt there is some truth and some error in all of them, but without written records from the early settlers, it is impossible to separate fact from legend. Richard Handford's son claimed that his father came to the Huron Tract with the Rattenburys, who settled at Clinton and gave that town its original name. Richard turned south and travelled on to take up land in Stephen. Was he settled by September 1832, when Isaac Rattenbury got his land? When did John Mitchell arrive? These two men settled in Stephen, but the exact date of their arrival is not known.

We learn a little about the problems of obtaining a deed to the land from Henry Ransford's diary, written in the summer of 1832. Henry saw an ideal parcel of land just east of Clinton, which he decided to buy.

Finding I could do nothing with Mr. Prior, the agent at Goderich, I hired a horse and on the 23rd of July I left for York (Toronto). I was four days getting to Hamilton where I took the stage to York where I found the cholera raging. I therefore took up the land I wanted from the Canada Company and hurried back to Goderich. I left on the 30th and was five days getting back.

In September he returned to Toronto, where it took three days to obtain the deed for his land. Ransford was fortunate. Most settlers couldn't afford to hire a horse to ride to York, and it was a

long walk. As a result, many of them were on their land for some time before it was purchased or leased, and the transaction recorded.

**Lands in Upper Canada,
to an extent of 100
THE CANADA COMPANY.**

THIS CANADA COMPANY have
Large Tracts of LANDS to deposit of,
which may be chosen as follows:—

1st.—Government Crown Reserves.

These consist of Lots or Farms of Two Hundred acres, or less, in almost every Township in the Province. They are a fair average of the other Lands in the Township, as they formerly belonged to the Crown, and were allotted on a principle based on practice in the Lands being surveyed.

2d.—States or Lots,

Of from Two to 100,000 acres.—These are chiefly situated in the Western District, and are of a very rich soil. They are held under the authority of Committees of thirteen who, from relationship, or from neighbourhood, are anxious to live together.

Among them may be mentioned the Township of Guelph, which, under the management of the Company, has been settled in an unprecedented short period, and contains a village of nearly 300 inhabitants, and a population amounting to nearly 2,000.

3d.—The Huron Tract.

This is a Fine Tract of about a million of acres and already containing from 2 to 3,000 inhabitants. The Land is rich and well watered, and possesses every advantage that a better can require. The Town of Goderich, so called, founded in 1825, already contains upwards of 100 houses, with good Stores, Hotels, Schools, and a Place of Worship open to all. A Road has been built; Mills are established in various parts of the Tract; and the road's are as good as it is possible to have them in a new country.

Any further information that may be required, will be furnished at the Company's principal office at Toronto, Guelph and Goderich, or at the following agencies in the U.S. and Eng.

Alice Mills, Township of St. Jacobs.

Bayfield Mills, Victoria Falls.

Huron Mills, Huron.

Canada Company's Office, Toronto.

(New York) May 1st, 1834.

112-17.

In an effort to entice prospective settlers to purchase land, the Canada Company frequently advertised in Canadian, American, and British newspapers. This advertisement, which appeared in the *True Patriot and London District Advertiser* of May 23, 1834, promoted the chief attractions offered by the Huron Tract and other Canada Company lands.

THE DEVONSHIRE SETTLEMENT

By September 1837 all the lots on the front road had been settled. In addition to those already mentioned, there were: Samuel Peters, who had taken Lot 7; George Snell, on Lot 10; Robert Bissett, Lots 11 and 12; Thomas Routcliffe, Lots 13 and 14 on Concessions 1 and 2 (a block of 400 acres); John Balkwill, Lots 15 and 16; Richard Stanlake, Lot 18; William Sweet, Lot 19; James W. Mahon, Lot 21; and James Whiteford, Lot 22. On Concession 2, John Quick had taken Lot 15 and James Stanlake had Lot 18. Most of these people were from Devonshire in England. Their good reports brought more Devon folk to settle in Stephen and Usborne, and the area became known as the Devonshire Settlement.

There were a few changes in ownership by 1842. On Concession 1, John Essery had Lot 7, Richard Bissett had Lots 9 and 11, and George Snell had moved to Lot 15. Richard Balkwill was on Lot 16; William Sanders, Lot 21; Edward Taggart, Lot 22. William Essery had acquired Lot 16, Concession 2, and Thomas Hedden, Lot 10.

On July 2, 1835, Lewis Holman had claimed Lot 4 on the Usborne side. The next year he was married by the Reverend William Proudfoot to Jane Bealey, who lived on the adjoining farm. This was the first recorded marriage in the area. In the marriage register, Lewis was listed as a Stephen resident, so he had proba-



The service station location at the intersection of Provincial Highway 4 and Huron County Road 4 serves as the only reminder of the general location of the Devonshire Settlement. This photograph dates from the 1960s.



The log cabin erected by William Hicks on Concession 3, Lot 2 was typical of those built by Stephen's early settlers.



The corner detail of the Hicks' cabin displays the precise craftsmanship and innovation required to build a log residence.

bly moved to Lot 10 at Devon Corner, where the family lived for many years. He and his wife raised a family of 12 children, seven boys and five girls.

By 1842, there were 17 families living in Stephen, and all but two were on the Front Road. The total population in May of that year was 89. Of these, 47 were under the age of 16. Sixty-four belonged to the Church of England and 25 were Methodists. John Mitchell and John Essery had one-storey frame houses, and the other dwellings were log cabins or shanties. The settlers had cleared 396 acres. John Essery had two horses, George Snell had one, and there were 41 oxen, 42 cows and 28 other cattle in the township. There were also sheep and pigs. This small community of clearings, each with a few buildings, spread out along the front of the township, was the beginning of settlement in Stephen.

1,500,000 Acres of Land For Sale in Canada West

THE CANADA COMPANY have for
disposed about 1,500,000 ACRES of
LAND disposed throughout most of the
Territory of Upper Canada - nearly 200,
000 ACRES situated on the Huron Trail,
with known as one of the most fertile
parts of the Province. It has reached its
population in five years, and now contains
approximately 20,000 inhabitants.

The lands are offered by way of Ex-
clusive Tax Lists, as for Sale, CANA-
DA TAXES - the plan of our City Tax, and
the Balance in instalments being due
every six months.

The taxes payable for February next
year, are about the amount of the tax
paid upon the gross of the Land. There
are no taxes, when it is sold, that
PROPERTY IS REQUIRED TO BE PAID,
and the taxes, according to law,
are due, in full, of three years' rent must be
paid in advance, and these payments
will free the holder from further liability
to the City, City, or City, or the
holders of the land.

The right of **PURCHASE** the property,
during the term, is reserved to the Company
at a fixed sum named in hours, and no ad-
vance is made according to anticipated
payment.

Lots of Land, and any further informa-
tion can be obtained by application,
by telegraph, post office, or the Company's offi-
cials, Thomas and Gadsden, of K. H. Mar-
tin, Esq., Apothecary, Catherine Street;
Dr. Almon, Sheriff; or J. C. M.
Dick, Esq., Sheriff, Huron District.
March 10, 1848.

This advertisement from the London Times and Canada General Advertiser of May 5, 1848 outlines the financial terms attached by the Canada Company to the sale of its land.

MORE SETTLERS

The second decade of settlement in Stephen Township brought more pioneers. By 1844, the population had increased to 213; by the winter of 1851-52, it had risen to 740.

In 1843 or 1844, James Ching purchased Lot 22 and George McLeod had Lot 25 and the north half of Lot 24, but by 1848, they were again assessed to David McConnell. In 1847, Isaac Carling bought 1.5 acres of land on the southeast corner of William Sanders' lot. On it he built a two-storey frame house and a tannery.

On June 25 of that year, four Hicks brothers, Richard, John, Robert and Samuel, purchased Lots 1 to 4, Concession 1, in Stephen, and Lot 1 in McGillivray from Dennis O'Brien. Shortly afterwards, the north half of Lot 3 was sold to William Hooper. Samuel, who settled on the McGillivray lot, died about six weeks after their arrival.

By 1848, George Webber was on Lot 9, Concession 1. Thomas Greenway settled on part of Lot 13 in the spring of that year. He died shortly after coming to Stephen, leaving a widow and five children. In June 1848, John Oliver purchased the north half of Lot 5 from O'Brien, and Thomas Trivitt took the south half. Robert McCoy acquired Lot 6 in October 1849. This was the last of the Stephen land owned by O'Brien. In October 1850, the Huxtable family arrived and bought the south half of Lot 2 from Richard Hicks. Then, on November 16, Robert Hicks sold Lot 4 to William and John Mitchell.

Richard Hicks died in 1851: his team ran away on the Sauble Hill between Clandeboye and Lucan while he was going to London, and he was killed in the accident. The same year, John Mitchell was accidentally shot. A bear had been damaging the farmers' crops and a number of men gathered at John Essery's farm to track it down. Mr. Mitchell had black whiskers, and during the hunt one of the men mistook him for the marauding animal. Mrs. Hicks and Mrs. Mitchell each faced the responsibility of raising nine children.

By 1848, most of the land on Concessions 2 and 3 had been chosen. Henry Cain, William Reilly, and James and Richard McPeak had located on Concession 2. These were the first of the Irish Catholic families to settle in the southern part of the township. Other families on this line were: James Wilson; David Elliott; James, Thomas and Joseph Rogers; Joseph Anderson; Robert Walker; John Baker; Septimus Hogarth; James and John Shapton; William

Hamoin; and John Waldron.

In the early 1850s, Samuel Hicks' son William purchased Lot 2, Concession 2, and erected the log cabin shown earlier in this chapter. It is probably one of the oldest buildings to survive in Stephen Township.

On Concession 3 were: Charles Wilson; Michael Lyons; Murdock McPhee; Thomas Hueston; Thomas Rodgers; William Baker; William Cockwell; Robert Logg; Richard and John Bissett; Henry Welsh; Isaac Roper; John and Samuel Sanders; Richard and John Sweet; John Penhale; and William Smith.

The first record for Concession 5 indicates that Thomas Oke leased Lot 11 in 1842. The value of the land was 20 pounds. By December 1844, no payments had been made and the lease was invalidated. On March 11, 1844, William Boase Bennet purchased Lot 10 on this concession. A coroner's report states that he accidentally shot himself at John Snell's distillery on April 6, 1845. His land was taken over by Benjamin Miller. On February 6, 1853, Henry Sweitzer purchased the lot from 'Miller of Colborne', the man who founded the village of Benmiller, on the Maitland River, in Colborne Township.

By 1848, Thomas Hedden had moved to Lot 11, Con. 4, where he soon cleared six acres. Four were planted to wheat, which yielded 50 bushels. One acre of oats yielded 20 bushels, and an acre of potatoes, 50 bushels.

The same year, George Essery settled on Lot 5, Con. 5 where he built a dam on the river and erected mills. Thomas and John White took Lots 6 and 4 on Concession 4 in 1849. John's son William related that he once saw a herd of 22 deer on their farm. Other settlers on Concessions 4 and 5 were: Ascott; Richard and Henry Harris; James Down; William Banes; William Halls; John Mitchell; Thomas Dearing; Thomas Glanville; William Heaman; Isaac Roper; and Thomas and George Ford.

In 1851, Reverend Robert A. Hurley, a Bible Christian minister, was listed as a resident of Stephen, but the location of his home is not known. The previous year, Thomas and Pascoe Kestle had taken Lot 14, Con. 2. On Concession 4, there were the following new settlers: Felix Wrenn; Archibald Cains; and William Marriott. On the South Boundary, William O'Neal, Edward Jones, James Parthin, Daniel Coughlin, Joseph King, Job Sims and Daniel Regan had chosen lots.

As yet, there were no bridges over the Ausable, but settlers were crossing the river to take up land. One of the first to settle on Concession 6 was Alexander Clark, who claimed Lot 6 on March 21, 1848. William Sweet had already purchased Lot 10 on Concession 7, and William Jewell, Lot 11, both in 1847. This corner became known as Sweet's Corner; we know it as Crediton. They were followed by Thomas Murray, Richard Sims, Edward, Joseph and Henry Lamport, Robert Gardiner, George Hooper and Isaac Hill.

In 1849, Frederick Preszcator, the first German settler to obtain land in Stephen, moved to Lot 19, Con. 3. The Preszcator family came from Morriston, Puslinch Township. Other German families from Puslinch and the Niagara peninsula soon followed. Most of the Germans who settled in this area were natives of Baiersbronn, a large village in the northern part of the Black Forest of Germany. It was a land of high hills covered with dark evergreens and valleys with winding rivers. No doubt they often missed the beautiful hills of their homeland.

Matthias Haist, Frederick Preszcator's son-in-law, leased Lot



The Lamport homestead, located at Concession 6, Lot 4, was typical of the progress made by Stephen Township's settlers. As prosperity increased through improved returns on expanded farms, the original family cabin was often the recipient of renovation and addition.

13, Con. 5, on October 24, 1849, but did not move until later. Jacob Motz, John Winer and Peter Hoffman leased Lots 6, 7, and 8 on Concession 5. Michael Hirtzel and Theobald and David Stahl were the first German settlers on Concessions 6 and 7. They took Lots 7 and 8, Con. 6, and Lot 8, Concession 7.

Jacob and Tobias Fahner, Bernhard, George and John Brown, and Jacob, Michael and David Haist evidently came in a party to claim some of the good land in Stephen. They leased or bought ten lots on Concessions 6 and 7 on September 29, 1849. Then, on October 13 of the same year, Henry Wolf, Barnhard Faist and Matthew, Christopher and Gottlieb Morlock took up lots on the same concessions. John Brown took Lot 10, concession 6, across the road from William Sweet. All the other lots chosen were north of Sweet's Corner — Lots 12 to 19. The land in the last block was not taken until some years later.

Lot 11, Con. 6 was leased to Ascott Harris. Later he sold it to Jacob Rau, who was probably the first settler to live on it. Apparently the sale of Lot 11, Con. 7 to William Jewell was not completed: the Canada Company resold this lot to Francis Hobkins on April 3, 1852, for 56 pounds, 5 shillings.



The John Brown family, who settled on Concession 6, Lot 6 was one of the many hardy, pioneer families of Stephen Township.

The Preszatoes and Motzs were the only German families listed as residents in the spring of 1850. When the census was taken in the winter of 1851-52, Jacob Finkbeiner and his family were living in a shanty, as were Matthias Haist and his family. Others listed were John Shinkey, Tobias Fahner, Andrew and John Winer, Jacob Rau, Henry Wolfe, George Weiss, Michael Hirtzel, and Diebald Stahl. Jacob and Sophia Motz gave their native land as France. John Brown, George Motz, Barnhard Faist and David Haist were bachelors.

Robert Walker took the 1851 census and these were his comments on the westerly settlements in Stephen: "...snow nee (sic) deep, no track, no roads but blaze on a tree, settlers very far apart." In the township there were now 84 log houses, six frame houses, 25 shanties, and one mud house — a total of 116. John Rowe, Isaac Carling, and David McConnell each had two-storey houses. In ten homes, there were two families living together.

In 1852, lots had been leased or purchased on Concessions 8 and 9 by Rodger Carroll, James Mahor, Edmund Chambers, John and Robert Hodgins, William and George Lawson, Joseph Marshall, Joseph Banes, Adam Galser, Jacob and Michael Finkbeiner, Moses Amy, Samuel Brokenshire, Edward, Joseph and Charles Kestle, and John Brewer.

Because no roads had been made through the swampy area, settlers taking up lots further west came in by the North or South Boundary to the higher land. Up to 1852, they included the Carey, Sullivan, Reynolds, Kessell, Leary, Williams, McDonald, O'Connell, Reordan and Murphy families. More families had settled on the South Boundary: Michael and Edmund Hall, Cornelius Regan, John Ryan and Frederick Fairhall. Many of the lots on the North Boundary had been purchased or leased, but were not settled. At the Dashwood intersection, William Whiting was on the east side and James Westcott was the owner or leaseholder of the west lot. Near the lake, James Flanagan, John McArthur and Andrew Armstrong had taken Lots 35, 36, and 37.

At the beginning of the 50s, English settlers were in the majority. Their church affiliations included Church of England, Wesleyan Methodist, Bible Christian, and Baptists (one family). The Irish were the second largest group. The first Irish families to settle were Methodists, Anglicans and Presbyterians (one family). The later Irish immigrants were largely Catholic. The third largest group were

German; they were all listed as Lutherans or Methodists. There were also three families from Scotland and a few from the United States.

In 1852, the residents of Stephen elected their first council to manage local affairs, a big step forward for the pioneer community.

Not all who came to Stephen in the early days remained. There are many names which only appear on the records once or twice. The struggle to carve a home out of the forest may have been too much for them. Accidents often occurred in the bush; when the head of the family was injured or killed, the family sometimes moved elsewhere to be near friends or relatives. No doubt a few of those who came were drifters and wanderers. Some made their contribution as squatters, and had to move on when they couldn't pay for the land they used. There were, however, many strong, hardy folk who came and stayed to hew down the forest, to break the virgin soil, and to transform the land into productive farms. They built comfortable homes, raised their families and did their part to make Stephen township a good place in which to live.

Valuable Property for Sale

UPON the Road about half-way between
London and Goderich 150 Acres of
excellent Land, with a small clearing, being
Lot No. 23, and South half of 24, in the
1st Concession of the Township of Stephen,
watered by a branch of the River Aus
able, and in the immediate neighbourhood
of Great and Saw Mills. Apply to Geo.
McCouncil at Goderich, or to

L. F. A WRASON.

London, 1st December, 1849. 3d

Those who left Stephen Township during the early years usually placed the sale of their properties in the hands of land agents. L. Larson, of London, and his associate, George McCowell, of Goderich, placed this card in the London Times of February 8, 1850 to advertise the availability of a plot in the township.

NOTE: The spelling of some names may not agree with that which is currently used. In the records examined, there were many variations.

1. A swale, according to the American Heritage Dictionary, is a low tract of land, especially moist or marshy land.
2. A settlement of black people extending east from the Little Ausable River to beyond Lutan. It was known as the "Wilberforce Settlement".
3. Now the town of Clinton.

Chapter Three

Pioneer Life

"We marvel that so much was accomplished with so little."

COMING IN ON THE LONDON ROAD

The journey to the Huron Tract and Stephen Township was slow and difficult. When the first lots in the township were sold, the London Road was still being cut. Henry Ransford's diary gives an account of his trip from London to Vanderburg's Corner (Clinton) in 1834. He was returning from England with his bride and household effects. They arrived at Port Stanley on a small steamer and engaged wagons to transport their goods to London, which was as far as the drivers would go.

...at London I found a man to undertake the job but the roads were in a dreadful state. The third day we got as far as Widow Conner's, a small tavern in the northwest corner of the township. Here we slept and the next morning hired a horse for my wife to ride as the wagon jolted her so much. This day being the best we went fourteen miles in thirteen hours. Half the road was swamp and once we turned over and a precious job we had to right the wagon and then load up again. At one place we had to cross a narrow deep creek. We found three or four logs of the bridge had floated away, so we carried them back and laid them across the stringers and so got the wagon over.

In the evening we arrived at a log house in Usborne, kept by a Devonshire man named Balkwill where we got something to eat and a place to lie down.¹ On one side of the house was a raised platform, the whole length, covered

with bedding of some kind, divided by curtains into four or five beds. The next day we reached Vanderburg's Corner.

Reverend William Proudfoot described the McConnell inn in February 1833, shortly after it had been opened:

It is the most wretched place I ever spent a night in. The walls are not well built, the interstices are very carelessly filled up: there is no clay or lime and the wind finds its way between the logs at almost every place. The door did not fit by at least three or four inches. There was kept an enormous fire, which served to produce a draft of air which was directed up the chimney by the heat and made us colder before the fire than out of doors. There were at least nine lodgers in the house. Mr. Christie (who was travelling with him) and I occupied one of the beds, a very poor concern indeed, the innkeeper and his wife occupied the other; all the rest squatted before the fire in a lump with their feet toward the fire and their bodies wrapped in such coverings as they had brought with them or as the house could furnish. Though Mr. Christie and I did the best we could to keep ourselves warm, in spite of all I could do I was forced to rise and warm myself.

Many of the first immigrants walked all the way from York or Dundas, carrying their few belongings. Those who came from other parts of Canada or the United States usually had household goods and some means of transportation. They packed their belongings in whatever vehicle they had, tied their cow behind it, and with their oxen hitched, travelled over the few existing roads to the Huron Tract.

They came with the hope of acquiring land and a home of their own. Life in the Huron Tract was not easy. But the independence, the opportunities for their children, and most of all, the reality of owning their own land, sustained the settlers during those first trying years.

CANADA COMPANY LAND SALES

The Canada Company had two methods of disposing of their land. The first was "Bargain and Sale", which meant that the buyer paid cash. The second was the leasing system, for which the pur-

chaser did not need money. Instead, he signed an agreement with the company, agreeing to clear at least four acres a year, keep the property in good repair and pay a stated amount of money each year. The lesor was not permitted to sell timber, but he could have what he needed for his own use. The usual term for a lease was ten years. If the settler fulfilled his obligations for only part of the term and then left, he had no claim on the Canada Company for the work or money he had expended. The sale of a lease was permitted if a buyer could be found.

As more land was cleared, the crop acreage was increased and the farmer was able to keep more stock. There were bears, wolves and wild cats in the surrounding woods, so a small log barn was constructed. (A pen was not sufficient protection because a wolf could pull a pig over the wall of a pen.) After a few years, the settler was usually able to improve his buildings. The forest receded and the homesteads began to blossom.

A ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS

Once the newcomer was located on his land, his first need was for a shelter. A temporary sleeping place, or lean-to, was soon erected. A pole was placed between two trees six or seven feet above the ground, or alternately, two forked sticks, well anchored in the ground, were used as supports. Other poles were laid on an angle against the cross piece and covered with a thick layer of evergreen boughs. A fire was built on the open side to give warmth and protection from wild animals.

Sometimes the settler's first home was a shanty, made of light-weight logs, roughly notched at the corners and piled one above the other.

THE LOG CABIN

As soon as the settler found time, a substantial log house was erected. There were two styles of log houses, one made with round logs, and the other made with squared timbers. The trees were felled, trimmed and cut into the desired lengths, then drawn by oxen to the site, ready for the raising bee.

The walls were erected by rolling each log into place on heavy poles. A man was stationed at each corner to notch or saddle the log, so that it fitted over the one below. Sometimes competitions were held for squaring corners. At one held in the early '60s, a



To satisfy his family's immediate need for shelter, the first structure built by a newly arrived settler was a crude log shanty.



The log cabin usually supplanted the shanty as a residence. Windows such as these were a luxury and were often a later improvement made to the cabin.

man from each of the townships of Biddulph, Usborne, McGillivray and Stephen participated. William Bagshaw, who lived on Concession 3 of Stephen, worked without a square or plumb bob and was declared the winner.

To provide extra storage space in a cabin, a loft or a low storey could be added. The loft was constructed by placing sturdy poles across the top of the cabin, resting on the uppermost logs of the walls. These overlays, as they were called, were laid close together, and later sawn boards were placed over them to provide a smooth floor. If the incline of the roof was sufficient, the loft also served as a sleeping place directly under the roof. As the family grew, the older boys used the loft, which was reached by a ladder.

In the earliest period of settlement, there were no nails, no door hinges or fasteners, and very few tools. A door was made by binding or tying lightweight logs or poles side by side to make a panel that fit the opening.

The first floors were hard-packed dirt. By 1850, there was a sawmill in Stephen and lumber for flooring became available. But to get the boards, trees had to be cut, trimmed and hauled to the mill by the oxen — a difficult task with the equipment at hand. For many settlers, wooden floors were not a priority; they would come later. In the meantime the dirt floor didn't need to be scrubbed.

Before Richard Handford came to Stephen, he had spent two years in Peel County, where he learned shingle-making. When the farmers began to improve their log cabins, or replace them with frame houses, Handford started to work at his trade. He supplied good homemade shingles for both houses and barns.

BY THE FIRESIDE

The fireplace was the centre of the pioneer home. Here the cooking was done. The open fire added cheer and comfort, especially during the cold winter months, when it was the only source of heat. The fire also provided light for many tasks.

During the summer months, the pioneer housewife often found it convenient to light her fire in the hollowed-out stump of a tree near the cabin, or in a circle of stones, with two anchored posts, one on each side to hold the bar on which the kettles were hung.

Fire was extremely important to the settler and his family. A few families had a tinderbox, which held flint and steel and some

very dry material which ignited easily, with which to start the fire if it went out. Others may have been able to create sparks by rubbing two polished sticks together rapidly. But most people needed live coals. Once the fire was started, it was tended carefully. At night, it was banked with ashes and stoked with sufficient fuel to last until morning. If, in spite of the care, the fire did go out, a family member, often one of the children, ran to a neighbour's farm to get some live coals. On a cold, frosty winter morning, it was extremely uncomfortable for the child sent for coals and for the rest of the family, left in the cold cabin, to wait. It was also important to keep a supply of small dry wood to use when the fire was low; green wood is slow to start.



Split brooms, kettles, and cast iron kettles were utensils of necessity to Stephen Township's pioneers. Courtesy Jack Doerr.

WATER

Water was another immediate necessity. If there was no clear stream nearby, a well had to be dug. It was lined with stones, and a curb of poles was built around the open top. If it was shallow enough, a long pole with a hook or crook at one end could be used for drawing up a bucket of water.

Sometimes, a spring pole was used. A thick cedar post was firmly anchored in the ground, and a long, tapering pole was fitted into a hollow at the top, narrow end toward the well, and held in place with a wooden pin. A smaller pole, long enough to reach down into the well, was attached to one end of the first pole, and a bucket was fastened to it. After the pail was filled, it was raised by applying pressure to the end of the larger pole which extended beyond the post. The pole was weighted with a stone to balance the weight of the full bucket. Spring poles were very individual; there were many variations in the height of the post, the length of the pole, and the distance from the ends to the centre post. The depth of the well may have effected these decisions, but it is just as likely that it was the individuality of the settler. Some of the tallest poles had a second piece with a cross piece on which the long pole rested when not in use.

THEIR DAILY BREAD

Another essential was food, and nature provided much of the settlers' needs in this area. There was an abundant supply of fish in the streams; bear and deer were killed for meat; black squirrels, rabbits and wild pigeons were plentiful. The settlers could also choose from a variety of wild fruits.

As soon as the settlers could obtain a large kettle, they made maple syrup every spring. The sap was collected from hard maple trees and stored in wooden buckets or a trough hollowed from a basswood or ash log. In a kettle the sap was boiled down into syrup. A gallon of thick syrup yielded seven-to-eight pounds of sugar.

If a 'bee tree' was located during the summer, the pioneer family also enjoyed wild honey.

Some writers were critical of the plain pioneer fare, but others found it quite good. This description of a meal in June 1833 is quite appealing: "Mrs. B. soon had her table spread, fish from the river, venison from the forest, butter and milk from the family cow, sugar from the maples, and much cheer."



Maple syrup making was an important activity carried on by early settlers. This chore endured and evolved into a popular springtime tradition in Stephen Township.

At first, flour was a luxury. With few grist mills, getting grain ground usually meant a long walk. Mrs. John McArthur, who came to the site of Brewster's Mill south of Grand Bend with her parents in 1866, was told that years earlier her father-in-law had to walk 12 miles into Exeter, carrying a bag of wheat on his back for grinding. He had lost his right arm, and there was only one place on the road, then little more than a path, where he could rest as he could not get the bag onto his back without help. She was probably referring to John McArthur Sr. who lived on Lot 36 of the North Boundary. There are many tales of settlers carrying a sack of wheat 30 or 40 miles to a mill, and returning with the meal or flour. One-twelfth of the grain was used to pay the miller.

CLEARING THE LAND

Clearing the land was slow, hard work. Clearing generally began around the cabin and other buildings. The sound of the settlers' axes and the fall of the trees could be heard throughout the winter months. Charles Wilson, one of the early settlers on Con-

cession 3, recalled that it was the sound of chopping that alerted him to the arrival of a new neighbour.

The first step in clearing was underbrushing. If possible, all the small trees and bushes were removed before snow came. They were cut close to the ground and the stumps were left smooth. The limbs were cut off and piled in parallel burdles, with the small logs piled at right angles to them. The neat, compact pile burned easily in the spring.

Usually the large trees were cut to make a long windrow, but sometimes it was easier to fell several trees in one spot to make a 'jam pile'. After trimming, the trunks were cut or niggled (burned) into shorter logs for easier handling. The piles were burned in the late spring or summer. Partially burnt logs were repliled for a second and third burning.

Because this operation was done during the dry season, special care to be taken: a change in the direction of the wind could quickly endanger buildings and crops. Occasionally the fires did get out of hand. The council eventually passed a by-law which restricted the time of year for burning and created regulations governing the firing.

Piling logs was slow work if done alone. As areas became more settled, logging bees were common events. Working together made the heavy labour seem lighter.

On the appointed day, the settlers came with their oxen, hand spikes and spare hands. A competition added excitement. Plots of one or 1 1/2 acres were measured off. Gangs were formed and lined up — and the race was on to see which gang would be the first to have its strip cleared and the logs piled. A gang, or team, included a driver, a chain man to fasten and unfasten logs, and at least two roller men to pile the logs.

It was a noisy event. The drivers constantly shouted directions to the oxen and the workers added their "yo-heave" as they rolled the big logs into place. No doubt the liquid refreshment, typical of such occasions, kept them in good voice. The women came with their men to help the settler's wife prepare the meals. The cooking was done in big iron kettles and tables and benches were set up outside. Often the day ended with a dance. Tired, aching muscles were forgotten in a cheerful social time.

When the ground had been cleared, cultivation could begin. At first, this might mean no more than dragging a tree top over

the loose soil around the stumps. Potatoes, wheat, oats and corn were usually the first crops to be planted. The small seeds were scattered by the sweep of the farmer's arm as he strode up and down the clearing.

THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS IN RETROSPECT

Let us pause for a moment to survey this new community in the 1850s.

There are now many clearings in this land of promise. The pattern of township roads is beginning to emerge. There is a bridge over the Ausable River on the Centre Road. At Essery's, a mill is operating.

The clearings along the front have increased in size as the settlers continue to win the battle against the forest. It is here that we see the greatest change: the stumps have been removed and fences enclose fields and gardens. The buildings have been enlarged to accommodate growing families. Many now have root houses for storing vegetables and there are extra sheds for pigs, sheep, and poultry, and for storing grain.

The London Road, as the main entry into the Huron Tract from the south, is extremely important to the community. By 1842, passengers could travel to London and back in a "...common rough wagon with boards laid across the sides for seats."² The wagon also carried mail. A regular stage was making bi-weekly trips from London to Goderich by 1844, going north on Monday and Friday, and south on Wednesday and Saturday, subject to the condition of the roads. By 1848, it served post offices at McGillivray, Hay and Tuckersmith by coach or horseback.³ Farms are now producing surplus product, which the farmers take to market over the London Road. In fact, practically everything, coming in or going out, is conveyed over the London Road.

At Devon, we see a two-storey inn operated by Joseph Quick. Here the first doctor in the area, Dr. John Hyndman, opened his office on May 25, 1851. The following year, a post office, named Devon, was granted to Stephen and Usborne; it was located in the inn. On the next farm north, William Balkwill had opened the Devonshire Inn by 1834. The first Stephen school is located on the next corner north, and across the sideroad was the Devonshire chapel. There are cemeteries on both corners.

There is the beginning of a settlement at Exeter and at Francis-

town. There are two tanneries on the Stephen side; Isaac Carling's on Lot 21, and another on the North Boundary. Two grit mills now stand on the river bank, one in each township. Innkeeper David McConnell had erected a new building on the Stephen side by 1842. Reverend Proudfoot had travelled to Goderich again in January 1835 and he noted that "...the road was wonderfully improved, having been turnpiked all the way from Biddulph to Vanderburg's at a cost of 2 1/2 dollars per rod. It is well done." He also commented that "...the tract was settling very fast."

The Stephen settlers work very hard; there is no other way to make a living in this new community. There are setbacks, but they have learned to accept them. They have perseverance, industry, ingenuity and hope — essential qualities for survival. Each year sees some improvement, and over ten years, a transformation. The first settlers are now old-timers and the new arrivals can profit by their experience. As the concessions fill up, the later settlers don't have the same feeling of isolation that the earlier ones endured.

For the structure that we raise
Time is with materials filled,
Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

(From "The Builders" by H. W. Longfellow)

1. Located on the second claim north of Devon Corner.

2. From Henry Ransford's diary.

3. From the first published list of routes, Canadian Almanac, 1848.

Chapter Four

From Path to Pavement

"Most roads lead men homewards, My road leads me forth."
John Masefield

EARLY ROADS

In the early days of settlement, those who travelled through the bush of Stephen Township had only the surveyor's posts, a blazed trail or a compass to guide them. A blaze was made by cutting some bark from a tree trunk with an axe or hatchet. The land was thickly wooded and overhanging boughs shut out the sun. Only when the lower limbs of the trees were cut away could a man ride through the bush on horseback.

William McConnell was charged with opening the London Road from Clinton to Elginfield, a distance of 35 miles. In 1833, the Canada Company charged its Improvement Fund 321 pounds, 15 shillings for 'opening the road to London Township, 35 miles, and for crossways and bridges.'

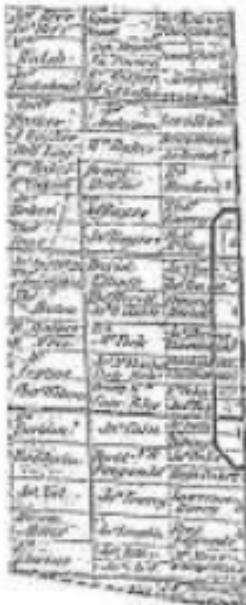
When the road was first cut, the stumps were left in place; it was not until the roots began to decay that any attempt was made to remove them. Disposing of the tree trunks and limbs was also a problem. In low, swampy areas, the tops were spread out and the logs laid over them side by side to form a corduroy road. W. H. Smith, author of *Canada, Past, Present and Future*, says of the London Road that "...probably no other road of similar length in the province had so much corduroy in it."

By 1836, the London Road had been turnpiked. Turnpiking meant that the stumps were removed, the holes filled and the road raised to form a crown. Settlers living beside the road were employed to do the work.

The Hay and Stephen townline was opened in 1839 and a bridge was built over the Ausable River. The next year, work was started on the Sauble road, now Highway 21.

In the southeast corner of the township was a low swampy area known as O'Brien's Swamp. During the wet season, the road through the swamp was impassable. The authors of *In The Days of The Canada Company*, refer to "...the springtime terrors of O'Brien's Swamp." A bypass was soon cut out: starting at the London Road in Lot 2, Con. 1 of McGillivray Township, it angled northwest to higher ground, then continued north to Lot 7, Con. 1, Stephen Township, where it turned eastward to the London Road.

George Hicks of Centralia remembered that when his family arrived in 1847, the bypass had been cut out but the logs had not been cleared away. The original road allowance, through the swamp, became known as the Marsh Road. Until this road was paved, nearly everyone used the bypass, and the village of Centralia was established on it. It was not until 1870 that a reduction was made in the assessment paid by farms along the bypass.



The bypass on the London Road,
from the 1862 Heriot Map.

THE PATHMASTER

At the first town meeting in Stephen in 1842, James Stanlake was appointed Overseer of Roads. Stanlake's appointment marked the beginning of local management of roads within the township.

The role of the pathmaster was to organize and oversee statute labour in his beat. Statute labour was a system by which each settler worked for several days a year on the roads without pay. At a time when there was very little money in circulation, this was the only way to open and build highways.

COUNTY ASSISTANCE

As the following excerpts show, the County was also involved in building and maintaining roads in Stephen Township.

From the County Council Minutes:

January 25, 1854.

It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Walker (Reeve of Stephen Township) that the County Surveyor be requested forthwith to survey that part of the road substituted for the Boundary Line between the Townships of Hay and Stephen and that this council order the necessary steps to be taken to confer with the proprietors of the land and obtain title for the same and the sum of 30 pounds, which was conditionally granted be available on the joint order of the Reeves of Hay and Stephen as soon as the work is completed. Carried.

(This is the only known reference to the location of the North Boundary road through the swampy area.)

January 26, 1854

It was moved by Mr. Corbett (Reeve of McGillivray) and seconded by Mr. Walker that the sum of 40 pounds be granted by this council to open up the Townline between McGillivray and Stephen. 20 pounds was allowed.

June 21, 1854

A motion by Mr. Walker of Stephen, seconded by Mr. Kirk — That the County Surveyor be authorized forthwith to examine that portion of the London Road between the townships of Stephen and Usborne and that he be authorized to give such portion of the same by contract as will make it passable for stage and other vehicles to pass uninjured.



Ox sleds were a rudimentary form of bulk transportation in Stephen Township. Highly adaptable to most varieties of large livestock, these sleds were commonly used until the turn of the century.



A surveying error created a pronounced jog in the township's first sideroad between Concessions 7 and 8.

This motion was referred to the finance committee who recommended that the Surveyor make a report. When this report was presented at the September meeting, the council would not recommend graveling as it was too late in the season.

A report, written by Thomas McQueen of Goderich in 1856, described the North Boundary Road, also known as the Port Franks Road, as follows: "The road between Hay and Stephen cut out by the Canada Company many years ago is now grown up with brushwood in some places. The bridges and crossways have decayed and fallen down and a few miles are at present impassable." Hay and Stephen settlers, using the Port Franks Road petitioned the council in June, 1866 for improvements to the road. The petition was accompanied by a subscription list of about 80 pounds from interested people in the area, but no grant was recommended or approved by council. Perhaps there was no money available. Certainly, there were many requests for bridges and improvements on boundary roads within the county.

The next year, Stephen was more fortunate.

June 24, 1857

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carling (Reeve of Stephen Township) seconded a motion that the sum of 100 pounds be granted towards making the road between Hay and Stephen.

The Finance Committee recommended this motion and that 25 pounds more be granted. Adopted.

A motion was made by Mr. Shoultz and seconded by Mr. Carling that the sum of 50 pounds be granted to this council to improve the Township line between McGillivray and Stephen. This was referred to the Finance Committee and they recommended it with 50 pounds additional. Adopted.

The construction of the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad, which crossed the width of the county parallel to the Huron Road, marked the beginning of a new era. Stephen was a rich agricultural community. The settlers had surplus product and wanted better access to the railroad. By 1854, the County council was considering ways of improving the major roads. The London Road had been turnpiked and graded, but never gravelled. It was a fair summer and winter road, but difficult during the wet seasons. In 1856, the seven-

mile portion through Biddulph was placed under contract to be gravelled. The same year, on June 21, County Council passed a bylaw which read:

To raise by way of Loan 100,000 pounds for the purpose of Making, Grading and Gravelling certain public Highways within the County of Huron. To repay the money it will be necessary to assess, levy and raise, upon the whole Rateable Property within the said United Counties of Huron and Bruce a Special Rate in each year during the continuance of the said Debentures or any of them...the sum of one penny and 13/24 of a penny per pound.

The equalized value of real and personal property in Stephen that year was 74,289 pounds, 15 shillings.

The London Road was the only one of the 'public Highways' that concerned Stephen. It ran through a well-settled and highly cultivated section where settlers were producing an increasing supply of saleable agricultural products. James Sweet, who grew up on Lot 19, Con. 1, related that it took two years to put the London Road in good condition. He was employed to carry whiskey and water to the labourers. "Whiskey of the best could be obtained for 25 cents per gallon and was carried in a pail with a cup attached and every man helped himself."

To maintain county roads, toll gates were introduced. There were none in Stephen, but County Toll Gate 9 was set up at Devon on the Usborne side and operated by John Potts. There were at least 15 toll gates in Huron. Only local clergymen and funeral processions were permitted to pass a toll gate without paying.

Tolls were abolished in 1873, and the improved roads were placed under township jurisdiction, with the exception of bridges over 20 feet in length. This policy continued in effect until 1917, when the increase in motor traffic required changes. For many years, the London Road between Clinton and Clandeboye was known as "...one of the longest, straight level roads to be met with in Canada."

ROAD MAINTENANCE BECOMES MORE SOPHISTICATED

It was not until the stumps in the road bed had decayed and were removed that small scrapers could be used. In August 1862, township council ordered eleven scrapers from Verity's Foundry

in Exeter. Scrapers were used to level ruts and smooth the road surface. They were drawn by a team of horses or oxen, with the driver standing on the scraper to add some weight. Scrapers were quite effective on a dirt road.

Council granted money for the ditching of a portion of the road leading to Essery's Mills on Concession 5 in April, 1853.

During the '60s, ditching was mentioned more often in council minutes. Sometimes farmers did the ditching themselves to provide a run-off for surface water. When the ditch was near the road, it helped both the land and the road, and council usually allowed some payment for the work. Soon there were many roadside ditches to carry water away from the road. In 1870, a government surveyor was engaged to review the township drainage. The same year, the Lake Road was ditched from Cameron's on Lot 7 to the bend of the river.

In the late 1850s, council began to use gravel on township roads. Most of the maintenance on the concessions was still done by statute labour, but on the side roads it was largely completed by contract. For some time, council members themselves were responsible for letting contracts. Contracts for chopping, crosswaying and building bridges and culverts were usually 'let on the spot'. Each job had to be inspected before it was 'taken off'. Later, commissioners were appointed to oversee this process, and in time, the township came to use the services of an engineer.

Occasionally a farmer's fence was erected on the road allowance and had to be moved. During the '80s, one man had to be instructed to remove his pig pen from the road allowance within 48 hours. There was even a complaint that a house had been erected on the road allowance in the Grand Bend area, and legal advice had to be sought to resolve the conflict.

The Centre Road did not extend past Concession 8 because of the swamp in the early 1850s. Although there is no record of when the road was extended west, the following petition indicates that by 1861 it went as far as Concession 12, but was in unsatisfactory condition.

It was some time before council could afford to improve the condition of the Centre Road. Over time, more and more settlers came to take up land in the western part of the township. Between 1868 and 1870, council worked on opening the road to Concession 21. In 1869, the first big contract was awarded to Simon Press, to

Township of Stephen (February 14, 1861)

Gratification

No the undersigned subscribers, in the name and behalf
of Stephen, are at a very great inconvenience for the want
of the roads, and they greatly. We heartily pray that you
the Council-men for our township, would take into considera-
tion this in politics, and grant as much money as would
make the roads practicable, from the township to the right road
now situated between lots 18 & 21.

John McAdam +

Donald McAdam +

Donald McTavish

Donald McDonald +

John McAdam +

Augus. McAdam +

Donald McAdam +

John McAdam +

Hugh McAdam +

Augus. McAdam +

Hugh McAdam +

Donald McTavish

Thomas Bangs

John McAdam +

Patrick McAdam

George McAdam +

Clark McAdam +

George Lewis

Alex Lewis

Lewis Lewis

John McAdam +

John McAdam +

John McAdam +

James Nathan

John McAdam +

James Nathan +

Petitions were an effective method of encouraging action by the township council. This petition, dated February 14, 1861, prayed for improvements to the Centre Road.

gravel 137 rods west from the Sauble River bridge on the road leading to the village of Crediton. The contract was for the sum of \$1,000.

FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

The growing demand for more and better roads could not be met within the council's budget. In February 1871, ratepayers voted to raise \$10,000 from the sale of debentures. As there was a flaw in the wording of the by-law, it had to be re-written and a second vote taken before the debentures could be issued.

This money enabled council to gravel four miles on the Crediton Road and four miles on each of the North and South Boundaries. There were still stumps and logs on the South Boundary and long stretches of corduroy through the swamp on the Crediton Road and on the North Boundary.

A dispute with McGillivray developed over the work on the south townline. The matter was submitted to arbitration, but Stephen was not satisfied with the award. A lawsuit followed, and a settlement was finally reached in March 1875. According to the settlement, Stephen was to spend \$500 and McGillivray \$600 each year for the three following years, with all the money, with the exception of \$100, spent on the road west of Limerick (Mount Carmel). Each council had to pay its own costs of arbitration.

In 1873, the Legislative Assembly passed an Act which entitled municipalities to receive grants to pay down indebtedness incurred through permanent improvements to roads, and to make further improvements. Under this law, Stephen was able to collect over \$22,000 in 1874-1875. Council used the money to continue the graveling work. A local newspaper gave this report in July 1874: "The municipal council is extending the graveling on the Centre Road to the 21st. They expect to complete it this summer, a consummation devoutly to be hoped for."

In the 1870s, the scale of wages for road workers for a 10-hour day was: Commissioners, \$1.25; a man and team, \$2.50; and extra hands, \$1. The Pathmaster directed the unloading of the gravel and watched for large stones, which had to be broken with a stone hammer into suitable sizes.

Swampy land continued to pose problems for the township. In August 1878, a by-law was passed to close and sell the original road allowance between Lot 1 in the Aux Sable Concession and

Lot 1 on the East Lake Road, because of the low, swampy nature of the land. A deviation was made through Lot 1 in the Aux Sable Concession, and the closed portion was sold to William Follis for \$30. The following year, the original road was re-opened as a public highway when it was discovered that the by-law was not legal. Mr. Follis had sold two parcels of the land and it cost over \$285 to buy it back. In August 1904, a by-law to open a third side road between Lots 15 and 16 in Concession 14 was passed.

The winter frosts and ice and the high water in spring were hard on the roads and bridges and each year, much repair work was required. For many years, stones and brick bats were used to fill up holes. In 1889, \$45 was spent on stones; \$40 for breaking them; \$27 for blasting; \$21 for stone hammers and handles; and \$40 for brick bats. There were many instances of horses being injured because a road or bridge had not been repaired and claims were laid against the council. Sometimes these cases were easily settled; occasionally they led to lawsuits and the council often lost.

WINTER TRAVELLING

When the roads were covered with snow, travelling was usually quite good. Home-made sleds and jumpers were gradually replaced by sleighs and cutters — their metalshod runners slipped smoothly over the packed snow.

While there were still many wooded areas, the snow did not drift as it does today in earlier times. As the forests were cut down, the wind swept the open countryside. Rail fences caught the snow, so that great drifts were piled on the road.

'Pitch holes' were formed by shallow hollows between high banks of snow. The driver had to slow down and drive carefully. There was a jar as the sleigh or cutter reached the bottom of the hollow, and a jerk as it started up the opposite bank. If the tracks were uneven, the outfit could easily be overturned. Landing in a snowbank was not a pleasant experience. The lucky ones picked themselves up, turned the sleigh or cutter over, shook the rugs and started off again. Occasionally, a skittish horse might become frightened and kick itself free, damaging the harness and sometimes the cutter. The horse would then head towards its home stable, leaving the unlucky travellers to find their own way. Hard as it is to believe today, in a severe storm this commonplace occurrence sometimes ended in tragedy.

On a bright winter's day, a sleigh ride was a pleasant outing. The passengers, bundled up in warm clothes and tucked under a buffalo robe, slipped along the smooth surface of the snow to the jingle of bells. If it was very cold and the trip was a long one, bricks and stones were heated, wrapped and placed in the bottom of the cutter to keep the feet warm.

As much teaming as possible was done during the winter months: grain, timber and cordwood were transported. Long lines of sleighs loaded with brick were a common sight from the 1860s, as materials were gathered for a new house or barn to be erected the following summer. If a severe storm made a road impassable, the rail fence was taken down and a track was made through the fields.

THE CENTURY DRAWS TO A CLOSE

Life in Stephen in the last quarter of the 19th century was one of prosperity, improvement and continuing growth. New and better machinery was introduced, as were conveniences for the home, such as washing machines and improved cook stoves. These labour-savers gave the farmers and their wives more time to spend in improving and beautifying their homes and grounds. Tree-lined lanes were established, evergreens were planted, lawns and flower beds created. Churches and schools were built throughout the township and villages grew in size. Life was good.

Apace with all the other improvements, council continued to work on the township road system. The small Verity scrapers were still useful. As well as scraping the roads, farmers used them to smooth lanes leading to farm buildings, which were often some distance from the road. Each year, sections of the roads were given a coat of gravel and the small scrapers kept them in satisfactory condition.

As travel increased, horse-drawn road graders were introduced. In 1892, council purchased one for \$72.50. They found the grader effective and bought another in 1894 for \$90. That year, the Ontario Good Roads Association was formed. In 1897, a third grader was purchased for \$183.02. These graders could be drawn by a team of horses, but if the roads were rough, as after a period of heavy rains, three were required. Two men were needed to operate them.

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上册·七年级下册·道德与法治

100

THE LARGEST ROAD MACHINERY PLANT IN CANADA

SAWYER & MASSEY CO., Limited, HAMILTON, ONT.



Stephen Township's first road graders were similar in design to this one manufactured by the Steiger and Massey Company.



By the turn of the century, the township's roads were well established and were a marked improvement over the crude pathways and trails of fifty years earlier.

THE NEW CENTURY

By 1900, the township and its people were well established. The days of struggle were over. A farmer who had pioneered in the early days of the township could now retire with \$10,000, buy a house in a village for \$500, and live comfortably on his income. A new age was dawning, but few living at the time could have envisioned the future as it unfolded.

One of the first signs of the new century was an act passed in 1903 to provide numbered permits for the 203 motor vehicles in Ontario, at a cost of 52 each.

The speed limit for cars was set at 10 miles per hour in cities and towns and 15 miles per hour in the country. Drivers were exhorted to use reasonable care not to frighten the horses pulling other vehicles on the road.

An item in *The London Free Press* in August 1905 tells of the trials and tribulations of early car owners:

A party of Londoners started for Clinton but before reaching Exeter they had three breakdowns. At Exeter the automobile behaved like the proverbial mule and refused to be coaxed any further. For three solid hours, the chauffeur struggled with the machinery; the tempers of the party getting hotter all the time. The machine was repaired shortly after 6:00 and the journey home commenced. At a slow rate of speed the party arrived back in the city shortly before midnight.

By 1907, there were 1,520 automobiles registered in Ontario; 2,130 in all of Canada. During the 1909 session of the Ontario legislature, there was hot debate about the automobile. Rural members favoured a bill giving county councils the right to prohibit the running of motor cars on Saturdays, which was market day, and Sunday, which was intended as a day of rest. No such legislation was passed, and the popularity of the automobile continued to grow.

Municipal council took another step forward in road maintenance in 1907, when they purchased moulds and engaged Conrad Kuhn to make tile. The tiles ranged in size from 10 to 36 inches and were used to replace the old wooden culverts. Daniel Oestricher and George Ellber also made tile. In September 1923, council bought the tile yard and the small shed on it, located on the north side of Victoria Street in Creditor, for \$100. Additional ad-

jaçent land has been purchased as needed for the township shed and for the storage of gravel and other road supplies.

THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE COMES TO STEPHEN

During the 1880s and 1890s, carriage-making and the building of wagons, cutter and sleighs had developed into a flourishing industry. There were two shops in Crediton: Thomas Trevethick's and William Wentzel's. There were three or four in Exeter and Greenway also had a carriage shop.

Into this age, later dubbed "the horse and buggy era", came a new contraption that could travel under its own power — the automobile. Among those who could envision the possibilities of the motor car were the carriage makers.

The interest in cars continued to grow, and before long, they began to appear in Stephen.

The first to venture into the new field were men who lived in small towns and villages, had good businesses and some spare money, and did not keep their own horses. Most communities had livery stables with horses, buggies and drivers for hire, and the train provided transportation to the city. But how much more convenient it was to have a car housed in the shed behind the house.

In Exeter, Milo Snell was one of the first to own a car. Before long he had a car agency and later, display rooms, a garage for repair work, gas tanks and tires. For many years afterwards, the Snell brothers, Milo and Ulric, operated a car business in Exeter.

Chris Zeufle also purchased a car at an early date. Mr. Zeufle operated the Exeter Electric Light plant, which supplied power for the street lights and a limited number of homes. (At midnight, the plant ceased to operate and the town was in darkness until daybreak). Mr. Zeufle bought a one-cylinder Cadillac. This model sold for \$850, which included the patent leather fenders; the brass lamps, bulb horn and picnic basket were all extras, as was the tonneau, or rear seat.

EARLY CARS IN CREDITON

One of the 1909 models from the McLaughlin Oshawa plant arrived in Crediton in April of that year. The local Exeter paper reported: "The auto of Mr. Lawson, Crediton jeweller, is quite a novelty."

The McLaughlin car did create a good deal of interest. The car

was purchased by August Haist and James Lawson, both of Crediton. Mr. Lawson did most of the driving as he was considerably younger than Mr. Haist, a retired farmer. When the car arrived, the days were getting longer and the spring mud had dried. On warm evenings after the shops had closed, the two men went for a drive together. There was usually a group of spectators to watch their departure, and some lingered until they returned. The village children were always there, and often, two or three of them were invited to ride in the rear seat as far as the big elm tree, half a mile west of the village. There, they were let out to walk home. The ride in the horseless carriage was an unforgettable experience for them.

In the June, 1909 paper, there was another item about the car: "Mr. August Haist undertook to operate the car. He lost control of the machine and ran into a barbed-wire fence — damage was slight." Apparently, Mr. Haist was more accustomed to horses than to cars. In the excitement of the drive, he forgot to use the brakes — instead, he shouted 'Whoa, whoa!' His new steed did not respond.

Mr. Lawson's son, Dr. William Lawson of Listowel, recalled: "I remember the first car being brought to Crediton when I was a very small boy. As far as I know, it was owned by my father and Mr. Haist. Unfortunately, I do not have a picture."

MORE CARS ARRIVE

(This section was written mostly from memory with the assistance of Roy Finkbeiner of Crediton, who was born in 1897 and remembers many early events in Stephen. The exact dates in this section are a little uncertain, but the events occurred in the first half of the second decade.)

In the early years, cars were not driven during the winter months. New owners usually made their purchases in the spring and started using them as soon as the roads permitted. In Stephen, Francis Clark, Dr. Joseph Orme, Herb Young, Herb Eller, and Harry Switzer were early car owners.

GASOLINE PUMPS

As the number of cars increased, a better gasoline delivery system was devised: gasoline pumps began to appear in towns and villages. Francis Clark and Herb Young installed pumps in front

of their shops on Victoria Street in Creditor. Mr. Clark's harness shop was located on the northeast corner of the main intersection, and Mr. Young's hardware store was a short distance to the east. The pumps were placed on the road allowance beside the cement sidewalk.

THE MAXWELL CAR

About this time, Albert Morlock and Ezra Oestreicher opened a Maxwell car agency in Creditor, and several were sold in the community. The Maxwell first appeared on the market as a 14-horsepower runabout in 1905.

In May 1914, Godfrey Nicholson purchased a Maxwell car for \$800. By this time, cars were much improved in appearance, design and comfort. The Nicholson's vehicle was a touring car with a fold-down top and a fold-over windshield. In case of rain, the top was raised and set in place. Side curtains made of a waterproof material were attached at the top and bottom to keep the interior dry.

William Switzer of Shipka bought a Maxwell at about the same



The Nicholsons' 1914 Maxwell touring car was one of the first automobiles purchased by a Stephen Township family. Here we see Mr. Nicholson, his daughter at the wheel, and his wife ready for a spin.

time. His son, Sam, remembered that his father could set the steering wheel in a position that kept the car running in a circle. Setting the gas lever so that the car was going slowly, Mr. Switzer put it in gear and then stepped out. The Maxwell would continue to circle without a driver. This demonstration usually took place at the intersection of the Crediton Road and Concessions 16 and 17 (Shipka corner), when a number of spectators had gathered at the village store. To end the show, Mr. Switzer stepped into the slow-moving car and straightened the wheel. Some time later, the car caught fire and was destroyed.

Joseph Haist, Fred Haist and Wesley Wein were all later Maxwell owners.

OTHER CARS

Sam Brown, a Crediton merchant, purchased an EMF; the initials stood for Everitt, Metzpar and Flanders, three car manufacturers. EMF was absorbed by the Studebaker Company, a former carriage-maker which had moved successfully into the car business. Studebakers were favoured by the Morlock family: Jack, William and Albert each purchased one. Edward, another brother, chose a four-cylinder Buick.

Charles Zwicker, another village merchant, chose a Hudson and later, a Model A Ford. The Hudson was a comfortable heavy car made from 1909 to 1957.

Another popular car was the Chevrolet, made in Canada at the McLaughlin plant beginning in 1915. In 1918, the McLaughlin Motor Car Company became General Motors of Canada, although the McLaughlin brothers remained in charge of operations. Bob Fahner and Garnet Switzer each owned a Chevrolet, and William Finkbeiner bought one in 1920.

CARS IN THE DASHWOOD AREA

Little information on early cars in the Dashwood area is available. Henry Hoffman, who drove the mail from Dashwood and Grand Bend to Exeter for nearly 45 years, bought a car in 1909. When rural mail delivery began about 1913, he used it to deliver mail on his route during the summer, although he continued to use horses in the winter for many years. Henry Hoffman died in 1969, at the age of 91.

Dr. Balfour of Dashwood purchased a five-passenger Buick

from Wes Snell, the local Buick agent.

Henry Guenther started a livery and dray or transport business in 1899. He ran a daily stage from Dashwood to Parkhill, where he picked up mail and passengers and returned to Dashwood, making stops at Khiva, Mount Carmel, Lieury and Moray post offices. Henry bought a truck in 1910 and another in 1911. He was killed in an accident in 1913, and his wife managed the business for a few years and then sold the trucks. When her son, Earl, returned home from service overseas in 1919, he bought the business. The same year, he purchased a Ford truck, and in 1922, he bought an International stake truck.

AROUND GRAND BEND

The Lambton Heritage Museum has a 1902 picture showing a group of people standing around an open touring car: Bruce, Harry, and Sid Bossenberry are in the group, but the owner and make of the car are not identified. Bruce Bossenberry may have owned a Studebaker at one time. A. E. Walker, developer of the Oakwood resort, was also an early car owner.

The first service station and garage in Grand Bend was owned and operated by Maurice Brenner. It was located across the street (now Highway 21) from the Brenner Hotel, which was operated by his brother, Ezra Brenner. The hotel is now known as the Colonial and the garage has been removed.

Silas Stanlake, who lived west of Exeter, had a Russell car. The Russell Motor Car Company was established in Toronto by the inventor, Thomas Alexander Russell, a native of Usborne Township. The company operated from 1906 to 1916.

CENTRALIA CARS

(Most of this information was contributed by Wilfred Huxtable)

In 1910, Jack Parsons bought a big six-cylinder Oldsmobile in British Columbia and shipped it to Centralia by rail. Wilfred Huxtable has part of the engine, the wheels, and the transmission from this car. The Olds Car Company was organized in 1895. By 1904, over 12,000 of its famous one-cylinder Oldsmobile runabouts had been sold. The four- and six-cylinder models were introduced in 1908.

In 1912-13, Gordon Wilson, who was living on Lot 1, Con. 3, purchased a Ford car. The first Canadian Ford, a Model C, came

off the assembly line at Walkerville in 1905. The Model T was made from 1909 to 1928, when it was replaced by the Model A. More than 750,000 Model Ts were built in Canada. It was a low-priced, sturdy, simply-designed car, fondly known as the Tin Lizzie. In 1925, the Model T car sold for \$395; the starter was \$85 extra. This is the car that put North America on wheels.

In 1915, William Moffat, operator of the Centralia Hotel, purchased a Reo. The Reos were made until 1926 in Lansing, Michigan.

William Collwell, a farmer, chose a 1915 Overland.

George Essery, who ran the livery stables at Centralia, bought a 1916 Ford. As cars became more common, he installed a gasoline pump and used part of his building for car work. It wasn't long before the horses were gone and Mr. Essery had sold out. The new owner did some remodelling and opened a garage.

Nelson Baker, a farmer on Concession 3, purchased a 1916 Maxwell, as did Thomas Willis, who owned and operated the Shamrock Creamery at Centralia.

In 1917, William R. Elliott selected a Model T with side curtains. His second car was also a Model T, but it had glass windows.

About 1918, Andrew Hicks, who lived on the Bypass, won an Overland car as a prize when he participated in a contest sponsored by a Toronto company.

The growing popularity of cars was linked to a demand for more and better roads. Thus, this short history of the first cars deserves a place in the story of roads in Stephen. We are grateful to all those who contributed their memories to this special section.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

In October 1916, the first paved highway in Canada was opened between Toronto and Hamilton. Premier Hearst spoke at the opening ceremony, promising that when the war was over construction of a provincial highway system would begin. An act providing for the establishment of a provincial highway system was passed in 1917, and grants for county roads were increased to 60 per cent. In 1919, the speed limit was raised to 20 miles per hour in towns and cities, and 25 on the highways.

To provide uniform road service throughout the province, a network of numbered highways was designed. Highway 2 was built from Windsor to Montreal, and Highway 3 from Windsor to the Niagara River to serve east-west traffic. Highway 4, from Port Stan-

ley north, and Highway 6, from Owen Sound to Dundas and Port Dover, formed the north-south lines of communication. By 1924, there were 709 miles of pavement in Ontario.



By the 1920's the network of highways in southwestern Ontario was quite extensive. Stephen Township benefited from provincial highways coming from Parkhill, Exeter, and Goderich.

CHANGES AT THE TOWNSHIP LEVEL

In 1920, township councils were instructed by the Department of Highways to prepare and pass bylaws making several significant changes in the township road maintenance system:

1. The appointment of a Road Superintendent was required.
2. Statute Labour was abolished.
3. The Superintendent was responsible for preparing a list of estimated road expenses for the next year.

In Stephen, Henry Eilber was appointed road superintendent and prepared the budget for the following year. But township council did not actually prepare and pass the required bylaws. The Department of Highways sent a letter, in September, reminding

council of the new requirements. Still council delayed. After nearly 80 years of looking after township roads, they obviously resented losing their autonomy and delayed making the change as long as possible.

It was not until January 1928, that statute labour was abolished in the township and a levy was placed on rateable property for the construction and upkeep of roads and bridges in the township. That year, George Eilber was appointed to succeed Henry Eilber as superintendent.

In 1929, a township by-law was passed designating certain roads as through highways and providing for the erection of stop signs. This by-law was not popular: farmers driving buggies, wagons or cars thought it an imposition to be obliged to stop at a corner to see if another vehicle was approaching.

By 1930, the township council had capitulated. All the by-laws were passed, the completed forms were submitted and Stephen received its subsidies.

ROAD EQUIPMENT AND CREWS

To meet the demand for good roads, the township needed better road equipment. In May 1926, \$654 was paid to the Sawyer and Massey Company for graders. The next year, one from the Dominion Machinery Company cost \$114 and a ditcher cost \$134. George Eilber, the road superintendent, received 40 cents an hour, and supplied his own transportation. His first year on the job, he received \$270.44. Mr. Eilber held this position until 1946.

In 1936, the township paid men \$430 for shovelling snow from the roads. The first power grader with a snow plough attachment was purchased in 1940 for \$5,300. A machine shed was erected on the township lot to house it.

If the snowfall was light, the ploughs managed very well. But in the 1940s, there were two winters of very heavy snow. In 1947, some of the concession roads were closed or snow-blocked for weeks. The Crediton road and the townlines were kept open. Some farmers parked their cars near these roads, before the concessions filled in, and walked or drove sleighs to them. Council had to rent heavy equipment in March and hire men to shovel out the roadways.

The remedy was more high-powered snow ploughs. In 1946, a power road maintainer was purchased for \$11,724. Edward Lip-



Heavy equipment, rented by council, was required to clear the roads after record snowfall during the winter of 1947. This picture shows some of Jack Frost's best work on Concessions 8 and 9.

pert became road superintendent in April of that year. In July 1948, he was succeeded by Lawrence Hill, who held the position until February 1970.

In 1949, a tractor, mower and drag were bought for \$1,668, and in 1950, a truck, costing \$1,496 was added. In April of the following year, a large truck was purchased for \$5,100 and in November a snow plough was bought for the truck. The township now had three snow ploughs. Clifford Kenney, Eldon Smith and Joseph Varley were the operators. A new township shed to house this machinery was erected in 1954, at a cost of \$8,000.

In 1955, signs bearing the concession numbers were erected throughout Stephen by the township Federation of Agriculture group.

SURFACING TOWNSHIP ROADS

During World War II, with the R.C.A.F. base at Centralia and the housing connected with it located in Concessions 2, 3, and 4, the traffic in the area increased greatly. The county roads were paved, and five miles of Concessions 2 and 3 were gravelled. These



The township road grader in 1971.



The township road maintenance crew in 1971. From left to right: Lloyd Bender, Eldon Smith, Clifford Kenny, Joseph Varley, and R.F. McIsaac, superintendent.

sections required extra labour and money to maintain them.

During the 1960s, the township council decided to use cold mix asphalt on the Exeter sideroad, #20, from the town limits west to the first corner. In 1975, they surfaced 1.25 miles in Concessions 2 and 3 from Fairfield Corner to the Stephen-McGillivray townline with a covering of "H.L.4 Hot Mix" asphalt. Council extended its paving program in 1985 to include the balance of Concessions 2 and 3 from the Crediton Road north to the Stephen-Hay townline. As well, the B Line, on which the Huron Country Playhouse is located, received a chip and tar surfacing. Although expensive, paving eliminated the need for grading, graveling, oiling and chemical spraying to control the dust. Stephen now maintains the Huron Park roads, which are all asphalt surfaced.

Stephen Township is responsible for approximately 100 miles of roads. Council is currently replacing smaller culverts with wider ones and raising, widening and building up the shoulders of the travelled portions of the concession roads. It is hoped that less snow will stay on the raised road beds, thus reducing the cost of snow removal. Although improvements are ongoing, some of Stephen's less travelled roads are still quite narrow, and could still be classed as horse and buggy roads.

Chapter Five

Bridges in Stephen

"They span the streams"

FORDING THE RIVER

With the exception of a few logs laid across the banks of a stream or creek, there were no bridges in Stephen Township until 1852, although two or three bridges had been erected on Stephen's boundaries by the Canada Company in the early days of settlement.

We have two stories of river crossings before there were bridges over the Ausable. The first concerns a German circuit minister, Jacob Bastian of Sebringville. Bastian, a minister of the Evangelical Association, served a farflung parish from Waterloo County to Lake Huron, known as the Huron Mission. Some of his parishioners, Swabian settlers from southwest Germany, moved to Stephen Township in 1849.

In 1851, he visited Stephen to establish a church for the new settlers, hold services, baptise children, and perform marriages. Although Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican ministers travelled up and down the London Road twice a year, Reverend Bastian was the first minister to cross the Ausable in Stephen Township. He probably followed the Centre Road in, then turned south along the river until he was opposite Lot 8, Con. 6, where Theobald and Christina Stahl had settled. He must have led his horse through the icy waters of the river, and then made his way westward through the bush to the Stahl home, where he received a warm welcome.

Several neighbours attended Reverend Bastian's service, the first to be held in the German language in the newly settled area. Bastian organized class meetings, which met at first in homes, later

in the local school, and eventually, in a small log church.

The other story also concerns a German family. When the family of Jacob Fahrner arrived to take up their land on Concession 6, north of Sweet's Corner, there was no bridge over the river. Years later, the Fahrner's son, George recalled how, as a boy of eight, he had hung onto the tail of one of the family cows as they crossed the river.

Most of the land east of the river had been leased or sold by 1852. That year, Stephen's first council was elected and settlers lost no time in petitioning them for bridges over the Ausable River.

WOODEN BRIDGES IN STEPHEN — THE CREDITON ROAD BRIDGE

The bridge building process of the 1850s was quite different from what it is today. The first step was the passing of a by-law by council, authorizing the building of a bridge at a given location. A plan was prepared and notices were posted, requesting tenders. On a specified date, councillors and bidders met at the site and the contract was let.

The first bridge approved by the new township council crossed the river on the Centre, or what is now the Crediton Road. John



The Crediton Road Bridge over the Ausable, c. 1905.

Essery won the contract with a bid of 39 pounds, five shillings. Essery had some experience in construction; he had built a dam and two mills. By March 1852, the bridge was built, but there is evidence that Essery's workmanship left something to be desired. In July, William Sweet and several others petitioned council to "bridge the hole on the east side of the bridge". Two years later, the bridge was raised two feet, as the first structure had been too low to withstand spring flooding.

The bridge was repaired again in 1858, and replaced in 1865. The next mention of the Crediton Road bridge is in 1892, when Lancelot Hardy of Exeter rebuilt it. It is likely, however, that Hardy's bridge was the fourth on the site, as the life of a wooden bridge was rarely more than 15 years. Records of the third bridge may be contained in a missing council minute book. Hardy's bridge was considered to be one of the best structures built over the Ausable River.

BRIDGES ON THE THIRD SIDEROAD

In the summer of 1852, settlers on the third sideroad petitioned council for a bridge over the Ausable River.

This structure became known as the Mitchell or sometimes the Sweitzer bridge, after the first settlers to the north and south. In 1870, Henry Sweitzer erected a second bridge for \$372. This structure was replaced in 1885 by Patterson and Weir.

BRIDGES ON THE FIRST SIDEROAD

Council passed a by-law allowing for a bridge on the first sideroad near Essery's mills in November, 1852. The following year John Snell erected it.

In 1868, a contract for a new bridge was let to Mr. Essery, but when he refused to sign the bonds, it was relet to Simon Press. The sawmill operated by Hugh McFee had to be moved to make room for the new bridge; he received \$12 for this work, and Mrs. Essery received \$1 for signing off her dower rights to the bridge site.

Council laid down precise specifications for the new bridge: it was to have a 55 foot span; 12 inch square bents of pine, oak or rock elm; a roadway of three-inch hemlock planks, 12 inches wide with no joins and nailed to the stringers with six-inch wrought iron spikes, seven to a plank; a handrail of "the best quality lumber"; and it was to be built "in the most workmanlike manner."



The fourth wooden bridge on the Essery Sideroad, 1893-1912. From left to right: Mr. Peget, banker; Mose Faist, storekeeper; Everett Falmer, clerk; G. Nicholson, butcher; Fred Housell, miller - all of Crediton, c. 1920.

The total cost was \$721.

It was replaced in 1882 with a bridge erected by R. Patterson at a cost of \$656. In 1893, a fourth bridge was constructed at Essery's by Joseph Lawson.

OTHER BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

The first 'Devil's Elbow' bridge was built on the Fourth Sideroad in 1857, by Mr. Balkwill, at a cost of 50 pounds. It was replaced by one built by Mr. Hardy, in 1869, for 370 pounds. The next recorded Devil's Elbow bridge was built by Joseph Lawson in 1893. This was the last of the wooden bridges to be built over the Ausable in Stephen.

By contrast, the Pollock Culvert on the Gill or River Road was constructed in 1970 for \$30,000. The culvert is on the boundary line between Stephen and the village of Grand Bend. The two municipalities shared the costs, which included extra land, new approaches, fill, and guard rails on both sides.



The concrete and steel truss bridge at Crediton East, 1909-1955. Photograph taken in 1955.



The concrete and steel truss bridge at Desai's Elbow, 1909-1981. Photograph taken in 1971.

CONCRETE AND STEEL TRUSS BRIDGES

Wooden bridges served their purpose, but they had a very short span of usefulness. By the turn of the century, council began to replace the wooden structures with sturdier concrete and steel bridges.

In 1909, council hired engineer F. W. Farncombe of London to prepare plans for a new bridge at Crediton East. It was to have a 90 foot span, a 16 foot roadway, and sufficient strength to carry a 10 ton load on wheels. The contract was let to Joseph Lawson of Crediton for the cement work and to A. Hill and Company of Mitchell for the steel work. The total cost was just under \$4,000.

The same year, council ordered a second concrete and steel truss bridge on the Fourth Sideroad (the Devil's Elbow). Contractors Lawson and Hill used the plans prepared for the Crediton East bridge, but made the roadway somewhat narrower. The total cost was \$3,409.82.

Council could not afford to build a third concrete and steel truss bridge until 1911. In that year, Lawson and Hill, using the same plans, constructed a third bridge, 78 feet by 14 feet, on the Third Sideroad between Lots 15 and 16, at a cost of \$3,435. Called the Haist Bridge, it was used until April 25, 1973, when it collapsed under the weight of a truck carrying 20 tons of concrete blocks.



A trailer load of concrete block proved too much for the old Haist Bridge. On April 25, 1973, the bridge buckled under the burden of about 10 tons.

The load capacity of the bridge, which had recently been redecked, was 13 tons.

In 1912, a fourth concrete and steel truss bridge was erected at the Essery Sideroad by a Middlesex contractor. The cement abutments did not pass inspection; the contractor had to replace them the next year. This bridge, with a span of 91.5 feet, a width of 14 feet, and a load capacity of 11 tons, is still in use.

Thus between 1909 and 1912, Stephen council constructed four concrete and steel truss bridges over the Ausable River. They proved to be a significant improvement over the wooden ones built during the previous 57 years. The investment was a worthwhile and a timely one: by 1914, the country was at war, metal became scarce and expensive, and costs rose, never to come down again.



The Essery Bridge, 1912. . . . Photograph taken in 1971.

THE TRI-COUNTY BRIDGE

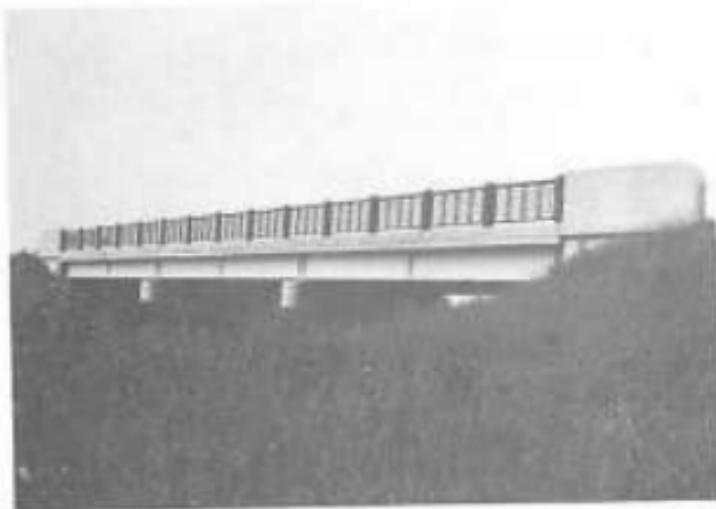
In the fall of 1909, the roads and bridges committees from the three counties of Huron, Middlesex, and Lambton met at the southwest corner of Stephen to consider the advisability of building a bridge on the site.

Stephen Township built the road from Greenway to the river. The bridge was built in 1911, and is known as the Tri-County Bridge.

The original bridge was replaced in 1963 by a much larger one. This bridge provides many Stephen residents with a shorter route to Highway 21 and the Pinery Provincial Park.



A rather slight looking wooden bridge at Grand Bend, c. 1905.



The Tri-County Bridge, crossing from Huron and Middlesex into Lambton, in 1971. This bridge is one of the few bridges in the entire province that connects three counties.

THE BEND OF THE RIVER

The earliest reference found to a bridge over the Ausable at the bend of the river is a letter dated February 1920. The letter states that a bridge is needed and that Lambton and Huron County will share equally in the cost of building and maintaining it.

The Ontario Railway and Municipal Board gave the two counties permission to build the bridge, and selected the engineer, James A. Bell of St. Thomas. Mr. Bell, who received as his fee five per cent of the total cost, was to select an inspector, send his plans to the Department of Highways for their approval, prepare contracts, and advertise for tenders. This represented the beginning of provincial control over highways in Stephen Township, although at this early date the counties were still responsible for the costs.

PRESTRESSED CONCRETE BRIDGES — THE CREDITON BRIDGE

The first prestressed concrete bridge in Huron County, and the third in Ontario, was erected over the Ausable River at Crediton during the summer of 1955. It replaced the concrete and steel bridge, built 46 years earlier.

Because the Crediton Road from Highway 4, west to Highway 81, was maintained by the County Highways Department, they were responsible for erecting the new bridge. The county engineer was Peter Patterson, and the county highways foreman was Kenneth Wright.

During construction the road was closed to the public and traffic was detoured. The girders of prestressed concrete, weighing ten to 13 tons, were brought from the factory and were placed in position on the bridge foundation by large cranes — an operation that drew a considerable audience. The new bridge was 175 feet long by 42 feet wide.

The official opening ceremonies took place of October 18, with Arthur Gibson, chairman of the county roads committee, as the master of ceremonies. Stephen school children were released from classes so that they could attend the ceremonies. The total cost of the bridge was \$57,377.

THE HAIST BRIDGE

The collapse of the Haist Bridge in 1973 came as a complete surprise. For the first time in more than 60 years, Stephen Town-



Hoisting the precast concrete beams into place for the Crediton Bridge, August 1955. Courtesy Jack Doerr.



The Crediton Bridge shortly after its opening in 1955.



The Heist Bridge, 1974—Photograph taken in 1974.

ship council was faced with building a large bridge. There had been many changes since the township last built a bridge, and the situation was not helped by the lack of funds for such a project.

In 1974, council selected McLean-Foster Company Limited as the contractor and agreed on a final contract price of \$118,712. With other costs, such as land, steel and engineering fees, the total cost of the bridge was \$156,130.

The bridge was officially opened on November 28, 1974, and was named the Haist Bridge in memory of the late Wellington Haist, who had served as a township councillor and deputy-reeve. The Haist family lived on Lot 15, Con. 5 for many years: only two other families — the Mitchells and the Brands — have occupied this location. Mrs. Wellington Haist cut the ribbon to officially open the new bridge.

THE DEVIL'S ELBOW BRIDGE

In 1981, Stephen Township council built its third prestressed concrete bridge, to replace the Devil's Elbow bridge. The approaches to the old bridge were poor: traffic had to turn to get onto the bridge, and then turn again on the other side, and the road was only 13 feet wide.

The new bridge was built about 260 feet west of the old one. Because the river turns to the north, a slight re-alignment of the river bank allowed the road to be straightened.

This required a number of land purchases and exchanges and involved the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority, which owns the Hay Swamp, the largest single natural area in the authority's watershed. The swamp acts as a flood storage and low-flow augmentation reservoir for the upper drainage basins of the river. As well, it provides some of the best habitat in Huron County for bass, wood ducks and deer.

The authority made several requests to ensure that the impact on the wetlands was minimised. As the bridge is located at the lower ends of the wetlands, special care was taken to ensure that the flow of the river was not altered.

Council accepted the tender of Elginfield Construction Company Limited for \$341,282. The new bridge was 29.88 metres long, the same as the previous one. B. M. Ross and Associates was the engineering company engaged for the project. The total cost of the project was \$402,699.



The Devil's Elbow Bridge, 1980- . Photograph taken in 1986.



The plaque mounted on the Devil's Elbow Bridge.

The bridge was finished in August and the official opening ceremonies were held on September 28, 1981.

The inscription on the plaque reads:

Devil's Elbow Bridge
Township of Stephen
Reeve C. K. Campbell
Deputy Reeve D. C. Russell
Council A. H. Walper
R. E. Weber
T. J. Tomes
Road Superintendent E. L. Finkbeiner
Clerk W. D. Wein
Engineer B. M. Boss and Associates Limited
Contractor Elginfield Construction Limited

The construction of the township's bridges was another chapter in improving the lives of the area's pioneer families.

Chapter Six

The Ausable River

"A lining river by the door"

R.L. Stevenson

THE SOURCE OF THE AUSABLE

If rivers have any pride in their origins, the Ausable can claim a share. Its source is in the once densely-wooded hills northeast of Staffa in Perth County, an area well known for its fertile soil. Here, at about 1,075 feet above sea level, springs of clear water rise to the surface of the land. These little streams unite and begin their winding descent to Lake Huron.

The Ausable is an old river; it was born of melting glaciers in the last glacial epoch. Its watershed extends to four counties, numerous townships and several towns and villages.

THE MEANDERING STREAM —

THE AUSABLE IN EASTERN STEPHEN

Most of Stephen lies within the watershed of the Ausable River. One exception is a lobe extending south of Dashwood in Concession 11 and 12. The other is the block from Concession 13 west to the lake; this wedge slopes northwest from 754 feet above sea level to the lake.

The Ausable enters and exits the township three times. Before Exeter became an incorporated village, it entered as it crossed the London Road; now the first entry point is the Stephen-Exeter line. Flowing westerly, it leaves Stephen again, crosses Highway 83, and enters Hay Township. It makes its way to Concession 5, where it turns southward and returns to Stephen. Veering a little to the west in the first block, the Ausable enters Concession 6, where it

is joined by a tributary, the Black Creek, in the centre of the block. Returning to Concession 5, the river meanders southward in a leisurely fashion through farmland and wooded areas until it reaches McGillivray Township. Throughout the township, the fall averages less than three feet per mile.

By this point, the Ausable has already earned its reputation as a meandering stream. A straight line from the source of the river to its outlet is about 50 miles. So devious is its course that it travels 300 miles to reach Lake Huron.

THE INDIANS

Long before the arrival of white men in the area, the Indians were familiar with the river. The Attawandarons or Neutral Indians lived in the southern part of the watershed during the 17th century. Their principal centre was a village located northwest of what is now the city of London. During the summer, they grew corn on the river flats. It is not known what name the Neutrals gave to the river. The Chippewas called it "Nagan-Sippi," meaning sandy river. French explorers and fur traders called it the Riviere aux Saubies, "river to the sands", a reference to the sand dunes along the shores of Lake Huron.

A PLACE TO FISH, SWIM AND SKATE

For many years, the Ausable has provided anglers with a pleasant place to try their luck. One Crediton resident, Christian Trick, liked fresh fish for breakfast. During the fishing season, it was his custom to rise early, walk a mile or so to his favourite spot and cast his line. In a short time, he would return home with a fine pike or two for his wife to cook.

INDUSTRIES BY THE RIVER

In the early years, the river powered several mills. The Essery mills were on the First Sideroad not far from Concession 5. Kilpatrick's woollen mill was on Lot 11, just north of the Crediton Bridge, and Sweitzer's sawmill was on Lot 16, both on Concession 5.

The nearby clay provided material for brick and tile yards, important industries from the 1860s to the turn of the century. For a three-mile stretch of the river, there were yards on nearly every lot, although some were small and did not operate every year.

THE GORGE

Many times in its rambling journey, the river has turned aside from much softer obstructions. Now it is more determined. During an earlier geological period, it relentlessly attacked layer upon layer of Devonian rock formation until it finally cut its way through the ridge. It left a gorge about 12 miles in length, and exposed beds of fossils in an exquisite state of preservation — a geologist's paradise. Devil's Glen area, near Arkona, is known internationally for its fossils, some quite rare, and its geological features.

In this stretch, the river flows between cliffs up to 100 feet high. Alternating with the high sections are gentler tree-covered hills. Sugar maple, white ash, birch, oak, basswood, black maple and aspens abound, and rare species — black walnut, sassafras, flowering dogwood and tulip trees — are sometimes seen.

As the river passes through the gorge, it falls 30 feet in a series of rapids into a low, flat area known as the lake plains.

THE LAKE PLAINS

No one is quite sure what changes took place in this area to produce the lake plains. It is believed that at one time the river found its outlet to Lake Huron soon after emerging from the gorge, at a point near where it now crosses the boundary between West Williams and McGillivray. At this time, the lake extended inland to the point where the river emerged from the gorge.

The river carried a heavy load of silt into this bay each spring. Over time, the prevailing winds and waves hurled back the silt, which, combining with sand, formed a barrier. The river was gradually forced northward, until it reached the white clay at what is now Grand Bend. Here, it turned toward the lake and soon found an outlet.

Now the process repeated itself. The mouth of the river at Grand Bend was gradually closed by banks of sand which extended south and west. The river was again forced to change its direction. A long line of sand banks and dunes built up on shallow sand bars that extended south toward the present-day Port Franks. The river flowed to the east of this new sand barrier for ten or 12 miles, before reaching the lake at Port Franks. Here, by some unexplained process, the lake and the river created a deep natural harbour. The long struggle between the river and the wind, water, silt and sand was over. The river had found a new outlet, adding a long loop to its course in the process.

In 1828, surveyor Samuel Smith charted the Ausable and five miles of Lake Huron shoreline in the Pinery area. At that time, the river still made a hairpin turn at Grand Bend and found its outlet at Port Franks.

Smith probably received valuable information about the "Drowned Lands" (also called the Klondyke) from Indians living in the area. With an Indian and one member of his party, he visited Lake Burwell, some five miles from his camp on the river.

The best known Indian portage in Smith's time was Carrying Place, from the lake to the Ausable River, at the site of the present village of Grand Bend. Another portage ran from the mouth of the river eastward along a line just below Lake Burwell to the river. The route continued easterly to Nairn, where the Indians could reach the Thames via its tributaries.

FEATURES IMPOSED ON THE MAP

The first commercial invasion into this virgin territory was made in 1832 by two Americans from Detroit, Brewster and Smart. They inspected the area and then went on the Canada Company office in Goderich where they agreed to purchase land and erect a saw-mill. The mill site was about a mile south of the bend of the river. Brewster and Smart constructed a dam to provide water power, and were in business by the following year.

THE NORTHERN CUT

In 1875, the Canada Company completed a cut that ran westerly just below Lake Burwell, so that water from the Ausable River flowed through the channel to the lake.

The Canada Company Cut drastically changed the river. The Ausable was shortened by several miles and cut off from the many creeks, small streams, ditches and drains that had been part of the river system in Hay, Stephen and McGillivray townships. The main tributary in this area, Mud Creek, became a secondary river, arising in Hay Township and flowing south through Stephen and McGillivray townships.

The southern cut did little to ease flooding from the Mud Creek and the Petsebe in the area around Grand Bend. For ten years, farmers petitioned the local townships for help in controlling the surplus water. On several occasions, Stephen's council requested a meeting with the other two councils to discuss the problem. When

they failed to respond, Stephen's council decided to act alone.

It took some time for the various levels of government to determine that Stephen Township could legally undertake the work. Fortunately, Stephen had a strong council, capable and interested in the problems of land-owners. The council included: Valentine Ratz of Shipka, the reeve; Henry Eilber of Crediton, the first deputy-reeve; John Sherrit of Harpley, the second deputy-reeve; and councillors Frederick Wuerth of Crediton and Richard Hicks of Centralia. Three of these men were later elected to seats in the federal and provincial legislatures, and Valentine Ratz received a Senate appointment.

An engineer was engaged to draw plans, the contract was let and the work started in the summer of 1892. The new outlet was almost cleared by fall; only a narrow strip of land was left to hold the river in place during the winter. When the 1893 freshets came down, the bar was swept away by the current and the river flowed freely into the lake. The bridge was taken down and the river was dredged upstream to a small creek, which was also dredged to increase the depth of the passage.

Finally a new bridge was erected and Grand Bend had an outlet to the lake, a great benefit to the village. Bosanquet and Stephen townships shared the cost. The cut brought some relief from flood waters, but more work was required in the succeeding years.



The romantic Ausable River at Grand Bend, c. 1910.

TRIBUTARIES OF THE AUSABLE RIVER

The branches of the Black Creek drain the northwestern part of the Ausable watershed. The Black Creek joins the Ausable just south of the northern boundary of Stephen Township.

The Centralia Creek begins near Centralia and flows northerly through Concessions 1 and 2 of Stephen, joining the river in the north block of Concession 4, near the Devil's Elbow.

The Little Ausable begins east of Exeter, then flows south parallel to the main stream. Just west of Lucan, it turns west and joins the river north of Ailsa Craig.

The Adelaide Creek drains the southeastern corner of the watershed. The smaller Decker and Jericho creeks drain the southwest portion of the watershed.

The Mud Creek was the longest and most important tributary of the Ausable, but after the Canada Company Cut it became an independent stream emptying into Lake Huron at Grand Bend.

The creek arises northeast of Dashwood in Concession 10, Hay Township, and flows through Stephen and McGillivray. Turning west, it unites with the Petsebe (or Petseebee), a tributary draining most of West Williams Township. They flow on to enter the old Ausable River at the Devil's Elbow on the Bosanquet-McGillivray boundary.

This creek did not begin as a natural basin or depression. In Stephen Township, the course was laid out by an engineer and dug by labourers using spades and shovels. Side drains were added and lengthened when necessary. As a result, the creek does not twist and turn like the river does. In McGillivray there were many loops in the early course but through the years, the stream has been straightened and the loops eliminated.

In the watershed, there are two Devil's Elbows. In Stephen Township on the Fourth Sideroad in Concession 5, the Devil's Elbow has been eliminated by straightening the road, but the name lingers on. The other 'Elbow' is located on the Ausable about seven miles south of Grand Bend.

There are a number of creeks between the second Devil's Elbow and Grand Bend which empty directly into the old Ausable River channel. Because they have an average gradient of 17.5 per mile, there is a heavy runoff which can soon fill and overflow the channel during periods of rain.



Contractor Joseph Lawson (far left) and his crew dig out the Mud Creek, a tributary of the Ausable that winds its way through Stephen Township, c. 1895.

FLOODING

Flooding has always been a characteristic of the Ausable in the lowlands of Stephen, McGillivray and Bosanquet townships. For more than 100 years, efforts were made to correct this situation. The Canada Company Cut and the Grand Bend Cut were helpful but not entirely successful.

The Ausable has flooded many times in Stephen during the spring runoff or heavy summer rains. Low banks along stretches of the river's course and insufficient fall in the lower regions are major causes for the flooding. When in flood, the river's current is strong; it carries along limbs, branches, even trees, debris and drowned animals.

When Brewster and Smart built their mill in 1832, settlers in the area blamed the dam for most of the flooding. When they failed to have it removed through legal means, the farmers destroyed the dam and burned the mill. Although the mill may have contributed, the flooding continued long after it was gone.

Local papers reported flooding in 1885 and subsequent years. A serious flood in 1937 caused considerable damage. There were flash floods in May 1945 and July 1947. In 1954, nearly a mile of the Crediton Road was under water. The sideroads were closed



The spring of 1954 witnessed some of the worst flooding caused by the Ausable River since Stephen became a township. This view shows how seriously the water rose just south of the Crediton Bridge.

and only the Huron-Middlesex townline was not inundated. The Crediton Road was raised in 1955 and has not been flooded since.

AUSABLE RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Although flooding had always been a concern in the Ausable watershed, matters did not come to a head until the late 40s. The land of Haig Farm and other farms in the Drowned Lands were rich and productive but crops were often lost to flooding. When other measures failed, Dr. L. Gordon Haigmeier of the Klondyke area in Lambton County, launched a lawsuit against McGillivray Township in 1945, claiming compensation for his flood losses. The lawsuit pointed up the need for a comprehensive approach to flood control and provided the final impetus that led to the formation of the Ausable River Conservation Authority.

Representatives from the townships concerned met in Parkhill in July 1946 and came to an agreement to form the Ausable Region Conservation Authority, the first to be established under the Conservation Authorities Act. Roy Ratz represented Stephen Township on the authority.



MUNICIPALITIES

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In 1955, the boundaries of the Ausable River Conservation Authority intersected four counties and surrounded most of the river's watershed.

The authority produced a major report on the Ausable River watershed, including a number of recommendations for land use, reforestation, control of water, protection of wildlife and development of recreational areas in 1949.

The principal work of the authority, in Stephen Township, has been the reforestation of over 1,000 acres of marginal land. On three acres of this land, the Authority has established a tree nursery to supply all its reforestation projects. Forested areas, such as the Hay Swamp, store flood waters in the spring and slowly release them throughout the summer, thus providing natural flood control and irrigation.

For several years the conservation authority was also involved in sponsoring farm ponds. Other projects included the Camp Sylvan Conservation Program, which since 1964 has provided local children with an opportunity to learn about conservation, the Stephen Wildlife Area and the Crediton Conservation Area.

DR. LULU GAISER

One Stephen Township resident who was very interested in the flora and fauna found along the Ausable River was Dr. Lulu Gaiser. The botanist was born on Lot 10, Con. 9, on the 100-acre farm taken up by her grandfather, Adam George Gaiser, who immigrated from Wurtemburg, Germany in 1854.

The Gaisers seventh child, William, married Saloma Schwartz in 1891 and took over his father's farm. He and his wife moved to a house they had built in the village of Crediton in 1919. Two children were born to the couple: Lillian and Lula Odell.

Lulu attended Crediton public school, Exeter High School and London Collegiate Institute. She graduated from the University of Western Ontario in 1916, obtaining a high school teaching certificate. She served as principal of the Crediton Continuation School from 1917 to 1919.

Dr. Gaiser then attended Columbia University, in New York City, where she earned her master's degree. From 1922 to 1923, she was an Edna L. Smith fellow at the university and then became a junior pathologist with the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

In 1925, Lulu Gaiser was the first woman to be appointed to the staff of McMaster University in Hamilton, where she taught in the biology department. She completed her PhD from Colum-



Dr. Lula Gaiser's intrigue and scientific curiosity brought her to examine the flora found in the southern reaches of the Ausable watershed. A Stephen Township native, she gained considerable respect in academic circles through her dedicated, professional approach to research.

bis University in 1927 and continued to teach at McMaster University until 1949. The next year, she became research assistant to the director of Grey herbarium at Harvard University, receiving a grant to collect plants in Mexico and Guatemala. She remained at Harvard until taking an early retirement in 1954.

After returning to Crediton, to care for her widowed father who was in his 90s, Lula Gaiser began a botanical survey of the flora of Lambton County. To assist in this work, she received grants from the University of Guelph, and two American foundations. Plants collected by Dr. Gaiser from 1957 to 1961 were donated to the University of Guelph herbarium. Plants collected over the next three years were placed in the Department of Agriculture herbarium in Ottawa.

Dr. Gaiser, assisted by her father, collected and catalogued over 900 plant varieties. William Gaiser died in April, 1964, in his 100th year, and one year later, Dr. Gaiser died at her Crediton home. She bequeathed her plants and research papers to Raymond Moore, with the wish that he publish a list of her collections. In 1966, the results of Dr. Gaiser's research were published by the Department of Agriculture.

The Stephen Township native was a talented and dedicated

botanist and outstanding teacher who left a lasting legacy for all those interested in the native plant life of Lambton County.

CONCLUSION

The story of the Ausable is the story of a river with an aptitude for finding its way in spite of obstacles great and small. It adds charm to level stretches of land and beauty to the pastoral scene, as well as providing water for animals. Most of the time the Ausable is a quiet flowing stream. In the spring, it can become an uncontrollable sheet of water, submerging bridges and spilling over its low banks into adjacent lands.

But, good or bad, the Ausable River is an inextricable part of the history of Stephen Township.

Chapter Seven

Municipal Government

"A wise nation preserves its records."

Hon. Joseph Howe

BEGINNINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In the early days of settlement, Stephen Township was part of the London District, a huge administrative unit that stretched north from Norfolk County to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. The District was governed by a board of Justices of the Peace of the Quarter Sessions who were appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. Quarter sessions were held every three months at London, the district town.

Because of the distance between London and Goderich, administration of the Huron Tract was difficult. As the population of the Tract increased, the need for local government grew. Inhabitants of the Goderich area began to petition the government of Upper Canada to establish a Huron District.

In 1838, the necessary legislation was passed to create the Huron District as soon as a jail and courthouse could be constructed at Goderich. In 1839, Thomas Mercer Jones of the Canada Company was authorized to donate a suitable building site from Canada Company lands and by 1841, a jail had been constructed. In October of that year, the District of Huron was proclaimed, effective January 1, 1842. At the same time, the first Municipal Act in Canada West became law. District councils replaced the Quarter Sessions as the district governing bodies.

The council of the new Huron District consisted of councillors elected at annual town meetings and a warden appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor. Townships with up to 300 freeholders could

1846 At the Township Mtg of Stephen
beginning 1st May at Stephen School house
The following persons were elected to
serve the several offices

Richard Ryritt Town Councillor

Richard Ryritt Township Clerk

John Newell Assessor

Wilson Sanders Collector

John Diamond
George Snell
James Hanlak
James Compton }
{ Trustees

Richard Hanlak Overseer of Highways

John Mitchell
Edmund Peart } Wardens

all fences to be five feet six inches high

No Horses to run at large

No Breeding Cattle to run at large

No Hogs to run at large under 40 lbs

Notify the above to be a true return of the
Township affairs and laws

George Ryritt
Chairman

The oldest surviving record of township municipal deliberations is that of the "Annual township meeting," of the inhabitants, dated 1844. It pre-dates the Municipal Act of 1849 (the so-called "Baldwin Act,") after which township councils were instituted. Township annual meetings mainly elected officials, such as the Town Councillor, who sat on the District Council (the pre-1850 County Council), and made basic rules relating to fences and livestock control.

elect one councillor; those with more than 300 could elect two.

Because of their small populations, Hay, Stephen and Usborne were united for municipal purposes. Men who resided in the townships and possessed unencumbered land in the townships valued at 300 pounds were eligible to hold office as councillors. William McConnell was elected from Hay, Stephen and Usborne at the first Town Meeting held on January 22, 1842.

Other township officers elected were:

School Commissioners

- James Scott (Usborne)
- Richard Bissett (Stephen)
- Rev. H. C. Cooper (Usborne)
- Thomas Case (Usborne)
- Joseph Hardy (Hay)

Town Wardens

- William Case (Usborne)
- Richard Balkwill (Stephen)
- James Willis (Usborne)

Overseers of Roads

- James Stanlake (Stephen)
- Thomas Lamb (Usborne)
- Robert Mould (Hay)
- John Westcott (Usborne)
- William Balkwill (Usborne)

Poundkeepers

- James Balkwill (Usborne)
- Castor Willis (Hay)

Assessor

- Thomas Routliffe (Stephen)

Collector

- Robert Bissett (Stephen)

Town Clerk

- George Snell (Stephen)

The first meeting of the council of Huron District, under warden Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop, was held in February 1842.

In 1843, the annual Town Meeting for Stephen, Hay and Usborne was held at David McConnell's house on January 2 and McConnell, himself, was elected councillor. The other township offices were filled and the following four bylaws were passed:

1. No pigs to run at large under the weight of 30 pounds
2. No horses to run at large
3. No breachy cattle to run at large
4. All fences to be full height of 5 feet 6 inches.

In 1844, a by-law prohibiting dogs from attending church was passed at the annual meeting. The clerk, Thomas Taylor, wrote to the county clerk for advice on the new law. His letter, in part, reads:

'...May I be permitted to enquire if the township meeting is competent to make a law like this about the Dogs, and if it is, can this be carried into effect, as it now stands. Suppose only one Dog comes to Divine Service, how can that be Dogs-and how can dogs be said to come to Divine Service. I guess they come for anything else, except divine service, and the dogs/quere*/ owners are to be fined 2/6 for the 1st offence and 5/- for the second. quere how much for the third and whose duty will it be to levy the fine on the four dogs...I hope I shall not be thought troublesome or impertinent by making the above inquiries, as I do not wish to be deficient in duty, or act beyond it...'.

(*quere is a latin term meaning question)

No reply to this letter was found in the records, nor any record of fines being levied against Stephen's pious dogs.

In 1846, Stephen was populous enough to elect its own councillor and township officers. Two candidates stood for councillor, Richard Bissett and Richard Balkwill. There were 20 eligible voters, and in the custom of the day, each voter's name was recorded under the candidate he favoured. Richard Balkwill won with a slim majority of two votes and held office until 1849 when he was succeeded by Isaac Carling.

THE BALDWIN ACT

Until 1849 a Town Meeting was held annually to elect the township's councillor and appoint the other officers: all other business was conducted by the District Council at Goderich. By 1849, the population of Canada West had grown and with it, a demand for more representation in government. A new municipal act, known as the Baldwin Act after its chief proponent, Robert Baldwin, became effective January 1, 1850. It established the framework of the

present municipal system in Ontario. Counties replaced districts for municipal as well as judicial purposes. Townships, towns and villages were empowered to incorporate and manage their own affairs.

For the years 1850 and 1851, Stephen and Usborne were represented on the council of the United Counties of Huron, Perth and Bruce by James Scott and Thomas Lamb. Since January 1852, Stephen had had its own council and township officers. Each year, five men were elected to Council and until 1866, their first duty was to choose one of their number to serve as reeve. By 1863, the population was large enough to warrant a deputy reeve. From 1883 to 1898, the period of Stephen's greatest population, a second deputy reeve was elected.

Most of the council's minute books, treasurers' records, copies of by-laws and annual reports have been preserved and are kept at the Stephen Township offices in Credilton. Some early records, however, are not available.

STEPHEN TOWNSHIP'S FIRST COUNCILS

Managing the affairs of the township was a new responsibility for the men elected in 1852. While the minutes of the first meeting are brief, no doubt there was much discussion about the best way to proceed. In February, the treasurer, assessor, collector, path-masters, poundkeepers, and fence-viewers were appointed. The remuneration for council members was set at three shillings nine pence per sitting. The clerk's salary was set at seven pounds, 10 shillings, the treasurer's at two pounds, and the collector's, at four pounds 10 shillings. By-laws regarding roaming livestock and the height of fences were passed and numerous petitions for road improvements were received. The sum of 3/16th of a penny in the pound was levied for taxes.

No meetings were held in April, May and June, when the men were busy planting and seeding, nor in August and October, during the harvest season.

In 1855, the township was divided into five wards, each of which elected a member to council. The sideroads were used as boundaries; each ward was 1.25 miles wide and extended from the front road to the rear of the township. A polling place for each ward was established on Concession 1 or 2.

Occasionally an elected member refused to take the oath which



Thomas Troutt, a resident of Centralia, served as one of Stephen Township's early clerks. In the 1870's, he served as a division court clerk.

was a prerequisite of office. In 1855, a second election was needed to replace two council members who refused the oath. Daniel Coughlin was elected councillor in Ward 1 in 1857, but refused to take the oath of office. After a second election he was replaced by Michael Lyons. Curiously, Coughlin was elected the following year, took the oath, and served as councillor for 14 consecutive years.

There was also another electoral problem in 1857. In April, John Bissett contested the election of Thomas Hedden, who had been appointed reeve. Council's decision on the matter, as recorded in the minutes, was: "...that said Thomas Hedden do go out." John Bissett took his place on the council and Isaac Carling was chosen reeve for the balance of the year.

In January 1869, council decided that its minutes should be published in *The London Free Press* as neither county newspaper had sufficient circulation in the area. In the same year, wards were abolished and replaced by polling divisions, using the concessions as boundaries. Subdivision 1 included Concessions 1 to 5 and the boundary lots. Subdivision 2 included Concessions 6 to 12 and the boundary lots and Subdivision 3 included the remaining concessions and boundary lots. As the population increased, more subdivisions were required: in 1871 the township was divided into four for provincial and federal elections, although there were still only three for municipal elections until 1875. In 1878, five subdivisions

were established and in 1882, six more. Today there are ten polling subdivisions in the township of Stephen.

MEETING PLACES

In the early years, council met at the home of one of its members. In April 1857, they decided to hold meetings at William Balkwill's Hotel in Exeter. The following year they began to meet in schools, alternating between No. 1, No. 3, and later, No. 5. The usual meeting time was the first Saturday in the month, often as early as 9:00 a.m.

When the ward system was in force, each of the five wards held their own nomination meetings and elections in the local schoolhouse, or if there was no school, in a private home.

In the late 1860s, a stand was erected close to the Crediton Inn for the use of nomination speakers. But December was not a good month for open air meetings and, as a result, the meetings were often forced to move indoors. One elderly resident recalled that sometimes the speakers stood inside and spoke to the gathering through an open window.

Council finally decided that they needed a regular meeting place. In January 1870, they purchased a two-storey building and one acre of land from John Mitchell of Crediton for \$400. An additional \$200 was spent in refurbishing and furnishing the building, which was on the site of Maller's home, the second building west of the present township office. Mitchell's building had at one time been a store, and before that, a woollen mill.

Crediton was now the 'capital' of the township and council had a place to meet and to hold their nomination meetings. In February 1874, the meeting time was changed to the first Monday of the month at 10 a.m.

THE FIRST TOWN HALL

In 1886, the township decided to purchase a site for a town hall, to be built for a cost not exceeding \$1,500. The contract for a brick building was let to Henry Willert for \$1,330, and William Holt Jr., of Khiva, made 28 seats for \$100. Christian Beaver of Crediton was appointed as building overseer. The new structure was heated by a large box stove. An elevated platform was created on the south side, and two cells were built west of it to serve as a lock-up (jail). Division Court was held in this building for several years.

By the time the Crediton Women's Institute was organized in 1919, the hall was shabby and uncomfortable. In winter people sitting near the stove were too warm, and those near the entrance were too cold. After the First World War, many communities erected halls as memorials to their citizens who had served in the war. In May 1919, three members of the Institute waited on council and requested that a community hall be built in Crediton, or that the old hall be remodelled and improved. But at the same meeting, a deputation from Centralia presented a petition signed by 231 ratepayers, electors and residents requesting that a community hall be built in their community.

Because of the two requests, council decided to hold a plebiscite on the erection of community halls in the township. The voters rejected the idea, 618 to 95. The Centralia polling division was the only one with a majority in favour of the erection of a community hall. The matter was dropped.

A NEW TOWN HALL

The condition of the township hall did not improve. In 1927, council hired an architect to prepare plans for an addition and alterations to the building. Harry Beaver submitted a tender on the project but nothing more was done. In 1934, 1937 and 1938, the Crediton Women's Institute continued their campaign to have the hall improved or replaced, but the project was always defeated.

Finally, in 1944, the hall had deteriorated to such an extent that council bought the former bank building to use for council chambers. The building cost \$1,200 and improvements an additional \$275.

STEPHEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Early in 1952, council appointed a committee to investigate the cost of rebuilding or repairing the old hall. When the work had started, the local newspaper reported: "The old 'log-house' jail is gone forever as well as the rickety stage and dressing rooms and the old lady is to have a modern two-piece outfit to make her more comfortable, convenient and certainly more fashionable." Alterations included a new foundation and basement, an oil furnace, washrooms, a new entrance, cloakroom, kitchen, a small room for the library and a concrete vault for township records. Volunteer labourers from the Crediton area reduced the cost substantially.

Renamed the Stephen Township Community Centre, the hall

became eligible for grants from the provincial government under the Communities Centres Act. The Stephen Township Federation of Agriculture provided chairs for the auditorium and the Crediton Women's Institute furnished the kitchen and provided chairs for the basement and material for banquet tables. After 33 years of hoping and petitioning, the renovated hall was a reality.

An official opening was held in the new year, at which Andrew Y. McLean, M.P., of Seaforth, called the hall a "memorial to community spirit." In the minds of many local people, community spirit was helped in no small measure by community persistence."

THE TOWNSHIP OFFICE

In 1953, council was able to sell the brick bank building back to the Bank of Montreal, which had decided to reopen a branch at Crediton. A few years later, a small red brick building on the north side of Victorian Street was purchased and fitted up to serve as a township office.

In the spring of 1967, council authorized the erection of a new office building on part of the former school grounds. It was a multi-purpose building, with space for the village of Crediton fire equipment and offices for the Community Park Board, as well as the township offices. The building cost \$30,000, of which \$15,000 was Stephen Township's share. It was formally opened October 18, 1967.

FENCE VIEWERS AND POUND KEEPERS

From the beginning of local government there have been by-laws regulating loose animals and property. It was an offence to allow an animal to run loose on the roads or on private property enclosed by a "lawful fence".

By-laws were also needed to define a 'lawful fence': the height, distance between rails and locking mechanisms were clearly laid down for worm-rail and straight-rail fences. Later when wire fences were introduced, specifics were laid down about the distance between wires, posts, and perpendicular stays, and the thickness of the wire.

These by-laws created the need for two positions that were filled annually: fence viewers and pound keepers. A fence viewer was called in when a disagreement arose over a fence; he determined



The present township office, built on Crediton's Victoria Street in 1967, serves as the centre of municipal government in Stephen.



The township garage, built in 1954, also stands as a symbol of municipal government in Stephen.

if the fence in question was lawful and if it was correctly located on the property line. If the parties concerned were not satisfied with the fence viewer's decision, they could pursue the matter through the courts.

The pound keeper's job was to impound animals that were running loose on roads or in private property. Horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry were held in the pound until the owner paid any damages for trespassing, a fee for each animal and the pound keeper's charge for receiving and keeping the animals. If the owner did not claim his animal within 48 hours, a notice was posted on the pound keeper's gate and in three other public places throughout the township. After eight days some of the animals might be sold to pay charges. For horses or cattle, an additional 20 days notice was allowed if the owner was unknown; after 20 days notice of sale was advertised in the local paper. When this bylaw was reviewed and amended in 1927, it had 19 clauses and covered 10 pages in the council record book.

LIQUOR LICENCES AND BYLAWS

One of the duties of the Quarter Session, the first governing body in the Huron Tract, was to grant certificates to sell liquor. In later years, township councils were empowered to pass by-laws regulating the licensing of inns and taverns.

Application for an inn licence had to be made annually. To open a new tavern, the applicant was required to give good reasons for the need for his establishment, be recommended by one individual, and be given surety by two others. If local council approved the application, it was also reviewed by a county committee.

On February 3, 1855, Stephen council passed By-law 28:

For the regulation of taverns and houses of entertainment: Every tavern keeper holding a licence shall provide five good beds for the use of travellers. The rooms in said tavern shall be well heated by good stoves or otherwise; also a driving house for locking up carriages; also an open shed capable of containing five teams and also a house of convenience. No tavern keeper shall allow of any drunkenness, playing at cards, dice, raffling or gambling on his or her premises. Neither shall any intoxicating drinks of any kind whatever be sold, delivered or otherwise on the Sabbath day.

By-law 29, passed the same day, established a fee of five pounds for a tavern licence, appointed an inspector and required that a report be submitted to the county clerk twice a year. The licence fee was set each year, and in some years council limited the number of licences available.

The power to grant tavern licences was an important one because taverns and inns played a large role in the lives of the early settlers. Often a tavern formed the nucleus of a new settlement. It provided meals and shelter for travellers and their horses and before the establishment of post offices, served as the pick-up and drop-off point for mail. The arrival and departure of the stage coaches at inns along the London Road was a big occasion. The innkeeper himself was a familiar local figure, known to settlers, stage drivers and regular travellers alike.

A shopkeeper could apply for a 'shop licence' which permitted the sale of spirituous liquors, ale and beer in quantities not less than one gallon.

STEPHEN'S TAVERNS

The history of Stephen's inns and taverns is difficult to trace because ownership changed frequently. It is uncertain where the first McConnell Inn was located, but 1841 county records indicate that David McConnell was operating it on the Stephen side by that time. Robert Wilson received a licence to conduct an inn in Stephen in 1841 and 1842. His application was recommended by Douglas and surely was given by William Balkwill and Henry Fraser. The location of the inn is not known. In October 1843, the McConnell Inn was closed as it did not meet the required regulations. The following year, George McLeod was granted a licence. In 1847, David McConnell is listed as receiving a licence in Usborne, but the accommodation was in "bad order" and he was notified that his licence would not be renewed. Later he reappeared on the Stephen side, but again lost his licence due to the condition of his establishment.

On the Usborne side, the Balkwill Inn was operating by 1834 and the Quick Hotel at Devon had opened by 1842. William Balkwill died in 1845 and the business was carried on by his widow, Jane. These two inns were kept in good order and probably received most of the trade in the area.

As settlement on the London Road near the Ausable River be-

gan to develop, hotels opened in the area. In 1855, John Patch of Exeter, was granted a licence. The following year, another William Balkwill received a tavern licence. This tavern was located in Stephen on the London Road, a short distance south of Huron Street, and continued in business until 1870. Richard Roche also received a tavern licence in 1856, and Mr. Macklin, a merchant, applied for a shop licence. Robert Bissett of Francistown obtained a licence in 1858. Three years later, his establishment was listed as a Temperance House, but in 1863 it was called the Sauble Hotel; it was still operating in 1866. The Coughlins were also issued a licence in 1858. The voter's list gives John as an innkeeper on Lot 4, Con. 5, but county records name Daniel as the operator. In 1863, Timothy Coughlin held the licence.

At Brewster, Ewen McCameron was operating on the Hay side of the townline by 1849. There were hotels on the Stephen side by 1858. Allen Cameron, William S. Smith and Walter McDougall were amongst the Brewster innkeepers.

James Towers was licensed to operate his brick hotel at Francistown in 1861; this hotel continued in business for many years under several different names. William Adams became manager of the Exeter Hotel in 1863, which had been operated by Richard Roche. Joseph Clarke, a merchant in Exeter, received a shop licence that year, and James Brownless established a hotel in 1866. By 1867, James Gordon had taken over the Exeter Hotel and renamed it Gordon's Inn. In June 1869, he sold it to Thomas Elston. William Drew received a licence to operate in Exeter in 1867.

In Crediton, John Parsons received a shop licence in 1857 and probably sold liquor in his general store, which opened the same year. By the early 1860s, there are references to the Oak (probably Oke) Inn on Lot 11, the first inn in the village. Simon Press took over the Oak Inn and, by 1868, had moved it to a new frame building on the south side of the street just east of the main intersection. Michael Davis took over the old business. He was followed by John Clement, John Hall and Henry Breckenauer. In the spring of 1874 a third hotel was opened by William Marriott. Just prior to the opening of the Marriott hotel, council received a petition requesting that only two tavern licences be issued for the village of Crediton. Council ruled "...that as the third tavern was now being fitted up with considerable progress it would be unjust to grant such petition but if petition had been presented sooner it would

have been granted." Marriott's hotel was a log building located on the third lot east of the Press Inn.

Others listed as receiving a tavern licence in Stephen but not located:

- 1858 and 1859 - Robert Carmichael
- 1860 - William Madill and Henry Bell
- 1861 - Mrs. Crich
- 1873 - William Simpson.

By 1869, the following hotels were operating in Stephen:

- Francistown - James Towers
- Exeter - William Balkwill - Balkwill's Inn
- William Drew - Drew's Inn
- James Gordon - Gordon's Inn
- Crediton - Simon Press - Centre Hotel
- Michael Davis
- Holt's Corner (Khiva) - William Holt - Holt's Inn
- Limerick (Mount Carmel) - Patrick Buckley - Buckley's Tavern
- Near the bend of the Sauble (Grand Bend) - Morris Tavern
- Shop Licences:
- Francistown - Alexander Beattie

Balkwill's Hotel,

EXETER, COUNTY OF HURON, C. W.
WM. BALKWILL - - - Proprietor.

This well-known hotel has every accommodation for visitors, and the utmost attention paid to the comfort of travellers, at very moderate charges.

The bar is constantly supplied with the best Liquors and Cigars of genuine brands. Good stabbing and amative hosteler.

When Exeter was part of Stephen Township, William Balkwill, the proprietor of the hotel bearing his name, received his tavern license from the township council. As this card, which appeared in the Huron County directory for 1863, notes, this hosteler advertised: "The bar is constantly supplied with the best Liquors and Cigars of genuine brands."

J. L. Wilkins was in charge of the Union Hotel in Exeter in 1870. Later it was sold to William Bissett and J. A. Oke and became known as the Central Hotel. That year, Edward Rollins opened the Centralia Inn. In 1874, Michael Neville opened a hotel at Limerick and Wendell Bruner, one at Friedsburg.

Hotels licensed in Stephen in 1875:

Centralia - James D. Wilson - Royal Hotel
 Crediton East - George Collins - Union Hotel
 Crediton - Benjamin Sparr - Western (later Royal)
 Simon Press - Central rented to John Carroll
 William Merriott, Commercial or Eastern
 transferred to William Baker
 Limerick - Patrick Buckley - Limerick Inn
 Michael Neville - Maple Leaf Inn
 Holt's Corner - William Holt - One Horse Inn (Khiva)
 Friedsburg - Wendell Brunner - Commercial (Dashwood)
 Con. 15, Lot 11 - George Walker - Central Hotel (Shipka)
 Corbett - James Nelson - Nelson House
 John F. Macey
 Grand Bend - Thomas Morris
 James Calhoun - Union Hotel
 James E. Cameron - Fountain House
 Brewster - Ewen Cameron

The number of taverns in Stephen Township was a reflection of the fact that many pioneers were heavy drinkers. Drunkenness caused much suffering and hardship in the early settlements. Over the years, several organizations were formed to combat the problems resulting from the over-use of alcohol. The Canada Temperance Act, also known as the Scott Act, was passed in 1878. Under its provisions, a simple majority of voters in any city, county or other municipality could prohibit the sale of alcohol in taverns and public houses within its boundaries. By 1914, as the result of a county-wide vote, prohibition was adopted in Huron County.

In 1934, the Ontario government, under Premier Mitchell Hepburn, chose to override the Canada Temperance Act by issuing ten licences for beverage rooms in Huron County. Local temperance groups objected and their appeal went to the Privy Council in London, England in 1946. The council declared that the Temperance Act remained valid in the counties of Huron, Perth, Peel and

on Manitoulin Island. The act remained in force in Huron County until it was repealed on November 30, 1959.

A plebiscite held in Stephen Township in October 1960 approved the establishment of mixed beverage rooms and licensed dining lounges. In December 1965, a second plebiscite was held and licensed lounges were approved. Licensed men's beverage rooms were rejected by the voters at each plebiscite.

THE STEPHEN BOARD OF HEALTH

Stephen's Board of Health was established in 1885, with five members and the township clerk as secretary. Dr. Naismith of Crediton was appointed Medical Health Officer and William Lewis, sanitary inspector. The rates were set for the salaries of the secretary and inspector.

By 1901, the township board consisted of three members, each appointed for a three-year term with one member's term expiring each year. The resident doctor at Crediton or Dashwood served as Medical Health Officer.

In December 1901, several cases of smallpox were reported in the township. Dr. Douglas Hutchinson of London and a Toronto

JOHN HYNDMAN,
Physician, Surgeon
 AND
 CORONER FOR THE UNITED COUNTIES OF
 HURON AND BRUCE.
 RESIDENCE - - - EXETER.

In 1863, when this advertisement was placed in the Huron County directory, most residents of Stephen Township relied upon Dr. Hyndman for medical services.

doctor were sent by the Provincial Board of Health to investigate the situation. Any house that had smallpox patients was quarantined and a relief officer was appointed to see that the families received necessary supplies. In all, there were 24 cases in ten homes by the end of December. A nurse was engaged to look after the sick where help was needed. An apparatus for disinfecting buildings was obtained and the infected homes and a nearby church were thoroughly disinfected. In the winter of 1902-1903, there were more cases and several homes, a church and two schools had to be disinfected.

During the '20s, there were several complaints to the board about waste, refuse and sewage being emptied into the township drains and river, and about unsanitary conditions on some properties in the villages. In 1931, the board ordered that milk sold to the public be tested. As a result of the tests, the council passed a by-law licensing and regulating milk vendors in the township.

The issue of inoculation for school children preoccupied the board during the 1930s. After an outbreak of 118 cases of measles in the township in 1936, the South Huron District Home and School organization petitioned council to institute an inoculation program. Parents were polled and over 90 per cent of them indicated their support for inoculation against diphtheria and scarlet fever. In 1947, the health board recommended to council that a program of immunization for smallpox, scarlet fever, diphtheria and whooping cough for children up to age 16 be given at the town hall in Creditor. Council agreed and the program was implemented.

On July 1, 1949, the Huron County Health Unit was formed. The unit was large enough to employ doctors and nurses on a full-time basis, and thus give a more effective service. The township Board of Health ceased to function.

CONCLUSION

In the course of its long history, Stephen Township council has dealt with many different issues affecting the day-to-day lives of its residents. The councillors were public-spirited men and women who played a significant role in the development of their municipality. Although the history of local government in Stephen is not dramatic, it reflects a slow but steady progress toward security and prosperity. We owe a debt of gratitude to the councils of the past who piloted Stephen Township through its infancy and into its prime.

Chapter 8

Life in the Horse and Buggy Era

*"Somewhere in God's own space
There must be some sweet-pastured place
Where creeks sing on and tall trees grow;
Some Paradise where horses go,
For by the love which guides my pen
I know great horses live again.*

Stanley Harrison

Driving down the well-kept roads of our township today, it is difficult to imagine how it must have looked in the early 1860s.

Many roads were still rough dirt tracks, almost impassable in the spring and fall. There were still many large stands of trees left, even in the settled areas. The land between Concessions 14 and 18 was covered with a heavy growth of hemlock and tamarack and was considered unsuitable for agriculture. It was not until sawmills were established in the 1870s and much of the timber was cut that farmers began to settle in this area.

The river still turned at the bend and flowed south to Port Franks. It is doubtful if anyone thought of going to the lake for a picnic: the land there still belonged to the Canada Company and was not considered valuable. In any case, there were no half days or long weekends for the farmer or the businessman. Rough as it might appear to modern eyes, much progress had been made in Stephen. The strength of the men and the courage of the women had prevailed. The pioneers had cleared land, tilled it and found it productive. They had built homes and raised families. The long trips for flour, tools and other necessities were past. Small communities were growing up around crossroads. Churches and

schools were being built. The 1860s marked the transition period from pioneer farming, when men and oxen supplied the power, to that of horse-drawn implements. During this decade small industries began to develop. A prosperous era was dawning.

The 1861 Census Report gave the population of Stephen as 2,897 residents and the number of "Agriculturalists" as 321. The 1862 Hermon Map shows large areas of land still held by the Canada Company in the western part of the township.

SETTLEMENT IN THE WEST

The 1858 voter's list includes the following names of settlers in the centre and western sections of the township. On Concession 10 were William Holt and James Willis. On Concession 11, William and Louis Kraft, Edward Dietrich, James Legrice, John Lewis and George McGinnis had taken up land. On Concession 12 were John Glavin, Angus, John and Ronald McKerseck, Murdock McPhee, Angus McCormick and Patrick Rourke. Those who had settled on Concession 13 included Patrick Barry, Angus Campbell, Jeremiah Crowly, Thomas Davis, Moses Jackson, Peter and Donald McGinnis, Donald McEachern and John and Angus McKinnon.

Further west, Owen Mitchell and Peter Ryan were on Concession 16 and Francis Tetro (Tetreau) had settled on Concession 21. John and William Follis owned property on the Ausable Concession. On the North Boundary were John Collingwood, John Dilling, Thomas Green and John Link. On the South were John Delany, Timothy Lynch, William Marks, Rufus McPherson, Dennis Sutton, James Wilson and George Towell.

THE HOMESTEAD

The condition and number of the buildings on his property usually indicated a farmer's progress. As more room was needed log cabins were enlarged and their appearance and comfort improved by covering them with clapboards. Sometimes a new kitchen was added to the rear of the house, with a woodshed behind to keep the winter's supply of fuel dry and convenient.

By the 1860s, many farmers were replacing log dwellings with frame and brick structures. In Stephen the proximity of the brick-yards along the river meant that there were more brick houses than frame.

The 1866 Assessment Roll for Stephen lists the type of buildings, other than log, in the township. On Concession 1, Thomas Huxtable, Thomas Trivitt, Thomas Greenway, Thomas Routliffe and William Rollins all had brick houses. On Concession 2 and 3, James Rogers, Thomas Shapton, John Hollison, Thomas Hueston and Thomas Bissett had brick homes. There were none on Concession 4, but John and Joseph Essery each had one on Concession 5, Lot 5. August Cleaman had a brick and frame barn and William Mitchell had a brick barn, both valued at \$150. In Crediton, Jacob Eilber, Christian Zwicker, Florando Krause, Andrew Heintzman, John Parsons and James Hill had brick houses and John Back had a brick store. Several of these buildings are still in use.

North of the village, Matthew Morlock had a brick and frame barn and Gottlieb Morlock had a brick and frame house. On Concession 8, Charles Eilber had a brick house on the southwest corner of Lot 10.

In Exeter and Francistown, Joseph Acheson, Isaac Carling, William Fanson, William Watts, H. B. Winans, John Brown and Robert Bissett had brick homes and James Brownless and James Towers had brick hotels. James Logie had a brick store and John Trick had a brick shop.

There was a total of 35 brick buildings, whole or part in the township. There were also 34 frame houses and 120 frame barns.

There is a growing interest in our old buildings. While Stephen is one of the younger townships, it has several pre-Confederation homes. Most of these have a grace and dignity which is frequently lacking in modern buildings. Often these old houses are unnoticed and unappreciated. In some cases their pleasing lines have been lost through unsympathetic renovation. The patina of age cannot be duplicated: the owners of these Stephen pioneer houses should be aware of the rare and valuable heritage they possess.

EARLY INDUSTRIES AND TRADES

By the 1860s, Stephen contained several grist and sawmills, a woollen mill, a carding mill, a distillery, tannery and foundry, and at least two brick yards. Tradesman made boots and shoes and weavers supplied the material for tailors and dressmakers. In the building trade there were framers, carpenters, shingle makers, joiners, cabinetmakers, bricklayers, masons and plasterers. The township was also home to other trades: the blacksmith, the cooper,

the pump maker, the ash man, the carriage and wagon maker, the tinsmith, the harness maker and the saddler — all essential to the developing community.

THE SPRING HOUSE

Although the farmer was not so dependent on his own efforts as he had been in the first years, most of his food was still produced on the farm.

Small outbuildings were erected as needed. Farmers with a spring or small creek nearby were fortunate: they could have a spring house. A well-shaded site was selected, stones were gathered for the foundation and walls and flat stones were imbedded in the ground to serve as a floor. A shallow trough held the cool flowing water and here the pails of milk, cream, crocks of butter, dishes of food and meat were placed. The overflow from the trough ran through a small opening in the wall and provided a constant supply of water for the farm dog and the geese and ducks. The spring house and the cellar under the house, if there was one, were the only refrigeration available to most families. Those who had neither hung perishable food in the well.

BUTTERMAKING

Once the farmer had acquired several cows, buttermaking became one of the household chores. Any surplus was sold to provide the housewife with a small income. Butter varied greatly in quality, depending on factors like refrigeration, the cleanliness of the equipment and the type of vegetation the cows had been eating.

By 1891, the production of butter had become an important part of the dairy industry. The Ontario Agricultural College began to send out a travelling dairy to help farm wives improve the quality of their product. Laura Rose, later a well-known Women's Institute travelling speaker, was one of the demonstrators. Here are some of her suggestions:

"Select good dairy type cows; feed them well; supply plenty of good clean water and treat them kindly. Keep the stables clean and well-ventilated. Cows should be milked quickly at regular times by the same person with dry hands, stripping well. Keep all utensils clean; strain the milk immediately and set pails in a cool place." The first containers were wooden; later metal pails and earthenware crocks were used.

Miss Rose continues: "The cream will rise to the top of the pan in from 24 to 36 hours in the summer and may be allowed to stand a little longer in the winter. To skim, run the edge of a knife around the inside of the pan to loosen the cream then remove it with a skimmer."

By the 1890s, cream separators were being introduced. When a creamery was opened at Centralia, a large separator was installed: farmers brought their milk in every morning, had it separated and took the skim milk home to feed the pigs. Gradually separators came into common use and were found on all dairy farms.

The first churning was probably of the wooden dasher type. Later earthenware churners were introduced. As the dasher was lifted up and down with a regular motion the cream was agitated until the butter fat was churned into lumps or 'gathered.'

"If the butter is to be packed, be sure it is well washed and rinsed, add a little extra salt; pack in perfectly cleaned crocks or small tubs and cover with a clean linen cloth or parchment paper and a salt paste. Put brown paper over top of the container and tie down well. If preparing butter for market, pack in small crocks or make neat pound prints and wrap in parchment paper. Good-paying customers is probably the best way to dispose of the butter. Good quality butter, delivered promptly is worth a small premium."

PORK AND HAM

Another common outbuilding was the smokehouse. The first ones were built with logs or stone; later ones were brick. Butchering day was an important event. If the meat supply was low, one animal might be slaughtered in the early autumn, but most butchering was done later when the weather was crisp and cold. Preparations began the day before: the kettles were set up in the yard with a supply of wood nearby, the knives were sharpened and the gear assembled. If the farmer had a scalding trough or could borrow one, it was placed near the kettles; otherwise a large barrel was used.

Early the next morning the kettles were filled with water and the fire started under them. Usually there was someone in the community who had some expertise in butchering: he and one or two neighbours gave a hand. As soon as breakfast was over the day's



Grandpa Tiffin (left) and Eckhardt Yungblut dress a pig on a Dashwood area farm, c. 1910. Courtesy Lambton Heritage Museum.

work began. Probably the least desirable of the farmer's duties was the slaughtering of his animals for food but it was a necessary part of farm life.

After the pig was properly bled, it was scalded and the skin scraped clean of bristles. The number of animals killed depended on the needs of the family. If hams and shoulders were to be sold or bartered, extra animals were killed. When the carcasses were firm enough they were cut up. The hams, shoulders and side meat or bacon were trimmed and laid out on boards for salting.

The rind was skinned off the strips of fat, which were cut up for rendering in one of the big kettles. In another kettle the prepared head pieces and some strips of skin boiled and bobbed. Later the desired amount of liver was added. When the meat was tender it was slipped from the bones and put through the meat grinder. Then it was cooked again in some of the broth, seasoned, mixed well and poured into tins or bowls to become head cheese.

The pig's feet were cooked with the head or used to make pickled pig's feet. The back bone, tenderloin and ribs were usually separated and cooked by themselves. The trimmings were ground, seasoned and stuffed into casings which the women had cleaned to make sausage. When the lard had been rendered the crocks or other containers were filled and carefully set to cool.

There were several different methods for curing the pork. In some cases, the pieces were laid on a bed of fine salt, sprinkled with saltpetre and covered with salt. The meat was resalted every three days. Curing required one day per pound of meat.

Once cured, the meat was washed, rubbed well with finely ground pepper and hung in the smokehouse. A small fire was laid in the centre of the dirt floor and kept smouldering; maple, hickory or beech chips and sometimes dried corn cobs were used for fuel. The door was kept tightly shut except when adding fuel. Small pieces required three to four days of smoking but larger pieces needed a week or more. When smoked, the meat was again rubbed with pepper (to keep the insects away), bagged and stored in a cool dark place until needed.

BEEF AND LAMB

When a sheep or cow was slaughtered for meat, the animal was skinned: the hide could be tanned for home use or sold to a tannery. The meat was cut up, packed in barrels and covered with brine. Some of the meat could be taken out of the brine in three weeks, smoked and bagged. Venison was probably prepared in a similar way. In addition to being a preservative, smoking gave the meat a pleasant flavour.

Some families, especially the German ones, made summer sausage. Finely-ground and highly seasoned beef and pork were packed into cotton casings which had first been dipped in lard. The sausages were then hung in the smokehouse until well-cured.

WINTER SUPPLIES

The provident housewife preserved all surplus food for winter use. Eggs were placed in a strong brine solution. Fruits were cooked in a little sugar, then dried in the sun. Pumpkin was peeled, cut into strips and dried. Corn was cut from the cob and dried. Cabbage was made into sauerkraut. Root vegetables were stored in the house cellar or in a specially constructed root cellar.

When glass sealers were introduced, the farm wife made many jars of jams and pickles. When the canning and sterilization process was introduced, she could add canned corn, string beans, peas and carrots to her winter supplies.

SOAPMAKING

The scraps of fat, grease and pork rinds were saved until there was enough for a batch of soap.

First, the lye was made. A wooden box or barrel with openings in the bottom was placed on a wooden trough or grooved board so that the lye would run into a container. In the box or barrel, hardwood ashes saved from the fireplace or stove were placed on top of a layer of clean straw. Water was poured over the ashes and the lye-laden liquid dripped into the container.

In the next step, the lye, fat and a quantity of water were placed in a large kettle and boiled and stirred. The boiling took most of the day; eventually the mixture became soap. Soft soap was kept in a small barrel or keg. To make hard soap lard was added to the mixture and the boiling continued longer. Some hard soap was allowed to cool and harden in the pot and then was cut into convenient pieces. In other cases the hard soap was poured into moulds lined with thin cotton cloth. Eventually lye became available in small tins at the local store.

HOUSE CLEANING

Some floors were left bare or painted a bright yellow. Others were covered with woven rag carpets made from old clothes. Strips of cloth were sewn together and wound into balls in the housewife's 'spare time' during the winter months. These balls of fabric were taken to the carpet weavers who wove them into strips, then sewed them together to make a large carpet. In time, a handsome 'boughten' rug was purchased for the parlour.

Each week the carpets were thoroughly swept. Once a year they were taken up, hung on the clothesline and given a good beating. The bare floors were scrubbed and the carpets were relaid.

After the wheat was threshed the housewife had another task. The old filling in the straw tick mattresses was replaced with long clean bright straw. The freshly-filled tick was fat and comfortable to sleep in and had a pleasing fragrance.



Quilting bees were a popular wintertime social occasion in Stephen Township.

QUILTING BEES

A quilting bee was one of the highlights of the winter social season. Friends and neighbours gathered together and as their skilful fingers sewed the marked design with tiny stitches, they chatted, exchanging news and trading housekeeping tips. The resulting quilt might be plain patchwork for every day use or some intricate pieced or appliquéd design which today is a valued family heirloom.

THE PEDLAR'S VISIT

The arrival of the pedlar with his pack of household wares was always a special occasion. The family gathered around as he spread his supplies on the kitchen table. There were needles, pins, hooks and eyes, buttons, thread, combs, a few pieces of cotton material, shoe laces and often some fancy handkerchiefs, laces, ribbons, folded fans, books and small toys for the children.

As more farms were occupied and roads improved, the pedlar graduated to a horse and light wagon. This allowed him to increase the range and quantity of his goods: he now carried shiny pots and pans, jugs, baskets, brooms, candles, sad irons, bolts of calico, perfumed hand soap, coffee mills, clocks, tea and coffee pots, books, pieces of coloured glass and many other things. He also brought news of the outside world and the community round about. All in all, the pedlar's visit brightened the monotony of hard work for the farmer's family.

THE VILLAGE STORE

The village store was much more than just a place to buy necessities: it was a place to meet with friends and neighbours, mail letters, catch up on the local news and discuss crops and politics. The men gathered behind the stove in the winter and on benches in front of the store when the weather was warm.

At the store, surplus produce from the farm — butter, eggs, lard or a ham — could be exchanged for merchandise. A well-furnished store had a little bit of everything: groceries, crockery, dry goods, hardware, dried herring and codfish and patent medicines. Flour, sugar and molasses came in barrels. The molasses was measured into a container supplied by the customer. Mustard and ginger were sold in earthenware jars with lids held in place by a wire band. Coffee beans came in sacks and later in tins. Tea was packed in 50 and 100-pound boxes lined with lead paper and sold in bulk. Later, tea also came in metal boxes or caddies, and eventually, in pound or half-pound packages. Fine salt for household use was packed in small cotton bags; coarse salt was packed in barrels.

The cracker barrel and the pickle barrel were handy and a big round cheese sat on the counter under a glass dome. The storekeeper was generous with samples, although a "taste" balanced on the end of a long sharp blade could be a bit frightening to small customers.

Pails, lanterns, tubs, kettles, axe handles and other articles hung from the ceiling. The shelves were full and the counters were piled high with essential articles. In later years, racks of ready-to-wears, boots and shoes were added. To delight the children there were jack knives, dolls and ribbons, jars of candy, peppermint sticks, sawlogs and licorice sticks, wooden pails full of plump Globe chocolates and at Christmas, some oranges.

In the late 1860s, eggs were 11 cents a dozen, butter 10 1/2 cents per pound, white fish eight cents a pound, pork four cents a pound, raisins 12 1/2 cents a pound, flour \$2.50 per 100 pounds, coffee 50 cents a pound, and oatmeal and cornmeal \$1.25 per 100 pounds. The farmer's wife could buy wincey for a new dress for five cents a yard, French merino wool for 50 cents a yard, heavy black silk for \$1.50 a yard and a mink tippet and muff for \$20 to \$40.



Nearly every necessity and convenience could be had at J.J. Breen and Son's general store in Shipka. In this postcard view, c. 1905, we also see that area farmers brought surplus produce to exchange for goods, credit, or cash.

CONCLUSION

From the 1860s to the end of the century Stephen saw many changes. People were no longer as isolated, nor life as arduous. A pattern of community life developed around the churches and schools. Concerts, teas, debating societies, singing schools and lodges were popular and the familiar bees and barn dances brought many people together.

Dotting the countryside were comfortable brick and frame houses surrounded by well-built barns and other outbuildings. The proud farmer delighted in his well-fenced and well-tilled fields and fine herds and flocks.

The family farm probably had its finest hour in this period. It was a symbol of security and independence. Gradually, though, the farmer was becoming more involved in the world beyond his boundaries. With the new century came the beginning of the end of this way of life.

Chapter Nine

Agriculture

*"The Land belongs to the Ages — it is ours for
a brief period which marks the passing generation."*

William C. Brown

EARLIEST DAYS

The prosperity of Stephen Township was grown in the deep rich soil of its fields. From the earliest days of settlement, Stephen's land has been recognized as ideal for agriculture. Thomas McQueen in his 1856 report on Huron County commented:

"There is some swamp and some sand in Stephen but generally the land may be called superior owing to the extra depth of rich agricultural mould and the crops of spring wheat and other spring grains are most abundant."

Other writers agreed with McQueen's assessment. W. K. Cornish, writing for *The London Free Press*, stated: "Stephen in Huron County cannot be surpassed for agricultural purposes." In the same paper, W. H. Johnston noted: "It is one of the most fertile townships in Huron."

Still, the land was of little use while it was thickly covered with primeval forest. The pioneer farmer gave little, if any, thought to the science of farming. His primary task was to clear some land, plant seeds and harvest a crop to provide food for his family and livestock. The first settlers, no matter what their trade or profession, were woodcutters and farmers by necessity.

Much has been written about the clearing of the land, and with good reason. It was a monumental task to clear away the trees, using only an axe and the strength of a man's arm. In Stephen, it was a process that took over 70 years to accomplish.

The clearing of Stephen lasted well into this century. In later years, there were easier methods of doing the work and a greater variety of tools and implements to use. Labour could be hired and living conditions were greatly improved. But in many ways, the settlers who arrived in parts of Stephen in the 1880s and 90s were as much pioneers as those who came in the 40s and 50s. They too should be honoured for their hard work and determination.

It took experience for the early settlers to become good choppers — but then, there was certainly plenty of opportunity to practise! Once a few trees were cut down, seeds could be planted around the stumps and a harvest laboriously gathered. That was not the end of the process. Until the stumps and their long, sturdy entwined roots were removed, it was not possible to properly plough and cultivate the fields. Because the hard woods decayed slowly, this process took eight to 10 years. There was much rejoicing when a field, finally cleared of stumps, was newly ploughed.



Clearing the land in Stephen Township lasted well into the 1900's. Felling trees was predominantly a wintertime activity, which benefitted the farmer in more than one way. After removing the stumps from the cleared land, the farmer was left with increased acreage, and the cut logs could be sold for extra income, or they could be used as fuel for the wood stove. This Skipska area gentleman has used a sleigh pulled by a burly team of horses to remove freshly cut logs from his back acreage.

SUBSISTENCE FARMING

Some pioneers arrived in Stephen with little more than an axe, but as soon as possible, they acquired an ox or a yoke of oxen. Oxen were superior to horses for doing the heavy work of clearing land, since they required less care and could survive on browse if no better food was available.

If the settler did not bring a cow with him, he obtained one as soon as he could. The first attempts to improve cattle were made by the agricultural societies who purchased purebred Durham and Devon stock for breeding. In Stephen this process began in 1846, when the London Road branch of the Huron District Agricultural Society received a gift of a fine Devon bull from the parent society. The result was much improved cattle in the area.

In 1845, only 520 acres of land were under cultivation in the township, but by 1851 the acreage had increased to 2,160 acres. Because Stephen was settled over a long period of time, advances in agriculture occurred at different rates in different areas. The settlers at the front were using horse-drawn implements long before the back or western sections were even settled.

In the early days, subsistence farming was the rule. The settlers grew, preserved and ate their own food. They built their homes, barns and sheds with timber they had felled. They provided their own fuel, made their own soap and candles, even tanned animal hides for shoes. The woman of the household washed, carded and spun the wool from their sheep, wove it into cloth, and made clothing with it. The farmer raised and fed his own stock. He saved seed from the best of his grain and his livestock provided the only fertilizer that he needed. The first farmers were practically self-sufficient: they needed little besides what they could provide for themselves. When there was a surplus of grain or pork it was bartered for the things they could not produce. The balance was sold for money, for taxes had to be paid and payments made on the farm.

SUCCESS IN THE 1850s

Conditions in Europe led to high prices for Canadian grain in the mid-1850s. A general crop failure in Europe in 1853 was followed by the Crimean War (1854-1856), which cut off the supply of wheat from Russia. James Sweet, whose father settled on Lot 19 on the London Road south of Exeter, told of hauling wheat to

London during the Crimean War and selling it for two dollars a bushel. It had previously been selling for 30 cents. A load of barley sold for a slightly higher price. The Sweet grain had been threshed by a power threshing machine, the first of its kind in Stephen, purchased by a syndicate of local farmers.

Agricultural societies were now well-established in the western part of Canada West and their reports in these years reflect an optimistic and progressive mood. During this prosperous period there was a rush to take up land. The Canada Company is said to have received more money from sales between 1852 and 1856 than it originally paid for the whole tract.

HARD TIMES

The prosperity did not last. The crop of 1857 was poor and in 1858 heavy rains delayed seeding. A killing frost in July made matters worse. The next winter was difficult and the next spring there was the problem of obtaining seed for planting.

By the spring of 1859, Stephen council was busy distributing relief payments to farmers in the township. In April, council applied for and received a \$1,000 grant from the county which was distributed equally amongst the relief applicants. Accounts vary as to how much money was handed out. Council records say each applicant received \$3, whereas an account by Reverend William Dignan, the minister in charge of the Wesleyan Methodist Devonshire circuit, says \$1.50. In any case, well over 100 farmers received relief payments. As Reverend Dignan concluded: "Tight living here, 30 miles from market and ten of a family."

PIONEER FARMING

The commonest crops grown by the pioneers were wheat, oats, peas, potatoes, turnips, field carrots and some mangels. The root crops were the last to be harvested. They were stored in pits to be used during the winter and early spring. With this final task, the harvest was complete.

Pioneer farming was a full-time occupation. There were few, if any, labour-saving devices. Work began at dawn and finished at dusk. But for the pioneers, it was a satisfying life. They planted their seed with faith that the soil, the sun and the rain would produce a crop and they were seldom disappointed. If one crop was light, another did well. Slowly their tillable acreage increased and the number of livestock multiplied. Life became a little easier.



Eben Weigand and Leonard Becker take a break from haying and pose for the camera amidst a threesome of curious hens.



Harvesting wheat on the Sanders' farm, 3rd Concession, c. 1905. Note the wide-brimmed hats for protection from the sun.

CHANGING TIMES

While changes in agricultural tools came later and more slowly than in some other enterprises, they did come eventually. The farmer who had cleared 30 to 40 acres of land needed larger and more efficient implements to work it. Growing towns and cities created a demand for farm produce and farmers began to produce for market, rather than simply to meet the needs of their own families.

New farm implements may have started with ingenious farmers who produced their own implements with the help of the village blacksmith. Soon innovative craftsmen in small foundries and machine shops were producing labour-saving, horse-drawn implements for sale.

This was the beginning of the implement manufacturing business which played such an important part in the development of Canada. Daniel Massey started one of the first of these small operations in 1847 near Newcastle, Ontario. Other plants were established in Canada and throughout the United States.

In 1858, Canada's great plow maker, William H. Verity came to Francistown and in partnership with Mr. Braddison (or Brabson), established a foundry to manufacture plows, sugar kettles, straw cutters, saw outfits, box stoves, and other castings.

ADVANCES IN FARM IMPLEMENTS — W.H. VERITY AND SONS

The plow was a basic tool that had changed very little over time. It was clumsy and inefficient and plowing was a tiring job both for the farmer and his oxen. By 1856, plows were being made in the Stephen area of both wood and iron. In Rodgerville, the Grey brothers manufactured the Grey plow which proved successful at local plowing matches.

William Verity produced an even better plow by discovering a way of chilling the ploughshare. It was a discovery that revolutionized the industry. Farmers could now plow two acres in a day using a single-furrow plow and a team of horses.

By 1869, the Francistown foundry was also producing Ball's Ohio self-raker and Wood's combined reaping machines, as well as the celebrated plows and all kinds of other agricultural implements. Verity developed a special plow appropriate to conditions on the Prairies as settlement moved west. At the Chicago World's

Fair of 1893, the Verity company displayed 16 different kinds of ploughs.

Improved hay mowers and rakes, farm wagons and seed drills were all produced by Canadian implement manufacturers by the late 1800s.

The Massey firm of Newcastle continued to expand throughout the last decades of the century, and began buying out several of the smaller manufacturers. During the 1890s, the company purchased a controlling share in the Verity Plow Company, which employed between 70 and 80 men at its new Exeter location. The foundry was moved to Brantford, a considerable blow to the Exeter community, where William Verity's four sons carried on the business. The Massey-Harris Company produced a full line of farm implements which were sold across Canada. In 1893, the Verity buildings in Exeter were purchased by Murray brothers of Wingham, who continued a foundry on the site.

FAIRS AND DELIVERY DAYS

Fairs were splendid places for machinery firms to display their wares and put on demonstrations. A report from the 12th annual exhibition of the Provincial Agricultural Association, held in Brantford in September 1857, stated: "...The implements department gives evidence of great progress. This is particularly true of ploughs, reapers and mowers... The show of ploughs surpasses anything that has ever been seen in Canada." According to the report, some 1,000 reapers and mowers had been manufactured in Canada that year. Threshing machines, iron harrow and cultivators were also on display.

Delivery Day celebrations were a form of advertising for farm implement manufacturers: the local agent of the firm ensured that the arrival of new equipment from the factory was a memorable event. In March 1902, W. Snell of Exeter delivered six carloads of machinery — the largest ever made to a Huron County town. He held a large and colourful celebration, complete with the town band. A similar event the following year is described in a nostalgic article from *The Exeter Times Advocate*:

"The implement business was big business in those days with a special delivery day in the spring when the farmers came to town and picked up their new equipment at the railway station and then formed a procession downtown where photographs were taken.

On this particular day the farmers gathered early at the station and there was a general bee of unloading the uncrated machinery and loading in onto the farmer's wagon. Later in the day the procession formed for a parade through the town and a photographs were taken by Mr. Joseph Senior.

It was a particularly good advertising stunt for the bigger and better the display, the greater impression was left on the prospective buyer."

THRESHERS

Separating the seed from the heads with a flail was a slow task, especially as acreages increased. By the mid-50s, a group of farmers on the front road had joined together to buy a threshing machine. The early machines were powered by horses and oxen by means of treads or sweeps. Some required four horses to operate, others as many as six or eight. In the sweep-type threshing machine, the horses were hitched to the spokes of a horizontal wheel, which revolved an inner wheel connected to the separator. One man kept the horses moving steadily while two men took turns feeding the machine.



A reliable hay loader and a large flat-bed wagon made gathering the hay a much easier task on William White's farm, 4th Concession, c. 1920.

The early machines only threshed the grain, which then had to be separated from the straw manually. Later the grain and chaff were separated by fanning mills. Improved models dropped the grain into a bushel box or basket and the straw into a pile. John White, who lived on Concession 4, of Stephen Township, had a machine powered by six horses.

STEAM-POWERED THRESHERS

The next major improvement was the introduction of the steam engine to run the separator. These machines were portable and could be moved from one farm to another by a team of horses. Traction engines came next; they provided power for threshing and could also propel themselves. Later ones pulled the separator and water tank. Wood-fired engines were later replaced by coal-burning models. The steam-driven separators were larger and more efficient. Another enhancement was a spout which carried the grain directly to the bins in the granary. A moveable blower attachment allowed the farmer to blow the straw where he wanted it, avoiding the unpleasant task of forking it. If the barn was full of hay and grain, the straw was blown outside and formed into a stack. As the mows were emptied the straw was cut and blown into them for feed and winter bedding.

STEAM THRESHING

When the threshing machine arrived on the farm, it was more than just another job — it was an event. Until the advent of the car, the men who operated the threshing machine stayed overnight with the farmer. Everyone was up early the next morning to prepare for the day's work. Because it took 12 to 14 men to thresh, neighbours exchanged work. For many years the grain, when dry, was stored in the mows and the threshing machine was hauled onto the barn floor. When more machines became available, stood threshing was the custom. The separator was set up in the yard near the granary. Wagons were loaded in the field and drawn to the machines, where the sheaves were forked into the open maw of the separator. The grain elevator then took the golden harvest to the granary and the yard was covered with clean fresh straw.

Meanwhile, the farmer's wife prepared meals for the hungry men. The table was extended as far as it would go and loaded with food by the time the whistle blew. Roast beef, ham, mashed pota-

toes, vegetables and gravy, bread, butter, pickles, a variety of pies, buns, biscuits, cakes and cookies soon disappeared, washed down by many cups of tea. The workers often filled the few minutes before work resumed with thinking up practical jokes to play on unsuspecting comrades. The farmer and his wife were glad to see the threshing outfit arrive, but they also breathed a sigh of relief as it rolled out the lane on its way to another expectant farmer.

In 1889, George Bedford, Wilfred and Henry Lafond and George Kellerman were threshing with steam engines in Stephen. Today grain in the township is combined.

BARNS AND STABLES

The first stable, like the first shanty, was small and humble: the settler had few animals and little crop to store. As acreages grew and livestock increased a larger log barn was sometimes built to store the hay and grain. Smaller structures were reserved for animals. Lean-tos were added on to accommodate pigs, sheep and calves. The barnyard soon became a cluster of small buildings surrounded by a rail fence.

By 1853, there were several frame barns in the township, and by the mid-60s, there were frame barns on most of the occupied farms as far west as Concession 7. There were ten frame barns on Concession 8 and 9 and eight on Concession 10 and 11. Allan Cameron at Brewster had one and there were six on the north boundary and one on the south boundary. There were also several small frame barns in Exeter and Francistown where a horse, and sometimes a cow, a pig and a few hens, were kept.

Frame barns had a framework of timbers covered with sawn boards called siding, all roofed with sheeting and shingles. A farmer rarely had the skills to build his own barn; a framer and carpenter were needed, as well as a group of neighbours to assist at the raising.

Suitable trees were cut for the timbers, trimmed and drawn to the building site. Oak and hickory were used where the weight was greatest. Well-seasoned rock elm was also used extensively.

The first frame barns had a mow at each end with a driveway in the centre and large double doors that opened to allow loaded wagons to enter. The foundation sills rested on large stones. Usually the granary was constructed on one side of a mow. The barn was floored and the mows were lined with poles or rails to keep the fodder and sheaves off the ground.



Moving a threshing outfit through Crediton, c. 1910.



William Smith's steam-powered equipment made the job go more quickly at Ed Fahrner's farm on Concession 7, c. 1910. This farm now belongs to Paul Schenck. Courtesy Don Finkbeiner.

The framer built the framework of timbers. Framing was a precise craft as each timber had to fit exactly into its proper place.

When the framer was finished, the carpenter assembled the sides and ends of the barn on the ground. Then it was time to raise the barn. A barn-raising required many men — some to raise the framework slowly, others to hold it steady while still others fitted and fastened the sections together, drove the pins into place, laid the plates and raised the rafters.

If the barn was large enough the sides were put together in sections. The men were divided into two teams, each with a captain who understood how the sections fitted together, and each team was assigned a side and an end. It was considered an honour to be on the side that finished first. Raising a barn was a good hard afternoon's work. The farmer's wife and her neighbours prepared a hearty meal to conclude the bee.

The bank barn was the next style developed. Bank barns may have originated in hilly areas where the barns were set against a bank or slope, from which a driveway to the second level was easily made. The lower floor housed the stock and was entered at ground level from the opposite end. This idea was modified to suit conditions where the ground was level by building a ramp to give



A barn raising was a community effort, and was always a great social gathering. In this 1912 photograph, four men put the day's finishing touches on Clayton Sims' new hipped-roof barn just before joining everyone else for a hearty supper.

access to the second floor. A foundation of stone, brick or concrete high enough for the stable supported joists, over which flooring for the second level was laid. The framework of the upper floor was assembled and then raised in the same way as the earlier frame barns had been.

If the farmer's first frame barn was in good condition, it could be incorporated into a new bank barn. The old barn was raised with jacks and long timbers were inserted near the corners. The timbers were raised to the desired height and the structure was supported by cribbing while the foundation was built underneath. Then the upper structure was lowered to rest on the new walls.

The stable or lower level had rows of stalls, pens, passage ways, a feed area and in several cases, a harness room. Some barns had a root cellar extending beyond the main foundation, sometimes forming part of the gangway or ramp to the upper level.

Barns with an overshot or overhang were quite common. The team and wagon could be driven under the overhang to protect both man and beast from inclement weather. There are still a few in the township but most have been enclosed.

Straw sheds had no stalls; mangers or racks for feed were built against the walls, and often part of the south wall was open. For many years there were no water systems in barns. The animals had to be let out every day to get water from a trough. In good weather they spent part of the day in the yard and straw shed. Later many of the straw sheds were raised, put on a foundation,



Source: Huron Township Assessment Roll 1879, Vol. 1, page 16, line 7

The farm and buildings of Septimus Hegarth, Concession 2, Lot 13. This idyllic view appeared in the Huron County Atlas of 1879.



Windmills with water troughs were once very common in Stephen Township.

and joined to the main barn. W. D. Sanders who lived on Concession 2, Lot 22, is said to have been the first in Stephen to install water in the barn, as well as the first to have a gasoline engine.

The farmer has sometimes been accused of providing better accommodation for his stock than for his wife and children. If this was sometimes true, it was a matter of expedience rather than preference. The family's income depended on animals and crops; the first concern had to be secure stabling and safe, dry storage for grain — the house came later.

THE ORCHARD

When the pioneer farm was well established and the farmer could spare an acre or two of cleared land, fruit trees were planted.

Stephen's climate, particularly in the areas closest to the lake, proved suitable for fruit growing. By the 1870s, many orchards were well established and more were being planted. The land chosen was usually near the farm buildings, preferably with a southern exposure and often with a windbreak of evergreens on the north and west.

A nursery order from 1875 includes:

For Francis Anderson	1 Pewekee (probably Peewalkee) 1 Duchess of Oldenburgh
For Timothy Coughlin	12 apples, 2 currants 1 Duchess of Oldenburgh, 1 Tetofsky, 2 Twenty-ounce, 2 St. Lawrence, 2 Porter, 2 Pewekee, 1 Western Beauty, 1 Willow twig, Currants, 1 cherry, 1 Lavasalfise (probably La Versailles)
For Mr. Cottel	Plumbs (sic) Washington, Green Gage Apples Tetofsky, Minisin Sweet, Northern Spy

APPLE GROWING

By 1881, the list of apple varieties was a lengthy one. There were at least 14 summer, 26 fall and over 40 winter varieties. Their names ranged through the alphabet from A to Y and included such intriguing ones as Autumn Strawberry, Freckled Mollie, Gatineau Belle, Maiden's Blush, Norton's Melon, Seek-no-further and Old Nonsuch. Older residents of Stephen will recall such favourites as Alexander, Baldwin, Ben Davis, Fameuse (Snow), Golden Russet, Gravenstein, King, Rhode Island Greening, St. Lawrence, Sweet Bough, Talman Sweet Wagener and Wealthy.

Apple trees took from five to ten years to start bearing and from ten to 15 years to mature, depending on the variety. Apple trees were planted 30 to 35 feet apart, sometimes with peach trees between them.

The apples left in the orchard after the winter supply had been laid down were used in several ways. Some were sold to the apple evaporator at Exeter, others were sold to buyers at Exeter and Centralia for shipment to cities and towns.

Some of the apples were dried for use in the spring when fruit was scarce. Often preparing the apples for drying was the occa-

sion for a paring bee. The boys brought a paring machine and the girls quartered and cored the apples. Then they were strung on long pieces of cord to be hung in the attic, or laid on racks for sun-drying. The paring bee was an evening of fun and laughter and often ended with a dance.

Windfalls were collected and taken to the cider mill to be crushed and pressed. It was a treat for the youngsters to go along on these expeditions and fill themselves with fresh sweet cider.

Some of the cider was used in the making of apple butter. The day before the butter making, the women peeled, quartered and cored ripe apples. On the day, they cleaned the big copper kettle and hung it in the yard over a cooking fire. The prepared apples and cider were cooked together, sometimes with a little sugar and spice, until a rich brown butter formed. Stored in earthenware jars and crocks, apple butter made a tasty spread with home-made bread.

Families from Germany were particularly adept at making apple butter. For a number of years the Sweitzers had an apple butter factory and cider mill at Shipka and Sylvannus Cann operated one at Exeter.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES

The Provincial Agricultural Association for Upper Canada was formed and the first Provincial Exhibition held at Toronto in 1846. Liberal prizes were offered for the best purebred animals: the first prize for stallions in some classes was as high as 10 pounds, for bulls, 17 pounds.

The early agricultural societies were organized on township, county and provincial levels. They promoted improvement of agricultural practises, better stock breeding, improved varieties of grain and fruit and the latest designs in farm implements.

The Huron District Agricultural Society was formed on February 14, 1842 at Goderich. The first president was Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop. Dr. Dunlop was a busy man; he held several offices and was also a member of the Legislature. When he was not available, his duties were discharged by John McDonald. The first show was held on October 18, 1842. Farmers came from 40 miles away over miserable roads. The prizes awarded amounted to over 25 pounds. For several years the Society held an annual plowing match.

To Owners of
ENTIRE HORSES.

THE HURON DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY will give PREMIUMS for the two best STALLIONS, to be shown at Goderich on Tuesday, the 9th day of May next, at 1 o'clock, P. M.

For the best HORSE,..... £6 0 0
For the second best do..... 4 0 0

The judges to have the power of withholding the PREMIUMS if the animals shown shall not be of sufficient merit to entitle the owners thereto.

Persons getting the PREMIUMS must travel their horses throughout the Huron District for the season, to stand in Goderich, at least one day in every two weeks, the same to be publicly advertised.

Entry of the Horses competing must be made with the subscriber on or before 4 o'clock, P. M., on the 8th May.

GEOGE FRASER,

Secretary, H. D. A. S.

Goderich, March 21, 1843. 13-3w

The Huron District Agricultural Society offered considerable reward for breeding excellence at its public competitions. This notice was placed in the London Herald of April 1, 1843.

Branch societies began to form at the township level. The London Road Branch, which included Stephen, Usborne and Hay, was established in 1845. Hay established its own branch, which also included part of Usborne in 1853. Within three years it had a membership of 112. The shows and fairs were held at Rodgerville.

The Stephen and Usborne branch was formed in January 1854. The first Stephen and Usborne Agricultural Fair was held at the Black Horse Inn Farm at Devon Corner. The next year it was at the Devonshire Inn, on the next farm north. That year the membership was 86, and by the following year it reached 102. The fairs alternated between the two Devon Corner locations until the site was moved to Exeter. Stephen Township council gave the fair board several grants, including \$200 in 1867, to assist in building a Drill

Hall at Exeter which was also to be used for fair exhibits. In 1873, they granted \$150 towards the purchase of show grounds. The grants were usually conditional upon Usborne matching the amount. The branch held annual fall fairs and spring shows.

At the annual meeting of 1907, the members decided to change the name to the Exeter Agricultural Society. The Exeter Centennial Fair was held in 1954.

The early fairs were important events in the life of the community and large crowds attended. The following is a partial prize list for the 1872 Stephen and Usborne Fair:

Blood horses - Agricultural and Carriage

Cattle - Devon and Durham, also classes for grade cattle and working cattle (oxen)

Sheep - Leicesters

Pigs - large breeds, small breeds

Poultry - chickens, various breeds, turkeys, geese, ducks, guinea fowl and pigeons

Grains - winter and spring wheat, 2 and 6 rowed barley, white and black oats, field and marrowfat peas, rye, tares, white field beans, yellow Indian corn, clover seed, flax seed, turnip, carrot and mangold (mangel) seed, the best bale of hops

Roots and vegetables - pink-eyed potatoes and any other varieties, Swedes white globe and Aberdeen yellow turnip, red and white carrots, long red and yellow mangolds and yellow globe mangolds, sugar beets, cattle squash, mammoth field pumpkins and common yellow pumpkins, 28 pounds of broom corn brush.

Fruit - a collection of 20 named varieties of apples, 6 of each."

At some fairs home-made articles were added. A partial list included: "Home-made hard soap, 1 pair all wool blankets, 1 pair union sheets, 10 yards of union flannel, 10 yards all wool plaid, pair of calf boots and pair of coarse boots, set of horse shoes, pair of iron harrows, 10 pounds maple syrup and 5 pounds of honey, 10 pounds salt butter, 8 pounds fresh butter in rolls or prints, 50 pounds factory cheese, 8 pounds dairy cheese."

In the ladies department, a wide range of handiwork was judged:

"Tatting, crocheting, embroidery, braiding, bead work, feather flowers, worsted knitting, fancy knitting, quilt, gentleman's shirt, home-made and handmade, woollen socks, mitts and gloves."

The first Crediton independent agricultural show was held on the Sweet farm, Lot 10, Con. 7, in April 1876. Although the weather was not favourable, some 1,000 people attended. Stephen council also supported this fair.

During the 1920s and 30s, the Department of Agriculture sponsored school fairs. Seeds were distributed to the children in the spring; they were to plant a garden, care for it and exhibit their products at the fall fair. The Department also supplied eggs for hatching and the poultry raised were exhibited. There were also classes for calves, lambs, halter-broken colts, bacon hogs, pigeons, rabbits and pets. Pears, apples and pumpkins could be shown, along with baking and sewing, nature study collections, manual training work, art and writing.

A school parade complete with banners, an evening concert and a public-speaking contest made a full day's program. In 1930 a four-legged duck was shown at the Crediton school fair. That year Mildred Hicks received a cup for the best calf and the T. Eaton Company cup for the highest number of points won. Elva Wuerth won first prize for public speaking. In 1940, many school fairs were discontinued and the children's exhibits were transferred to the local Agricultural Society Fairs.

AGRICULTURE IN THE 1860s

By the 60s, many of Stephen's farmers had adopted modern farming methods and acquired new machinery. They were growing varieties well suited to the soil and climate which produced better and larger crops. The introduction of purebred stock and the use of careful breeding practices was improving the quality of their animals.

A DESCRIPTION OF STEPHEN TOWNSHIP AND A LIST OF ITS INHABITANTS AS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE 1863 HURON COUNTY DIRECTORY, FOLLOWS:

TOWNSHIP OF STEPHEN.

This Township is bounded, on the north by the Township of Hay; on the east by the Township of Ubbois; on the south by the Township of McGillicuddy, in the County of Middlesex; and on the west, partly by Lake Huron, and partly by the Township of Beausejour, in the County of Lennox. It is six miles in width, and thirteen in length. The soil generally is good. It is intersected by the Sable River, which runs through the eastern part of the Township, and affords abundant water power for mills. There are seven good mills in the Township. In 1844 the population was only 213; in 1851 it was 145; and in 1861, 3,713. There were only 200 acres under cultivation in 1842; in 1851 there were 2,189; and in 1861 had increased to 2,285.

RETURN OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, LISTS HELD, OBSERVATIONS

29 - 1 - LAND, ETC., FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF STEPHEN, 1851.

LABOR AND CAPITAL. By J. B. Clark. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1912. Pp. xii + 372.

LIVE STOCK.

Woodland **Wetlands** **Wetland** **Wetlands** **Wetland** **Wetlands** **Wetland** **Wetlands**

Chancery of James II —
"of the following persons
Persons of quality and rank —
... 1640-1660, and 1666-1688.

Quantity of land 6000 ft. above sea level.—
Sowing distance—4000 ft. according to the
Fall wheat—4000 ft. according to the
soil.

Spring-wheel—*quill*, a small wheel or pulley, used in some kinds of machinery.

Blackwells—series *Indian corn—series*

Answers—units **Answers—values** **Answers—graphs**

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF RESIDENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP.

	Cen. Lot.	Cen. Lot.
Ashurst, Joseph	4 16 Baker, John	7 1
	5 1	8 1

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF RESIDENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP

Col. Lot.	Col. Lot.
Ashman, Joseph	4 14 Baker, John
Amey, Moses son.	9 18 Baker, John
Amey, Moses jun.	9 19 Baker, Miss Wm. blacksmith
Anderson, Frances	3 2 Baker, Thomas
Anderson, James	3 5 Baker, Wm.
Anderson, Joseph	2 15 Baker, Wm.
Angus, Francis	21 6 Baker, Wm.
Armstrong, Andrew	8 b 28 Baldwin, John A. J.
Armstrong, Michael	8 b 12 Baldwin, Richard

AND GENERAL DIRECTORY

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	Con.	Lot.		Con.	Lot.
Baldwell, Richard	4	7	Collingwood, John	3	25
Berry, Florence	12	11	Cone, John	6	12
Berry, John	12	12	Curran, John	10	6
Berry, Patrick	15	13	Coughlin, Timothy	5	4
Bastard, Abram	6 b	22	Craigton, Daniel	(See road)	2
Bastard, Joseph	17	23	Craft, Lewis	11	19
Bayhens, Wm.	3	17	Craft, William	11	17
Bear, Humphrey	21	18	Derry, Alexander	6	25
Besse, Joseph pump maker,	9	9	Derry, Hugh	12	17
Besse, Wm.	9	10	Derry, John	12	1
Bissell, Jacob	10	10	Dob, Christian (Miller)	6	6
Bisett, John	3	14	Duffy, Michael	12	19
Bissell, Robert	6	10	Doris, Mary	2	11
Blore, Dennis	Bable	11	Dowd, James	21	6
Bixim, Joseph	Bable	5	Dowd, Thomas	12	19
Bleatt, Maria	1	11	Dulay, John	12	15
Box, James	4	10	Durkin, William	2	19
Box, J.	5	21	Dugdale, Edward	11	19
Boys, Samuel	21	14	Durkin, Thomas	4	27
Bress, John	Bable	6	Dwyer, Abraham	4	23
Brewer, John	2	21	Dwyer, Charles	2	23
Brocklein, Samuel	9	20	Dwyer, Chas.	2	23
Brown, Adam	9	8	Dwyer, John	6 b	4
Brown, Charles	4	14	Easson, Elizabeth	1	23
Brown, George	7	13	Eason, Wm. founder	12	11
Brown, John	6	10	Dwan, Harry	2	8
Buchanan, Donald	16	6	Eiken, Wm.	11	17
Burke, James	22	11	Edwards, George	11	23
Bush, Robert	5	13	Eiken, Charles	6	10
Bushaw, Florian	22	5	Eiken, Frederick	6	18
Cain, Henry	3	1	Ehrer, Jacob carpenter	6	28
CAMERON, ALLAN innkeeper	1	7	Ehren, Clark	9	8
Campbell, Angus	13	7	Ehle, John	15	31
Campbell, George Dr.	7	14	Elliott, Wm.	12	4
Carritchell, Francis	—	10	Ensey, Francis	12	3
Carl, Isaac	1	20	Ensey, Peter	12	6
Carroll, Bartholomew cooper	18	7	Ensey, Joseph miller	6	6
Carroll, James	17	16	Ensey, John	6	6
Carroll, Roger carpenter	10	8	Ensey, Thomas	6	6
Cashier, Timothy	16	18	Ermer, Jacob	6	13
Coughlin, Daniel	11	11	Farnar, Tobias	6	11
Coughlin, Pancek	11	10	Farnar, Tobias	6	14
Coughlin, Timothy	11	10	Fawick, John	6 b	29
Carey, Thomas	10	9	Ferguson, Celia	Bable	2
Carey, Michael	10	4	Ferguson, Malcolm	12	2
Carey, John	10	6	Ferrier, John C.	6	16
Chamber, Edward	6	4	Finkhauser, Christel	6	16
Chapin, Michael	7	11	Finkhauser, Christel	6	17
Chesley, Alfred	7	6	Fitzgerald, James	6	23
Clark, Alex.	8	6	Finkhauser, Jacob	6	11
Clark, George	8	8	Finkhauser, John	6	16
Clark, Wm.	21	6	Finkhauser, Mathias	6	11
Clemens, Augustus	5	18	Fingerisser, Michael	6	13
Clamp, John shoemaker	5	11	Fingerisser, John	6	13
Cockwill, William	3	8	Flynn, James	6	1
Collins, Daniel	12	8	Flynn, William	6	1
Collins, Dennis	12	8	Felce, William	Aux Bable	2

COUNTY OF HURON GAZETTEER

First name	Cen.	Let.	Cen.	Let.	
Ford, Albert	2	16	Hodget, Thomas	9	5
Ford, George	4	20	Hofman, Peter	5	8
Foist, Bernard	6	19	Hogarth, Septimus	9	12
Foist, Bernard	7	18	Hont, Augustus	6	16
Friedrick, Basrel (blacksmith)	6	19	Hoint, David	5	12
Fulton, Robert	n b	20	Hoint, Jacob	6	16
Fulton, William	n b	20	Hollenbeck, Chester	4	4
Gaines, William	12	11	Hollenbeck, Lewis	1	10
Gardner, Robert	7	19	Holt, Wm.	10	22
Gentle, Tobias	6	19	Hosper, Wm.	1	14
Giles, Henry	3	16	Hewings, Thomas	15	5
Giles, Patrick	8	10	Hobbel, Lester	21	4
Glanville, Thomas	4	19	Humphreys, John	N B	4
Grenville, Joseph	Lake road		Iffeson, Thomas	3	4
Greenwood, Philip	9	20	Huston, James	9	3
Green, John	17	3	Heatal, Thomas	1	2
Green, Thomas	n b	5	Marshall, Thomas	9	17
Griffie, Charles	n b	16	Ireland, Robert	19	19
Grigg, John	12	20	Jewell, Wm.	9	13
Gronway, John	1	13	Jackson, Moses merchant	13	15
Groff, Michael	7	8	Kassell, Edward	5	15
Guzz, W. cabinet maker	6	10	Kassell, John	n b	15
Guzz, Adam	9	10	Kassell, Pascoe	10	21
Guzz, Adam	7	12	Kassell, Thomas	3	34
Hallenbeck, Andrew	21	2	Kefter, Michael	3	14
Hall, Edward	8	20	Kelby, Thomas	10	18
Hall, Edward	8	21	Kenny, John blacksmith	4	11
Hall, Michael	8	20	Kerr, Sarah Jane	3	3
Hampkin, Wm.	9	22	King, Joseph	6	12
Harrison, Benjamin	21	12	Krause, Augustus bricklayer	6	10
Harris, Askcott	4	5	Krause, Edmundo bricklayer	6	10
Harris, James J.	1	20	Krause, Ferdinand brick maker	6	10
Harris, James	6	20	Krause, John	7	11
Harford, Richard	1	5	Lampert, Edward	7	3
Hayes, James	8	20	Lampert, Henry	7	6
Hayes, Paul	10	11	Lampert, James	6	6
Hessman, Jeremiah	1	5	Kentigen, John	3	11
Hessman, Wm.	1	45	Lang, Philip	3	38
Hessman, Wm.	1	23	Lawson, George	9	7
Hartney, John	13	5	Lawson, Wm.	9	6
Hartney, Michael	13	11	Leadsom, Wm. Justice	10	6
Hedde, Samuel	4	6	Leeson, Samuel	3	12
Hedde, John	8	18	Lee, George James	11	7
Heron, Richard	3	6	Leva, George	7	6
Hicks, Andrew	1	1	Lewis, John	11	16
Hicks, Elizabeth	1	2	Lewis, Joseph	8	6
Hicks, Samuel yeoman Devon			Lewis, William	10	20
Hill, Isaac	8	20	Lewis, William	13	22
Hill, Walter	N B	15	Lever, James	3	14
Hodder, Thomas	6	11	Ley, James	21	11
Hodget, John	3	20			

AND GENERAL DIRECTORY.

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	Con. Lot. #		Con. Lot.
Lowell, George	8	11 Mahoony, Dennis	8 22
Luber, Robert	4	12 Mahoony, Jeremiah	8 19
Lyon, Timothy	8	13 Massing, Richard north blded	12
Lyon, Michael	3	14 Marks, Wm.	8 15
Lyon, William	4	15 Marrott, Wm.	4 7
Lyon, William	5	16 Marshall, Joseph	8 9
MacArthur, John, sen.	8 b	17 Masseter, Paul	10 12
MacArthur, John, jun.	8 b	18 Martin, Thomas D.	11 20
Mackay, Edward	9	19 Martin, Wm.	1 11
Mackay, James	9	20 Matheson, James	10 14
Mackay, Thomas	3	21 Matheson, James jun.	11 11
McCable, Patrick	11	22 Matheson, Wm.	11 12
McCann, William	12	23 Matheson, James sen't.	11 15
McCauley, Angus	16	24 May, Wm.	16
McCaughan, Donald	13	25 Mitchell, John	5 15
McCaughan, Ronald	13	26 Mitchell, John jun'r.	8 15
McCarthy, Cornelius	8	27 Mitchell, John	1 4
McCarthy, Daniel	12	28 Mitchell, Owen	16 4
McCarthy, Michael	5	29 Mitchell, Thomas	1 4
McCormick, Angus	12	30 Mitchell, Wm. blacksmith	22 5
McCormick, Hugh	12	31 Mollard, Charles	22 2
McCoy, Thomas	17	32 Mollard, Isaac	22 2
McCoy, Robert	1	33 Mollard, James	22 2
McDonald, Alex.	8 b	34 Mollard, Thomas	22 3
McDonald, Angus	12	35 Morgan, Wm.	22 2
McDonald, Donald	12	36 Morgan, George	5 6
McDonald, Donald	15	37 Morgan, John	21 16
McDonald, James	12	38 Morgan, Angus	18 6
McDonald, Ronald	12	39 Morris, Chas.	4 22
McFee, Hugh	3	40 Morris, Alexander	1 24
McFee, Peter	17	41 Morris, Henry	8 9
McGinnis, Donald	12	42 Morris, Jacob	2 3
McGinnis, Malcolm	8	43 Mustoeck, Julius wagon maker	8 19
McGregor, Frederick	3	44 Mustoeck, Mathew	7 12
McIntyre, Peter	8	45 Murphy, Mathew	7 13
McKeanie, Thomas	15	46 Murphy, Dennis	13 4
McKeanie, Alexander	16	47 Murphy, John miller	6 9
McKeanie, Russell	12	48 Murphy, Thos.	6 5
McKibbeck, Angus	12	49 Nicholson, Wm.	20 14
McKeebeck, John	12	50 Oak, John basketper	7 21
McKenna, Barney	18	51 O'Conor, Eugene	1 10
McKenna, Daniel	13	52 O'Conor, John	16 7
McKenna, Donald	13	53 O'Connell, Patrick	12 3
McKenna, Angus	19	54 Oliver, John	1 5
McLeod, John	15	55 O'Leary, Arthur	11 6
McLeod, John	16	56 O'Hearn, Wm.	6 9
McNiven, John	17	57 O'Page, Jessie	8 b 16
McPeek, Richard	2	58 O'Perry, Tolaphene	8 b 2
McPherson, George	2	59 Parsons, John merchant	1 18
McPherson, Rufus	2	60 Parsons, John	1 9
McWilliams, Wm. G.	1	61 Parsons, Wm.	3 15
Maguire, Patrick merchant	8	62 Peller, Jonah	8 19
		63 Pollar, Josiah	8 17

COUNTY OF HURON GAZETTEER

	Cen.	Lot.		Cen.	Lot.
Pedlar, Joshua	7	20	Sorenson, John	1	3
Pookala, John	8 b	14	Stevens, Michael	7	9
Pookala, Thomas	10	22	Stevens, Wm.	11	14
Ponkala, William	5	23	Swanson, James	12	9
Post, George (stage proprietor)			Steene, Charles	10	15
PROPERTY, CHASSTON (names)	2	6	Salvors, Michael	11	3
Prater, John	2	12	Salvors, Patrick	13	9
Quigley, Daniel	2	13	Sutton, Michael	8	34
Hague, David	2	15	Sutton, Michael	8	4
Ragan, John	8	26	Sweet, John	8 b	4
Ravilin, Isaac	9	27	Sweat, Michael	6	14
Rawlings, John (carpenter)	11	28	Sweet, Richard	3	20
Reardon, James	12	29	Sweet, Robert	7	10
Reardon, Patrick	12	30	Sweet, Wm.	7	10
Romert, George	7	12	Sweet, Wm.	1	19
Rickey, William	2	13	Taylor, John	3	9
Roddison, Bernard	8 b	13	Taylor, Henry	5	16
Rooks, Patrick	13	14	Taylor, Richard	2	23
Rogers, James	2	14	Taylor, Samuel flood land		8
Rogers, Joseph	2	21	Thompson, Edward	6	5
Roughilt, Thomas	1	15	Tease, John	9	15
Row, Thomas	2	21	Trotel, Francis	8	33
Rupert, Frederick	2	16	Trotrecom, Francis	b	9
Rusell, Joseph	2	22	Trotrocom, Joseph	21	16
Rusell, Charles	8	13	Trottil, Thomas, clerk	division	
Ryan, John	8	21	court	1	5
Ryan, John	21	11	Trevidick, Sarah Blacksmith	7	11
Ryan, Michael	8	21	Tripp, Jonathan	5	11
Sandin, John	8	21	Trividick, John wagon maker	6	16
Sandin, Samuel, son	2	21	Uhl, Anthony	9	14
Sandin, Samuel, jun.	2	21	Upson, Thomas	4	9
Sandin, Thomas	4	18	Voss, Charles	8	9
Sandone, William H.	2	18	Voss, Charles	9	7
Shapton, James	2	11	Wagner, Fred'k. Blacksmith	6	10
Shevill, Thomas	Sold	2	Walker, Messy	21	11
Shink, John	5	12	Walker, Robert	2	2
Shevill, Frederick	8	14	Walker, Robert	2	10
Short, James wagon maker	2	11	Walkerton, Theo	2	41
Simpson, Wm.	12	13	Walstrand George	2	23
Sims, John	2	13	Ward, John	8	5
Sims, Richard	6	5	Webster, Geo. boat and	abs	
Smyth, Wm.	2	16	maker	1	12
Seall, George jr.	1	15	Wern, John	9	16
Seall, John	2	17	Welch, Thomas	4	16
Seider, Wm.	5	15	Welch, Wm.	3	12
Southcott, Wm.	2	21	Wells, Geo. F.	6	3
Stanley, John	4	15	Westchell, Michael	6	3
Stahl, David	6	8	White, John	4	4
Stahl, Lewis	6	3	White Robert cooper	6	11
Stanley, Leonard	6	12	White, Thomas	4	5
Stasikie, James	2	18	Whiting, Richard	8 b	33
Stasikie, Richard	1	15			
Stephenson, Janis merchant	2	10			

AND GENERAL DIRECTORY.		95
	Cen. Lot.	Cen. Lot.
JWilson, Chas.	3 1 Witch, John	6 9
JWilson, James	8 8 43 Wolf, Henry	0 17
JFine, Godfrey	8 14 Wren, Tobias	8 5 13
Wineet, Matthew	2 17 Weiss, Catherine	4 3
Wineet, Wm.	7 17 Yearley, Thos.	11 8
Winterhalter, John	13 22 Zarker, Christian boat maker	6 10

From the 1861 census for Stephen:

3,846 acres of spring wheat produced 71,205 bushels
 637 acres of peas produced 12,526 bushels
 658 acres of oats produced 16,779 bushels
 10,647 bushels of potatoes and 32,964 bushels of turnips were
 grown
 Small amounts of fall wheat, barley, clover and beans were
 grown.
 Cash value of implements \$12,714
 320 farms consisting of 25,291 acres valued at \$344,595
 800 pounds of maple sugar produced
 2,000 yards of flannel and 50 yards of linen produced
 Cattle - 2126
 Butter - 28,000 pounds
 Sheep - 2,000
 Pigs - 1,500
 Horses - 486
 Carriages - 65 families
 Brick houses - 11
 Frame houses - 83

DRAINAGE

Because of the river with its low banks and swampy areas there was much land in Stephen that had to be drained before it could become productive. Small surface drains and ditches were used in the early years but often were not sufficient. Although there is no record of the first underground drainage, Stephen farmers probably copied methods used in other areas. Sometimes broken stones or bundles of straight tree limbs were laid in the bottom of a trench, which was then covered with pieces of wood or overturned sods. These drains worked for a time but eventually soil filtered in and blocked them. Wooden drains were used until clay tiles began to



Proper drainage has always been a necessity in Stephen Township, especially given the area's low-lying surfaces. Here a farmer near Harpley engages machinery to help him prepare his field for drainage tiles, c. 1950.

be manufactured in the area. Good drains were laid at least four feet deep so that summer rains were absorbed by the soil, not drained away. When the land was well drained the fields dried earlier in the spring, and the early sown grain produced higher yields.

HORSES

Horses gradually took the place of the slow-moving but dependable oxen. As roads improved and the farmer became more prosperous, he was able to buy a buggy or democrat for summer use and a cutter for snow-covered roads. Trips to nearby villages and to churches became more frequent and more pleasant.

In this mechanical age it is difficult for young people to realize that not so long ago the horse provided the only means of local transportation. Farmers were proud of their horses and rarely accepted being passed by another outfit. There were many unofficial horse races as 'gay blades', both young and old, showed off their trotters and pacers. This led to the establishment of race tracks and horse racing became a popular attraction at fall fairs. By no means all the attention was focused on light horses; farmers were



Strong, reliable horses were a point of pride at the Fred Willert farm. Posed with these two fine specimens is Almere Willert in 1908.

equally proud of their well-groomed and well-matched teams. For general farm work, Clydesdales, Percherons and Shires were favoured breeds.

During the 1870s, T. J. Berry of Hensall began to import purebred horses from Scotland. Later Bawden and McDonell of Exeter also imported Clydesdales and Shires. The area became known for the fine horses it raised and shipped to distant places. Thomas Handford, a horse dealer and buyer, shipped many carloads of horses from this community.

THE 1880s AND 90s

By 1881, good farms in Stephen were valued at \$6,000. Straight rail fences were a common sight and wire fences were beginning to appear. During the next two decades the improvements in farm machinery allowed the farmer to increase his acreage and production.

The investment in good livestock and careful breeding meant that Canadian beef and pork was able to compete on the British market. Boats were fitted out for shipping cattle and an export trade developed. There were several drovers in Stephen who bought and shipped stock overseas. W. D. Sanders was one drover who marketed 50 of the township's best steers in England each year. In June

1880 Coughlin Brothers of Stephen shipped 1,300 sheep to the Liverpool market. Refrigerator cars and ships were introduced, enabling Stephen's producers to ship butter, cheese, eggs and apples to the west and overseas to Britain. In October 1880, Mr. Parsons of Crediton took a carload of butter with him to Manitoba.

In the 1890s corn was grown for green feed. Silos, usually made of wood and sometimes of cement, were built to store it safely. The corn was finely cut and blown into the silo. An area Short-horn feeder describes the building of his new round concrete silo in 1903:

"The size was 12 feet by 30 and the walls tapered from 8 inches thick at the bottom to 6 inches at the top. Great care was taken with the foundation and no. 9 wire was laid in with every raise of the wooden crib. Portland Cement, one to 10 parts good gravel, was used with plenty of stones bedded in. Four weeks after construction the walls were plastered inside and outside. The ensilage kept perfectly."

Silage still plays an important part in the livestock feeding program and numerous tall silos dot the township landscape.

TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY SCENE

The turn of the century is a good place to pause and look at the country scene. A government report of the time commented:

"Throughout the farming community there are evidences of a marked degree of prosperity; the well-built houses, the splendid barns, the well-tilled fields, all indicate progress and success. Churches dot the landscape, comfortable homes thickly stud the country roads along which the children go unmolested to school, barefooted and happy in summer, rosy-cheeked and full of life in winter. It is an agreeable land in which to live and is capable of returning to the farmer and his family not only a competence but an independence such as is enjoyed by no other class of producers in the community."

Education is within the reach of all; the sale of liquor is restricted; Sunday is universally observed; property and person is everywhere safe; its citizens are sober, industrious and law-abiding. It is hard to point to any country where the people are more contented and prosperous and where



By the turn of the century, most of the farms in Stephen Township were well-organized, functional units built upon years of toil, ingenuity and enterprise. The E. Willert farm reflected all of the modern advantages offered in 1905. Courtesy Don Finkbeiner.

the prospects for the future are brighter and more encouraging."

Although this rosy picture was largely true, it ignored the unpleasant but unavoidable fact that there were some people who lacked the means for a good life in the countryside, as in the city.

In 1900, more than 60 per cent of Canada's population lived in the country or in rural communities. In Stephen, most of the productive land had been cleared and fenced and was in use for general purpose or mixed farming. Most of the grain, fodder and root crops raised was fed to livestock, including horses, cattle, pigs, poultry and often sheep. A good supply of fruit and vegetables were grown and butter made by the farm wife added to the family income.

Wheat was virtually the only cash crop, at least until 1902 when four sugar beet factories were built in southern Ontario at Wallaceburg, Dresden, Berlin (now Kitchener) and Wiarton. Farmers began to grow beets to feed the new factories and by the fall of 1902, a local newspaper could report that "... the farmers of the Crediton district started a sugar beet contest. So far, Mr. Gottfried has the lead."



Flax was an important crop at the turn of the century, especially in the Shipton area.



The flax puller was just one of the many devices offered by turn of the century technology that increased the productivity of the harvest.

Other newspapers and magazines of the time mention the following items:

1901

George Penhale, Exeter P.O., was nominated an expert judge of Leicester sheep by the Dominion Sheep Breeder's Association.

1902

Shires-purebred — A. E. King, Clinton his Milo 2 placed second in the three-year-old class at the Toronto Exhibition. T. J. Berry, Hensall has been in Great Britain to purchase purebred Clydesdale and Shire horses. It is gratifying to notice how carefully Mr. Berry adheres to a certain type and the influence of horses of his importation is plainly seen throughout his district.

1904

Mr. Philip Baker of Brewster, one of Stephen's progressive farmers, reports that on November 4, he purchased six hogs and at once penned them for feeding. The six weighed 966 pounds. Twenty days later he delivered them to Messrs. Prior and Armstrong when the six weighed 1270 pounds, thus making a gain 304 pounds net or an average of 50 pounds on each hog. They were fed on chopped oats and barley, one-third to two-thirds respectively."

FARM LIFE IN 1900

Nineteen hundred marked the zenith of the horse-and-buggy era. The farmer spent long days in the fields, plowing, cultivating, planting, hoeing, cutting, stooking and harvesting the crops. His wife was busy with housework, tending the garden, picking and preserving fruit, making butter, looking after the fowl, cleaning eggs, and sometimes helping in the barn or in the fields.

As there was no hydro, the chores were done by hand — milking, turning the separator, feeding the livestock, pumping water and pulping roots in the winter. One particularly monotonous job was sharpening the hoes, binder and mower knives and the scythe. The young helper turned the crank while the farmer steadied the blade on the grindstone.

The wood supply had to be kept up all year round. In the summer soft wood was used to build a quick hot fire for preparing meals. Plenty of kindling was needed because the fire was not kept

on between meals. Coal oil stoves proved a real boon to busy housewives when they were introduced for summer cooking and baking.

There were few telephones, and none in the rural parts of the township, and no radio or television. The members of the farm family were physically active throughout the day. By evening, they were content to relax before a glowing fire or around a big table. They read books and papers, did mending, patchwork and fancy work, prepared lessons and played board games. Checkers, Lost Heir, and Crokinole were enjoyed by the whole family. Little girls made corn husk dolls, strung buttons on a string, cut intricate paper doilies or played with dolls. Fresh popcorn and crisp apples were the snacks of the day.

THE NEW CENTURY

The report that painted such a happy picture of life at this time also made bright predictions for the future: "Marked progress in the whole field of Agriculture will eclipse that of the past; the telephone will be universal; electric railways will traverse the country; and social standards in rural districts will rival the city in culture and versatility." Many of these expectations have been fulfilled, most in ways the writer never imagined. Certainly, it was impossible in 1900 to envisage the changes that would occur over the next 50 years — the two world wars, the disintegration of the British Empire, the widespread use of electricity and telephones, the advent of the automobile and airplane, the many other technological advances.

The introduction of the gas engine marked the end of the horse and buggy era. At first gas engines were used only to pump water, pulp motts, and grind grain. But soon they were being used to power automobiles and then tractors. During World War I, when labour was scarce and demand high, tractors came into common use. As a result, the market for horses shrank and the horse-raising business, once very important to Stephen, declined. Gradually tractors improved and increased in size and power. Implements designed for use with tractors were developed and rubber tires were introduced.

But as with horse-drawn implements, the spread of mechanical implements was slow and uneven. During the Depression of the 1930s, farmers were too busy meeting their own family's needs and struggling to make tax payments to think about acquiring new

machinery. Money was scarce and life a struggle for survival.

By the late 30s the economic sky was brighter. With the outbreak of World War II, demand soared and the introduction of mechanized farm equipment proceeded more quickly. The land that had once been used to grow oats and fodder for horses was converted to cash crops — beans, sugar beets, and later turnips and corn. Today farming is a complex, specialized business that requires a large capital expenditure.

During the horse and buggy era, the farmer worked hard and long hours, but his stump-free fields, horse-drawn implements and improved buildings all helped to make the work easier than it had been in the pioneer period. Farming was less complicated and more leisurely than it is today. The farmer prided himself on his independence and his family enjoyed a comfortable and satisfying life.

Farmers today receive very little recognition or remuneration for the important work that they do. City people are accustomed to milk in bags and meat neatly portioned on styrofoam trays. They have forgotten the source of these essentials. As Jonathan Swift said: "...whoever could make two ears of corn or blades of grass grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind and do more essential services to his country than the whole race of politicians put together."

Chapter Ten

Early Trades and Industry

*"It is a good country for the honest, industrious artisan.
It is a fine country for the poor labourer, who, after a few years
of hard toil, can sit down in his own loghouse and look abroad
on his own land and see his own children well settled in life
as independent freeholders."*

Catherine Parr Trail

The earliest settlers in Stephen were self-sufficient subsistence farmers: almost everything they needed, they produced themselves. For many years they had no surplus goods or needs that could not be met on their own land.

But gradually trades and industries developed, usually as adjuncts to agricultural production. Blacksmiths forged ploughs, coachmakers built farm wagons, cobblers made sturdy boots for farmers, millers ground grain into flour. The earliest industries were also closely tied to Stephen's natural resources: soil, trees and waterways.

LUMBERING

It was natural that lumbering should be one of the first industries in Stephen. If there was one thing the people of Stephen had a-plenty, it was trees.

Two men from Detroit, Brewster and Smart, built the first saw-mill in the Township. Records are scanty but an item in the books of the Canada Company indicates that Brewster and Smart paid interest to the Company in 1832, suggesting that they had already bought land by that time.

Apparently the two men had prospected the Lake Huron shore-

line for a suitable site to build a mill. There was no lack of trees but what was needed was a way to get the logs to the mill: the answer was the Ausable River. Logs could be floated down the river to the mill; then the squared timbers and sawn lumber could be rafted to the mouth of the river. From the deep harbour there, the lumber could be transported to market by barge or schooner. Brewster and Smart made a deal with Canada Company officials to erect a sawmill on the river a mile downstream from the hairpin turn; the Company agreed to buy all the lumber they produced.

It probably took most of the summer of that year to build the dam across the river, erect a mill, cabins or shanties for the men, a cookhouse, a stable for horses and a store house. But soon the mill was producing sawn lumber at a faster rate than the Company could use it. By the time the agreement was legally ended, the Company had piles of lumber on the river bank at Goderich. Brewster was able to find markets for the sawn lumber along the St. Clair River and in Detroit; the squared timbers were shipped to Britain for the ship-building industry.

The mill operated until the early 1860s when a group of farmers who blamed the mill dam for flooding banded together to destroy the dam and burn the mill. It is reasonable to assume that



A bird's eye view of the John Dalziel saw mill operation at Grand Bend taken from the Huron County Atlas of 1879. Dalziel also had an interest in a saw-mill in Sarnia.

Brewster cut down most of the trees in the eastern section of the township. The new growth was mainly scrub and so it remained for many years. John Dalziel purchased the Brewster and Smart property in 1868 and erected another mill which used combined steam and water power.

After the London Road had been cut and an inn erected at the Usborne/Stephen boundary, the Canada Company directed that a mill be erected on the Ausable River on the Usborne side of the road. It seems unlikely that this mill was erected as early as 1833-34, as is commonly believed, because there were only a handful of settlers in the area until the mid 40s. The first actual reference to a mill along the Stephen/Usborne boundary is in the 1842 Assessment Roll. Thomas Oke had five acres on Lot 19 in Usborne where he ran a grist mill and sawmill. The value of this property was 269 pounds — much higher than any other property in either township. In a trade directory from 1857-58, C. Jackson and James Hands were listed as saw mill owners in Francistown. An 1862 Hermon map shows a saw mill on the north bank of the river at the Usborne border, with a carding mill directly across the river on the south bank and on the Stephen side, a grist mill.

The 1848 township census lists John Essery with a grist mill valued at 150 pounds, a sawmill that produced 50,000 board feet of lumber and a distillery which produced 30 hogsheads of 50 gallons each. In the 1850 census, George Essery is listed as having a sawmill on Lot 5, Con. 5. The 1862 map shows the sawmill on the west side and a carding and grist mill on the east side owned by John Essery. There was no township bridge across the river at this point until 1853.

In a report on settlement in Stephen Township, written in 1856 or 57, by Thomas McQueen four sawmills and two grist mills were mentioned. According to McQueen: "The sawmills were mostly small and on small streams where for several months of the year they were dried up or frozen up." There is no record of the output of the mills but because Stephen was so far from the export markets they probably only served small local markets.

Also shown on the 1862 Hermon map was Sweitzer's sawmill on Lot 16, Concession 5. A mill is also shown on Lot 9 of the South Boundary close to the east bank of the river. The river divides this lot into two parcels; John Murphy is listed as owner of the south half and his name also appears beside the mill. The initials "S &

SM" beside the mill may indicate a steam and stream (part steam engine, part water powered) mill. The earliest mills relied solely on water wheels for power which limited operations to times of the year when the flow of water produced enough power. As early as 1860 many sawmills had been converted to steam or part steam operation, allowing them to operate year-round.

James Hawker bought a sawmill from Henry Allen on the 22 and 23 Concession of McGillivray at a time when an ox cart was about all that could travel to it. About 1863, he moved the mill to Stephen. After his death, Sid Hawker carried on the business for a few years, then dismantled the mill and sold the machinery to the Ratz brothers.

As the villages grew, the demand for building materials and firewood increased. Local industries used wood products as their raw materials: staves were used to make barrels, which were exported from Stephen after 1860, and tanbark was used by the tanneries. When the London Huron and Bruce Railroad bed was constructed, large quantities of ties were sold to the railway. The railway put distant markets within easy reach and the train engines themselves used wood for fuel. Because wood was virtually the only fuel used for heating there was a ready market for firewood.

A note in a local paper in April 1874 reported the erection of a mill at Lot 13, Con. 17. "Saw mill erected here by John Parsons and others which has raised the value of the surrounding lands." Certainly being close to saw mill meant that farmers could convert unwanted trees into cash. Those who had a hemlock bush on their acreage were especially fortunate. Hemlock tan bark sold for \$5 to \$6 a cord at the tanneries and the hemlock logs could be drawn to a sawmill to be cut into lumber. The mills paid \$2 to \$2.50 for logs; 1000 feet of lumber sold for \$5.

In May 1875, a local paper noted that cabinet, planing and sawmills had started work at a location one mile east of Creditor. By June the reports were good: "The Creditor planing mills are turning out a large quantity of work. They are manufacturing a patented fanning mill. There are nine residences going up in their end of the village among which is a large handsome brick building for Mr. Sweitzer Sr."

On August 12, 1875, a newspaper reported: "The late fire in McDougall's Mill caused the proprietors a loss of over \$4,000. Besides the mill there was burned over \$1,500 worth of lumber and



Cutting trees still proved profitable in the Harphey area as late as the 1940's.

lath. They had disposed of the mill and were to give possession September 1st. It is pretty certain it was fired by an incendiary." In October of the same year, we read: "A splendid new saw mill is being erected on the site of the one belonging to Messrs. McDougal and Fulton which was burnt this summer."

Winter was a busy time for sawmills: farmers could turn their attention to clearing and their logs could be easily transported by sleigh over a hard surface of snow. In January 1876, a local paper reported: "Bissett's Mill — The proprietor of these mills informs us that notwithstanding the small quantity of snow which we are at present favoured with a large number of logs find their way to his mill by wagon and by water."

In the southern part of the Hay swamp, around the junction of the Black Creek and Ausable River, there was a dense growth of elm, ash, hemlock, cedar, soft maple, soft elm, pine and oak. Because of the soft, swampy ground the road made a detour, following a small ridge. In 1873, Robert Bissett and Thomas Greenway built a sawmill in the area, unwittingly building it on the actual road allowance. Later, when the township put in a mile of corduroy road, the mill had to be moved to the Stephen side. In 1877, it was sold to Samuel and Silas Stanlake, twin brothers. William

Carrick was the head sawyer and John Brown, foreman. During the 80s and 90s, the Stanlake mill built up a huge trade. Millions of feet of lumber were sawn and shipped far and near and hundreds of cords of tan bark were supplied to tanneries in Exeter, Clinton, London and other towns. The mill needed labour to keep up with the demand; at one time as many as 20 people were employed. Because of the labourers' heavy drinking, Chester Prouty, a retired school teacher, called the settlement Sodom.

Silas and Sam Stanlake were fond of singing and their voices were often heard during a drinking session. They were reputed to carry a ladder with them when taking a load of hay to town so they could get down easily each time they passed a tavern! A favourite expression of theirs was: "We've made our money together and we spend it together."

A busy lumbering industry also grew up around Concession 22 and 23, McGillivray Township, because of a dense growth of hemlock and pine. The area became known as Moray. Two sawmills were built in the vicinity, owned by Andrew Thompson and the Dowker brothers. Mill workers lived in a large boarding house run by Mrs. John Mack.

George James owned a sawmill on Lot 9, Concession 23. The corner was called "James Corner" and a number of houses were built around the mill. John Mack lived in one of the houses and scaled logs and lumber for the mill.

The lumbering industry expanded and grew prosperous in the last three decades of the 19th century, reaching its peak in the 1890s. Some of Stephen's sawmill owners:

James Hands — Francistown

C. Jackson — Francistown

Dennis Sutton — Concession 14, Lot 3 and Concession 18, Lot 14

Thompson and McDougall — Concession 14, Lots 10 and 11

McDougall and Foulton — Concession 14, Lot 10

Charles Eilber — Crediton

Werner Schnarr (also a flax mill)

Stanlake — Just west of river on North Boundary

Flannigan — Concession 8, North half of Lot 6

J. MacDonald — Concession 14, 1/2 mile south Townline

Ratz brothers — Concession 14, Lots 10, 1316 (Khiva)

J. Hodgins — Corner Crediton Road and Highway 81



Stephen's forested regions offered an ample supply of lumber even as late as the early 1900's.



A more interior glimpse of the Deshwood planing mill, c. 1910. This successful enterprise eventually evolved into Deshwood Industries Ltd.
Courtesy Lainton Heritage Museum.

Sutton — Concession 18, Lot 13
Robert Bissett — North Boundary, Lot 9
Fred and Louis Baker
Casselman — 1.25 miles north of Greenway
William Fulton — Brewster P.O on Townline almost at Lake Road
Blake and Co. — On lake 1/2 mile south of Brewster
Parson — Shipka
Freid — Dashwood
Louis and Baker — Sweitzer - Near Crediton
Zager and Pfeffer — Brewster

For the first time in 1890, steam boilers were listed separately in the Township Assessment Rolls. The following mill owners possessed steam boilers in that year:

Valentine Ratz — Concession 14, Lot 10
Sam Sweitzer — Concession 16, Lot 11
J. Owen — Concession 16, Lot 16
Dennis Sutton — Concession 18, Lot 14
James Hawker — Concession 19, East half of Lot 6
Sam and Silas Stanlake — North Boundary, Lots 9 and 10
Frederick Baker — North Boundary, Lot 25 and part lot 26

After 1900, the demand for cordwood and lumber decreased. Oil and natural gas replaced wood as heating fuels and gasoline powered cars and trains. But as late as 1939, Wellington Haist of Crediton was running a large lumbering operation on a farm two miles northwest of Parkhill. His crew of up to 40 men slept and ate at the camp. Cutting extended over some 70 acres of bushland and produced both cord wood and sawlogs. The rest of the branches and brush were burned in the kilns at Haist's brickyard.

POTASH

Potash was another early industry that sprang from Stephen's abundant forests. It began as a home industry and later developed into a commercial enterprise.

Potash was used by European textile manufacturers to bleach their fabrics. During the 19th century the expanding cotton industry in Britain created a strong demand for potash. Originally a Russian import, it was discovered that the product obtained from Canadian trees — especially maple, beech and elm — was superior to

the Russian product. The best Canadian potash was 60 per cent pure.

The making of potash began with the burning of trees cleared from the settler's land. As the fires died down, the farmer and his helpers raked the ashes into large conical piles. If this was done while the ashes were still hot, the small partially burnt pieces were reduced to ash by the time the pile had cooled. It was not a pleasant task: the ashes were uncomfortably warm underfoot and the workers, sweating as they laboured, were soon covered with a fine layer of ash.

The first leaching barrels were hollowed-out basswood logs, open at the top and with holes in the bottom. The logs were placed on elevated platforms which sloped down to a wooden trough or container to collect the raw lye. Later coopers made leaching barrels which were lighter and easier to handle.

To produce lye, water was poured over ashes packed into the leaching barrels: as it percolated or filtered through the ashes it dissolved and freed the lye. As the containers filled with lye it was ladled into storage tubs. The lye was caustic: care had to be taken that it didn't splash on hands or face.

The next step was boiling. Placed in a large iron kettle, up to five feet across, it was boiled all day. More lye was added as the water evaporated. When all the lye had been added, the boiling continued day and night until the mixture became a dark red molten mass. At that point it was ladled into smaller kettles where it cooled and hardened into a solid mass of potash. At this stage, it was commonly known as black salts: later, when it had been purified, it was called pearl ash.

A barrel of good quality potash was worth about 240 York shillings, a considerable sum of money for the early pioneer. Any small bits left on the sides of the kettle after boiling were chipped or scraped off and could be traded for goods at the local store. An acre of hardwoods yielded about 60 bushels of ashes.

There are very few records of the Stephen families who made potash; most of the information we have comes from their descendants. They include: William Hicks, Lot 2, Con. 2; the two White families on Concession 4; the Hoffmans on Concession 5; and the Gardner and Edwards families on Concession 7.

By the early 1860s, John Gould had a potash factory in Exeter. Almost every farmer had an ash storage shed or two in the cluster

of small farm buildings; if he wasn't able to make potash himself, he could save his dry ashes for sale or barter. A bushel of ash brought four to six cents. As the roads improved, the ashman made regular trips through the countryside to collect the ashes.

William Walker, another ashman, had his factory at the rear of his Francistown home. He made soap with the ashes he collected in his one-horse light wagon. For many years, women leached ashes to get lye for their annual soap-making task. By the late 1800s, the housewives collected ashes from their woodstoves and exchanged them with the ashman for soap.

Although ashes produced wealth, they could also spell disaster. Hot ashes stored in paper or wood containers have often caught fire and destroyed buildings. In 1888, a young woman in Crediton took a pan of hot ashes from the stove and dumped it into a box in the chicken house so that her Buff chickens could dust themselves. The hot coals started a fire which destroyed the house. A nearby house was saved by men who doused it with water from a roadside ditch: this house still stands in the village.

TANNING

Tanning is another early industry that was closely tied to Stephen's bounty of trees. In Stephen the bark of the hemlock was used in the tanning process. Cutting and skinning hemlock trees was a profitable winter occupation for farmers. The bark was drawn to the nearest tannery to be ground in a bark mill into small pieces suitable for the tanning vats.

When hides were brought to the tannery, the tanner began by marking each hide with its owners' initials. Cowhides and other large hides were laid out and split along the back to make two identical sides. Lamb and sheepskins were moistened and then piled together to 'sweat': the combination of heat and moisture caused the hair fibres to decompose. Cowhides were placed in a vat of milk of lime to loosen the hair and then into a 'bate', composed of dung, salt and water. The bate counteracted the effects of the lime and ensured that the finished product would be soft and supple.

In one of the sheds of the tannery, vats were filled with one-inch layers of bark alternated with layers of hide. When they were full they were flooded with water and kept topped up as long as the hides lay in them. The process usually took about six months.

An expert tanner knew by the feel when the process was complete. The heavy leather was fished out, washed and laid out on drying racks in another shed or in the open air. After tanning, the hides were curried to make them soft, pliable and smooth. The currier scraped off the yellowish bloom from the grain side of the hide, then scoured both sides with a smooth stone and finally scoured again with a steel slicker. Oils were rubbed and beaten into the hides to prevent them becoming stiff when dry.

When the process was complete, some of the hides were returned to the farmer; the tanner kept half or more in payment for his services.

TANNERIES IN STEPHEN

In 1847 Isaac Carling came to Exeter and bought an acre of land on the southeast corner of Lot 21, Concession 1. On the south side of his lot he built a house; on the north side, the sheds for a tannery. By 1851, he employed six men, all listed as tanners: Abraham Sanders, William Carling (Isaac's brother), James Balkwill, John Longnien, John Colby and William Neal. The tannery had to close in the 1870s because the local water supply was not adequate. The South Huron District Hospital is now located on Carling's property.

In June 1934, when the Bell Telephone Company was excavating Main Street in Exeter to lay underground cables, the workers found a quantity of soft dark material. Older residents recognized it as tan bark, put there 70 years before to raise the level of the road as it passed through a black ash swale. Reeve Sanders and William Carling stated that the bark came from the Carling tannery.

The second tannery in Stephen was located on Rattenbury land. Joseph Rattenbury's purchase of 100 acres in Stephen in August 1832 is the first recorded sale in the township. By April 1848, it appears that Henry Morgan was part owner with Rattenbury. They sold one-and-a-half acres of land for 75 pounds to Daniel Shoff, a merchant from Böddulph who wanted to build a tannery. The parcel of land was described as:

Part of Lot 25, Concession 2, beginning at the east side of the bridge now erected on the Big Aux Sable (sic) River in the townline between Stephen and Hay, thence east until it includes the small building on the bank on the east side of the first brook which said brook crosses the said townline, thence south along the east side of said brook includ-

ing the said building and point on which it stands until it meets the north bank of the said Aux Sable River to the water's edge, thence west and north along the several windings of the said Aux Sable River to the place of beginning.

The transaction was recorded on October 22, 1849, signed by John Galt and witnessed by John W. MacDonald. With an abundant water supply nearby, this must have been an excellent site for a tannery. In 1850, a sale was recorded: "Tannery, yard, dwelling house, bark mill and stand to T. Wilson and D. J. Hughes." Later in the same year Joseph Rattenbury sold his 100 acres "...except about one acre or less of said lot on which there is a tannery."

The third tannery in Stephen was operated by T. H. McCallum, who came to Exeter in 1876. It was located on the south bank of the Ausable River, close by the London Road. Mr. McCallum may have started his Exeter business about the time the Carling tannery closed. His riverside location assured him an adequate water supply. McCallum became active in local government: it was during his term as Reeve of Exeter that the first village water system was installed.

In the early years, many small communities had tanneries. Like so many industries, they were gradually absorbed by bigger businesses in nearby cities. When the McCallum yard closed in Exeter, the butchers bought hides from farmers and shipped them with those from their own killings to the Hyman Tannery in London. Hyman's was a large concern located on Richmond Street just south of the C.P.R. tracks: in 1945, it employed 500 workers and was one of the biggest suppliers of sole leather in Canada.

GRIST MILLS

Early settlers sometimes had to walk many miles with a heavy sack of wheat over one shoulder to reach a grist mill where it could be ground into flour. Life became much easier when a grist mill was erected by a nearby river or stream.

Wheat was ground by dribbling the grain between two large rotating millstones. The stones could be set at different distances apart depending on the type of grain and its eventual use. In the early days, the stones were driven by a water wheel; mills could only be built where there was a sufficient volume of water to drive the wheel. There were several different types of water wheel: the overshot, which required a dam or natural waterfall; the under-



The Credition Roller Mill relied upon the healthy crop production of Stephen Township's farmers. In 1905, when this photograph was taken, the mill was owned by the Sauerz Brothers. Courtesy Glen C. Phillips.



The Shipka Feed Mill was another important industry in Stephen Township that relied upon agricultural production.

shot, which could be used only in a swift stream; the breast wheel, which took water from the bottom of a sluice gate; and horizontal 'tub' wheels. If the natural fall in the stream was not sufficient, a dam was constructed above the mill. The farmer paid the miller from his flour, usually a one-twelfth portion.

The McConnells owned a mill at Exeter by 1834. At first it only ground whole wheat flour and settlers had to go to Coderich for white flour for several more years. As settlement grew, grist mills began to appear throughout the township. Amongst millers in Stephen and Exeter:

Hugh McPhee (Devon)
Absolom Fried (Sarepta)
Isaac Reed (Crediton)
John Back (Exeter)
Fenwick and Swenerton (Exeter)
Noah Fried (Dashwood)
J. G. Emory (Exeter)
Eidt and Kellerman (Dashwood)
Switzer and Mayfield (Crediton)

THE BLACKSMITH

Smithing is the art of fashioning or forging metal. The term 'smith' comes from the word 'smite' which is what the artisan does to the metal as he shapes it. Smithing is one of the oldest trades known to man.

There are several types of smith. The best known is the blacksmith who worked with iron. The shoeing smith also used iron but specialized in shoeing horses. Others include the white or tinsmith, the silversmith, goldsmith, coppersmith and hornsmith.

There was a special attraction about the blacksmith shop that drew the boys of the community. They came to see the glowing fire, to hear the blasts of air from the bellows and to watch the smith as he struck the ruddy bar of iron with his heavy hammer, making it ring through the shop. They watched with fascination the exploding sparks as he fashioned a shoe for a waiting horse.

The smithy was also a gathering place for farmers. While they waited for their work to be done, they exchanged neighbourhood news and discussed politics. There were sale bills and other notices posted on the walls. Upturned nail kegs served as seats. Rainy days were especially busy — good opportunities to get machinery

repaired, teams shod or odd jobs done. During seeding and harvest seasons, the blacksmith often worked long hours so that the farmers would not be delayed by lengthy breakdowns. Another busy period was midwinter, when the roads became icy from repeated thawing and freezing, and horses had to be sharpshod to prevent them from slipping.

The blacksmith was one of the most important members of the community. Among the early settlers who came to Stephen were some craftsmen who had learned their trade and served their apprenticeship in the 'Old Country' or in the older, settled parts of this country. Often they were members of a settling family and helped to build a home and clear some land before beginning to practise their trade.

It was difficult for most tradesmen to support themselves and their families with their trades alone in the earliest days; other settlers were few and far between, tended to be very self-sufficient and had little money to pay others. But one of the crafts that few settlers could do for themselves was smithing. The blacksmith was one of the first tradesmen to set up shop in an early community.

The shop was usually a one-storey building with wide doors that opened to admit a team of horses. The earliest ones were log structures; later they were replaced by frame buildings. Some had a second storey used by a carriage and wagon maker; in other cases the two shops were built side by side.

The most important feature of the interior was the forge, an open fireplace and chimney usually constructed of stone. The base of the structure was a flat-topped block about 2.5 feet high, with a square fire hole at the top. A grate was set in the opening to hold the fire, with sufficient space below to accommodate an ash pot.

The bellows was a large, hand-operated device used to fan the fire to create sufficient heat to soften the metal. Some bellows were so large that a whole ox hide was used to cover them. The sides were flexible wood leaves, at least one inch thick, which tapered towards the tuyere, or tuyere, the pipe that connected the bellows to the forge. The leather hide was fastened to the pitch-smearied edges of the wooden leaves with large-headed nails: it formed the lung or air chamber. A square hole, covered by a flap of leather, acted as an intake valve. The bellows was attached to a cross beam or suspended from a frame and operated by a long shaft. When the smith pulled on the handle of the shaft, a blast

of air fanned the fire. When he released it, the leaf dropped and drew in air for the next blast.

Next to the forge, usually at the left side, stood the anvil. It consisted of a spreading base resting on a large block of wood, a rectangular core, a tapered beak for bending iron and a square hole in the core for fashioning the tongs of various tools.

The smith began with an iron bar which he heated in the glowing coals of the fire until it was cherry red. Then he quickly drew it onto his anvil and began shaping it with hammers of various sizes and weights. When the object was finished he plunged it into a bucket of water. The process of heating and quick cooling strengthened the iron.

There were two materials that were essential to the blacksmith's trade: smithing coal and iron. Two types of iron were used primarily: bar iron, which included several compounds that could be forged and tempered by heating and cooling; and wrought iron, a purer compound that became malleable and ductile when heated and could be used for decorative purposes.

As early as the 1820s, there were iron foundries in Canada. The Normandale Foundry, located near Long Point, was fed by ore recovered by farmers from local swamps. The Leonard family, originally associated with Normandale, established their own foundry in London in 1838: this foundry continued to operate for over 100 years. Stephen Township blacksmiths probably got their iron in London but it must have had an arduous journey over terrible roads.

To get a fire hot enough to forge iron a special fuel was needed. In later years "blacksmith's coal" was imported from England or Germany, but in the early years, pioneer smiths had to use charcoal, which they probably made themselves.

To make charcoal, split wood, preferably maple, was laid in conical or pyramid-shaped piles, with an opening through the centre from top to bottom. The piles could be as much as 12 feet high but to be effective had to be tightly packed. The outer surface was covered with chips, twigs, small branches, leaves, moss and straw, a layer of sods and lastly, a good covering of earth. Small holes were made around the bottom to admit air and a larger opening was made for the fire, which was started at the centre of the pile. When the process was complete, the smoke took on a transparent blue colour. From beginning to end, it took about two weeks to make charcoal.

In a newly settled district, there was great demand for the blacksmith's products. Axes and logging chains were needed first, then other tools such as shovels, spades, hoes, rakes, hammers and chisels came into use. Once the settler had cleared a bit of land, he called on the blacksmith to make a harrow or plough, wagon wheels and jacks and sleigh runners.

The pioneer housewife depended on the blacksmith for items like andirons, fire tongs, cranes, trivets, fry pans, cooking pots, hooks, flat irons, ladles, pokers and tea kettles. He even made knives and forks and candlesticks for the table and boot scrapers, door stops and boot jacks for the front door.

Other tradesmen such as carpenters and framers came to him for their specialized tools. Some blacksmiths made forceps and long before there were dentists, occasionally pulled teeth.

The shoeing smith was a blacksmith who specialized in shoeing horses. If he also knew something about treating the ailments of horses, he was called a farrier. In smaller communities, the blacksmith did everything but this specialty grew up in towns and cities as the number of horses increased.

Shoeing a horse took blacksmithing skills and an understanding of horses: a badly frightened horse could be dangerous. The first step was to remove the old shoe, pare away the excess horny growth and smooth the hoof. Then the smith took a bar of iron, heated and hammered it into the appropriate size and shape and tried it against the horse's hoof. If the fit wasn't perfect, it went back into the forge and onto the anvil. Later moulded horseshoes could be purchased in various sizes; the smith simply had to heat and adjust them to the horse's foot. When the shoe was ready, the smith grasped the horse's leg between his knees, applied the new shoe and drove in the nails on an angle, so that they came out through the side of the hoof.

Another blacksmithing specialty was decorative wrought iron work. A smith with an artistic bent might fashion weather vanes, gates, balcony railings, trivets, elaborate door hinges, and even grave markers. This kind of work took both skill and creativity. The rod of wrought iron was heated then hammered into shape or forced through an anvil containing the desired template design. Other fancy work was produced using cast iron poured into moulds. This method was popular for trivets, bootjacks, sad irons and other small household items.

Blacksmiths still exist today, although in much smaller numbers. During the 1960s and 70s, when interest was revived in many handcrafts, artistic blacksmithing enjoyed a rebirth. Good examples of both new and old wrought iron can be seen at the Benmiller Inn in Colborne Township.

Farriers or shoeing smiths are still in demand for riding and racing horses. Race horses need to be re-shod every three or four weeks.

In 1899, the blacksmiths of Huron County entered into a price combine: they agreed to charge 15 cents for resetting a horseshoe and 35 cents for a new shoe, an increase from 10 and 25 cents. The cost of a new shoe in 1981 was \$35. Much of the modern smith's work is done with a travelling smithy installed in the back of a truck. The blacksmith himself has not changed much, though: he still needs a good eye, a strong arm and a way with horses.

STEPHEN'S FIRST BLACKSMITH

In June 1847, the four Hicks brothers purchased Lots 1 to 4 on Concession 1, Stephen Township. This stretch of the London Road ran through swampy land and was often impassable. A bypass on higher land to the west was chopped out and it was on this higher ground that the new settlers erected their buildings. Robert Hicks chose Lot 4 where he cleared one acre and built a blacksmith shop, the first recorded in Stephen Township.

The population in the area was small and little land had been cleared by 1847. Hicks may not have had enough business to make a living; in the fall of 1850 he sold his land to John and Francis Mitchell, who had just arrived in Stephen from Darlington, near Toronto. They were staying with the McCoy family who had come from Darlington the previous year and settled on Lot 6, Concession 1. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell and their eight children moved into the blacksmith shop until they were able to put up a cabin. Robert Hicks went to London to find work in his trade. (This information gleaned from the Mitchell family history.)

EARLY BLACKSMITH SHOPS IN STEPHEN

Centralia: Robert Hicks had a shop for a brief time.

Exeter and Francistown: By 1856 Diggory Braund had a blacksmith shop south of the Francistown corner. At about that time William Verity and his family moved to Francistown and built a

shop. Soon Verity expanded it to a foundry where he manufactured farm equipment.

John Trick was listed as a carriage maker and general blacksmith in 1856; his was probably a combined shop where the blacksmith did the metal work and the carriage and wagon makers produced the wooden parts. There were ten hands working for him, some of whom were probably apprentices. In 1869, he had a brick building 42 by 24 feet and a frame one, 80 by 22 feet. In that year, R. Davis had four forges in a frame building 60 by 25 feet with nine hands.

Devon: William Cudmore

Fairfield: William Mitchell

Crediton East had a shop for a brief time

Crediton: John Trevithick opened his shop in April 1855. In 1861 Samuel Frederick established another smithy.

Sarepta: Conrad Pfaff had a shop by 1869; he later moved to Dashwood

Khiva: Joseph Lorentz

Mt. Carmel: M. Neville

Greenway: Thomas Brophy

Lake Rd. East, Lot 7: Silas Gratton

Concession 2, south half of Lot 17: Richard Davis

TINSMITH

The tinsmith arrived at the settlements a little later than the blacksmith but he too was an important part of the growing community. Before shops were established the tin peddler took his wares up and down the concessions and sideroads, first on foot and later with a horse and wagon.

The tinsmith or whitesmith made the items he sold from sheets of tin-plated iron. Tin is a soft, silver-white metal. When thin sheets of iron or steel are dropped in molten tin, a layer of tin is deposited on the sheet. Tin-plating helps to prevent rusting. Although tin-plated iron (usually referred to as tin) is more brittle and not as strong as blacksmith's iron, it is also lightweight, easy to work and inexpensive.

The tinsmith cut out his sheet of tin according to a variety of wooden patterns, then shaped it by bending, crimping and hammering. Tin cannot be welded: the joints must be soldered. The sign of a good whitesmith was his ability to conceal the solder in the finished product.

The housewife was always glad to see the tinker arrive. He supplied her with inexpensive and lightweight kitchen items such as coffee and tea pots and caddies, kettles, measures, funnels, dippers, strainers, baking pans, milk pans and graters. The holes of the graters were pierced with a square nail, sometimes in a decorative pattern. Tin was also used for making candle holders, lanterns, lamps and wall brackets. Before iron stoves with ovens a reflector roasting oven with a revolving spit was used for cooking meat. A rounded sheet of tin formed the top, back and bottom and the ends were filled in with a sheet of metal. Placed in front of the fire, the tin reflected the heat evenly to cook meat, apples or potatoes.

After the pioneer period, the tinsmith made all the eavestroughs, brackets and downspouts for new houses. He had long ladders which he used to climb to the edge of the roof to install the eavestroughs and downspouts. He also made hundreds of stove pipes. When homes were heated with stoves, there were openings for the pipes near the top of the wall in each room. Sometimes a stove pipe might run the whole length of a room and would have to be wired in the middle to prevent it sagging. All pipes had to be taken down each spring for cleaning, a very sooty job!

TINSMITHS IN STEPHEN

Crediton: Emmanuel Bissett, James Hill, Young and Kerr

Exeter: David Johns

Dashwood: J.G. Soldan

Tinker Line was the name given to an area on Concession 22 where a group of families from Lower Canada settled. They lived by growing flax, raising sheep, fishing and tinsmithing. During the winter they made pails and other tin items; in the spring and early summer they travelled through the country selling their wares from a covered wagon. Among the Tinker Line tinsmiths: William Gamble and John Wade.

THE COACH MAKER AND HARNESS MAKER

As roads improved and small settlements grew up, heavy farm carts pulled by oxen were no longer essential for travel. More lightweight and comfortable vehicles were needed: the coachmaker's skills were in demand.

A coachmaker usually set up shop close to a smith: either on the top floor of the smithy itself or in an adjoining building. He

was responsible for building everything except the iron parts of the vehicles; the blacksmith forged any iron that was needed. Together they built buggies, farm wagons, cutters, sleighs and every variety of horse-drawn vehicle.

The body and frame were all constructed of wood, skilfully put together and finished. The most difficult part of the process was building the wheels. A wheelwright was a specialised craftsman who did only this job; many blacksmiths were also wheelwrights.

The hub and spokes were carved from wood. Then the spokes were driven into mortises in the hub with a heavy maul. The fit was tight to ensure that the wheel withstood the rigours of travel and it took a tremendous blow to force in the spoke. The rim was constructed of several pieces of curved wood, called fellies, each of which took the tongues of several spokes. In the early days, short strips of curved iron were nailed to the rim to form the tire; later hoop-tiring, using one continuous piece of iron, was introduced.

To make a hoop-tire, the iron was heated over the forge, then bent into a circle by hand hammering or by using a hand-cranked machine. The tire was made slightly smaller than the wheel and had to be heated to get it over the rim. Once it was in place it was sprinkled with water; as it cooled the iron shrank against the wood, securing the tire and holding the whole wheel together.

The buggy was the popular choice for a family. A buggy was a small light-weight vehicle with four high wheels, a seat on which the driver and his passenger sat, and sometimes a smaller seat behind the dashboard. If mother and father each held a child and the older children sat on the small seat, a family of six could be quite comfortable. For larger families, the democrat, with a larger bed and two seats, was more commodious. A fabric and frame cover, which could be folded down in fine weather, usually protected the seats. A buggy was pulled by a single horse or a light team. The farmer began to have two distinct types of horses: heavy work animals and light driving horses. A handsome matched team was a source of great pride.

Most people living in the villages kept a horse and buggy. They often had a small stable at the back of their lot where the horse and perhaps a cow, a pig and some chickens were kept.

Travel was easier in the winter when the buggy was exchanged for a cutter. Sleighs and cutters were easier to make because they didn't require wheels. The sleigh was the winter equivalent of the

farm wagon, used mainly for freight. A cutter was designed with passengers in mind: the body was supported high above the runners and the dashboard curled up to protect against snow and slush scattered by the horses' hooves. It was traditional to attach bells to the harness of the horses pulling the sleigh, or to the shaft of the sleigh itself. Each set of bells was different, setting up its own melody as the horse jiggled along. Neighbours could be identified by the sound of their bells.

A harness was required to attach the horse to the vehicle it was to pull. Most farmers had two sets of harness, a light one for the buggy or cutter and a heavier one for farm wagons, field implements and sleighs.

These harnesses were far more complicated than those used for the oxen. They consisted of bridles, reins, straps, hames, bits, belts, tugs, traces, a collar, belly bands, back bonds, a whiffletree and a martingale. Most of the parts were leather with a few metal joining pieces such as the bit, buckles, snaps, hooks and rings. The harness maker cut the various pieces required from a large hide, then smoothed and dressed them. The collars had to be molded by hand into the correct shape. Once the work was started, it had to be continued until finished or the leather was spoiled.

With the coming of trains and cars, buggies almost completely disappeared from the roads. During the Depression, when money for gas was in short supply, some farmers pressed their old buggies into service again. There is still a buggy factory operating near Elmira, Ontario, where repairs are made to old buggies and sleighs and new horse-drawn vehicles are made to order. For the most part, though, the graceful buggy, the 'family car' of a more leisurely time, and the cutter with its melodious bells, are no more.

HARNESS MAKERS, COACH MAKERS AND SADDLERS IN STEPHEN

Crediton: Michael Schmidt (wagon maker)

George Schoelly (saddler)

John and William Trevithick (wagon maker)

James Clark (saddler)

Henry Wensell (wagon maker)

William Wenzel (carriage maker)

Devon: Ward Thomas (carriage maker)

Offa: James Crowley (wagon maker)

- Exeter: Diggory Braund (wagon maker and blacksmith)
 John Dignan (wagon maker)
 James Down (wagon maker)
 George and Charles Eacret (saddler and shoes)
 P. Frayne (harness maker)
 John Treble (shoes and harness maker)
- Dashwood: Joseph Ochelouser (wagon maker)
 Julius Thon (wagon maker)
 Michael Fern (harness maker)
 Rothermel and Hertleib (carriage maker)
 William Zimmer (carriage maker)
- Centralia: Charles Bessett (wagon maker)
 George Essary (carriage maker)
 H. Sweet (harness maker)
- Corbett: James McPherson

THE SHOEMAKER

In early settlements, everyone walked long distances on a daily basis. That's why it was so important to have good shoes. Most farmers could make basic repairs to their families' boots and shoes but few had the skill to create a new pair from a piece of leather.

Shoemaking was called the 'gentle craft' because it involved no strenuous exertion. The shoemaker could make conversation with customers as he worked. To practise his trade he needed nothing more than a small shop, with good lighting and a cobbler's bench, on which to work.

A last was a wooden form created to match the shape and size of each customer's foot. A lasting jack, mounted on the cobbler's bench, held the last firmly on a solid base.

The first step in making a pair of shoes was to cut out the upper from wooden patterns. Early shoes often consisted of only two pieces: the vamp and the counter. The counter covered the heels and sides, bending in straps. Better shoes sometimes had a two-piece counter, joined at the heel. The customer supplied the buckles which were used to fasten the straps.

The sole leather was soaked in water for a day and wrapped in cloth overnight to make it supple enough to work. It was then cut into shape and beaten into the appropriate contours with a flat rock called a 'lapstone'. The upper was stretched over the last and the sole was glued temporarily in place, then sole and upper were

sewn together using thread of waxed linen or hemp and a needle of hog bristle. Heel-shaped lifts were attached to the sole with small nails and the shoe was neatly trimmed and finished. The uppers of dressy shoes were blacked and waxed while work shoes were smeared with tallow.

Boots were made in a similar way but a special last was used, made in three long sections so that it could be removed even though the boot narrowed toward the top. There were no overshoes or galoshes; well-greased heavy cowhide boots resisted most weather.

SHOEMAKERS IN STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

Crediton: John Klumpp

Christian Zwicker

Bernard Brown

C. Rau

W. Taylor and Son

A. Wilken

C Trick

Devon: George Webber

Dashwood: Frederick Wurtz

Fenn and Edighoffer

Toms and Edighoffer

Centralia: Jacob Brown

Shipka: M. Baikie

BRICK AND TILE MAKING

The first homes in Stephen were log cabins; later, as sawmills began to appear, the settlers built frame houses. But by the 1860s, many new buildings in Stephen were constructed of brick.

Clay from the Ausable River banks proved ideal for brickmaking and a large industry grew up in the Crediton area, supplying not only local demand but also new building throughout Southwestern Ontario.

Brickmaking was a comparatively simple process. Clay was mixed and formed in moulds, allowed to air dry and then fired at high temperatures.

Each brickyard had a pit dug at the back to hold enough clay for one day's production of brick. The clay was mixed in a 'pug-mill' — a large wooden box with a rotating wooden post studded with pegs in the centre. The power for the mill came from a horse,



Slow brick making was back-breaking work at the Credlton brick yard in 1897. Taking a brief rest to pose for this photograph are William and Joseph Davis, William Winer, William Elsie, and John Motz.



A view of a kiln at the Credlton tile and brick yard, 1917. From left to right: Marny Holtzman, Job Sims, Everett Haist, M. Geiser, Herb Haist, Wellington Haist.

hitched to a sweep attached to the centre post. It was the job of the mill filler to add a new batch of clay to the mill each time a mixed batch was removed; the mill filler also had to take his horse and dump cart to fill the supply pit from the clay bank when it was emptied.

Once mixed, the clay was removed through a door in the bottom of the mill. The moulder packed the clay into wooden moulds which had been soaked in water. Brick carriers dumped the soft bricks onto the yard, which was sprinkled with sand to keep the bricks from sticking. After the bricks had dried for three days, the carriers stacked them in rows or tiers five or six bricks high, covering the top to keep off rain. After a few more days of drying the bricks were taken to the kilns for firing.

It was the moulder who knew just how to set the bricks in the kiln so that the heat circulated evenly through them while they were being baked. They were built into ten or 12 brick arches and covered with a 'skin' of old and broken brick mortared with sand and water and plastered on the outside. When the kiln was complete the arches were filled with four-foot lengths of cord wood, pushed into place with a long pike pole. After continuous firing for about a week, the bricks were baked.

Eventually the hand-made 'slop' brick process was replaced by a mechanical process which increased productivity substantially. After mixing, the clay was forced through dies into the required shapes for brick or tile. From the dies the bricks ran onto a cutting off machine which made each one of equal size. They were then stacked in a shed for drying and later fired. These later kilns were built of brick with domed roofs. They had large fireplaces with chimneys and doors on either side.

BRICKMAKING IN STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

Crediton was the centre of brickmaking in Stephen. The first brick buildings in the township were built in Exeter about 1860. In the 1867 Assessment Roll two brickmakers are listed on Concession 5, Robert Bissett on Lot 10 and William Mitchell on Lot 15. Over 100 years later, when an old house was being torn down to make way for the nurse's residence opposite the South Huron Hospital, a brick was found bearing the inscription: "July 12, 1862, R. Bissett, Stephen". Conrad Kuhn was another early brickmaker.



Dan Truemner and Jake Messner at the Wein tile yard, 1937.

Both sides of the river supplied brick clay. Clay from the east banks burned a red colour, while that from the west side made white bricks.

Brick soon became a popular building material. The Exeter paper of January 13, 1874, reported: "Not a day passes but 20 or 30 loads of brick enter the village. Prospects are a harvest of new building this summer." In August of the following year, the paper reported: "An immense quantity of brick is being manufactured on the river banks this season, six yards being now in operation."

Those six brickmakers were:

- George Motz - south part of Lot 11, Concession 5
- William Halls - south half of Lot 12
- John Kerr - north half of Lot 12
- Richard Young - Lot 13
- John Saunders - Lot 14
- William Mitchell - Lot 15

John Kerr came from County Sligo, Ireland and worked in brickworks in Hamilton before settling in Stephen Township in 1860. He purchased the north half of Lot 12, Con. 5 in 1869 for \$742 and set up a brickyard.

Machine brickmaking came to Stephen in 1879. A report in a local newspaper noted: Mr. John Mitchell of Stephen has shown

us a sample of "machine" made brick which he has recently commenced manufacturing. These are superior to "slop" brick which Mr. Mitchell also manufactures, each brick having one smooth side." Fred Haist was the last Stephen brickmaker to make slop brick, as late as 1912. One of the last buildings constructed of slop brick was the Zurich school.

While the bricks were baking it was customary for the brickyard workers to visit a neighbouring farm and purloin a couple of chickens, a goose or even a turkey to bake in the kilns. One cooking method was to wrap the bird in wet clay before putting it in the oven. When it came out, the feathers came off with the baked clay coating and the meat inside was tender and juicy.

John Kerr bought the south half of the lot, on which there was also a brickyard, in 1883. His sons Charles and Fred, together with five or six other workers, produced brick and tile from the new location. In 1897, Kerr installed a steam engine and mechanical machinery. The business was carried on after his death by his son Fred.



Dairying was not an exceptionally large industry in Stephen Township at the turn of the century. Some, however, such as James Young, pictured along side his milk delivery wagon, did devote energy towards the enterprise. Young was the president of the Corbett Cheese and Dairy Company from 1903 to 1905.



The Shipla Flax Mill played a substantial role in the township's industrial economy at the turn of the century.



BASIS WALL. LIVERY. STORE. PARS & STORE.
FARM EQUIPMENT. PREMISES OF JOSEPH BANES, GRETCH, ONT.

Joseph Banes was an exceptional Stephen Township entrepreneur in the 1870's. He owned and operated a pump manufactory, a livery, and a general store, as well as dabbling in some farming.

THE ROYAL HOTEL

HERBERT C. CLARK, Proprietor.

GOOD SAMPLE ROOMS

CREDITON

CREDITON	
Huron Co	Pop about 200
Brown Joseph, pump & builder	
Brown C, general store	
Burkard S A Mrs, furniture	
Brown H, Postmaster & Bank & Shop	
Brown Samuel, general stores	
Canadian Bank of Commerce	
The W H James Agency Mag	
Clark Eric, druggist	
Clark F H, lumber dealer	
Clark H C, Prop Royal Hotel (see adv)	
Cookson James, impl agent	
Coxworth E, live stock	
Division Court, Mr Lewis Clerk	
Elbier Henry, insurance, Cosy- corner & Township Clerk	
Elbier Herbert K, Notary Pub- lic (see adv)	

Herbert K. Elbier

NOTARY PUBLIC & CONVEYANCER

CREDITON, ONT.

Elbier H P, farms & pumps
Father Clark, druggist
Frost Cornishman
Hast Frederick, brick & tile works
Harris Motter, painter
Hay Township Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Co, R Elbier, mgr
Hill August, hotel
Holmes Almon, blacksmith
Holloman G G, reporter
Holloman J H, tutor
Jones W H, Aeting Mag: Cas- sia Bank of Commerce
Lewis H James, jeweler
Lewis Wm, Clerk 11th Division Court of Huron (see adv)

ONTARIO

McCue P J, physician
Murdoch Albert, blacksmith
Nicholson & Lawson, butchers
Royal Hotel, H C Clark Prop (see adv)
Sunderwood W Barber
Stout Joseph, roofer
Trevethick Thomas, carriage dealer
Trich Charles, shaver
Wesel Wm H, blacksmith
Wolf Charles, livery
Worth Ward & Co, flour mill
Young Bro, hardware etc
Evander Charles, general stores

CREDITON EAST

Huron Co Population about 200

Hast Fred, brick & tile
Hast Joseph, brick & tile mfr
Hodges Hammie, brick & tile mfr
Kerr Fred, brick & tile mfr
Kuhn J H, brick & tile mfr
Mote J S, Farmer & General Store
Swinton Henry, flour mill

WM. LEWIS

Clerk 11th Division

Court of Huron

CREDITON, ONT.

Crediton and Crediton East in the Huron County Directory of 1909 gives a comprehensive list of the business and professional men of the age.

Chapter 11

The Mail Must Go Through: Post Offices and Stages

"If not called for in five days return to. . . ."

THE EARLY DAYS

The arrival of the mail every day at our gate or office is something we often take for granted. When the first settlers came to Stephen, however, there were no post offices in the entire Huron Tract. Any mail they sent or received had to be carried by a traveller on the road to London or York (Toronto). Post offices were first established at Goderich and Stratford on October 6, 1835, and mail came by way of Preston, over the Huron Road.

The following year, a post office was opened on Lot 13, Con. 1 of McGillivray Township, with J. Adamson appointed postmaster. This was the first township post office in the Huron Tract, and was known as McGillivray. In later years, it was moved to Clandeboye and after November 1, 1882, was known by that name.

The Tuckersmith office, east of Clinton, opened on October 5, 1841. The Hay office was established about two miles north of Francistown on October 6, 1842. These were the closest post offices for Stephen residents until 1852.

There are few records of mail delivery along the London Road before 1852. John and Isaac Rattenbury were early mail carriers. One report states that John was the first courier between Crediton and London, while another claims the honour for Isaac. The round trip could take as long as two weeks in bad weather.

J. Quick also carried mail between Goderich and London. William Porte of Lucan noted in his diary that Quick carried the mail from London to Goderich on horseback three times a week.

Quick was an interesting character. Settlers often gave him money to buy them supplies but he sometimes used it to finance a spree instead. In spite of this, he was well-liked and genuinely mourned when he was killed in an accident.

When there was no nearby post office, mail was often dropped at inns along the road. It is likely that many early Stephen settlers got their mail this way, rather than by travelling to more distant post offices.

Seventeen post offices were established in Stephen between 1852 and 1952. When rural mail routes were set up in the townships, the small post offices were gradually closed, until only four remained.

EARLY LETTERS AND POSTAGE

In the early days there were no envelopes or stamps. A sheet of foolscap-sized paper was both letter and envelope. A pen was fashioned from a quill, using a sharp knife to cut a slanted oblong sliver from the end of the feather. After the letter was written, a little clean sand or fine ash was sprinkled over it to dry the ink. Then the sheet was folded and sealed with wax.

At first postal rates were determined by the distance the letter travelled. The rate for two sheets was double that for one, so most people filled every available corner of the paper. Postage costs were reduced significantly in 1851 when the post office passed from British to Canadian control. An ordinary letter could be sent pre-paid



In 1879, the Huron County Atlas recorded thirteen operating post offices in the Township of Stephen. Eight of these offices were closed between November 30, 1913 and May 31, 1974.

for three pence or "unpaid" (postage collected from the recipient) for four-and-a-half pence.

In 1851, the first penny stamps were issued. Decimal currency stamps appeared in 1859. The basic letter rate was then five cents paid and seven cents unpaid. The use of stamps was not mandatory until 1875; before then the postage was often written on the letter with a pen or steel marker. Imperial penny postage began in Canada on January 1, 1899; the rate for a letter weighing one-half ounce was two cents to any destination in the British Empire.

Early settlers did not send many letters; many of them could not read or write. Receiving and answering a letter was an important and serious business. When weekly newspapers and farm magazines began publishing, many families subscribed to these news sources. The day these publications arrived at the post office was a busy one for the postmaster.

In small towns and villages, the post office was most often located in the general store or the postmaster's home. A typical country office consisted of a desk or table with a number of pigeonholes mounted on the wall above it.

HAY AND EXETER OFFICES

Joseph Hardy was the first postmaster at the Hay office, which opened October 6, 1842. He was succeeded by James Gordon in 1844. The office was closed for a time, then reopened on January 6, 1848. In 1853, James Murray was appointed postmaster and held the position until March 13, 1874.

A post office was granted to Exeter on July 1, 1855. John McDonnell was the postmaster for the first year. William Sanders, who lived on Lot 21, Con. 1, followed him in the position, serving as Exeter postmaster until 1877.

By this time Francistown and Exeter had united and were incorporated as the village of Exeter. When John Currelly was appointed postmaster on May 12, 1874, he moved the Hay office to his store, located just south of the Francistown hotel. This created the unusual situation of a township post office located within the incorporated village of Exeter. The two post offices — one for the township and one for the village — continued to operate in Exeter, as they do today. The Hay outlet, however, is now a franchise in Prayne's General Store, rather than a full post office.

STEPHEN POST OFFICES

When a post office was opened in the Quick Hotel on September 6, 1852, it was called Devon, the English shire from which many of the settlers had come. Joseph Quick was the first postmaster. He was followed by his brother Isaac, in April 1857, and by Stephen Walsh on October 1, 1859. A year later it passed to James Stephenson, who owned a store at the corner. On January 1, 1865, Thomas Greenway became postmaster and he was succeeded by his brother William in 1872. The Devon office was closed on June 30, 1873 but was reopened 20 years later. Matthew Kelland, operator of the hotel, became postmaster on June 1, 1893. The post office remained open until 1902.

On May 1, 1853 a post office was opened at Brewster with B. Brewster as postmaster. Other Brewster postmasters included: J. H. Cook, appointed July 1, 1859; William McDougall, July 1, 1866; William Fulton, October 1, 1880; Mrs. Margaret McDougall, July 1, 1900; Joseph Sharroo, November 1, 1903 and Philip Baker, February 26, 1910. The office was closed on March 18, 1914.

On March 1, 1861, a post office was established in John Parson's store at Crediton. Parson served as postmaster for 22 years. When Jacob Eilber was appointed to replace him in 1883, the office was moved to his store, where it remained for 20 years. Next it moved to the shoe shop next door, with Bernard Brown in charge. On January 15, 1922, Lloyd England, a World War I veteran, was named postmaster and for the next 44 years the England family manned the office. On January 15, 1966, Arthur Attfield, a veter-



John Parsons, an enterprising merchant, served as Crediton's first postmaster. Starting on March 1, 1861, mail could be received and sent from his general store.

ran of World War II, became postmaster and the office was transferred to his store. He was succeeded by Robert Bushfield on January 2, 1970.

In recent years, Mrs. Rosemary Stewart was the Crediton postmistress, in a small brick building on the main street that once served as the town hall. The Crediton post office was closed on February 4, 1991, despite attempts by local residents to keep the office open. The village is now served by a community mailbox and a postal franchise located in the village variety store.

A post office opened in the store at Crediton East on October 1, 1898. It was operated in turn by John W. Mitchell, William England and Josiah Motz, and permanently closed on July 18, 1917.

Sarepta, at the crossing point of the Goshen line and the Stephen-Hay boundary, received a post office on March 1, 1865. It was located in the community's general store, in the western part of the hotel, on the Hay side of the road. Sarepta had only two postmasters — William Reynolds, followed by his son Hora-



When John Parsons gave up his postmastership in 1883, the Crediton post office moved to the general store of Jacob Eller and Son.



Census Post closed Crediton's last post office, operated from this tiny brick building on the main street, on February 4, 1991, despite an attempt by local residents to keep it open. (Photo by S. Hardling)

tio. At first, William Reynolds carried mail from Sarepta to Exeter on horse back. The Sarepta office was closed temporarily between 1880 and 1884, reopened in 1885 and permanently closed in 1914. The Cranford post office had the distinction of being opened on Canada's first Dominion Day in 1867. It was located in the general store and John G. Quarry was the first postmaster. On February 1, 1868, the name was changed to Offa and on April 1, 1889 it was changed again to Mount Carmel. Thomas Hall succeeded Mr. Quarry on August 1, 1901. The office was officially closed on February 28, 1914.

Dashwood received a post office on December 1, 1871, when Noah Fried was named postmaster. The post office was located on the east side of his home. He held this position until the end of 1888. The next postmaster was Joseph Snell, who moved the office to a small building beside his brick house, a little north of the main corner. He was succeeded in November 1905 by Jacob Kellerman who established his office in a corner of Peter McIsaac's place of business, which was later Tieman's Furniture Store. The



The Dashwood post office building in September, 1971.

next move was in February 1912 when Henry Willert became postmaster; the office was located in the building on the northeast corner of the main intersection. Several years later he moved the office to the east portion of Dr. Hobbs Taylor's building, where it remained until September 1941.

Earl R. Guenther, a World War I veteran, was appointed postmaster on April 2, 1923. Guenther had first started carrying mail in as a young boy in 1910, driving the Dashwood to Parkhill stage route when the regular driver was away. By 1912, he was working regularly for his father, Henry Guenther, who owned a Dashwood livery business which operated stage coaches between Dashwood and Exeter.

In 1941, Earl Guenther moved the post office back to a building on the northeast main corner of Dashwood. He retired as postmaster in January 1966 after serving in that position for 43 years. Earl Guenther continued delivering mail to post offices at Hay, Kippens, Hensall, Zurich, Dashwood and Crediton until he was 84 years old. Canada Post officials held a special ceremony in 1990 to mark his 70 years of service delivering the mail.

Henry Hoffman, who started driving a stage coach for Henry Guenther in 1901, originally delivered the mail over rutted roads between Exeter and Grand Bend. In 1909, he exchanged his stage for "one of those new fangled autos", and continued to deliver mail between Exeter and Dashwood until he was 71 years old, retiring in 1946.

When Earl Guenther retired, Mrs. Donna Restemayer became the Dashwood postmistress. In recent years, the post office was located in a trailer beside the community centre, before moving to the Boyle plaza. The Dashwood post office is still in operation.

In 1872-73, four post offices opened in Stephen Township: Grand Bend, Harpley, Centralia and Corbett. Grand Bend postmasters were: John Ironside 1872-1887; George Glanville, 1887; William B. Follis, 1888; Andrew Pollock, 1898-1910; William Amos, 1910-1913; John Ross, 1913-1925; William Oliver, 1925-1931; Jules Desjardine, 1931-1937; John Love, 1937-1944; Mary Yeo, 1944-1951. Grand Bend became part of Lambton County in 1951.

Harpley had only two postmasters, Thomas Hayter and John Love. The office closed on November 30, 1913.

Centralia's post office was located in the Greenway store until 1922. The postmasters were: William H. Greenway 1873-1876; Andrew Walker Jr., 1876-1879; Thomas Abbott, 1879-1885; Patrick Quigley, 1885-1886; Benjamin Quarry, 1886-1909; Patrick Hanlon, 1909-1922. William J. Parson took over the office in 1922 and moved it to his own building. After his death, his wife served as postmistress until 1949. Mrs. Lloyd England was acting postmistress until 1951 when Ray Lammie became postmaster.

The Centralia post office, on the main street of the village, was closed on December 31, 1989.

When the R.C.A.F. base was established at Centralia during the Second World War, all the mail for the base arrived by way of the Centralia post office, making it a very busy office. A post office was opened at the base itself in 1952 for the use of service personnel and their families. When the base was closed, the post office was renamed Huron Park. This post office remains open, one of only two post offices surviving in Stephen Township.

Corbett had three postmasters: John F. Macey, 1873-1876; John Corbett, 1876-1906, and James Pollock, from 1906 until the post office closed in 1914.

Three more post offices were added in 1878 to serve the people of the Greenway, Shipka and Khiva areas.

The Greenway office had only two postmasters: W. J. Wilson, 1878-1912, and William Mellon, 1912-1914. Shipka also had two postmasters: Frederick Heitzman, 1878-1911, and John Ratz, 1911-1913. At Khiva, Valentine Ratz served as postmaster from October 1, 1878 until the office closed on March 1, 1894. It reopened



The Centralia post office in November, 1971, nearly one hundred and twenty years after postal service was initiated in the village.



From 1906 until closure in 1914, James Pollock operated the Corbett post office in his general store.

five months later with M. McCann as postmaster but closed again at the end of the year. On June 1, 1898 it was opened again, this time under Bernard Cunningham. He was followed by William H. Brokenshire in 1911. The office was moved in 1912 to a small building near the home of William Witzel, who operated it until it closed permanently on January 13, 1914.

As well as these post offices, some residents of Stephen were served by post offices just outside the township boundaries, including Adare, Moray, Zurich, Parkhill and West McGillivray.

MOVING THE MAIL

The following are the mail carriers on the London Road from 1852 to 1878.

From Coderich to London:	B. Miller started February 1, 1852
	M. Seger started January 1, 1853
	W. Kily started June 1, 1855
	G. Hobson started October 1, 1857
	N. Smith started April 1, 1858
From Clinton to London:	A. Smith started October 1, 1858
	A. Arkill started October 1, 1859
	S. Boyd started April 1, 1860
	J. Brown and E. Jennings started April 1, 1861
	A. J. Moore started April 1, 1864
	W. Diamond started April 4, 1868
	A. Jamieson started July 7, 1871

On July 1, 1878, the London, Huron and Bruce Railway added a mail coach. Mail for post offices along the London Road was dropped at the nearest station. Contracts were let to carry the outgoing mail to the station and the incoming mail from the station to each office.

All the other post offices in Stephen received their mail by stage. A network of stage routes developed to serve the many small offices and these roads eventually became the main roads of the township.

It is not clear how Brewster got its mail in the early years. It probably did not come by way of the Hay office because the North Boundary road was impassable in places. It may have come from Bayfield, along the lakeshore trail. By 1871, Brewster received mail twice a week and by 1884, three times a week, from Parkhill. Mail couriers between Brewster and Parkhill were: A. Armstrong, S.



W.T. England's general store was not only a popular gathering place; it also served as Credilton East's post office at the turn of the century.



Josiah S. Motz offered boats, shoes, hardware, crockery, jewellery and postal services to the residents of Credilton East. He assumed control of the post office after W.T. England gave up the position. Motz's store is shown at the left centre of this circa 1910 postcard view.

Gratton, F. Gratton, and J. Ravelle. These couriers no doubt serviced the Corbett, Greenway, Harpley and Grand Bend post offices when they were opened. On July 1, 1909 the Grand Bend and Parkhill route was set up. The Brewster carrier probably went to Grand Bend for mail after that time.

Courriers on the Grand Bend to Parkhill route were J. G. Tudor, A. Webb, R. Cavanagh and A. P. Nicholas. Federal records indicate that this route was dropped in 1942 and Grand Bend began to receive mail from Exeter via Dashwood.

For 103 years, Crediton received the mail from Devon or Centralia, but since 1964 it has come from the Exeter post office. The first carrier was postmaster John Parsons. Parsons made two trips a week. By the early 1890s, Crediton received two mails a day. Carriers from Devon and Centralia included: J. Cann, A. J. Rollins, Louis Holman, William Donnelly, A. Calder, J. Short, James Clark, Charles and William Brown, Charles Wolfe, William H. Wenzel, Albert Wolfe and William Roeszler, Godfrey Nicholson, and Wilfrid D. Mack.



For many years, Wilfrid D. Mack served as a mail courier between Centralia and Crediton. Here, Mr. Mack loads mail bags for Huron Park and Crediton.

While the Crediton East post office was open it serviced and later carried the mail to the R.C.A.F. base post office. For a short time the Shipka office received its mail from Crediton, carried by F. Heitzman. The mail for Adare and Mooresville was picked up at Centralia for a time. At the same time, Mount Carmel received mail three times a week from the McGillivray post office.

For many years the Dashwood office received mail from both Parkhill and Exeter. The first known stage driver from Dashwood to Parkhill was Art Willert. He was succeeded by E. Hall, William Fletcher, J. S. Witzel, Peter McIsaac, Henry Guenther, his widow Jane Guenther and her son, Earl R. Guenther. This route also served Mount Carmel and Khiva, and mail was picked up for Shipka at Khiva. The Dashwood-Parkhill run ceased in 1914. William Reynolds was the first to carry mail from Exeter to Dashwood. He was succeeded by J. A. Wambold, Peter McIsaac, Henry Guenther, Jane Guenther and Earl Guenther.

For many years the Crediton, Dashwood and Grand Bend stages also carried passengers, express parcels and freight. When the London, Huron and Bruce Railway began to carry mail the Crediton stage arrived at the Centralia station in time to meet the southbound train and then waited about three-quarters of an hour until the train from London arrived. The stage then left to deliver mail to the post offices along its route. The trip to the station was repeated in the afternoon when the two trains made the return trip. For many years the offices served by the railway received two mails a day from both the north and the south, four times the service received today.

RURAL MAIL DELIVERY

Rural mail delivery to country areas began in the United States in 1896. By the early 1900s, there was considerable lobbying to have rural mail delivery in Canada. Many letters were sent to farm magazines and to members of parliament. Dominion Postmaster-General Sir William Mullock felt that the project was premature and too expensive for a young country.

But public pressure continued to mount. According to one supporter of the plan: "It is a real hardship for the farmer to get his mail from the post office. If he lives ten miles distant he must drive twenty miles to get his mail. At certain seasons the roads are bad. The eternal mud, like the poor, we will probably always have with us... We are enjoying unusual prosperity in Canada today. Indus-

try is thriving. The post office has developed until it is no longer a public burden. Is it going to confer upon the agricultural community of this Dominion the advantages that it so freely extends to the urban population?"

Rural mail delivery began in Canada in 1908, but it was not until August 18, 1913 that the first routes were established in Stephen.

Routes	Couriers
Exeter R.R.1	Harry Parsons, Edward Willard, Frank Reeder, James Grassick, Frank Wildfong, Donald Cooper
Centralia R.R.1	Cornelius O'Brien, Frank Reeder, Jack Reeder, Alton Isaac
Centralia R.R.2	William H. Wenzel, Albert Wolfe and William Roeszler, G. Nicholson, W. D. Mack
Crediton R.R.1	James Clark, Albert Wolfe, Aubrey Gaiser, W. D. Mack

On October 1, 1971, Crediton R.R.1 and Centralia R.R.2 were combined, with Mrs. Harvey Smith as courier

Crediton R.R.2	James Clark, Albert Wolfe, Roy Finkbeiner
Hay R.R.1	Jane Guenther, Earl R. Guenther, Exeter Coach Lines Limited
Dashwood R.R.2	Henry Willert, William Mason, Addison Tieman, Ross Guenther
Dashwood R.R.3	Elmer Willert, Mark Brokenshire, Edward Kraft, Kenneth Kraft
Grand Bend R.R.1	Richard Hamilton, Glen Desjardine, Emmerson Desjardine

(The preceding information was gathered from several sources and may not be complete.)

STAGES AND LIVERIES

During the late 1860s and early '70s, the stage coach business boomed. Roads had been greatly improved and people were travelling more. Competition between stage coach lines was fierce. The following advertisements and items from the Exeter newspaper give us a glimpse of the times.

"Traveller's Guide 1874

Stages leave Exeter daily for Lucan and London at 4 a.m.,

arriving Lucan at 6 a.m., arriving Exeter at 9 a.m.

Stages leave London for Exeter at 2 p.m., arriving Lucan at

5 p.m., arriving Exeter at 7 p.m.

Stages leave Exeter daily for Clinton at 5 a.m., arriving Clinton at 10 a.m.

Stages leave Clinton for Exeter at 2.30 p.m., arriving Exeter at 5.30 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

Stage leaves Exeter for St. Marys at 6 a.m., arriving at St. Marys to meet noon trains going east and west

Stages leave St. Marys for Exeter at 2.30 p.m., arriving Exeter at 6.30 p.m.

Round trip to London for the Fair \$1.50

Exeter, Crediton, Lucan and London Daily Stage
leaves Exeter and Crediton about 4 a.m., connecting in
Lucan,
arriving London at 9 a.m.

Returning - leaves City Hall at 2 p.m. for above places arriving in Lucan in time for the GTR train going west connecting in Exeter with Clinton Stage.

London, April 16, 1874 Calder and Co., Proprietors"

December 10, 1874

"Messrs. Donnelly have put on an opposition stage to run from Crediton to London calling at Lucan so the public will have increased accommodation and fares will probably be lowered."

"Hawkes' Stages-London and Exeter - Leave Exeter about 4 a.m. connecting in Lucan and London with stages and trains

Good horses, comfortable stage and fast time

Leave Western Hotel, London at 2 p.m.

W. Brooks, driver John Hawkes, Proprietor"

July 8, 1875

"Mr. Wm. Brooks, stage driver, left Exeter at 4 a.m. with quite a number of passengers. Going down the hill at Mount Hope (north of London), Donnelly's opposition stage attempted to pass. Brooks whipped up his horses and they sped along at a rapid rate. The nut of the left fore wheel came off the iron axle and fell to the ground, releasing the wheel. Mr. Brooks was thrown to the ground. The horses continued on and the eight passengers tumbled out onto the road. Mr. Brooks died about 4 p.m."

With the coming of the railway early in 1876, the stage business slowed considerably. The trip by train was easier, quicker and safer. The livery business continued to flourish until cars came into common use.

CONCLUSION

Although transporting the mail is no longer a physical challenge, as it was in the days of stage coaches, many residents in smaller communities are again concerned about postal services. In recent years, Canada Post has closed several branches across the country as a cost-cutting measure. Included among those closures was the Crediton Post Office, which had been in operation for more than 100 years. More and more Stephen Township residents are now served by community postal boxes and franchise postal outlets. No longer is there a nearby post office available for mail pickup, a chat with the postmaster and the opportunity to learn the latest community news.

Stephen Township residents, which were once served by 17 post offices, are now served by two — in the village of Dashwood and in Huron Park.

Today, we are certainly not as isolated as Stephen's first settlers, nor as dependent on the mail service for our communications with the outside world. But reliable postal service remains a high priority for rural residents and villagers alike.

Chapter 12

Towns and Villages

Part 1: Exeter to Crediton

"Like glimpses of forgotten dreams."

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

INTRODUCTION

When we examine the maps of proposed towns and villages shown in the 1879 Huron County Atlas, we get a glimpse of the dreams of some settlers. Many of those who bought a corner lot hoped that a settlement would develop at their crossroads, bringing them sure prosperity.

In fact, villages and towns evolved for many different reasons. The availability of water power was often a deciding factor. Mills were erected beside the Ausable River in Stephen Township, but the low banks and frequent flooding did not encourage newcomers to establish villages around them. In some cases an inn, store or industry — the result of one man's enterprise — became the nucleus around which a village grew. The coming of the railway played a decisive role in the rise and fall of many communities.

Stephen Township had its share of little settlements and each one made its own contribution to the life of the area. Only two, Exeter and Grand Bend, ever became large enough to be incorporated. Two others, Centralia and Crediton, have remained substantial but unincorporated villages. As living conditions changed and transportation improved many of the smaller communities faded away and disappeared.

But memories still linger. This chapter is a nostalgic journey up and down the concessions and sideroads as we recall familiar places and some almost forgotten communities.

FRANCISTOWN AND EXETER

Our journey begins at the northeast corner of the township, where the townships of Stephen, Hay and Usborne meet. Here, where the road reaches the top of the grade as it rises above the river, was a natural location for a village to develop. It became known as Francistown but no one remembers when it was named, for whom or by whom. Francistown included Lots 24, 25 and part of Lot 23 north of the river on the Stephen side.

In late 1832, William McConnell built a shanty near the river. McConnell was responsible for cutting the London Road from Clapdeboye to Clinton and bought lands on both sides of the road. The Canada Company dictated that his roughly-built log cabin serve as a traveller's stop between London and Goderich. Later a brick hotel was erected at the junction of the London Road and the Stephen North Boundary (also known as the Lake Road). It was built by Matthew Rodgers who owned and operated a hotel, store and brickyard at Rodgerville, four miles to the north.¹

The hotel was built in 1857 and opened for business in February 1858, under the name the Great Western Hotel. James Towers ran it for many years. The Great Western later became known as



Exeter's main street from a postcard, c. 1910. Although it left the township when incorporated as a village in 1873, Exeter has always maintained unbreakable ties with Stephen. The stage-coach pictured above was one such bond at the turn of the century. Courtesy: Regional Collection, UWCO.

the Walper House — after a subsequent owner — and was recognized as one of the finest hotels in the county.

McConnell built a sawmill in 1833 and a grist mill in 1834. He was an energetic citizen, prominent in the district for many years. His child, born in 1833, was the first white child born within a radius of 20 miles.

Another prominent Francistown resident arrived in 1843. George McLeod was born in Scotland, lived for over 20 years in Nova Scotia and only arrived in the West when his fortunes as a shipbuilder faded. Appointed as an agent of the Canada Company, he travelled regularly through Stephen, Hay, Usborne, Biddulph and more remote townships. Soon after his arrival in the Huron Tract he wrote to Victor Dunlop, M.P. for Kingston, to say that a post office was "indispensable". McLeod was appointed associate coroner for United Counties of Huron, Perth and Bruce in 1845.

In 1842, Hay Township Post Office was established in the postmaster's home, two miles north of the corner. It was later moved to Francistown and continued to serve the needs of local residents for well over 100 years.

Great things were predicted for Francistown in the 1850s. When the provincial surveyor, John McDonald, mapped the town in 1854 he wrote: "When the time comes for the division of the County of Huron, Francistown must from its position become the new county town as will readily appear by a glance at the plan of the Huron Tract."

By 1856, there were two grist mills and two sawmills, all using a combination of steam and water power, at Francistown. Two stores, two carpenter's shops, a blacksmith shop and the hotel, which was nearly complete, made up the rest of the community.

By 1863, there was also a carding mill, a second hotel and several more shops. The Verity Foundry had been built, the beginning of a major agricultural implements business.

Later businesses included a flax mill and an apple evaporation (dried apple) factory. Diggory Braund's blacksmith shop, where he worked with wagon maker Alex McPherson, stood south of the Walper House Hotel. Braund had a large family and built a brick house on his property: the house was later demolished and the brick used in several new homes built in Exeter by Charles Snell.

Early directories depict Francistown as a thriving little community. With its fine hotel, mills, foundry, shops and stores it gave

promise of increase and expansion. However McDonald's prediction did not come to pass: it was Exeter, the more southerly settlement, that was to grow in size and importance.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF FRANCISTOWN TEACHER

One of the most perplexing mysteries of the area occurred in Francistown. The village's first schoolteacher, Thomas Taylor, a learned but somewhat eccentric man, lived in a small addition at the back of the school. He was known to be very punctual, waiting every morning at the school door to welcome his pupils. After following this invariable routine for several years, one morning he did not appear. His clothes and personal effects were found in his room. Despite extensive inquiries and searches no trace of him was ever found. Taylor also served as the clerk for Usborne Township.

Moving southward to the next crossroad, we come to the nucleus of Exeter. The first settler in the Exeter area was James Willis, a native of Ireland, who arrived in 1832. Willis left his wife in London while he built a log cabin on Lot 20. The following spring they took up residence together and in their first summer managed to clear more than five acres of land.

The real impetus for the development of the village, however, was provided by Isaac Carling. Carling arrived in 1847, bought one-and-a-half acres from Mr. Sanders, owner of the 100-acre lot, and built a two-storey house and tannery. Carling also opened a store. He had soon developed a good business. The fertile lands of Stephen and Usborne were filling up rapidly and the nearest store was in London. Later, Carling built a three-storey brick block on Main Street, a building that is still used for businesses and offices. The handsome Carling home was purchased by the South Huron District Hospital and for many years was used as the front portion of the hospital. Three of Carling's sons, Thomas, William and Isaac, also built fine homes and made valuable contributions to the life of the village. Isaac Carling represented South Huron in the Ontario legislature for a number of years.

Another forward-looking Englishman arrived in Exeter in 1852. James "Boss" Pickard also opened a store and in time took his place in the front ranks of local merchants. Most of Pickard's buildings were on the east side of the village: they included a large, three-storey store called Old Reliable House, his home and a large ware-

house, used by the Exeter Furniture Company in the 1970s. Pickard also opened the first steam grist mill in the area, located on Huron Street. Isaac Carling and James Pickard laid the foundations of what would become a prosperous community, and Pickard is credited with suggesting the town's name.

In 1856, Thomas McQueen reported, "Exeter contained a steam sawmill, a tannery, three stores, two taverns, four blacksmiths, two wagon makers, three shoemakers, three tailors, two painters, two cabinetmakers, one cooper, one neat little church, Bible Christian, and a post office." Although he was not impressed by the location, growth by the mid-1850s was encouraging and promised well for the future. It was also in 1856 that an Exeter lacrosse team became Canadian champions.

Much progress had been made by 1863. Stores were operated by Joseph Clarke and A. D. Freeman. General stores dealt in groceries, dry goods, hardware, boots and shoes, crockery and other necessities. Clarke also had a shop licence which allowed him to sell spirituous liquors, ale and beer. Richard Roche was the owner of the Exeter Hotel and William Balkwill operated the Balkwill Hotel. There were four boot and shoe dealers, two grocery stores, four tailors, two hardware stores, three saddlers, a currier, a cooper, a baker, a butcher and a potash factory. There were also several blacksmiths and carriage and wagon makers. J. Drew had a cabinet factory where he made and sold furniture. Thomas Gidley had a similar business but also included undertaking. Gidley's sons, Charles, Samuel and Richard, were all highly skilled in woodcraft and wood carving. The fine furniture they produced is still highly prized today.

Exeter also had several carpenters (Hugh Balkwill, Alex Dyer, George Harwood, James Sherbrooke, John Southcott, Joseph Walsh, George Welsh, Archibald White and Thomas Wright), a framer (Nicol Johns), a turner (John McNabb), a stone mason (John Sanders), and two bricklayers (Richard Bissett and N. Marshall). William Crispin and Cornelius Green were painters.

Exeter had three doctors in 1863: John Hyndman, G. E. A. Winans and Young Cowan. Two drugstores were operated by H. B. Winsans and E. Hickson. George Strong and James and John Vanstone made watches and sold jewellery. Benjamin Elliott was a lawyer, John Spackman the bailiff and William Sanders, the postmaster.

The Bible Christian Church, dedicated in 1856, had become too small and a new brick building, which became Exeter United Church, was erected on James Street in 1862. Three schools were listed, of which two were probably private or church schools. The Lebanon Forest Lodge, No. 133, was organized in 1860 and meetings were held at Balkwill's Hotel on the first Monday on or before the full moon. Exeter was clearly a bustling and rapidly growing business centre.

John Gould was making soap and candles by 1869 and James Gordon was operating a new hotel. Several new shops had opened. James Pickard's sawmill was turning out one-and-a-half million feet of lumber annually. For the ladies, there were now six milliners and a fancy goods shop. Charles Senior opened his photography studio on July 1, 1867. Two new doctors had arrived, Dr. J. W. Browning and Dr. A. D. MacDonald. A third drugstore had been added, as had a dentist's office. An Anglican church had been erected and Reverend George Keys was minister.

By the late '60s, Richard Manning had a cheese factory in Exeter: Manning cheese was considered the best in the county. A barn 100-by-40 feet housed 60 dairy cows and 14 to 15 tons of cheese were produced annually.

Exeter continued to grow. A cider mill, turning factory and planing mill were opened. Six hotels operated at one time. The addition of a confectionery business, feed and flour store, jewellery shop, another dentist, a veterinarian, two insurance agents and a real estate agent attested to the growing sophistication of the Exeter business community. Isaac Crocker became the leader of the Exeter Brass Band.

Currelly and Company took over the store south of the Francistown Hotel. It was in the residence attached to this store that one of Exeter's best-known native sons was born and raised. Charles Trick Currelly, the first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum, was born on January 11, 1876, the day the first train arrived from London, on the new London, Huron and Bruce Railway. Currelly's memoirs, *I Brought The Ages Home*, provide a glimpse of this prosperous community in the late nineteenth century. It was a tidy, pretty village, he tells us, full of flowers and vegetable gardens. Milk products were plentiful as many families kept a cow. Best beef was 10 cents a pound, chickens, five cents, and a large loaf of bread, five cents. Apprentices started at \$3 a week; if they

boarded with their employer, they received \$50 the first year, \$75 the second and \$100 the third.

Exeter and Francistown were joined and incorporated as a village in 1873. The new village was no longer part of either Stephen or Usborne townships.

Let's leave Exeter to its fate as an incorporated village and continue on our journey at first south along the London Road and then divert to the west along the Fourth Sideroad to the point where it intersects with Concession 2 and 3. Here a Bible Christian Church was erected and named Providence. Across the concession road was a small cemetery, and a quarter mile south was S.S. #3, in later years known as the Shapton school. William Southcott, a tailor, lived on the east part of Lot 21 and George Waldron, a boot and shoe maker, on an acre of Lot 23. Other early settlers in this area included the Shapton, Sweet, Sanders, Penhale, Stanlake, Ford, Kestle, Snell and Preszcator families.

The church remained active for many years but is long since gone. Until recently a few lonely stones marked the cemetery plot. The school is now a residence with few reminders of its early history. Descendants of some of the pioneer families still live on nearby farms and treasure the stories of the early settlement handed down to them.

THE DEVONSHIRE SETTLEMENT

Returning to the London Road, we continue south to the next crossroads. This corner was once the cultural centre of Stephen. On the northwest corner, the first church in the township was erected on land granted by Richard Balkwill, owner of Lot 16, to the Wesleyan Methodists. The log church, known as the Devonshire Chapel, had a small cemetery beside it. When the Exeter Cemetery west of Francistown was opened, most of the stones were moved there. For many years a few remaining stones, surrounded by lilac bushes, could still be seen at the corner. They disappeared when Highway 4 was widened.

Richard Balkwill's brother Hugh lived across the road in Usborne, and another brother, James, was on the next lot to the north, so it was quite natural that the crossroads became known as Balkwill's Corner. The first log school in Stephen was built on the southwest corner. The Church of England used it for services and there was a cemetery on the corner for members of the church.

There is some evidence that a blacksmith shop, run by another Balkwill brother, was located on the northeast corner. Some years later, William Rollins purchased part of Lot 16 and the crossroads became known as Rollins' Corner. Later still it was renamed "Twilight Corner" in honour of two families, the Days on the north side of the sideroad and the Knights on the south side.

Continuing south, the Balkwill Inn was located to the left on Lot 7, Usborne. It was operated by William Balkwill, brother to the other three Balkwills and was open by June 1834. After William's death, his wife Jane kept it going for several years. Balkwill's sisters also lived along the London Road, Mrs. May on the first farm north of the tavern, Mrs. George Snell on the farm where the first school was built, and Mrs. Isaac Carling in Exeter. The log hotel was well built and enjoyed the reputation of a good house with moderate charges. It stood for more than 80 years before being dismantled in 1915.

The next stop is Devon, at the junction of the Crediton Road and the London Road. According to one brief description of early Devon: "There is a collection of log houses and a log tavern." The corner now has little to recall the activities of earlier days except the old well and pump on the east side of the road where the Quick Hotel once stood.

In the early 1830s, Joseph Quick purchased the southeast corner lot. He had left his wife and family in Devonshire: after a year, he sent for them and they arrived after a long and tiring journey. Their home was erected near the road and as a result many foot-sore and weary travellers sought food and shelter with them. The Quicks never turned anyone away who was hungry and tired. But as the number of travellers increased, they decided to enlarge their home and serve meals and provide lodging for the public. Business was good until the house was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1842. A larger, two-storey log structure was erected and opened for business by November. As trade increased, additions were made to the north and south ends. At a later date, the whole structure was sided. Stables and sheds were added to accommodate horses and wagons. Following the English custom, the hotel was named The Black Horse Inn. The sign, a wooden horse made by neighbour Louis Holman, hung from a pole at the front of the building.

In 1852, a post office was opened in the inn; Joseph served as

postmaster. Isaac Quick later had a store in part of the building. By 1851, the Division Court was being held at the Black Horse and the court clerk, Mr. Carter, had an office in the building. His position was assumed by Thomas Trivitt who used his home in Centralla as an office. Lawyers from London and Goderich came to represent their clients and were all accommodated at the hotel.

The Stephen and Usborne Agricultural Fairs were held at Devon, alternating between the Quick and Balkwill farms. Here local people gathered with their best produce to participate in competitions and to visit with neighbours. While the fair was on, dances were held at the hotels. Every evening men gathered in the tavern to hear the latest news and discuss weather, crops and politics.

Other settlers near the corner on the Stephen side included the Bissell, Holman and Webber families. A little to the north were the Routliffe and Greenway families and to the south, the Handfords and Esserys. One writer states that there were 50 children living at or near the corner at one time. Imagine the merry times they had as they worked and played together!

Dr. John Hyndman, a young medical doctor, stopped at the Black Horse Inn one night in May 1851. According to the story, Philip Andrew of Usborne had the misfortune to break his leg that same day. His neighbours, who were taking him to a doctor on a sled with a team of oxen, broke their journey at the hotel: Dr. Hyndman had his first patient! He decided to stay in the Devon settlement and simply added his sign to that of the Black Horse. He later married Charlotte Quick, the youngest daughter of the family. When Exeter was a young growing community he moved there. The family later lived in an English-style brick cottage on Huron Street. The doctor's son, Hugh, trained as a doctor and became his father's partner. The Hyndman family faithfully served the people of Stephen Township as general practitioners until 1926.

In 1862, Joseph Quick sold his property to Andrew Walker and moved to Michigan where he died in 1876. Mr. Walker sold the hotel and corner lot. In 1874 it was advertised for lease by John Kelland: "The Devon Hotel, a paying business, brick cellar, twelve rooms, two pumps, stables and sheds." Later operators were Matthew Kelland and Thaddeus Jones.

The Bible Christians built a church on a piece of land donated by Richard Bissell in the early 1850s. The church, called Bethel, was served by a minister from Exeter. In the early 1900s, it was

removed after standing empty for several years. This was on the northwest corner.

On the southeast corner, a store was operated first by Stephen Walsh, then by James Stephenson. Thomas Greenway took over the business in 1864 and conducted it until the fall of 1875 when he transferred the stock to his new store in Centralia. The building became a stable for the Webbers, who owned the corner farm. It was finally torn down but the foundation remained until the highway was widened in 1964. Across the road, on the southwest corner, a brick house was built to serve as a home for the storekeepers and their families. The last inhabitant was Frank Wickwire, who operated a small printing shop north of the house. The buildings were removed when the road was rebuilt. Some other small parcels of land were sold from this farm and a few buildings were erected but they have all long since disappeared.

In 1871, two shoemakers were listed at Devon: George Webber and Samuel Lumsden. Later Mr. Walters had a shoe repair business in the old hotel. William Cudmore was listed as a blacksmith and Thomas Ward as a wagon maker. Devon was a busy little hamlet at one time but never grew large enough to be called a village. The name was an enduring link between this new country and the settlers' home land.

Up and down the London Road, the oxen plodded slowly for many years. Later horses hauled wagons, buggies and coaches, all making the journey from Goderich to London and points between. Now cars skim past on the highway and airplanes streak overhead. Although much has changed, memories are still bright.

CENTRALIA

Our journey continues through Stephen's towns and villages by driving south to the bypass road and turns west toward Centralia.

Centralia exists today because of the canny business sense of one man, Thomas Trivitt. A native of Somerset, England, Trivitt married in 1848 and emigrated to Canada. In June 1848, he bought the south half of Lot 5, Con. 1 in Stephen from Edward Adams.

Trivitt was reputed to be a shrewd and rapacious business man. Some claim that he charged from six to 100 hundred per cent interest on borrowed money! In 1864, Trivitt purchased the north half of Lot 4 and in 1869 he subdivided part of his property into

36 village lots. Later an additional 229 lots were laid out. There was little demand for the lots at first, but with the arrival of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway in 1875, Trivitt's investment paid off handsomely. Thomas Trivitt was also the first clerk of the Township of Stephen, a position he held for several years.

A small business area grew up around the corner of Richmond and Victoria Streets. John Mitchell Jr. operated a store on the northwest corner and Edward Rollins had an inn, eventually the Royal Inn, on the southwest corner. Across the street on Lots 3 and 4 was a double building with a blacksmith, William Mitchell, on one side and a woodworking shop on the other. Thomas Sando was the carpenter and Richard Sando the pumpmaker.

On July 1, 1873 the Centralia post office was opened with William Greenway as postmaster. The same year, his brother Thomas opened a store. The following advertisement appeared in the Exeter paper on October 23, 1873:

GRAND OPENING SALE
An immense stock of Goods, opening out at the
New Brick Store
Centralia
T. Greenway and Co.,
are bound to rush off a large quantity of goods
at once on account of being late in opening and will offer
Special In-Duce-Ment-S
For one month
T. Greenway and Co.
Centralia and Crediton

Later advertisements indicated that Greenway sold overcoats, shawls, blankets, furs, millinery and dress goods and that he was in the market to buy dressed hogs, butter and eggs from local farmers.

The newly established Exeter paper had a Centralia correspondent who reported progress in the village. From his account for the April 16, 1874 edition come these notes:

"Mr. Greenway is to erect a superb family residence to cost \$3500. Mr. Trivitt is planning a large brick addition to store wool and grain. Mr. James Timmins has purchased premises of Mr. Thomas Sando and is to carry on the business of car-

riage and wagon making. Mr. Baker is making great alterations and is preparing to erect first class stables, driving house and sheds for public use. Mr. Joseph Anderson has heaps of bricks and other materials intending to make considerable improvements and additions to his house. William Cotterill of St. Marys has already a new dwelling house and shop in a forward state, in which he intends to open out the business of saddler and harness marking. A handsome church with other public buildings will be erected here before long which no doubt will be both an ornament to the place as well as useful to the community."

Thomas Trivitt's own house, also built in 1874, was one of the showplaces of the area. The grounds were beautifully landscaped with one thousand fruit and ornamental trees, a 10-foot fence and large concrete animals that were drawn out of the sheds on fine days to be used as lawn ornaments. Trivitt's wife was very fond of birds. She kept many different kinds in cages but released them each day to fly freely around the house.

Mr. Trivitt bought the first pipe organ in the vicinity, installed it in his house and learned to play it. He also purchased a parrot which he taught to sing while he played. According to one story, the bird was slow learning his song one day and received a scold-



RESIDENCE OF THOMAS TRIVITT ESQ CENTRALIA STEPHEN CO OREG

The fine residence and neatly treed grounds of Thomas Trivitt bespeak the enterprising spirit of Centralia's earliest businessmen.

ing from Mr. Trivitt. The bird's response was: 'Go to Hell!' Mr. Trivitt was so horrified that he killed the bird.

Eventually the Trivitts moved to Exeter. Mr. Trivitt offered his property to the people of Centralia to be used for a church, in return for a payment of \$100 a year as long as he and his wife lived. They built the Trivitt Memorial Church, in Exeter, at their own expense.

The first Centralia Strawberry Festival was held on July 1, 1874, and was soon a popular annual event, drawing visitors from a wide area. Eventually the railway ran special excursion trains to bring people from the north and south. Visitors feasted on bread and butter, ice cream, and strawberries and cream, joined in races, watched baseball games, listened to band music, and in the evening, enjoyed a splendid concert in the church.

The village stores in Centralia changed hands many times over the years. Thomas Greenway soon became a member of parliament, and a few years later, moved to Manitoba. Among shopkeepers who operated Greenway's store over the years were: Thomas Abbott (1879-1885), Benjamin Quarry (1886-1893), Patrick Hanlon and Dennis O'Brien (1893-1922), Milton Sleannan (1925-1940), Roy Andrews, Robert J. Smith, Ralph Honsberg, Frank Osborne, Gordon and Mary Zavitz and Thomas Tomes (1965 to 1977). Two other stores also operated in the village at one time.

The Royal Inn was built by Edward Rollins in 1871. The next hotel was the Ocean Wave, built near the railway station in 1878, by James Cain. The Ocean Wave came into the hands of Thomas Hodgins, who replaced it with the Dufferin House on Victoria Street in the late 1880s. By 1904 both remaining hotels were owned by William Moffatt. He moved the older building down the street and added it to the south side of the Dufferin House. Moffatt, who also worked as a drover, was killed in a rail accident in Northern Ontario in 1926. The hotel remained closed for several years then re-opened under the management of Benjamin Cook. When the airfield was established in the Fairfield area the building was converted to apartments.

The blacksmiths in Centralia included: William Greenway, Thomas Marin, Sam Davis, John, Sam and Henry Sheardown, Robert Pollock, Wesley Hodgins, Richard Simpson, Alex and Simon Heugott, Billie Dobbs, Lawrence Beckett and Carl Theander. Richard Sando and Mark Mitchell were pumpmakers and William Parr and Joseph Anderson were coopers. William Cottrell was a



ROYAL Hotel

Centralia, Ont.

The old established house of 25 years standing. Every attention paid to the travelling public. An attentive hostler always on hand.

WM. HOFFPAT. - Proprietor

William Moffat placed this card in the 1901 edition of *The Farmers and Business Directory for Huron, Middlesex and Perth*. The illustration, however, is not of the Royal Hotel, but is a stock woodcut employed by directory publishers throughout Ontario.



GEO. G. ESSERY

Livery & Sale Stable

Special Attention to Commercial

Travellers

Telephone

Centralia

Ont.

An advertisement for Centralia's only livery stable at the time; taken from the 1911 Farmers and Business Directory for Huron, Middlesex and Perth.

saddler and harness maker who came to the village in 1874.

James Timmins, James D. Wilson and George Essery were wagon makers. Essery added a successful livery business in the late 1890s. When cars became common he started a garage and installed gasoline pumps. The garage was later owned by Fred Penwarden and Ray Shoebottom.

Other tradesmen included: shoemakers William and George McNamee, Christopher Race, Jacob Brown and Harry Mills; bakers Wesley Pitchers and Mr. Dennicker; butchers Edward Rollins, William Kirk, and Samuel Brock and barbers Al Brown, Percy Simpson, Marx Mitchell and Fred Warren.

The first industry in Centralia was a brickyard built by Thomas Greenway in the 1870s. Bricks from this yard built several homes in the village.

In the late 1880s, Mr. Pearsall of Meaford moved to Centralia, bought the Methodist church on Lot 7 and started a cheese factory. A few years later, he sold the business to Charles W. Smith who established the Centralia Cream Company, a butter-making operation. In 1904, it was sold to Thomas Willis; he renamed it the Shamrock Creamery and operated it until 1934 when he sold it to Canada Packers. Canada Packers moved their operation to Exeter in 1952.

The grain and feed business began in the early 1880s when Mr. Robinson, a grain buyer, erected a building south of the cattle yards. In 1883, A. I. Bobier was buying and selling grain. He soon sold his business to Charles Trietz who built an elevator north of the station, which was purchased by the Hicks family about 1893. Joseph Cobblewick bought the business from Andrew Hicks, then sold it to Richard Seldon in 1907. The Centralia Farmers Club, formed in 1918 with five members, bought out Seldon for \$2,500 in 1920. The Centralia Farmer's Cooperative Limited was formed and shares were sold for \$25 each. The business grew and prospered. The Coop bought feed corn, grain, flour, sugar, coal, lime and cement in carload lots. In 1936, they installed a grain cleaner and in 1948 a chopping mill was added. That year the manager, George Hicks, retired and the business was sold to William Elliott, who changed the name to Centralia Farmers' Supply Limited.

Samuel Davis and William Parsons became partners in the produce business in 1904. They dealt primarily in butter, eggs and poultry. Often they bought up produce which store keepers had accepted in exchange for goods. During the fall, they employed several men to kill, pluck and dress poultry for market. They also bought apples which were packed into barrels. All the goods were shipped by rail to urban markets. In 1922, Mr. Parsons became postmaster and the front part of the building was fitted up as a post office.

For nearly 40 years, Centralia was a shipping point for sugar beets to the Canada and Dominion Sugar Company plants in Chatham and Wallaceburg. Sugar beet growing in the area reached its peak in 1950 when 366 growers harvested more than 2,000 acres of sugar beets. By 1967, the acreage had dropped to less than 500

acres, and the following year the Canada and Dominion Sugar Company announced that they were closing their processing plant at Chatham.

William J. Smith built a chopping mill on the east side of Victoria Street in the early 1920s. The mill operated until 1946 when it was torn down and taken away. In 1947, R. B. Gates acquired the property and erected a house on it. Benjamin Cook installed a grinder and hammer mill in part of the hotel stables about 1938, and ran it for about five years. The Farmers' Co-operative added a chopper in 1940.

On Civic Holiday, 1934, Centralia held an Old Boys Reunion. Former residents from Canada and the United States returned to meet old friends and relatives. Hundreds of people lined the streets to view the grand parade led by a 35-piece band from Forest, Ontario.



Centralia Community Centre was opened in the early 1970s.

FAIRFIELD AND HURON PARK

Now let's return to the side road and turn west. After coming up the grade and crossing the railway tracks, the modern traveller is surprised to see not the rural countryside that might be expected but a community of some 360 houses.

With the establishment of the Royal Canadian Air Force (R.C.A.F.) station, Centralia became a familiar name all over Canada, and in many other countries, as airmen from member nations of the British Commonwealth received their training there.

The first name for this little settlement was Fairfield. A cluster of tombstones by tall evergreen trees on the southeast corner is all that marks Fairfield, the centre of the Devonshire Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which extended from Clinton on the north, to Lucan on the south. In 1855, a parsonage was erected on the site and by 1862, a brick church had been added.

The school for S. S. #1 was relocated in 1853 and a log building was erected on Lot 7, Concession 2; it became known as the Fairfield School. At that time the only business at the corner was a blacksmith shop on the southwest corner operated by William Mitchell.

Fairfield remained little more than a crossroads until World War



A lonely cluster of tombstones presently serves as the only reminder of the hamlet of Fairfield.

II, when the Canadian government selected this area as the site for a British Commonwealth Air Training Program (B.C.A.T.P) school and airfield. Construction began in the fall of 1940. By August 1942, as workmen still laboured to put the final touches on runways, hangars and barracks, the first trainees arrived. Two months later, 49 graduates, who had trained on the first twin-engined Avro Anson Bombers, received their pilots' wings.

When the war ended in 1945, Centralia became a Flying Training School in the peacetime air force. The base was elevated to the status of an R.C.A.F. station in April, 1947, comprised of a Radar and Communications School, a Radar and Communications Flight School and an Instrumental Flying School. Canada began training aircrew from other NATO nations in 1950. The first pilot trainees to arrive at R.C.A.F. Station Centralia in September of 1950 were from Belgium, France, Holland, Norway and Italy.

The R.C.A.F. base was closed in 1966, a serious blow to the economies of neighbouring communities. In answer to requests for help, the federal government transferred the base to the Ontario government, which placed it under the care of the Ontario Development Corporation. The facilities became known as Huron Industrial Park, home to several important Stephen employers. The hous-



Thanks are owed to the Ontario Development Corporation for purchasing and preserving Huron Park upon the closure of RCAF Station Centralia.

ing development built for servicemen and their families became Huron Park, a private residential district.

ESSERY'S MILLS

Before the base was established, the first sideroad continued west to Concession 5. It takes a little imagination to stand on Lot 5 and visualize the busy little centre known as Essery's Mills. The original owner of the land was George Essery who obtained his lease on March 13, 1848. He died on January 13, 1858, leaving the property to his son John, known as John Senior. The family also bought Lot 6 on the north side of the road at an early date. The river ran through both farms and provided power for the mills.

A swampy area east of the river made it necessary to build a bypass from both the concession and side roads. The swale on the northwest corner of Lot 5, Con. 4, was said to be bottomless. During the 1950s and '60s when the R.C.A.F. base used it as a refuse dump, sufficient fill was deposited to make a solid base and the concession and side roads were straightened and rebuilt.

Accurate information about the early buildings and activities at Essery's Mills is scarce: the mills ceased operation over 100 years ago. We know that a dam was constructed on the north side of the road and that the mill owners were granted the privilege of flooding Lot 8, and two-and-a-half acres of Lots 9 and 10 on Concession 5. By the spring of 1850, a sawmill was in operation, the first one in the township west of the London Road. No doubt the grist mill and carding mill were soon added. Early maps indicate there were mills on both sides of the river. It is not clear whether there were three separate buildings or if two operations combined in one building. Older residents also recall a distillery which sold whiskey for 25 cents a gallon. Distilleries were often connected with grist mills: the smaller and poorer quality grain was used for distilling. In 1858, John Coughlin, who lived on Lot 4, the next farm south, was listed as an innkeeper. The Essery still was probably his source of liquors.

The Esserys also operated a small brickyard in the early 1860s. John Senior built a large brick house west of the river. One of his sons had a smaller house on the east side. Some older residents also remember small houses for the labourers and barns and sheds on both sides of the river. Weekly church services were held in homes in Essery's Mill on Tuesday evenings, during the 1870s and

1880s, by the minister of the Crediton Bible Christian circuit.

John's son Joseph was a miller. He ran the family businesses in the early 1860s. Then he sold them to Hugh McPhee in October, 1867. McPhee received "...the grist mill, the carding mill and dam and everything necessary to work the mill that may be now in connection with said mill for the sum of \$2000." Joseph was to have the privilege of "...removing the circular saw, its rigging and the steam engine and pump now in the grist mill." Mr. McPhee did not operate the mills for long; by 1869 they were again in the hands of the Esserys. John Senior died in 1884 and the property went to his youngest son, Henry. The older sons — Charles, Samuel, William, Thomas, Joseph and John Jr. — all settled in Manitoba. A daughter, Emma, married Thomas Greenway, later Premier of Manitoba. About 1900, Harry Essery sold the farm and also moved to Crystal City, Manitoba.

In Essery's Mills we have an example of a small settlement started on the initiative of one family. If the site had been on higher ground, it might well have become a larger settlement. The buildings and the dam have disappeared; only the land, the river and the memories remain. Or is there something more? Wilson MacDonald's verses seem appropriate:

The wheels are silent now, and yet is milled
Pale grist that once was warm as autumn's gold;
And on clear nights transparent sacks are filled
By cloudy shapes that move as men of old.
And misty farmers ride up with their grain
And spectral horses neigh against the door,
And streams of blurring amber pour in vain
Their flood of ghostly wheat forevermore...

The Globe and Mail, July, 1947

Thomas White, of Cornwall, England, settled across the road from the Esserys in the late 1840s. An interesting story is told about Betty White, a great granddaughter of Thomas White. Thomas and his family moved to Snowflake, Manitoba when that area was being settled. Betty White, at 16 years of age, was working in a store in Winnipeg in the summer of 1947 when she read in the paper that Princess Elizabeth could not have nylon hose for her wedding as luxury items were not yet available in England. Betty bought a pair and sent them as a gift: two months later she received a let-

ter of thanks and an invitation from the King and Queen to attend an afternoon party at St. James Palace. Betty flew to England with a chaperon and suitable wardrobe, attended the royal wedding and was royally entertained during her stay in London. It was truly a memorable experience for the great granddaughter of Thomas White, who once lived on Con. 4, Stephen Township.

CREDITON

Concession 5 was one of the busiest roads in the township during the years of the brickyards. Between Lot 5 and Lot 16 there were some 15 brickyards, most of them on the east side of the river. Brickmaking was done during the summer months and much of the teaming was done in the winter, when the farmers were not as busy. The kilns have now gone and only depressions and hollows in the ground indicate where they once stood.

Crediton is Stephen's dominant village, located on one of the highest points of land in the township. Because of the unusual way the community developed it has been described as a village one house wide and a mile-and-a-half long. One might ask why this site was chosen. Although villages most often sprang up along riverbanks in pioneer times, the nucleus of Crediton is a mile from the river. The answer lies in the low banks and wide spillway of the Ausable River; because of the danger of flooding the settlement grew up on a ridge of high land.

The southwest corner lot was purchased by William Sweet, one of the Devonshire settlers, on November 22, 1847. John Brown, a German settler, bought the southeast corner on September 28, 1849. In 1852 Jacob Rau, another German settler, bought the southeast corner, Lot 11, Concession 6 from Ascot Harris, who also owned land on Concession 5. The northwest corner was purchased first by Francis Hobkins, and then sold to Henry Ruppert, likely about 1852.

William Sweet is believed to be the first settler at the corner, probably arriving to take up his land in 1848 or '49. One writer claimed that Sweet earned his living trapping wolves and selling their skins. The settlement was originally known as Sweet's Corners.

The second school in the township was built in 1850 on the northeast corner of Lot 7, Con. 7, a mile south of Sweet's Corners. An early teacher was Samuel Foster, a Roman Catholic. It

served both Stephen and McGillivray students and was open from May to November. The teacher's salary was 48 pounds. Forty-three students were enrolled out of a population of 65, but average attendance was only 23. Farm work was still the first priority for students.

The German settlers first held church services in the home of Theobald Stahl in 1851. Reverend J. Bastian, an itinerant minister whose charge extended from Sebringville to Lake Huron, conducted the services. When he was unable to be present, meetings were held under the guidance of local leaders. By the fall of 1855, a log church had been built on a piece of land donated by Henry Ruppert.

English-speaking settlers in the community also wanted to hold religious services, too. The first services were held at the home of David Stahl. Reverend H. Hurley, a Bible Christian minister stationed in Exeter, probably conducted the services. Worship was later conducted at the home of Michael Stevens and for a considerable time, in the school building.

John Brown sold the northwest corner of his lot to Jacob Eilber in 1855. Eilber, a carpenter, built a log house on his new property. The same year John Trevithick opened a carriage and wagon shop at the corner. The following year, William Sweet sold the northeast corner of his lot to John Parsons, who erected a general store on the property.

By the end of the decade, Crediton was a thriving and growing community. In 1861, Crediton had three blacksmiths, Frederick and — Samuel Trevithick, and Frederick Wagner, a cabinet maker, Vincent Gaunt, four bricklayers, Amandus, Edmund, Florando and Julius Krause, a second wagon maker, Julius Morlock, a boot maker, Christian Zwicker, and a shoemaker, John Klump. John Ole had built an inn and Dr. George Campbell provided medical services.

A post office was opened in 1861 after considerable discussion about a name for the village. As there were several settlers with the name Charles, Charlesburg was suggested. Merchant John Parsons, a settler from Devonshire, suggested that the new village be named after Crediton, England because like its namesake, it was six miles from Exeter.

In 1864, the first subdivision plan for the village was submitted by Anne Marie Fahrner, legal representative of Jacob Rau, original owner of Lot 11, Concession 6. Three years later John Brown, John



The town-plot of Creditor as it appeared in the Huron County Atlas.



Creditor's tree-lined thoroughfare afforded a scenic panorama in the early 1920's.

Parsons and William Sweet submitted another subdivision plan involving parts of Lots 10 and 11 in Concessions 6 and 7.

Creditor's business community had grown still more by 1867. Simon Press was operating two inns, one on Lot 11, Con. 7 and one on Lot 10, Concession 6. Charles Switzer was a butcher, Paul Link a well digger, John Back a merchant, Michael Smith a blacksmith, Robert White a cooper, George Shelling a harnessmaker, William Snyder, a cabinetmaker and Christian Dahl, a tailor. Blacksmith Michael Smith was famous for making very large nails that would bend without breaking, for use in place of door hinges. By 1869 the village also had a painter, two dressmakers, and a saddler. A woollen factory had been established by the Baum and

Krause families and several brickyards had opened for business. There were now two churches in Crediton. Reverend William Hooper ministered to a congregation of Bible Christians; Reverend William Schwandt oversaw the Evangelical Association worship.

James Clark moved from Usborne Township to Crediton about 1870. Clark set up a harness shop and then expanded into the livery business. He also drove the mail stage to Centralia for many years. Henry Sweitzer built a grist mill in 1873 at the east end of the town. The mill operated until 1922.

The hotel built by John Oke passed through several hands before being purchased by Benjamin Sparr in 1875. Sparr and his sister operated it for several years under the name Western Hotel and later, as the Royal Hotel.

The 1870s were a period of rapid growth throughout the township. Crediton's population grew rapidly: from 200 in 1869 to 700 by 1880. An article in *The Exeter Advocate* in October 1880 reported:

"Crediton, a flourishing village in the Township of Stephen, has a population of about 700. Some affirm it is entitled to incorporation and indeed from appearance and enterprise we should judge it was. There is not the slightest doubt incorporation would largely develop its resources and vastly improve the village. There are a dozen and one little luxuries which they miss now they could then enjoy to their heart's content: to wit, sidewalks, a fire brigade, a brass band, a lockup and village constable, a beak, mill and railway bonuses and a red hot election every new year."

The same article noted that John Parsons had developed a large dairy business and had shipped 150,000 dozens of eggs and 1500 kegs of butter that year.

An account published in 1881 noted:

"A great many people in the adjacent townships when hearing of Crediton have little idea of the size or importance of the place. The only fault of our town is the unfortunate way in which it is laid out. We have a population of between 600 and 700. We have three large stores besides smaller ones, a flour and feed store, three large shoe stores, one extensive harness shop, two livery stables, two tailors, two hotels, one gents' furnishing store, one wagon and carriage shop, four blacksmith shops, one grist mill, one sawmill, one large

flax mill, one large woollen mill, five brickyards, one furniture making factory and planing mill, one cooper, two pump-makers, one tinsmith and stove depot, one cheese factory, one creamery, one egg packing and butter making establishment, one watch maker, one doctor, one veterinary surgeon, one telegraph office, and a Division Court."

In 1886, a new Town Hall was erected in Crediton.

During the last three decades of the 19th century, brick and tile making was the mainstay of Crediton's prosperity. Flax was also important to the local economy. By 1890, the population had reached an all-time high of 900 people. Crediton had three general stores, one fancy goods store, three tailors, two furniture stores, three shoemakers, two hotels, two butcher shops and an array of other trades and industries. The telephone arrived in Crediton in 1892. After reaching Exeter in 1889, an expansion was planned to link Exeter and Grand Bend. Residents of Crediton asked that the line be built by way of the village and assisted in putting up the necessary poles. The first telephone was installed in James Clark's harness shop. Mr. Clark took messages for other villagers, who paid a small charge to have them delivered to their homes or places of business. In 1894, Charles Zwicker founded the Zwicker Seed Company Limited, specializing in wholesale and retail feed seeds, clovers, grasses and pasture mixtures.

As a new century dawned, Crediton was still a hive of busi-

CREDITON STAR

SUBSCRIPTION \$100 PER YEAR

F. J. WICKWIRE, Publisher and Proprietor

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

A Profitable medium for advertising. Send for rates

Finest Quality Job Printing Estimates given

Crediton

Ont.

The Crediton Star, F.J. Wickwire, publisher, offered Stephen's residents a paper of their own during the early 1910's.

ness activity. The village got its first streetlights in 1907 when council gave Alonzo Hodgins and Company Limited permission to lay piping for acetylene gas into the town. Crediton's baseball team, the Stars, brought renown to the town in 1912 with a championship season.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

The Crediton Women's Institute was founded in April, 1919. The following year, the men of the community banded together to establish the Crediton Amateur Athletic Association.

The object of the men's group was to buy a field in the town "to give us a place for our different sports." The first event planned was a civic celebration on June 3, 1920, that was to include concerts by the Crediton Band, a refreshment booth operated by the Institute, a parade with school floats, a shooting tournament, field sports and baseball games.

The Women's Institute and Amateur Athletic Association worked together to establish recreational facilities for the commu-



Baseball was a popular recreational pastime in Crediton at the turn of the century. From left to right: back row - Charlie Kerr, Elmer Gower, Wes Kerr, Fred Young, unidentified, Fred Kerr, Herbert Young; front row - Frank Snell (the team's catcher), Gilbert Ray, Nathan Sanderson, Sol Borner, George Beever.

nity. Funds were raised by sponsoring concerts, plays and other special events.

During the early years of the new century, the brickyards began to close and other small industries lost out to larger urban-based concerns. Flax, used to make linen for airplane wings during the First World War, gradually declined in importance after the war. The population shrank back to about 200 but the village continued to serve as a social centre for the surrounding area.

In 1952, Crediton finally retired its hand-pumper fire engine, originally purchased second-hand in 1870 for \$50. It found a new home at the Huron County Pioneer Museum near Grand Bend. The same year, Crediton's town hall was renovated and expanded to create a social and recreational centre for the village. During the mid-1950s great excitement was caused by exploratory drilling for oil by the Jul-Du-Mar Company. Instead of oil, the drillers found salt and nothing came of the expected oil boom.



The Dorcas Band offered a social outlet to Crediton's ladies, and provided entertainment for the village's other residents. From left to right: in back - Lydia Melrose, Adeline Finkeiner; standing - Bertha Ewald, Edna Weiz, Carrie Kahn, Martha Finkeiner, Laura Haist, Rev. Burn, Ida Fahner, Hilda Schock, Ella Link, Mabel Fahner; seated - Less Haist, Lily Fahner, Laura Treitz, Clara Fahner, Laura Finkeiner, Lizzie Wolfe, unknown; front row - Louisa Fahner, Della Brunvi, Martha Wind, Madeline Bertrand, Louise Haist, Clara Kunkle.

A new municipal office and fire hall were built in the village in 1967. Two years later, a fire destroyed the 47-year-old Crediton United Church. The congregation had already decided to join with the Evangelical Association congregation to form a new United Church congregation. That congregation worships in the former Evangelical Association church.

On the newest landmarks in the village of Crediton is the new township works garage. This was built in 1991, on the west of the village, to house the equipment of the township road department.

1. Rodgerville is also often referred to as Rodgerville in early Huron County history books. The sign on the actual site of the community reads Rodgerville, 1845-1890.

Towns and Villages

Part 2: Crediton East to Grand Bend

*"The village sleeps, a name unknown, till men
With life-blood stain its soil, and pay the due
That lifts it to eternal fame..."*

Mark Anthony De Wolfe Howe

CREDITON EAST TO SODOM

Crediton began at the intersection of Concessions 6 and 7 and the Centre Road but the settlement gradually extended east to the river where the brickyards grew up. By the 1870s, there was a grist mill, woollen mill, planing mill and two flax mills on the west side of the river and several houses had been built to house the workers. When the settlement was granted a post office in the early 1900s, it became known as Crediton East. Crediton East also had a hotel, a store and, for a brief time, a blacksmith shop.

Continuing north along Concession 5 there were six or seven brickyards in the next mile and a quarter. The Sweitzer sawmill and brickyard were located on Lot 16 in the next block. The junction of Concession 5 and the third sideroad was originally known as Mitchell's Corner; Mr. Mitchell opened a brickyard on Lot 15. Later the Sweitzer name was used. When the Sweitzers moved to the village, it became Haist Corner, after the Haist family who owned Lot 15 for many years and were the last family to operate a yard. In the early years of settlement a cooper squatted on one corner of the Sweitzer farm and practised his trade.

On the fourth sideroad, just west of Concession 5, the river makes a loop: two deviations were needed to build a road and bridge the river. This crossing became known as the Devil's Elbow. There are now few dwellings on this block but, according

to the 1879 Huron County Atlas, there were at least seven houses. Some say there was also a cheese factory.

Returning to Concession 5 the road continues to the North Boundary. At one time the Centralia Creek crossed and re-crossed this road allowance on its way to the river. A deviation, opened in 1876, had to be made on the west side. Later the creek and road were straightened. In an earlier period, some of the farms in this area were occupied but today no buildings remain. Most of the land on the west side has been reforested.

A little to the west along the North Boundary are the flats of the Ausable River and the Black Creek. At one time this was dense bushland where hard maple, elm, ash, hemlock, birch, cedar, soft maple, pine and oak grew in abundance. The original road detoured to follow a small ridge. Eventually the two townships, Hay and Stephen, laid a mile of corduroy to make the road allowance passable.

In 1873, while the detour was still being used, Robert Bissell and Thomas Greenway built a sawmill in the area. They later discovered it was located on the road allowance and had to move it. In 1877, the mill was sold to twin brothers, Samuel and Silas Stanlake. They developed a good business, employing many men. Small houses were built around the mill for the workmen and their families.

THE COMMUNITY OF SODOM

As in many new settlements, there was more than a little drinking and rowdiness amongst the Stanlake mill workers. For this reason, township clerk and retired teacher Chester Prouty, named the place Sodom, after the biblical city destroyed by "fire from Heaven" for its wickedness.

But not all Sodom's inhabitants were cut from the same cloth. A small group of people held church services and Sunday School in their homes and had regular meetings with special speakers. In June 1896, the Royal Templars of Temperance held their District Council meeting, dinner and tea in Samuel Stanlake's orchard, with 100 people in attendance. Public school inspector Elgin G. Tom of Goderich was the president of the organization. At that time, Sodom also had a Glee Club which provided entertainment at local gatherings.

In later years, when sawmilling was no longer lucrative, the

Stanlakes turned to farming. There were many tales told about the Stanlake brothers. One concerns a time when they were taking a loaded hay wagon into the barn. One twin was on the ground driving the horse and the other was on top of the wagon. As the wagon passed under the door of the barn, he hit his head against the door frame and fell to the ground stunned. He got up confusedly and rubbing his head said plaintively: "Be I Sils or be I Sam?"

The Stanlake home was the scene of the worst tragedy ever to occur in the township. Silas Stanlake's wife, four children and brother were killed when their house was destroyed by fire on June 3, 1923.

Part of the report from *The Exeter Times* follows:

"Fire destroyed the home of Mr. Silas Stanlake on the Lake road and claimed as its victims six, in the persons of Mrs. Stanlake, 38; her four children, Clarence, six; Charlie, four; Wilfred two; and a baby not three weeks old; also Albert aged 45.

The fire started at the rear of the house cutting off that exit. The father could not get the front door open but he was able to break a window through which he, his eldest son Wilfred, 15, and an adopted daughter Beatrice Edwards, were able to escape.

All day Saturday and Sunday people for miles around visited the scene of the tragedy. The funeral was held on Sunday and never in the history of Exeter did such a crowd gather for a funeral. There were more cars than could reach from the cemetery to the funeral home."

A union school, always known as the Sodom school, was built on the Hay side of the road. The mill and the school are now gone; the old corduroy road is now Highway 83.

SHARON TO SAREPTA

We continue our journey west along the Noeth Boundary until we reach Concession 8 and 9. This is known as the Finkbeiner Line. Here we digress to Sharon, the first corner south along the concession road. Sharon is also a biblical name: it refers to the fertile plain between the mountains of central Palestine and the sea. Several Englishmen settled around Sharon, including Thomas Rowe, the Kestle brothers, Samuel Brokenshire, Moses Amy and Joshua

Pedlar. There were five Kestle brothers — Charles, Edward, Josiah, William and Albert. Further south were several families of German descent: the Morlocks, Schwartzs, Finkbeiners, Gaisers, Treitzs, Eilbers, Winds and Weins.

School Section #4 was established at the corner in 1855 and a log school was erected on the southwest corner of Lot 15. It was also used for religious services until a frame church was built in 1869. The church remained open until 1901 when most of the members joined the Crediton church. The church building was purchased by Mr. Kestle, who moved it to his farm to use as a straw shed. The social life of the section centred around this corner for many years.

Stories submitted to the local newspaper by the "Sharon news correspondent" indicate that the settlement was a busy place. The undated clippings were probably written in the late 1870s or '80s.

"Drawing sand and gravel is the order of the day — Jacob Schwartz, drawing for his new barn to be erected next summer, Mr. M. Finkbeiner, who purposed raising his and Mr. Jack Morlock for the same purpose. . . Mr. John Pedlar is busy drawing sand. He believes in having the best in the way of improvements and intends to place a cement floor in the cellar of his house."

"On Saturday morning one of the men in the gravel pit had a very close call. As the gravel bank is frozen, the loose gravel is being taken away from underneath, the back being held up by props. Without the slightest warning a large section of the bank dropped away almost pinning one of the men under its jagged edges. A few inches closer would have done the deed. As it was his shoulder was slightly bruised and his coat cut."

"Sunday's blinding blizzard was the most severe the hamlet has experienced for a very long time. The concessions are badly drifted and traffic will be somewhat hampered for a time."

"The hens of this neighbourhood have struck for higher wages, therefore eggs will be higher next week."

We return to the North Boundary and continue our journey west. At the next corner is Sarepta, another biblical name. The original Sarepta was an ancient town in southwest Syria. We can only

wonder how this corner in Stephen came to be named for it. A frame Methodist church, known as Salem, once stood just east of the Sarepta corner but it is not known when it was built or how long it remained in use.

In the early 1860s residents at Sarepta were:

on the Hay side	Lot 19 James Balkwill
	Lot 20 Christian Haist
on the Stephen side	Lot 19 Isaac Wedlock
	Lot 20 Francis Burns
	Lot 21 Adam Bastard
	Lot 23 Richard Whiting
	Lot 24 William Toine

From Lot 25 west to 35 the land had not been taken up on either side of the boundary.

Mr. Christian Haist sold a half-acre lot on the southwest corner of his farm to William Reynolds, who built a log house with a barn at the rear. Twice a week, Mr. Reynolds rode the six miles in to Exeter to pick up his mail. He finally applied for a post office at the corner and his application was granted. The Sarepta Post Office was opened on March 1, 1865 with William Reynolds as postmaster. It was said that he received the appointment in recognition of his services during the Crimean War. The post office was closed for over four years in the early 1880s but later reopened and operated until May 1914. In that time there were only two postmasters, Mr. Reynolds and his son Horatio.

Mr. Reynolds also built a fine two-storey brick hotel at the Sarepta corner. The building was 34 feet by 44 feet, with a verandah all across the front and inch-thick maple boards on the floors upstairs and down. The verandah was later removed when it interfered with the growth of the trees. The hotel was first known as the Farmer's Inn and, later, as the Sarepta Hotel. The west part of the building served as a store and post office.

William Reynolds was an interesting personality. Besides serving his country during the war, he had the honour of playing his flute at Queen Victoria's coronation. The instrument on which he played became a prized family possession. No doubt he had many interesting stories to relate to travellers who broke their journeys at Sarepta.

Other businessmen listed at Sarepta were Christian Haist, a

cabinet maker, Conrad Pfaff, a blacksmith, Joseph Martin, a shoemaker, Philip Schweitzer, a carpenter, Joseph Schapp, a wagon maker, and William Simpson, a tavern-keeper. John Ewing was a general merchant in 1869. Reverend J. Cheetham had charge of the Primitive Methodist Church. J. Broderick and J. Rollings were listed as teachers, possibly of the school at Sharon.

After the hotel closed, Horatio Reynolds operated a seed business for a number of years. When Reynolds retired to London in 1939, Everett Haist purchased the property and operated a McCall Frontenac Agency. The next owner was Robert Spicer who used the building as a residence. Finally, it was sold to Norman Cowan who remodelled the east part and opened a lunchroom. The Department of Highways purchased the building and in 1958, removed it to "daylight" the corner. Mr. Cowan erected a restaurant and service station on the southwest corner at Sarepta. When it burned down, the business era in Sarepta was over.



Cowan's Lunch served up hot meals and refreshing beverages in Sarepta during the 1950's.

DASHWOOD

While Sarepta perished, its near neighbour to the west, Friedsburg (later Dashwood) flourished. Friedsburg was named for its founders, Abraham and Noah Fried, young brothers who came from Waterloo County about 1860. They were invited by the businessmen of Sarepta to locate there but Sarepta had no water, the one essential for running a lumber mill. A mile west, deep in the great hemlock woods, they found abundant water and cheap land.

Soon Friedsburg was a thriving business centre. W. Simpson built a hotel and his brother Robert, a butcher shop. Louis Bedard had a blacksmith shop, Nicholas Schoupe, a wagon and carriage shop, John Hall, a general store and Thomas Hamlin, the post office. Other businesses included: William Kraft, harness maker; B. Brown and John Witzel, both shoemakers; Philip Rhein, tailor; and William Ball, furniture dealer. Henry Orth built another hotel at the west end of the village, John Mitchell erected a store nearby, Conrad Pfaff moved his blacksmith business from Sarepta, and Jacob Doerr opened another wagon and carriage shop.

A post office was opened in Friedsburg in 1871, with Noah Fried as postmaster.

In the early days, there were no less than 13 mills within a radius of seven miles of Friedsburg: Fried's, Waldron's, Brown's, Fulton's, McPhee's, Sutton's, Hawkin's, Dalziel's, Kalbfleish's and Stanlake's. At the height of business, Fried's mill ran 18 hours a day. As timber stands were depleted, most of these mills closed.

When Absalom Fried died in 1874, the mills were sold to John and Rheinhard Cook. A few years later, Noah Fried bought the grist mill back, closed it and constructed a new mill into which he later introduced the roller system. For a few years, Noah Fried also had a broom-handle factory in connection with the mill.

In 1885, the first flax mill was built by Messrs. Lindenfield, Steinhausen and Cook. By that time the wagon shop was owned by Julius Thon, the blacksmith shop by Simon Thon, the first private bank by Joseph Snell and stores by W. Hamlin and M. Schell.

Friedsburg's first church, a Bible Christian Church, was built in 1875. An Evangelical church was built in 1895 and a Lutheran church soon followed. The first school opened in 1897 with Dennis Brintnell as teacher.

Among early settlers in the area: Schweitzers, Whitings, Roth-



Dashwood in the 1920's. Courtesy Edward Phelps.



The Dashwood Hotel was an ideal place to meet before a Sunday spin in a Model "T".



Hoffmann's Deshwood Band enjoyed a loyal following in years-gone-by. Harry Hoffmann, the musical group's leader, is seated at front row left. Courtesy Lambton Heritage Museum.



Although it lost a tire, the Dashwood fire truck came to the rescue during Grand Bend's great fire of 1939. Courtesy Glen C. Phillips.

fuss, Birkes, Balkwills, Snells, Krafts, Sniders, Halsts, Beavers, Raders, Browns, Griggs, Bakers, Pfaffs, Soldans, Willerts, Wolfes, Domms, Howdens, Schraders, Smiths, Beirnes, Liedmans, Fergusons, Cunninghams, McCanns, Daws, Filers, Burkes, Gabriels, Beans, Grills, Schoeligs, Schroeders, Voelkers, Heidricks, Webers, Ecksteins, Thons, Kleinstivers, Reists, Beckers and Walpers.

It is no accident that the word "wood" is part of Dashwood. Wood remains a significant factor in the economy of the village. Fried's lumber mill eventually became a planing mill. It was purchased by Thomas Klumpp in 1928, who managed to keep it going during the Depression year. In 1939, the mill was completely destroyed by fire, with all the lumber on hand. With the cooperation of local residents, the mill was reopened in May.

Business thrived, due in part to the resort building along Lake Huron. Thomas Klumpp's son, Maurice, and later his grandson Bill, also became involved in the family business. The retail side of the business was sold to Conklin Lumber in 1960, and the stock was moved to Grand Bend. Dashwood Planing Mills (now known as Dashwood Industries) became wholesalers of wood windows. The business has grown into a major industry with a large plant in Centralia and distribution centres throughout the area. In 1968, the Klumpp family sold their interest to the London-based Allpak Limited, which later sold it to an American company. Dashwood Industries, now the largest manufacturer of wood windows in Canada, celebrated its 60th anniversary in 1988.

KHIVA TO SHIPKA

We now turn south along Concession 12 and come to the intersection with the Crediton Road, once a hamlet known as Khiva. Because this crossroads was at the junction of the Grand Bend to Crediton road and the Dashwood to Mount Carmel road it received considerable traffic. There is little reminder of its former life now. For years it was still called Khiva on maps, but even that memory has now been erased.

In 1867, William Holt moved from Lot 22, Con. 10 to Lot 10, Con. 13. He built a small log tavern on the southwest corner which became known as Holt's Corner. The tavern was licensed in 1869. With Ratz's mills a little to the west and Crediton's brick and tile yards less than four miles east, there was plenty of traffic past Holt's front door: farmers taking logs and grain to the mills, teams tak-



A choice location at the intersection of two of Stephen's busiest roads allowed the Khiva Hotel to enjoy an enviable trade at the turn of the century.

ing lumber and farm produce to market or delivering new brick or tile from Crediton. Holt's business soon outgrew its original premises. A substantial frame building was erected on the north side of the road, and, by the spring of 1883, the hotel business had been moved to the new building and was being operated by William Holt Jr. The Khiva post office, granted in 1878, was located in a room at the rear of the hotel's side verandah.

Between 1878 and 1879, Joseph Lorentz, a blacksmith, purchased half an acre of land on the north side of the road on Lot 11. Lorentz built a shop and a house and practised his trade for two years before selling his property to William Holt. Holt had four sons, William Junior, James, Charles and Alonzo. One of them had apparently trained as a blacksmith and took over the Lorentz business. In 1886, he made the seats for the Stephen Township hall at Crediton.

The local polling booth for municipal elections, held for many years on New Year's Day, was located in the Khiva hotel. Some older residents can remember their parents leaving home by cutter to vote. Sometimes voters were offered \$2 to vote for one of the nominees. There was a story that the polling booth was placed beneath a stovepipe hole so that someone on the floor above could see how each voter marked his ballot!

On June 1, 1898, Bernard Barnes Cunningham took over the operation of the Khiva hotel. As methods of transportation became more sophisticated, the hotel's business declined. Eventually the hotel was closed. The vacant building deteriorated badly and had to be demolished. No evidence of the part it played in the development of the township remains today.

Continuing west on the Crediton Road, we soon arrive at Ratz's Mills on the south side of the road. Here John Ratz and his brother Valentine developed a flourishing business after buying the saw mill from William Fulton in 1874. The mill and workmen's houses were located between the spacious homes of the two brothers. A grist mill was operated for a number of years but the Ratz's main business was lumber. Valentine Ratz served as reeve, then Member of Parliament and Senator.

THE COMMUNITY OF SHIPKA

Further west on the Crediton Road, we come to Concession 16 and 17 and the settlement called Shipka. Shipka owed its existence to the lumber trade. The land around it was rough bushland, not considered suitable for agriculture.

In 1876, Charles Eilber of Crediton built a sawmill on the north-east corner. He operated it for several years and then sold it to John Parsons and Norman Buchanan. At this time, Shipka was called



An early postcard view of Shipka, c. 1905.

Slabtown, because of the large piles of wooden slabs. When the post office was established in 1878, the name was changed at the suggestion of Postmaster Heitzman. Shipka is the name of a pass through the Balkan Mountains, the site of fierce fighting during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78.

In 1888, Eilber's mill was purchased by Samuel Schweitzer, who also built a flax mill. Schweitzer served in the Stephen Township and Huron County councils for many years. His sons Matthew and William built an apple-butter factory and a chopping mill. William Schweitzer inherited his father's sense of public duty — he served 17 years on Stephen Township council and, in 1935, was Warden of the County of Huron.

Both mills burned down in 1910. They were rebuilt and the flax mill was sold to the Ontario Flax Company. When the flax industry declined the mill was sold for farm buildings.

There were three other sawmills in Shipka: the Hawker, Sutton and Zavitz mills.

In 1874, John Parsons and Charles Eilber built a general store at Shipka; it was later owned by Fred Heitzman. Jacob and Henry Kellerman built another general store in 1892, which was later sold to A.G. Webb. John Ryan built a blacksmith shop at Shipka in 1875; it was later operated by Charles Lochner and Samuel Hawkins. The Shipka hotel stood on the northwest corner until 1927 when it burned down.

In its heyday in the 1880s, Shipka boasted two stores, a hall and hotel, sawmills, a flax mill, an apple-butter factory, a blacksmith shop, a harness maker, a dressmaking business, a tailor shop, a shoe maker and a nut-and-bolt factory.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Wilson of Greenway (then Boston), first established a Sunday School in Shipka in 1887 in the home of Sam Hawkins, the blacksmith. The following year, a log church was built. It served the community until 1963. The school section S.S. #7, Shipka was formed in 1863. The first log school house was built on Lot 7, Concession 16. That building was replaced with a frame schoolhouse, and later, was moved to Lot 10, Con. 17, and replaced with a brick building, which eventually became the Shipka Community Centre.

Among other early settlers in the Shipka area were the Gaisers, Finkbeiners, Lamports, McEacherns, McIsaacs, McKenzies, Sharpes, McDonalds, Schweitzers, Keoughs, McPhees, Sharps, Hartlons, Pickering and Keys.



The Skipha Hotel was a well-appointed establishment, offering only the best to its patrons.



Mrs. Henry Wing's general store was just one of two that were open for business in Skipha at the turn of the century.



The giant, outdoor screen of the Starlite Drive-in still serves as a prominent feature to mark Shipka's place in Stephen Township.

SPIDERTOWN AND MOUNT CARMEL

Now we turn south along Concession 16 and 17 to the South Boundary and then east to Spidertown and Mount Carmel.

Spidertown, or Slabtown as it was also called, was a tiny community just west of Mount Carmel, consisting of a cluster of houses built on the corners of four intersecting lots. At one time, a Dr. Flaherty had an office in one of the corner houses, but later moved to Mount Carmel. For a short time, Alexander Todd operated a general store at the corner. No doubt this little store received its supplies from a spring wagon, drawn, in all likelihood, by a team of mules or jackasses from a supplier in Lucan. Spidertown had virtually disappeared by World War I.

The first settlers came to the Mount Carmel area about 1835. They were mostly Irish immigrants who had settled in Pickering, Ontario. An advertisement in the *Kingston Mirror* offering land at 12 pounds per 100 acres enticed them to the west. By 1854, the largely Irish Catholic population had built a small log church at Mud Creek, just east of the present Mount Carmel.



Mount Carmel's main street in the 1920s.



The Mount Carmel general store in the early 1970s.

CRANFORD-OFFA-LIMERICK

A post office opened at the crossroads in 1867. It was called Cranford, then Offa, and finally Limerick. The church site was moved to the settlement and a small frame building was erected in the same year. Part of this building later served as a barn until it was demolished in 1990; another portion of it formed the kitchen of one of the houses in the village. In 1869, a residence was built for the priest. A log schoolhouse was built on the southeast corner of the village.

Limerick was a thriving village in the 1860s, with three hotels, a general store, a shoemaker, two doctor's offices, two blacksmith shops, a dressmaker and hat shop.

In 1872, the first schoolhouse was replaced by a frame structure. The present church was built in 1887 and soon became a landmark. The area was often referred to as "over near Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church". The village eventually became known as Mount Carmel.

By 1900, Mount Carmel boasted a cider mill and chopping mill. Timothy Coughlin and James Doyle served as members of parliament in the first years of this century.

In 1906, a two-room yellow brick school was built to replace the one-room frame building. The older building was moved across the road and with an addition, became the parish hall. The priest's residence was replaced by an imposing red-brick home in 1909.

Four Ursuline Sisters from Chatham, Ontario came to the village to take over teaching duties at the school in 1924. During the '20s the general store was open on Sunday morning after Mass was celebrated at the church.

Mount Carmel was a thriving village. The general store carried produce, rubber boots, yard goods and a variety of other items. A butcher from Dashwood sold bacon, smoked meats, canned goods and weiners to the store and the villagers. The tea wagon, the "Imperial Blend", came from London offering coffee and tea products; local residents chose their supplies and paid the salesman next time he was in their area, often six months later. A bread truck from Zurich supplied the village and nearby country stores. Other travelling salesmen included the "lightning rod man" and the "windmill man".

In 1934, a third classroom was opened in the parish hall, making it possible for students to finish their junior matriculation (high

school) without leaving the parish. It was furnished with tables, chairs, desks and benches brought from the homes of the students. On Friday nights, all the furniture was cleared away and put on the stage in readiness for the popular dances. A garden party was held almost every year on the church lawns, featuring a ham supper, games of chance and other activities. A chicken barbecue has become an annual event in recent years.

In 1956, a new three-room school was built just south of the old one. Mount Carmel developed into a central school for all Catholic children in the area: by 1968 buses were bringing pupils from Crediton, Dashwood, Shipka and Grand Bend.

Parishioners past and present of Our Lady of Mount Carmel church celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1987. The village itself continues to thrive. Young families now live in new homes surrounded by the descendants of those who first settled the area, some 140 years ago.

CORBETT AND GREENWAY

Retracing our steps along the South Boundary, we continue west to Concession 18 and 19 and the small community of Corbett. Corbett once had the distinction of being apportioned between two counties — Middlesex and Huron. It was named for John Cor-



An early postcard view of Corbett, c. 1910.

bett, for many years a prominent figure in Middlesex County.

John Corbett came to the area about 1840 and built a log house and saw and grist mill, which he operated with his son Harold. He also bought the village general store and became Corbett's first postmaster. The store was later operated by James Pollock and James Young.

By the 1860s, J. R. McPherson had a thriving carriage business housed in a brick building in the village. For many years, McPherson's shop was also a popular meeting spot for Corbett area residents. McPherson's son Bob took over the business on his father's death and eventually moved it to Parkhill.

McPherson's brother, Sandy, built a two-storey blacksmith shop at about the same time. The second floor was a repair and wood working shop. He later sold the business to W. J. Pollock, a settler from La Chute, Quebec, who operated it until his death in 1929.

It was also during the 1860s, that the Corbett Hotel was built. Ice for the hotel was gathered during an ice bee, a popular social event. Men from the surrounding area brought their teams to draw the ice from a creek behind the hotel to the ice house, where it was packed in sawdust. The hotel was sold and demolished in 1946.

The Corbett Cheese and Dairy Company was founded in 1888 when a number of local residents, interested in finding better markets for their dairy produce, obtained a charter for the making and selling of cheese and butter. The company was sold to I.C. Gondhand and W. T. Ulens in the early 1920s and became known as the Corbett Creamery. Metal cans of cream were collected twice a week from the farmer, who was paid according to the number of pounds of butter fat his cream produced. The buttermilk was sold back to the farmer, who mixed it with grain to make an excellent hog feed.

Corbett butter was considered one of the best and was shipped all over North America. Americans used to make the trip to Corbett for butter, taking home boxes of 24 pounds at a time. The factory burned down in 1938. The Parkhill Creamery was formed one year later.

Mr. Reeder, an early pioneer in the area, operated an ashery and soap factory. He gathered ashes from the surrounding farms, paying for them in bars of soap.

A Methodist church was built in the 1850s but closed in 1890.



HALL'S HOTEL A. HALL, PROP.
GORBETT, STEPHEN T.P. ONT.



The Gorbett Hotel as it appeared in 1879 (above), and as it looked without a verandah in the early 1900s.

Corbett Presbyterian Church was built in 1887; it closed in 1925 at the time of church union. A school was built in Corbett in 1901; it remains in use as a community centre.

Leaving Corbett, we travel west along the South Boundary to the small community of Greenway. Greenway was originally called Boston but was renamed in honour of Thomas Greenway, a former Stephen Township resident who served as member of parliament for South Huron, Premier of Manitoba and finally, member of parliament for South Lisgar, Manitoba.

W. J. Wilson built the first store in Boston in 1871. Wilson also served as postmaster and Justice of the Peace. The original frame structure burned in the early 1890s and was replaced by a two-storey brick building. On the second floor were lodging rooms and the shop of tailor Henry Mellin. W. J. Wilson moved to Alberta and the store was sold to Lawrence Pollock in 1918. Pollock owned and operated the store until 1961 when he sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Harold MacDonald of Oil Springs. A second store, operated by Mr. and Mrs. Robert English, was opened in the 1870s, directly across the road from Wilson's. This building is now a residence. English later bought the blacksmith shop from Thomas Brophy.

Other early businesses in Boston included a chopping mill owned by James Geromette, a shingle mill owned by David Hollenback, Thomas Brophy's blacksmith shop, a woodworking shop owned by Jim McPherson, carpenters William A. Wilson and John Sherritt and shoemaker Thomas W. Bullock.

Greenway United Church began as a Methodist church. At church union in 1925, it joined with Corbett Presbyterian Church. The Anglican church in Greenway was built in 1887 on land donated by James Brophy.

There were several drillings for oil around Greenway but only three proved to be successful. Small oil rigs can still be seen in fields around the village.

Until 1965, the road from Parkhill to Grand Bend went straight through Greenway; in that year the highway was curved to bypass the village. The following year County Road 5 through Greenway was paved.

THE GRAND BEND AREA

Along the road to Grand Bend we pass the tiny settlement once known as Harpley, once the site of two lumber mills.

Continuing toward Grand Bend, we come to the odd block of land originally marked on Canada Company maps as a Reserve for Port Franks. The block includes the Lake Road East and Concessions A and B. Port Franks actually developed further south, leaving this block uninhabited for some time. The block remained as the Port Franks Reserve for over two decades on Canada Company maps and according to W. H. Smith, was a source of amusement for local settlers: "...The inhabitants of the neighbourhood began to talk of importing a cargo of magnifying glasses to enable them to see this wonderful town, which by some peculiar magic, has hitherto managed to evade their searches."

Concession B or the B-Line, as it was known, was settled by two young men from Lower Canada, Peter Farrell and Francis Tetreau. They travelled by boat to Goderich, walked south and worked in the bush near Forest. They chose land on Concession A. Later they returned to Quebec, married and returned to live on Concession B.

They were soon joined by their parents and other families — the Allaires, Gambles, Elliotts, Desjardines, Ravelles, Pollocks, Webbers, Masons, Wades and Reiths. After they had cleared their land, they grew flax which they sold to the flax mills at Shipka and Dashwood. Most of the farms also raised sheep and the women did their own spinning and weaving to clothe their large families. Between seed time and harvest, they fished using a seine net. Peter Farrell was the first man in the district to obtain a licence to fish with a pond net.

During the winter months many of the men along the B-line made tin pails and other items. The Wilsons and Gambles were noted for their handiwork. In the summer they loaded a covered wagon with their wares and travelled the township selling them. Horse trading became part of their business and often extra horses were tied behind the wagon. The community came to be known as Tinkertown.

About 1875, a log school was built. It was later replaced by a frame building, and in 1926, a brick building. A small log church was built in the community in the 1890s. It was replaced in 1949 by a new brick building in Grand Bend itself.

The Carrying Place, or Grand Bend as it is now known, is steeped in tradition. There is more history concerning this site than any other place in Stephen.



Before 1965, the year that the Parkhill to Grand Bend road was cut to bypass the village, Grenzay's Imperial Oil service station benefited from a steady stream of summer traffic.

Before the cut was made in the 1890s, the Ausable River turned and flowed south to find an outlet at Port Franks. The point where the river turned — the big bend — was a favourite summer camping ground and stopping place on the Indians' travel routes. From the bend a portage cut across the dunes to the lake and a trail ran north along a ridge of high land to Goderich and south along the shore to Sarnia. When the Ausable was high and clear of trees and debris, the Indians could, with some portaging, reach the Thames River, part of the main trading route between Niagara and Detroit. Many coloured beads, small trinkets and other small trading items have been found in the beach at Grand Bend, suggesting that it may also have served as a summer trading post.

Reverend J. Carruthers, a Presbyterian minister, reported an interesting visit to the bend in the river in 1833. He travelled from Hamilton to London by horse, met with Reverend William Proudfoot, then journeyed through Lobo Township to Williams Township, where he stayed with an agent of the Canada Company. When he reached the Ausable he exchanged his horse for a sailing canoe and came down the river to the big bend. He met a band of Indians and was taken to visit the Indian chief, Omeek, who lived in a log house. There he wrote up his notes:



Lumbering near Harpley, c. 1940.

"The Indians have a burial spot on the banks of the Sable River which I visited. They bury the staff of the aged chief with him and the tin cup which he ate out of and the spoon is placed at the head of the grave, which is built round and covered over with wood or boards. A hole is cut at the head of the grave where a supply of food is handed in to the spirit for a few days before it takes its departure to the far west, where no storms blow, no enemy annoys, and where there is plenty of game."

Early settlers in the vicinity learned from the Indians that two battles had been fought nearby. This may account for the large number of arrowheads, stone tools and other artifacts that have been found around Grand Bend.

No one knows for sure what the Indians called this place: it has been identified as The Carrying Place, The Portage, The Stopping Place, The Meeting Place, The Bend of the River, the Big Bend and finally the Grand Bend. Although the river no longer bends, the town retains the traditional name.

The earliest white settlement in this area occurred in the early 1830s, when a lumberman named Richard Brewster built a saw-mill on the river and constructed a small pier on the lake directly west of the corner. He shipped his lumber from Port Blake, as the

pier became known: he had a contract to supply the Canada Company with all the lumber he could produce. During the 1850s, the area farmers became convinced that the dam at Brewster's mill was causing severe flooding of their lands. The Canada Company took legal action against the mill owners but without success. Finally in the early 1860s, the farmers took the law into their own hands. Gathering one night in early spring, they burned the mill down.

Other white settlers began to arrive in the area of the big bend in the 1850s. The MacArthurs were one of the first families. The Turnbulls settled in 1856 in Hay Township, close to Stephen's north boundary, and William Fallis arrived the following year.

The Armstrongs were another early family in the area. Mrs. Armstrong was a Scottish widow who met her second husband on board ship for Canada with her six children. She was known as the 'kind squaw' because she gave the Indians bread; in return they supplied her with venison. The Indians also helped the Armstrongs build their first log house. The nearest store was 15 miles north at Bayfield; they travelled on foot or by boat to buy necessities. Later the Armstrongs opened a general store and post office in their house.

In 1858, the Mollard brothers, James, Charles, Isaac, William and Thomas, came from Yorkshire, England and settled on the Mollard Line. Mr. and Mrs. Page followed the old Indian trail through the Pinery and settled across the road from the Mollards. Other early settlers were the Gills, Olivers and Pattersons.

John Dalziel bought the old Brewster's Mill land in 1868 and built a sawmill, a house, and eventually, planing, moulding, shingle, grist and oat mills.

The first blacksmith at the big bend was John Ingram, followed by Donald Pattison, G.H. "Baldy" Smith, Bob Pollock and Otto Romanowski. Joseph Brenner opened a hotel in 1868. Called Brenner House, it was later owned by W. Fritz, Ezra Brenner, Joe Brenner Jr., and Harold Klopp.

In the early years, the settlement was served by a log schoolhouse, built at the entrance to the cemetery in 1857. Later a larger and more central school building was erected. The first church building was built in front of the school in 1872 and operated as a Presbyterian mission. Wesleyan Methodists were also holding services in the Grand Bend area by this time.

Robert Fulton established a flour and feed mill, John Ironside



FOUNTAIN HOUSE, H. BECKERHAUER, PROP.,
GRAND BEND, STEPHEN Twp. ONT.

When Grand Bend was part of Stephen, the Fountain House was one of the larger hotels in the township.

opened a general store and the Glanville brothers, Alfred and George, opened another. John Ironside became the first postmaster in 1871. The Ironside store, situated on the north side of Main Street near the Brenner House, was later operated by Thomas Mollard, Delbert Mollard, W. Amos, John Ross, Nelson Ravelle, Emery Desjardines, Jules Desjardines, and the partnership of Desjardines and Finan.

By 1879, the village had two good hotels, a post office with tri-weekly delivery, a mechanic's shop and several good stores.

The Bossenberry family arrived in Grand Bend and bought the old frame Woodbine Hotel in 1890. They replaced it with the Imperial Hotel in 1906. The Imperial was operated first by Henry, and then, by Bruce Bossenberry. Mrs. Bashaw opened a store about the same time which she later sold to Silas Gration.

It is sometimes forgotten that it was Stephen Township council which was responsible for "The Cut" which gives the village a harbour and outlet to the lake. Although it was entirely in Bosanquet Township, Stephen undertook the work in the hope of reducing flooding along the Ausable River. The first petition for the cut was presented to Stephen council by discouraged farmers in 1881 but it was more than ten years before the work was completed.

The contract was let to two local men, Andy Robinson and J. England in the summer of 1892. Most of the new channel was excavated by teams of horses and wheeled scrapers. The channel was dug only a few feet wide at first but the river water soon made it wider. Once the cut was complete, the Port Blake pier, on the northern edge of Grand Bend, was abandoned.

It was in the last years of the century that Grand Bend began to develop as a summer resort. It became a very popular destination for large school and church picnics. Inland towns and villages held civic holiday picnics and private families added to the throngs. Older residents recall the cheerful procession, several miles long, of buggies, carriages and horses making their way to the lake for the day. Elsie's ice cream parlour was a popular stop for turn-of-the-century visitors: parents enjoyed Fred Elsie's homemade ice cream while the children clamoured to ride the merry-go-round next door.

Some of the visitors were so impressed by the picturesque surroundings that they decided to build their own summer homes by the lake. Maple Grove, for example, was founded by two London businessmen, Frank Lawson and Charlie Somerville. Lawson built a cottage in Grand Bend in 1893 and his friend Somerville rented a summer home in 1894. While exploring the countryside they discovered a pretty grove of maple trees that seemed ideal for a small cottage development. The land was purchased from the Canada Land Company in 1900 and the building of 10 cottages began in the spring of 1901. It was also in 1900 that Charles Southcott purchased 200 acres of land south of the village on which to build cottages. His property was later to become one of the village's most prestigious developments. Other major developments included Oakwood, Kingsmere, and in later years, Grand Cove Estates. Among the colourful names of early cottages: Alderside Cottage, Bleas House, Ivanhoe, Chesney Wold, Idylwyld Cottage, Dotheboy's Hall, Woodbine Cottage, Ivy Cottage, East Lynne, Blarney Castle, Boffin's Bower, Dingley Dell and The Oaks.

With the influx of tourists, new hotels sprang up. The 100-acre lot between Bremer's Hotel and the lake was valued at \$350 in 1900 because the pure sand was of no value to the farmers. Mr. Levitt saw its value, however, and built Lakeview House a few years later.

The hotel was later operated by Bert Holt and Mr. Tiedeman,



The approximate site of Brewster is today marked by the Lake Huron pumping station.

and then Herb Smith and Abner Mollard. Later, the property was sold to George Ecclestone, and then Harmon Gill. Gill operated Lakeview House until the 1950s.

A beachfront dancehall was built in 1919. In later years, many famous bands including Guy Lombardo, Rudy Vallee, Vincent Lopez and Lionel Thornton played in Grand Bend.

The dividing line between Lambton and Huron Counties was the Main Street of Grand Bend. Under the Canada Temperance Act, Bosanquet Township in Lambton was 'wet' and Stephen Township, 'dry'. As a result, liquor outlets were allowed on the south side of Main Street but not the north. Both counties courted the resort, but Grand Bend chose to join Lambton County as an incorporated village in 1951.

The beach at Grand Bend has always been its chief attraction. In 1980, a Parkhill businessman, Archie Gibbs, went to the village council to press his claim that the beach was private property. After nearly a decade of litigation, Gibbs won his case and was awarded ownership of the beach. Gibbs has plans to develop part of the beach and make the rest available for public use.

Here in Grand Bend our tour of the towns and villages of Stephen ends.

CONCLUSION

In the era of the horse and buggy, small communities dotted the map. Each one formed a nucleus for the surrounding rural area, providing stores, essential trades, schools and churches, and an opportunity to socialize, all within easy reach of the homestead. A visit to the general store or blacksmith's shop provided an opportunity to trade news with neighbours. Travellers stopping overnight at the hotel passed on news of a broader world beyond the farmer's acreage. Churches and schools brought young people together.

With the coming of automobiles, highways and telephones, communications and travel became easier. Many crossroad communities died out. Others grew into centres drawing from a larger area. Although many have disappeared from the map, it would be wrong to forget the contribution of Stephen's small communities in the early years of settlement.

Chapter 13

A Light In The Darkness

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness." - John xii, 46.

There are six surviving churches within the perimeters of Stephen Township that remain a testament to the faith of our pioneers.

The attractive church buildings and regular religious services of today were a luxury unknown to the earliest settlers. Their religious needs were met by itinerant ministers who journeyed up and down the London Road, stopping to hold services in homes and taverns. These occasions were eagerly anticipated as opportunities to baptise children, perform marriages, socialize and get news of the 'outside world.'

When there were enough adherents of a particular faith, a congregation was established. The Anglicans were first but they were soon competing with the aggressive evangelism of Wesleyan, Bible Christian, Primitive, and Episcopalian Methodist circuit riders. The hardness and enthusiasm of the circuit riders and the democratic structure of the Methodist organization attracted many adherents. Later missionary preachers from the Evangelical Association, a German-language faith very similar to the Methodists, ministered to settlers of German extraction, thwarting the growth of the Lutheran church in this area.

Other denominations found in Stephen Township include Baptists, Roman Catholics, and more recently, United Church members, a Faith Tabernacle congregation and the Church of God.

In Stephen Township, as elsewhere, the rivalry between the various strands of Methodism resulted in many small Methodist

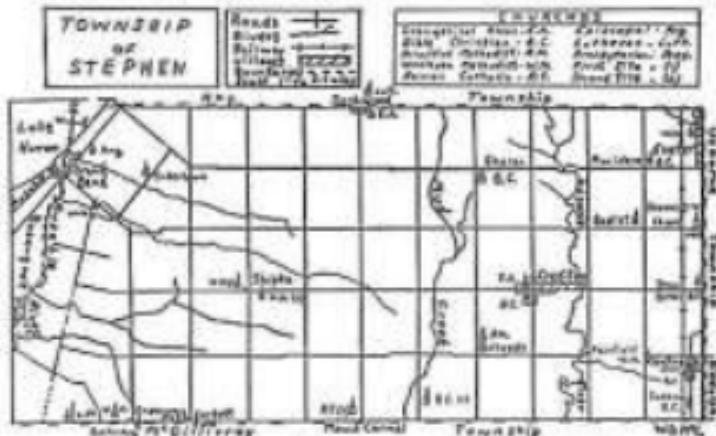
congregations, often with churches in close proximity to one another. Within the space of a generation the diverging views of the Methodists began to converge, a series of unions took place and many of the smaller churches were closed. This ecumenical trend culminated in church union of 1925, when the Methodists, Congregationalists and many Presbyterian congregations joined to create the United Church of Canada. The Evangelical Brethren Church also became part of the United Church of Canada in 1968.

ITINERANT MINSTERS

Reverend Thomas Whitehead of the Episcopal Methodist Church rode up the London Road to Goderich in September 1831 but found no settlers in Stephen Township. He made the same trip the following summer and once again found no habitation between "the Coloured People's Settlement" (the Wilberforce settlement, Lucan) and "Mr. Vanderburgh's" (Clinton).

In February 1833, Reverend William Proudfoot and Reverend Thomas Christie of the Presbyterian Church, travelled the same route seeking out communities where a congregation might be established.

They spent a night at McConnell's Tavern in Exeter. Proud.



This map shows the location of Stephen Township's first churches and their denominations. Many of the churches were part of a circuit that includes several of the smaller congregations.

foot reported: "Mr. McConnell's father-in-law requested family prayer and I officiated, which was a source of gratification to us."¹²

Reverend J. Carruthers, another Presbyterian minister, made a journey through southwestern Ontario in the same year. When Reverend Carruthers came to the Ausable River in Williams Township he took a "sailing canoe" down the river to what is now Grand Bend. There he encountered a band of Indians and observed their burial customs.

Rev. Proudfoot again travelled the London Road to Goderich in 1835. The Presbyterians, by 1838, had established a Goderich mission of their London circuit, under the leadership of Reverend Hugh Montgomery.

Also in 1835, Reverend William Bettridge, an Anglican minister, made his first visit to the Huron Tract. Between 1837 and 1838, Reverend Thomas Green was licensed by the Bishop of Quebec as a "Travelling Anglican Missionary in the London District for the Church of England." In a letter dated August 3, 1837, he reported that he had visited the townships of Biddulph, McGillivray and Usborne in the Huron Tract and "...have made four new appointments comprising in these townships with that of London nine regular stations which I visit every fortnight."¹³ It is likely that the reference to Usborne was the Devonshire settlement.

EARLY ANGLICANS

By 1842, the total population of Stephen Township was 89 residents. Of these, 64 adhered to the Anglican faith and 25 were Methodists.

Henry Cholwell Cooper was appointed to the Devon area in 1841 by Anglican Bishop John Strachan of Toronto. Cooper lived on Lot 14, Con. 1, Usborne. He held services first in homes and then in the schoolhouse built on Lot 15, Con. 1 of Stephen in the early 1840s.

Reverend A. N. Bethune of Toronto visited Cooper's former congregation in September 1848. His report stated:

"...the school house was pretty well filled. I could not help feeling and expressing surprise that after enjoying the ministrations of the church and having a resident clergyman amongst them for nearly seven years no church, however small and unpretending a scale, had as yet been erected and that nothing existed but a miserable log school house for the

performance of Divine Service, I do not know what effect my remarks may produce, though I fear that church feeling, though it may have been zealously inculcated, is not very strong in this quarter. At present they are without a resident minister and the field, it appears to me, might be satisfactorily cultivated by a travelling missionary."

At this time, Cooper was transferred to Christ Church, Mimico, where he preached for nearly 30 years.

Rev. Bethune's recommendation was apparently accepted. There is no record of another minister serving here until 1859 when Reverend Stearne Tighe of St. James Church, Biddulph, started to conduct services. An Anglican church was opened in Exeter in 1861.

EARLY WESLEYAN METHODIST CONGREGATIONS

Methodist preachers were more aggressive and fervent in the promotion of their ministry in the backwoods than the Anglican clergymen. The results of their labours soon became evident.

It is also significant that many of the early settlers in Stephen, Hay and Usborne townships emigrated from Devonshire in England where Wesleyan Methodism was firmly entrenched. This is also where the Bible Christian movement had started. Although the Anglicans dominated in the early 1840s, the next three decades saw the rapid growth of all strains of Methodism.

The Devonshire Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist church was established in 1844. It extended south to the London Circuit and north to the Goderich one, and included the townships of Stephen, Usborne, Hay, Tuckersmith, Biddulph and McGillivray. Reverend Thomas Williams conducted services in private homes until a church was built on the southeast corner of Lot 16, Con. 1. The land was donated by Richard Balkwill in 1845. This log building, large enough to seat 150 people, was known as the Devonshire Chapel. It was Stephen Township's first church.

In 1857, another Wesleyan Methodist church was built at Francistown, on the hill south of the river. An 1861 director reports, "Francistown Wesleyan Methodist Church built in 1857, size 36 feet by 40 feet, cost \$2,000, can seat 350, minister Rev. William Chapman." That church was located one block west of what became Main Street, Exeter.

A third congregation was organized south of Crediton and in-

CREDITON CIRCUIT.
METHODIST PREACHERS' PLAN.

Category	Sub-Category	Definition	Example	Impact	Severity	Probability	Score
Financial	Market Risk	Exposure to price fluctuations of assets.	Stock market volatility.	Loss of value.	Medium	High	8
	Credit Risk	Ability of debtors to fulfill their obligations.	Default on loans.	Loss of principal.	High	Medium	7
	Liquidity Risk	Ability to convert assets into cash quickly.	Run on bank.	Loss of liquidity.	Medium	Medium	6
	Operational Risk	Risk from internal processes, systems, or people.	System failure.	Loss of data or resources.	Medium	Medium	5
Strategic	Market Share Risk	Ability to maintain or increase market share.	Competitor entry.	Loss of market position.	High	Medium	8
	Technological Risk	Ability to keep up with technological advancements.	Obsolescence of products.	Loss of competitive edge.	Medium	Medium	6
	Regulatory Risk	Ability to navigate changing regulations.	New laws.	Cost of compliance.	Medium	Medium	5
	Geopolitical Risk	Ability to operate in different countries.	Political instability.	Loss of operations or markets.	High	Medium	7
Reputational	Brand Reputation Risk	Ability to maintain a positive brand image.	Scandal.	Loss of trust.	High	Medium	8
	Customer Loyalty Risk	Ability to retain existing customers.	Product recall.	Loss of customer base.	Medium	Medium	6
	Employee Turnover Risk	Ability to keep key employees.	High turnover.	Loss of talent.	Medium	Medium	5
	Supplier Dependence Risk	Ability to rely on external suppliers.	Supplier bankruptcy.	Loss of supply chain.	Medium	Medium	5

JOHN HENRY - THE BAKER.

B. M. SCHWARTZ, Secy. of Council.

A schedule for the ministers serving the Caledon Circuit of the Methodist Church, September 1867 to February, 1868.

cluded both Stephen and McGillivray families. These worshippers originally met at the homes of the King and Lamport families. The small frame church, built in 1878, was called Eden.

A brick church was erected at Fairfield in 1862, where a parsonage had already been built seven years before. Another Wesleyan Methodist congregation formed in Centralia. A Wesleyan Methodist church was built in Shipka in December 1888.

EARLY BIBLE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATIONS

Philip James was sent to the Huron Tract in 1846 to establish a Bible Christian mission to serve nine townships. The Bible Christians, which also originated in Devonshire, were an evangelical Methodist group with a liberal form of church government which gave ministers and the laity equal rights.

In 1847, four circuits were formed, Mitchell, Usborne, Clinton and London. In 1851, Reverend Robert Hurley came to Stephen Township to open the Exeter mission as part of the Usborne circuit. He conducted the services in the home of James "Boss" Pickard.

By 1855, a log church, named Providence, had been erected on Lot 20, Concession 2, west of Exeter. This is believed to be the first Bible Christian Church in Stephen Township. The church trustees were Richard Sweet, James Shapton, Thomas Dearing, William H. Penhale and William Heaman. The church was disman-

ties in 1891 and the timbers used in W. Sims' barn. Another Bible Christian Church, Bethel, was proposed for Lot 11, Concession 1 at Devon Corner. It is not known if this church was ever actually built.

A Bible Christian church was opened in Exeter in February 1856, on the present site of the Town of Exeter offices. The event drew so many people that the new building could not accommodate them all. The Exeter circuit at this time included Bethesda, Providence, Eden, Bethel, Centralia, Crediton and Dashwood, under the guidance of Rev. John Edwards.

Exeter's first Bible Christian Church was replaced by a larger brick structure, which came to be known as James Street Church, in 1862. Built largely due to the generosity of James Pickard, this is the present Exeter United Church.

More Bible Christian churches followed. Three new churches were dedicated in 1869. These were: Salem, a frame church on the bypass south of Centralia; Sharon, a frame church five miles west of Exeter; and a white brick church at Centralia. Some time after 1870 a small church was erected east of Sarepta.

BIBLE CHRISTIAN PREACHERS' PLAN									
FOR THE									
1882. CREDITON CIRCUIT.					1882.				
Month	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
January	1882	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
February	1882	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
March	1882	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
April	1882	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
May	1882	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
June	1882	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
July	1882	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
August	1882	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
September	1882	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
October	1882	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
November	1882	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
December	1882	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

This Bible Christians, evangelical Methodists with a liberal form of church government, established six congregations on the Crediton Circuit at Crediton, Centralia, Eden, Bethel, Sharon and Sarepta River.

THE EARLY PRESBYTERIANS

Although Presbyterian ministers were among the first to ride through Stephen, Presbyterianism never established a strong foothold in the township. The first congregation in Exeter was organized in 1861 by Rev. John Logie. Services were held in a brick store at Francistown. The first Presbyterian church was a modest, frame building, erected at Francistown in 1863.

Another Presbyterian congregation formed in Grand Bend where services were held in the schoolhouse. In 1862, Grand Bend became a mission station and for several years students from McGill University in Montreal and Knox College ministered to the congregation. The McGill students served the French-speaking members of the congregation and Knox College students ministered to the English-speaking worshippers. In 1874, a new church, built for \$1,445, was opened although attempts to combine English and French in the services were not successful.

THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION

The Evangelical Association survived in Canada from 1826 to 1968. This religious denomination was brought to Stephen Township in 1850, with the establishment of the Huron Mission. It quickly spread in areas where German people had settled. Reverend Jacob Bastian arrived in Stephen in 1851, and preached in Theobald Stahl's log cabin. Reverend Bastian was succeeded by Reverend Frederick Scharffe in 1851. As he had a large field to cover his visits to outlying settlements were infrequent. To overcome this problem, classes were formed to meet between the minister's visits in class members' homes. Michael Finkbeiner was the first class leader for the Crediton area. In 1868, the Stephen circuit was established and Crediton was given a resident minister.

A church was started at Crediton in 1854 and completed by the fall of 1855. A second church was built about half a mile west of Greenway, probably in the early 1870s. It remained an active congregation for about 30 years.

The Evangelicals in the Dashwood area were also first served by Rev. Bastian. They first worshipped in Jacob Weber's carpenter shop and home, located on the Goshen Line. That original church survives on the V.L. Becker property.

The second Evangelical Association church in Dashwood, the present Calvary United Church, was built on land purchased from

George and Barbara Kellerman, in 1895. The Evangelical congregation first joined with the United Brethren Church in 1946 and was known as the Evangelical United Brethren. All these churches, in turn, became part of the United Church of Canada in 1968.

THE CATHOLICS

The Mount Carmel area was settled by Irish Catholic emigrants, many who had first settled in the Pickering, Ontario area, during the 1830s. The first masses in Mount Carmel were celebrated in private homes by a priest from Lucan. A log church was built in 1857, a mile east of the present site. It was followed by a frame building in 1860. The priest at that time moved the site of the church from Mud Creek to its present location on the hill at Mount Carmel. In 1869, a frame house was built for the priest, Rev. Philip James Brennan.

In the 1870s, the Irish settlers were joined by German families who settled in the community. These families, such as the Hartmans, Dietrichs, Regiers and Zillers, came mainly from Waterloo County.

The brick church that serves the Mount Carmel congregation, and which has become a landmark in the area, was started when Father Martin Kelly was serving this parish. The cornerstone of



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, built with brick drawn from Crediton by the men from the parish, was completed in the summer of 1888.

the church, built with brick drawn from Crediton, was laid on July 24, 1887.

THE METHODIST UNION

In 1884, several strands of Methodism, including the Primitive Methodist church, the Bible Christian church and the former Wesleyan Methodist group, united to form the Methodist Church of Canada. As a result, several small churches in Stephen were closed and others united. The Devonshire Chapel had been closed for some time. The two churches at Centralia were united and Fairfield closed in 1889. Sharon and Eden carried on for several years as appointments on the Crediton charge, but closed in the early 1900s. Bethesda closed about 1890, as did Corbett Methodist.

The Shipka Methodist church was opened in 1888 and closed in 1963.

THE BAPTIST CHURCHES

In 1873, Richard Hicks granted to the trustees of the Baptist Church one-and-a-half acres of land on the north half of Lot 2, Concession 1 in Stephen. A church was built on the property and some of the land was reserved as a cemetery. Some time later a second church was built on Lot 16, Concession 3. It is not known how long these churches remained in existence.

EXETER CHURCHES

The first Bible Christian Church in Exeter was dedicated in February 1856. Until that time services were held in private homes. The Reverend John Edwards ministered to the new congregation, "...a very godly man whose knees it is reported, were callous from much praying." The congregation had outgrown their first church by the early '60s and erected a brick church in 1862. On the occasion of the opening it was reported that 1,400 people sat down to supper! The Exeter Bible Christian circuit by then included Bethesda, Providence, Eden, Bethel, Centralia, Crediton, Dashwood and four other preaching stops.

The Exeter Bible Christians joined the Methodist union of 1884 as James Street Methodist Church — this church later became Exeter United Church.

The Wesleyan Methodist congregation originally met in a small church on the river, presumably built on Church Street in the 1850s.

Then, in 1869, the congregation built a new and much larger brick church. A disastrous fire, believed to be arson, destroyed this church in 1895. At that time there was some talk of union with the James Street Church, but in the end the congregation decided to rebuild.

The congregations of Main Street and James Street churches did eventually merge in 1969. Services for the two congregations were then held in James Street United Church. The former Main Street church was sold to the Pentecostal Tabernacle congregation. When the Pentecostal congregation built a new church, just south of Exeter, the old Main Street Wesleyan Church was sold and dismantled and a small strip mall built on the site.

Reverend Stearne Tighe of the Anglican Church of Canada held vestry meetings in Exeter Union School on Andrew Street beginning in April 1859. The Orange Hall was also used for services until construction began on a church building, Christ Church, which was located on Victoria Street opposite the old public school, was dedicated in December 1862. Two years later, however, it was not completed and the congregation was deeply in debt. Financial problems and low attendance continued to plague the church throughout the 1870s. When Reverend S. J. Robinson arrived to serve as rector in 1885 he reported that "the church house, fence and other property were in a wretched state of repair. A rotting wooden fence enclosed a wilderness of weeds and undergrowth..."

Then in 1887 Thomas Trivitt, a prosperous Centralia merchant, offered to donate a new church in Exeter. The cornerstone of Trivitt Memorial Church, built in the Gothic style of architecture and decorated with Ohio sandstone trimmings, was laid by Bishop Maurice Baldwin on August 1, 1887. The first service in the new church was held on December 23, 1888.

The old church was moved a short distance to the east and served for some 50 years as an exhibit building for the Exeter Fair. It was ironically dubbed 'The Crystal Palace'. For 362 days of the year the windows of the building were boarded up; the boards were only removed the day before the fair and replaced the day after. In 1904 it was purchased by Cliff Brintnell and dismantled.

Presbyterians in the Exeter area were first organized in 1861 and held their services in a Francistown store. Their first church was built in 1863, on the north side of the river. In 1877, the congregation erected a new brick church, south of the river. It was



Thomas Trivitt, a prosperous Centralia merchant, donated the funds to build Exeter's Anglican Church, named, fittingly, Trivitt Memorial Church.

named Caven Presbyterian Church, after Rev. William Caven, then principal of Knox College, Toronto. A windstorm in 1893 blew the roof and tower off the church, and the small but loyal congregation raised the funds to repair their church. The congregation of Caven Presbyterian did not participate in church union in 1925. The church, which has been extensively renovated over the years, still serves Presbyterians in the Exeter area.

CENTRALIA CHURCHES

In the summer of 1876, when the London, Huron and Bruce Railway was being built through Centralia, the Bible Christians moved their church from Lot 2, Con. 1, Stephen to Station Street in Centralia. The building was opened for worship in September. The Centralia Bible Christians were part of a four-point charge that included Fairfield, Kings (south of Crediton), Elimville and Centralia.

By 1880, a house in Centralia was rented for a parsonage and Brother Essery, Exhorter (lay preacher) took charge of the Bible



Centralia Methodist Church, located on the site of the present United Church, was built in 1888, on land donated by Thomas Trivitt. The church was struck by lightning and burned in 1921.

Christian church. The building was whitewashed and an organ was purchased to provide music during the services.

Another branch of the Methodist faith, the Wesleyan Methodists, moved their church from Lot 5, Con.2, Biddulph Township to Centralia in the same year. The dedication service was held on December 1, 1876. In 1880, Thomas Trivitt, a Centralia businessman, gave his house and four acres of land as a manse on the condition that the church pay he and his wife an annuity of \$100 a year.

Both churches joined the Methodist Union of 1884 and merged to become Centralia Methodist Church. It was decided to use the former Wesleyan church and parsonage and the Bible Christian church was sold. Eventually, the first Wesleyan Methodist church was also sold and became a cheese factory.

The combined congregation of Bible Christians and Wesleyan Methodists built a new church in 1888, on the site of the present Centralia United Church.

Thomas Trivitt donated the land and paid one-third of the cost of construction. The new building was built of white brick and featured a belfry, Gothic windows and a gallery. While it was being built the congregation worshipped at the Fairfield Church. The year after the Centralia church opened, the Fairfield Wesleyan Methodist church was closed and sold.

In 1921, the same year that electricity was installed in the church, Centralia Methodist Church was struck by lightning and destroyed in the resulting fire. Church members, however, were able to rescue the piano, many of the church and Sunday School furnishings and the altar. Following the fire, services were held in shed, until cold weather forced the congregation to move into the basement of the damaged church.

The congregation held a variety of bazaars, church suppers and sales of produce and crafts to raise the funds for a new building. On May 14, 1922, the new red-brick church, built for \$15,000, opened for services. Following church union in 1925, the church became Centralia United Church. At that time, the Fraser congregation from Biddulph Township joined Centralia United Church.

In 1947, Whalen United Church also closed, and many members transferred to Zion West Church. In 1968, the Zion West congregation also joined with Centralia United Church, making it a two-point charge.

The other church which serves Centralia area residents is the non-denominational Faith Tabernacle. The white frame church was originally an Anglican Church in Brinsley, McGillivray Township. It was moved to Centralia in 1951 and located on land donated by Kenneth and Florence Hodgins. It continued as an Anglican Church for three years, and was then used as a Boy Scout hall.

In 1965, the Faith Tabernacle congregation purchased the hall for \$600. Ministers who have served at Faith Tabernacle include: Rev. David Elliott, Rev. Clarence Sawyer, Rev. Alvin Bilyea and acting pastor Ted Prouty. Rev. Bob DeGraw has been with the congregation since 1976.

By the 1990s, the congregation was outgrowing their small, frame church. Property for a new church has been purchased at the intersection of Huron County Road 2 and the northeasterly edge of Centralia. Construction of a new church is planned in 1992.



Faith Tabernacle, named to Centralia from McGillivray Township in 1951, was originally an Anglican church in the community of Brinsley.



William Sunet, a convert to the Bible Christian faith, donated the land for the Crediton Bible Christian Church, built in 1869.

CREDITON CHURCHES

German families living in the Crediton area opened their first Evangelical Association Church in the fall of 1855, on land donated by Henry Ruppert "forever and ever." The congregation included families bearing familiar Stephen Township names like Finkbeiner, Haist, Motz, Hirtzel, Preszcator, Stahls and Schwartz. The log church was erected by 12 men in the congregation who assembled the building without using one nail.

As more German immigrants settled in the township, the congregation grew in size. Jacob Eilber was named first president of the Sunday School. Another Sunday School was located on the Finkbeiner Line, with Charles Eilber leading it. There was also a Sunday School on the John Link line, directed by its namesake.

By 1864, the Evangelical Association congregation had outgrown its little log church. The minister, Brother S. Krupp, called a meeting of the congregation. A building committee, composed of Brothers Michael Hirtzel, John Kuhn, Henry Sweitzer, Charles Braun and Rev. Krupp was organized to plan the construction of a larger, brick meeting place, with congregation members Fiorenzo Krause doing the masonry and Vincent Gaum the carpenter work.

The new brick church was opened in 1866, beside the original log church, to accommodate the growing congregation. The first resident minister was Reverend Schwandt, who arrived in 1868. During the 1880s, the congregation numbered 400 members, divided into 12 different prayer meeting classes. A brick parsonage for the minister was built in 1882 for \$2,000.

William Sweet, a convert to the Bible Christian faith, donated the land for Crediton's second church in 1869. A Bible Christian Church, built during the ministry of Rev. William Hooper, was erected on the site. The Sweets, who resided next door to the church, boarded the men who drew the materials used in building the new place of worship.

The Rev. John W. Butcher, who came to Stephen Township from Prince Edward Island, was the first pastor to occupy the parsonage for the Bible Christian Church. This home was later owned by Ezra Faist.

Other Bible Christian congregations were built at Eden and in Salem. Crediton actually began as an appointment of the Centuria charge. The union of the Bible Christian, Primitive Methodists,



The congregation of the Crediton Evangelical Association built their third church in 1896, using white brick from the local brickyards. The church could seat 950 worshippers and survives today as Zion United Church.

Wesleyan Methodists and Canada Methodist Churches took place in 1884, creating the Crediton Circuit of the Methodist Church. This consisted of five churches — Crediton, Sharon, McGillivray, Bethesda and Ebenezer. The Sharon appointment was closed in 1903; the Eden church the same year.

The Primitive Methodists did not have as many churches in this area as the Wesleyans or Bible Christians. There was one Primitive Methodist church in the Crediton area, about a mile and a quarter west of the village, on Lot 8, Concession 8, which was the Flynn farm. This church, pictured on an 1862 map of Huron County, was called Bethesda. Families that belonged to this congregation included the George Clarks, Gowers, Flynns, Lawsons and Glanvilles. This church was part of the McGillivray circuit, along with a frame church at Ebenezer.

One of the Bethesda ministers was Rev. Dorsey, reputed to be an escaped slave. He eventually moved to a cabin on the first sideroad near Mud Creek, where he cleared enough land for a small farm. When he died in 1870, Rev. Dorsey was buried in the cemetery beside the Primitive Methodist Church.



Members of this women's group at the Crediton Evangelical Association Church (c. 1927-1934) include: (back row, left to right) Gladys Wein, Estelle Wein, Martha Haist, Laura Hirtzel, Hilda Finkbeiner, Martha Ratz, Ma Finkbeiner, Heist, Gertrude Ostricker, Alma Schwartz, Marion Schenk and Lavinia Ratz. In the second back row, are: Elsa Wuerth, Thelma King, Lizzie Faist, Amy, Delta Siles, Alma Morlock, Leona England, Cora Kleinfeld, Etta Meinhorn, Linda Finkbeiner, Mary Wein and Beatrice Roessler. Middle: Mabel Esnid, Adeline Pfiff, Mildred Holtzman, Irene Haist, Lydia McIsaac, Chrissie Telfer, Lavinia Finkbeiner, Kathleen Gaiser, Adeline Morlock, Grieres, Katie Schenk, Rosetta Fahrner, Ella Fahrner and Mrs. Charles Schroeder. Second bottom row: Lily Haist, Emma Bonner, Mary Brown, Carrie Morlock, Ida Smith, Lily Finkbeiner, Mrs. and Rev. W.M. Sippell, Sybil Gaiser, Clara Harris, Mary Eilber, Fahrner and front row: Daisy English, Pearl Fahrner, Lizzie Brown, Gladys Gaiser, Clara Ratz, Cora Wein and Lillian Wentzel.

As the congregation of the Crediton Evangelical Association continued to grow, it was obvious that the church was going to require major renovations. Instead, the congregation decided to build their third and largest church building in 1896. The new church was a Gothic design, using white brick from the Crediton brickyards with Ohio sandstone trim. The auditorium and gallery could seat 950 people. The splendid new church, built for \$15,000, was dedicated on February 14, 1897. Much of the work during the building of the church was donated by members of the congregation and their friends. When the new church opened, it boasted a fine pipe organ as well as bell, which tolled for the first time at the funeral of its donor, Mrs. Charles Eilber.



The Crediton Methodist Church was destroyed in a fire during Rev. R.A. Brook's ministry, on January 1, 1922.



This undated postcard is a photograph of the mission band group of the Crediton Methodist Church.

FINANCIAL REPORT
-OF THE-
OFFICIAL BOARD OF THE
CREDITON CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
FOR THE YEAR ENDING SAT 3RD JULY 2000

JAS. HUSSAR, B. D.

J. H. RIVERS, M. D.,
RECORDING SURGEON



These ladies, members of Crediton Methodist Church, are (back row, left to right) Lucy Leeson, Meggie Anderson, Laura Eller, Aulin Wilkinson, Sylvia Jones, Muriel Nicholson and Laurene Sambrook and (front row) Mary Chambers, Merle Clark, Mrs. Godfrey Nicholson, Mrs. Jim Hodges, Queeny Brown and Ruthie Murchison.

Methodist Church, Crediton, Ont.



The Crediton United Church, built of Milton red brick, was destroyed by fire in 1969, just as the centennial history of the church was being readied for publication.

The Association name was changed to church in 1922 and then in 1946, the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren congregations joined to become Zion Evangelical United Brethren Church.

On January 1, 1922 the Methodist Church in Crediton was destroyed by fire, although the piano and altar were saved. Only two months later the congregation was busy rebuilding. The cornerstone of the new church constructed of Milton red brick, was laid on May 18 and the building dedicated that December. On June 10, 1925, the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches united to form the new United Church of Canada. Shipka United Church was added to the Crediton charge, then served by Rev. Duncan McTavish.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church also eventually joined the United Church of Canada on January 1, 1968 and Zion Church merged with Crediton United Church.

On May 4, 1969, during its centennial year, a fire of unknown origin destroyed Crediton United Church (the former Methodist Church). The congregation was invited to join the congregation of Zion United Church, the last surviving place of worship in the village of Crediton.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first Roman Catholic services were held in the homes of families living in the Mount Carmel area. Father T. Kerwin celebrated Mass at the home of Roger Carroll, east of Mount Carmel, and in the Hall home at Mud Creek. Early priests who visited the area travelled to the parish on horseback, often from St. Patrick's Church, in Biddulph Township.

The first Catholic church in the area was built at Mud Creek. The church site was moved about 1860, to the present location "on the hill", where another frame building was erected. The first priest's home was built near the church in the 1870s.

Father Martin Kelly was serving the parish when the present brick church, a landmark in the area, was built in 1887. The cornerstone of the church, which was built with brick drawn from Crediton, was laid on July 24, 1887. The blessing of the cornerstone was done by the Vice-General of the diocese, Rev. John M. Bruyere. Cost of the church, which was completed in the summer of 1888, was \$35,000. James Anselm Mitchell was the first child baptised in the new Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.



Mount Carmel Catholic Church, a landmark in Stephen Township, was completed in 1888. The imposing red brick rectory was built next to the church in 1909.



A group of priests enjoy a game of lawn bowling on the grounds of Our Lady of Mount Carmel church.

In 1909, the frame rectory beside the church was demolished and an imposing red brick home was erected in its place. The handsome white pillars were built by Alexander McIntosh, better known as Sandy Stewart. Water was pumped by a windmill to a large tank on the upper floor of the rectory, and this supplied both the priest's home and the barn.

Several native sons of the Mount Carmel parish have joined the Catholic priesthood. Father Basil Sullivan C.S.B., a Basilican, taught at St. Michael's College, Toronto and was chaplain at two hospitals in Western Canada.

Father Vincent Guinan C.S.B. was president of Assumption College, Windsor and was the founding president of the University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas.

Father John Glavin C.S.B. taught at Assumption College, Windsor and served parishes in Detroit, Owen Sound and Toronto. Other priests who were natives of the parish were: Father John Hall, Father Hugh Fleming, Father Cyril Doyle, Father Edward Doyle, Father Basil Glavin, Father Raphael Glavin, Father Dan Couglan, Father William Coughlin and Father Hugh Coughlin.

The Mount Carmel parish, which is part of the London Diocese, celebrated its centennial in 1987.

DASHWOOD AREA, SHIPKA CHURCHES

The first church in Friedsburgh was built by the Lutheran congregation in 1874, on the Hay Township side of the village. The frame structure replaced an earlier church located on the Bronson line near Dashwood, on land donated by the Walper family.

The frame church was built for \$1,150 and it served until 1907 when the congregation decided to rebuild. The new brick Zion Lutheran Church, with its impressive tower and tall steeple, was dedicated in December 1908. German language services continued in the church until 1940. The Lutheran Church was destroyed by fire on April 5, 1979. A new church, featuring a very contemporary steeple design, was opened on June 21, 1981. The bell from the former Lutheran church, bearing the biblical inscription "Kommt! Est ist alles bereit (Come! all things are ready)" was rung prior to the opening services in the new church.

Several small, German-speaking congregations of the Evangelical Association formed in the Dashwood area in the late 1850s and early 1860s. One met at the Oswald home on the Bronson Line;



Disbrowed Lutheran Church, with its impressive tower and steeple, was dedicated in December, 1908.



The cornerstone for the Evangelical Associate Church in Dashwood, near Calvary United Church, was laid in the spring of 1895.

another in Jacob Weber's carpenter shop on the Goshen Line. A brick building, named the Salem Church, was erected on a lot on the Goshen Line. All these small appointments were closed in 1874 and work was concentrated on building the congregations of Dashwood, Crediton and Zurich churches.

In 1883, the Dashwood congregation bought a small Methodist church which was located one-and-a-half miles east of the village and moved it to Dashwood where it was repaired, and reopened. This church served until 1895 when a large new building was erected.

In the spring of 1895, a congregational meeting, led by Rev. Elias Eby, decided to build a new Evangelical Association Church in Dashwood. Members and their teams hauled much of the brick and stone used in building the new church. Benches from the Salem Church, which had been closed, were transferred to the Sunday School room in the new church. The cornerstone for the new church was laid in May, 1895. The brick parsonage for the church was purchased from the Kellermans in 1890.

The Dashwood Evangelical Church united with the United Brethren Church in 1946, to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1968, all of those churches became part of the United Church of Canada. The Dashwood church was renamed Calvary United Church.

The earliest church services in the Shipka area were held by the Bible Christians in the 1860s. The first Methodist service in Shipka was held on Christmas Day, 1887, in a room above Samuel Hawkins' blacksmith shop and was conducted by A.M. Wilson of Boston (Greenway), a local minister. A Sunday School class had already been meeting in the Hawkins' home.

Plans were soon being made to build a church in the community. The trustees overseeing this project were S. Hawkins, T. Keys, T. Lampert, J. Pickering, A. Durr and G. Keys. Land was donated north of the corner and logs provided by church members were turned into lumber at the Sweitzer-Zwicker mill in Shipka.

The frame church was completed in December, 1888. By 1899, the congregation became concerned that the close proximity to the hotel was not suitable for a place of worship. The church was moved to a lot donated by Jacob Gaiser on the Crediton Road, east of the corner.

At a meeting in 1900, the congregation voted to allow "The

German friends the privilege of using the church Sunday afternoons to teach their children German..." The Shipka church was originally part of the Grand Bend circuit, with Greenway and the White Church (east of Grand Bend). In 1926, the Shipka church became part of the regular Crediton United Church circuit.

The Shipka United Church congregation worshipped in their frame church until 1963, when the members decided they were too few in numbers to support the church. The last services in Shipka United Church were the 75th anniversary services for the church, held on September 29, 1963.

Before the church and shed were sold, and the building removed, some of the Shipka church furnishings were transferred to Crediton United Church.

Three young people from the Shipka area devoted their lives to the Christian ministry. One was Pastor Gordon Hewlett, who became chaplain of Hinsdale Hospital in Illinois. Rev. Paul D. Webb, a United Church missionary, served for many years as direc-



The 75th anniversary services for Shipka United Church were held just before the church was closed in 1963.

tor of the Hong Kong Christian service. Audrey Finkbeiner of Shipka trained as a Baptist missionary, and worked in St. Lucia, West Indies for more than 16 years.

Also, for some years, Gospel Services were held at the Starlite Drive-in Theatre at Shipka on Sunday evenings during the summer months. Henry Hoffman and Edgar Cudmore were co-directors of the Gospel Services. The slogan of these outdoor services was "Come as you are and hear from your car. In case of rain, come just the same."

CHURCHES OF CORBETT AND GREENWAY

The Boston Episcopal Church had its beginnings in 1860 when the children of the community gathered at Mrs. James McPherson's home for Sunday School services.

The first community church service was held in 1868 in the unusual setting of a woods, owned by Henry Shank. When a minister from the Sylvan Circuit was available, the congregation began to worship at S.S. #10 schoolhouse and later in a hall built on the future site of Greenway United Church. In 1875, plans were made to replace that hall with a Methodist Episcopal Church, on the townline between Stephen and McGillivray Townships. Twelve years later, the congregation of the Boston (later Greenway) church were holding meetings to compare the cost of repairing and enlarging this church, or building a new church.

Eventually, the congregation decided to build. The present Greenway United Church was built in 1897, during the ministry of Reverend J. G. Thompson, for \$3,700.

The old church was moved to the Eggert property across the road. Four other congregations, two east of Greenway and two west of the community, amalgamated in this church. Corbett Wesleyan Methodist church was probably built in the 1860s and served until the early 1890s. Corbett was also the site of the Methodist parsonage, the home of ministers of the Grand Bend and Corbett charges. A German Evangelical Church was built on the farm of Lloyd Stewardson, west of Greenway, but closed in the early years of this century. The same pattern was repeated by the German Lutheran Church, built on the farm of Emerson Woodburn, also west of Greenway. Bethel Methodist Church was located on the farm of James Rock. Corbett Presbyterian Church was built in 1887 and remained open until 1926, when the congregation joined Greenway United Church.

The membership rolls of Greenway Methodist Church, and Corbett Presbyterian Church, were bound together on June 27, 1926, at a special service conducted by Rev. A.M. Grant. When Corbett Presbyterian Church was razed, the pulpit and pulpit chair were preserved in Greenway United Church.

Grace Anglican Church, although located just outside Stephen Township, drew many adherents from the township. The first religious services were held in the home of Mrs. Fred McPherson, lovingly referred to as Aunt Selina. When her house was no longer able to accommodate the growing congregation, services were moved to the Greenway Orange Hall, which was used alternately by the Anglicans and the Methodists. In 1887, Grace Anglican Church was built under the supervision of Reverend Johnson of the Parkhill parish. The brick was bought at Crediton and all other building materials were donated. In 1908, the foundation of the church gave way and the building had to be torn down and rebuilt. A new hall was built adjoining the original church in 1955.

Grace Anglican Church was closed and sold in 1986 but the church survives as a private residence.



The pulpit and pulpit chair of the Corbett Presbyterian Church, razed in the 1920s, are preserved in Greenway United Church. (Photo by S. Harding)



Grace Anglican Church, in Grand Bend, was closed in 1986 but survives as a private residence. (Photo by S. Handing)

GRAND BEND CHURCHES

By 1862, the Presbyterian settlers in the Grand Bend area were tired of infrequent services by itinerant ministers. When they discovered that the Maitland Presbytery was meeting at Clinton in October 1862, they petitioned for a baptismal service. The Reverend John Logie, who ministered to Presbyterians in the Exeter area, was appointed to visit Grand Bend and conduct baptisms.

For several years afterwards student ministers were sent to the Grand Bend "mission" for a six-week period in the summer. In 1872, Reverend Henry Gracie of Thames Road formally organized a Presbyterian congregation and served the sacraments in the old log schoolhouse in the village. Two years later, a brick church was constructed directly in front of the school.

The Reverend Samuel Anselm Carriere arrived to take charge of the congregation in 1882; he remained until his retirement in 1922. Carriere, a French-Canadian, once reminisced, "...I was sent to endeavour to unite the English and French into one charge, and to evangelize, as much as possible, in the whole district.... After 16 years of toil amidst many difficulties but also many encourage-

ments, we have the joy of saying that there is not a household in our field where we are not welcomed and very few who do not claim your servant as their pastor."

A non-denominational Sunday School was one of the means Carriere used to bring the young of Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic families, both English and French-speaking, together. He spoke French and English fluently and delivered his sermons in both languages. Professionally trained in music himself, he introduced the daring innovation of reed organs into both the Grand Bend and Corbett churches. Carriere was a colourful and energetic figure who gave a firm foundation to his congregation in Grand Bend.

A Methodist congregation also developed in the Grand Bend area. A frame church, painted white, was built in the late 1870s and became known as the White Church. It became part of a three-point charge which included Greenway and Shipka.

By the turn of the century, another group of worshippers were well established in Grand Bend. These were the campers and cottagers who gathered in a shady grove, east of the beach area owned by Charles Gibbs of Parkhill, for interdenominational services. In the early years, all the participants shared the responsibilities of conducting the services, leading the singing or giving sermons. The services were very popular and gradually became more organized, with ordained ministers of various denominations conducting services during July and August.

At the time of church union in 1925, the Methodists and Presbyterians agreed to form one congregation. The 'campers' also agreed to join, but unwilling to give up their open-air services, they bought land for the new church building with ample space for outdoor services to be held during July and August. The Grand Bend United Church was completed and dedicated in 1927.

The Grand Bend Church of God began with French language services in private homes before the turn of the century. In 1903, several families built a log church and shed on the B-line. As the church grew, revival meetings, held every spring and fall, became popular events. A new church was built in 1949 on land purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Sol Pollock.

Two young evangelists, Thomas Wilkie and Albert Joyce, arrived in Grand Bend in 1921 and began preaching, first in a little hall on the B-line and later in a disused dance hall, owned by Bruce



In 1874, the Presbyterian Church in Grand Bend was built at a cost of \$1,445. The manse eventually became part of Peter Eisenbach's Museum.

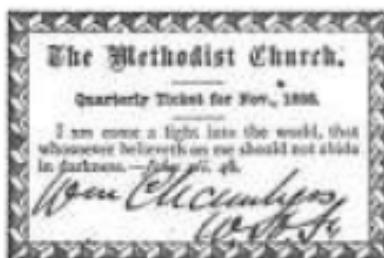
Bossenberry, in town. In 1922, a large tent was pitched on an empty lot and a congregation was formed. Founding members of that congregation included Michael Gratton, Mrs. and Mrs. Fred Gratton, Mrs. Nellie Webb, Arthur Page and his sister, Verda. The building of the Gospel Hall began in September and was completed, all by volunteer labour, in November 1922. Noah Gratton, a member of the Grand Bend congregation, preached the Gospel Hall message in Quebec for over 30 years.

In the spring of 1949, Anglican Bishop George Luxton determined to build a church at Grand Bend to serve both permanent and summer residents. He purchased a lot on Highway 21, just north of the town and the church, which came to be called St. Johns by the Lake, opened for worship on July 10, 1949. In 1957, the building was extended to the east to make room for a sacristy, vestry, office and choir room. On January 1, 1979, St. John's by the Lake joined with Trivitt Memorial in Exeter to become a two-point charge under the ministry of Reverend George Anderson.

The Mary Ellen Memorial Chapel was dedicated in 1964 at the pioneer museum created by contractor Peter Eisenbach three years earlier. The chapel, named for Mr. Eisenbach's wife and mother, was furnished with antiques including the pulpit chair used by Reverend Carriere, pews from dismantled churches in Shipka and elsewhere and a bell from the Grand Bend public school. The chapel

was moved to the Lambton Heritage Museum site, on Highway 21 south of Grand Bend, when the museum opened in 1978.

Faith was central to the lives of the early settlers of Stephen: it gave them strength to face the trials and griefs of life in the backwoods. Today, that faith and faithfulness is kept alive by the congregations of the surviving churches in Stephen Township.



This quarterly ticket, with the biblical verse which starts this chapter, survives as a memento of the Crediton Methodist Church.

From Log. . . to Brick. . . to Central School

The history of Stephen Township's schools was compiled by Donald Finkbeiner, with assistance from Muriel Mack, Cecil Desjardine, Phyllis Tones, Mrs. Emery Desjardine, Janet Hicks, and files from the Exeter Times Advocate.

Pioneers counted their shillings and pence,
Purchased a site, erected a fence,
Steadily toiled with primitive tool
Till sturdy and strong stood their new school.

Little boys came with their copper toes,
Girls in their pinafores and bows,
Teachers taught them their A B Cs
At recess they shouted beneath the trees.

Years passed by, the school still stood,
Strong white brick and frame of wood.
Grandparents told the girls and boys
Of past remembered woes and joys.

One hundred years the school has stood,
Sheltering from both the bad and good.
Out from the doors great men have come,
Girls became women creating a home.

Let us never forget the old brick school
That was built long ago to overrule
Darkness and ignorance, to bring the light
Through the hundred years yet in our sight.

When the settlers had cleared some of their land and established a home for their families and shelter for their animals, they turned their thoughts to providing an education for their children. Before 1843, the settlers could not be taxed for building and supporting schools. Hence any existing schools depended on voluntary support. The Huron Tract was controlled by the Canada Company. Early records show that the first school in Huron County was a log building, erected by the Canada Company, in the town of Goderich, possibly in 1832. The first school in Stephen Township was opened at Francistown, a short distance east of the London Road. This school was to serve the townships of Hay, Stephen and Usborne, and was known as School #9. It was a county school and was probably the ninth to be built by the Canada Company, around 1838.

In 1841, the Honourable S.B. Harrison's parliamentary bill provided for the annual grant of funds to various counties in the province in proportion to their school populations. This was conditional on the county matching the amount of the grant by local assessments for school purposes. Also, municipal councils were authorized to appoint local superintendents of schools.

In 1843, Sir Francis Hincks introduced another bill which provided for dividing townships into school sections and the election of three trustees for each section. The trustees were elected for a three-year term, with one of them serving as chairman and a second as secretary-treasurer. They had the responsibility of "looking after" the hiring of teachers and any business relating to the education of the pupils in their section.

Some of the school's regulations and requirements of this era were: desks were to be around the outside of the room; each school was to have a bell to call the children into school; there was to be a pointer for blackboard instruction; a pail and dipper for water and a split-leather strap in the classroom. Some schools did not provide toilet facilities.

Stephen Township's first schoolhouse was a log structure erected on the farm of George Snell on Lot 15, Concession 1. It is not certain when this school was built but we know that it existed in 1843, as municipal records state that the "annual town meeting" for the townships of Hay, Stephen and Usborne was held in the school on January 1, 1844.

This school served the whole of the township except for a small



This map shows the location of the schools that served the students of Stephen Township. Today, township students attend one of three central elementary schools at Huron Park, Mount Carmel and Stephen Central, located west of Centralia.

area in the north-east corner, the children from that area attending the school at Francistown. Records show that the first teacher was hired in 1848. By 1855, according to bylaw 59, a new school for the section was built on Lot 7, Concession 2. This school was later replaced by a new building, at another location, and became S.S. #1, Fairfield.

The original school, besides being the meeting place for the council, was also used for religious services, and remained standing until about 1878.

S.S. #1, FAIRFIELD

"Fairfield public school, after being in operation for almost 100 years, is about to be closed and in future the pupils will join the Stephen Township School Area.

"At a Christmas party at the school Mr. Herman Powe read a history of the school from which we have taken the following information." - *Exeter Times Advocate*

"Originally, Fairfield was a Devonshire mission and a Wesleyan Methodist church was erected in 1862. Fairfield was the second oldest community in the district, pre-dated by little Devon.

two miles south of Exeter, where Methodist and Anglican churches were built about 1847.

The first school was started north of Devon around 1843. Council used to meet in this building. S.S. #1 Stephen was later moved to Fairfield where a church and parsonage were built on the southeast corner where the cemetery still stands. There was a blacksmith shop owned by William Mitchell. The old log school was on the farm formerly owned by John Reeder.

The first teacher in the log school, more than 100 years ago, was John Parsons, later the owner of a mill and general store in Crediton. Later teachers were William Roche and Chester Prouty. Mr. and Mrs. Warburton taught jointly in the two-room school which was torn down 31 years ago. While Mr. Dalgety taught, the school section was divided, with some pupils going to Crediton and some to Centralia.

The old log school is described as a square, low building, with a row of desks around three sides, benches occupying the centre. These were the days of large families — the Wilsons with 13 children, Handfords 12 and other families with eight to 13 children.

The second school stood for 63 years and some of its brick was used in the new school, built in 1930. The trustees were Messrs. Byron Hicks, George Hepburn and Leslie Richards. The basement was fitted with washing sinks and hard and soft water. The schoolroom was lighted with hydros, had hardwood floors, slate blackboards, single seats and cloak rooms for the boys and girls.

This, the third school, was opened 61 years ago, with a fine celebration and a hot chicken supper served to about 150 people. H.E. Hueston, a former teacher, gave an interesting talk on his early days as pupil and teacher.

The present school was considered the finest in rural Ontario. The teachers who followed Miss Beryl Hill and her assistant, Miss Reta Rowe were: Warren Bamford, Miss Violet Watkins, Miss Grace Andrew, Mrs. Freeman Moelock, Mrs. Ivan Prouty, Miss Colleen Stobo, Miss Donna Bowden and Mrs. Mervin Carter, now serving her second term.

In 1941, the Centralia airport was built, breaking up the section and the attendance dwindled to 11, forcing S.S. #1, Stephen to enter the school area."

- Herman Poué

At present, the school is the residence of Dave Dittmer.



The students of S.S. #7, Fairfield in this 1904 photo are: (back row, left to right): Louise Flanagan, Siloam Hirtzel, Lulu Essery, Miss Robertson (teacher), Laura Sims, Mary Chambers and Rory Sims; (second row) Verne Essery, Delphine Essery, Gleetis Hill, Ethel Lausport, Bristol Essery, Laura Sims, Louise Sims, Roy Hill and (front row) — Sims, — Sims, — —, — —, Beryl Hill, — —, Everett Sims, Claytau Sims, Will Sims, Eva Hirtzel, — —, — —, Garner Hill.



This photo of S.S. #1, Fairfield, with an unidentified teacher and his class, is taken in front of the second schoolhouse, which stood for 63 years.

S.S. #2 (SOUTH)

The school sections in Stephen were set up as the need arose and petitions were presented to council. When the settlers became more numerous on the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th concessions, the need for another school was apparent. There was no bridge over the Ausable River and hence the children living west of the river were not able to attend S.S. #1, Fairfield regularly. So settlers living west of the river, together with others living in the township of McGillivray, united their efforts to have a school in this area. The result was a Union School, built of logs, on the northeast corner of Lot 7, Concession 7. The section did not receive a deed for this property, but paid an annual rental fee of approximately \$3 per year.

The school did not open as soon as it was built, quite possibly because there was no teacher available. However, it was open by 1853, from May to November, with John O'Connell as teacher. Samuel Foster later taught here for several years and the school was known as the Foster School.

In 1874, a new site was purchased on the southwest corner of Lot 6, Con. 6, and a brick school was erected. It served the community until it was closed in 1945. Pupils from this area were then transported to Crediton Public School.

From recordings of the school secretary, kept since 1871, it is noted that during 1872, the teacher's salary was \$200. Martha Lewis was paid \$4 for sweeping the school 100 times and scrubbing the floor. John Lawson was paid \$3.80 for providing four cords of hard wood.

During the school's history, three generations of two families were trustees. These were Edmund, Thomas and Edward Chambers, and William, George and S. George Lawson.

Other trustees included Daniel Coughlin, Matthew Winer, George Lewis, Joseph King, Richard Sims, Henry Lamport, James Lamport, Michael Hirtzel, David Stahl, Alex Clark, Joseph Edwards and Patrick Flannagan.

The first teacher was Henry Hueston, who for many years was also secretary of the school board. Other teachers were: Mrs. Sam King, Mrs. Freeman Morlock, Mrs. Earl Haist, Miss Audrey Power, Mrs. William Coates and Wilbert Sholdice.

The school has been deserted for some years — ever since adoption of consolidated schools, which brought the pupils to Crediton. The grounds, woodshed, and contents of the school were sold by auction.



This photo of S.S. #2 students, taken about 1938, includes teacher Dorothy Kyte with students Mathew Morlock, Bryce Mack, Mary King, Orville Rollings, Eva-line Mack, Harvey Hodgins, Vida Rollings and (second row) Doris Wright, Marion Wright, Eileen Hodgins, Norma Hodgins and Elaine Mitchell, Clifford Rollings, Winnifred Mack and Marian Grieves.

Students were transported to Crediton by bus drivers Wilfrid and Muriel Mack, beginning in 1946.

S.S. #3 SHAPTON

When the second school in the township, (S.S. #2) was erected, the river had formed a natural division for the two sections. In 1852, when a request was made to council for a third school, it was necessary to set up definite boundaries. The legislature of Upper Canada, in 1810, had passed a school act that empowered any group of settlers, in any area where 20 pupils could be found, to open a school. Three trustees had to be elected and make application to municipal council.

On November 13, 1852, bylaws 9 and 10 were passed giving the boundaries to S.S. #1, and S.S. #3. George Waldron was appointed to call the first meeting for S.S. #3, Stephen. It was held on October 3, 1853 and three trustees were elected, George Waldron for three years, William Sanders for two and James Shapton for one. The freeholders and householders met on December 2 to consider the building of a schoolhouse and its location. The trustees advertised for a teacher and classes were held in the Providence Chapel on Lot 21, Con. 2 from January 16 until the school was erected on the southeast corner of Lot 20, Con. 3 in 1854. The trustees used the same plan as S.S. #1 and the cost was 53 pounds, 12 shillings, 10 1/2 pence. That cost included the furnishings and digging a well.

It was agreed that this would be a free school with all expenses raised by taxes. At first the section had no money so they gave notes for their debts. The township collected the non-resident taxes and the school trustees tried to get their share from the council, but the council did not have any money. Then on June 25, 1855, George Waldron, on behalf of the section, made a last demand for the money due and threatened that if it was not paid, the trustees would take lawful means to collect the funds. The succeeding events are not recorded but on January 10, 1856, the trustees received their money.

The section had another problem and no explanation was found for it. When the school was erected on Lot 20, Con. 3, it was actually on the Union S.S. #9 side of the dividing line. In January 1858, S.S. #3 trustees requested council to withdraw from S.S. #9, but this was not done and it was not until December 1862 that a bylaw was passed which added lots to the North Boundary in Concessions 2 and 3 to this section. Apparently Union S.S. #9 trustees demanded compensation as they were paid \$48.41 in 1859.

Desks were purchased for the school in 1862. The next year a platform was built and in 1865, a porch was added. Teachers at the school included: Miss Sophia Carter, Miss Celia Blake, Miss Charlotte Munson, Thomas M. Bowerman, Walter McDougall, George Van Slyke, William H.C. Winan, John Yelland Varcoe, John Waldron, George Wright and Miss Mathilda Elliott.

In 1871, additional land was purchased from Richard Sweet and a new school was erected on the north side of the lot for \$1,200.

A porch was added in 1876 and in January 1878, a partition was put up and an assistant teacher engaged for four months. In 1887 a new well was dug, a new fence erected, and a new stove purchased and in 1890, a woodshed was added.

Teachers in this school were: Thomas Young, James McAndrew, William T. May, George W. Holman, Robert Sample, Miss Rhoda Rowe, assistant, Samuel Sample, S.J. Latta, Miss Hannah Kinsman, Arthur Hotham, J.W. Harrison, George A. Russell, Thomas McKay, William Bagshaw, R.N. Creech, Barton Hooper, Robert Anderson and Fred Sanders. Salaries were from \$312 to \$400.

The trustees decided to build a new school in July, 1904, at a cost of \$1,700, to be raised by taxes. A white brick school was erected with a furnace for heating and a cement sidewalk to the door and

was ready for use on November 9. The new teacher was Miss Pringle but her stay was brief. A belfry was added in 1906; a 26-inch bell was purchased for \$34.

In 1909, a library was started and additions were made in succeeding years. Blackboards and furnishings were added as needed and a new furnace was installed in 1926 for \$153. In the '20s, a garden was started and students participated in the Crediton School Fair. Hydro was installed in 1937 and a piano was purchased. Roy Goulding was engaged to teach music in 1928, followed by Lawrence Wein.

Teachers in the third school included: Miss Pringle, Percy Barnes, Charles Tebutt, Melvin Keys, William Triebner, Miss Emily Thompson, Miss Ida Marchand, Miss Florence Triebner, Miss Leila B. Sanders, Miss Dorothy Juntz, Miss Alma Harding, Miss Gertrude Francis, Miss Hazel Smillie, Miss Margie Laing, Miss Madaline Gillfillan, Miss Etta McLeod, Miss Margaret MacMurchy, Miss Norma Fahrner and Miss Irene Finkbeiner. Salaries increased from \$400 to \$2,000. The 1944 trustees were Ernest Willard, William Stanlake and Earl Shapton.

The minutes and financial records for S.S. #3 from 1853 to 1944 are recorded in two journals. There is also an interesting Visitors' Book dating from May 11, 1857. It includes some fine examples of penmanship and the comments of visiting ministers, teachers, trustees, and by the local superintendent and inspector of public schools.

The school joined the Stephen Township Public School Area in 1945. It closed in June 1950 when attendance dropped to six students. The children were taken by taxi to the Crediton and Exeter public schools. The school was sold to James E. Jones. Later it was sold to John Harvey Andrews on December 14, 1962, and was transformed into a comfortable residence by the Andrews family. Kathy and Ron Mason have lived in the school for the last five years.

S.S. #4 SHARON

"The settlers of the Sharon community presented a petition to the Stephen Township Council, and Bylaw 37 was passed on October 20, 1855, to authorize the setting up of School Section No. 4. Joshua Pedlar was authorized to call the first meeting at the home of Moses Amy, November 8, 1855."

In 1856, a log school was erected. On June 20, 1863, some land



Students from the Shann School, with their banners and crepe paper hats, were dressed up to take part in a school parade, possibly during the annual school fair.

was bought for five shillings from Ed Kestle by Moses Amy. On January 20, 1871, an additional half acre of land was purchased for the sum of \$80 per acre from Ed Kestle on the same lot.

According to records which are available for 1884, the trustees of S. S. #4 were Wm. Rowe, G. Morlock and N. Kestle.

On July 2, 1888, a special section meeting was called and it was decided to tear down the log school and build the present brick school. One-half acre of land was purchased from William Kestle for \$44 in 1908 to enlarge the schoolyard. A new wire fence was erected to enclose the school grounds, and a woodshed was built.

In 1921, an organ was purchased by the teacher and pupils for \$25, from the Christmas concert proceeds.

In September 1930, musical instruction was started in the school with Roy Goulding as the first instructor. He was succeeded by Lawrence Wein of Exeter in 1965.

In 1935, Miss W. Frayne, teacher, and E.C. Beacom, inspector, influenced the board to install cupboards and purchase dishes to serve hot lunches to students.

Four years later, a piano was purchased by the board for \$75. Farm Forum meetings were held at the school in the 1940s. The school joined the Stephen Township School Area in 1945. Hydro was installed in 1950, one of the most welcome improvements at the school.



The Crediton school, which even offered high school classes for eight years, was one of the larger public schools in the township.



This two-storey schoolhouse was built in Crediton in 1906, the third school to serve village students. The brick used in construction came from Wilson Anderson's yard.

Each June, a picnic was held for the school section. The teacher who occupied the teacher's desk the longest was Miss Lavina Smith (Mrs. Irvine Finkbeiner).

Others who taught at Sharon were: Joseph Holmes, G.W. Lawson, M. Jennison, J. Truemner, Mathilda Oestricher, Lydia Oestricher, Margaret McMasters, Ila Hodgins, Helen Walper, Ada Webb, Jean Armstrong, Joyce Cooper and Katharine Becker.

A special tribute should be accorded to Arthur Amy who was secretary-treasurer of the Sharon School for 25 years (1919-1944). He continued as secretary-treasurer of the School Area Board until 1955.

Through the doors of S. S. #4, Stephen, prominent men and women have come. For over 100 years, the little school house has administered learning and taught comradeship and leadership to many children." - *Excerpts from Sharon Reunion Folder*

The school was purchased by the Boy Scout troop of Dashwood and used by the Scouts for several years. The school bell was stolen in January, 1975. Clifford Grasdahl eventually purchased the property and built a residence there.

S.S. #5

School Section #5 was formed as a separate area from S. S. #1 and S.S. #2 in 1857 by a bylaw of township council.

The schools in this section were all located in Crediton. The first building used as a school had been a woollen mill. It was located behind the present Mallett residence, northwest of the municipal office. This same two-storey building was also used as the first town hall in the village.

In 1873, a two-room frame school was erected with a third room being added in 1877. This new building was erected to the east of the woollen mill. Three additional parcels of land were purchased in 1873, 1893 and 1900 for \$334 to complete the school property. In 1905, at a special meeting of ratepayers, plans were formulated to build a new school. This brick, two-storey building was erected in 1906, using brick made at Wilson Anderson's slop-brick yard. The contractor was George Holtzman of Crediton. The new school cost \$6,200. Trustees Sam Brown, Michael Finkbeiner and William Wenzel decided at a special meeting in 1906 that high school education would be available to students starting in January 1907. Due to a declining enrolment of senior students, only elementary classes were taught here after 1915.

Teachers at Crediton school included: A. Hobkirk, S. Nash, Edith Wiggin, James Westman, John Nichol, C.K. Blaett, Miss Farrow, Laura Love, S. Salter, M. Brown, Almeda Finkbeiner, Lydia Oestricher, Lulu Gaiser, Cora Schroeder, Ethel Mackay, Merton Morley, Miss E. Kinney, Ella Morlock, Verna Cunningham, Sid Brown, Carman Whitmore, Miss Norma Fahner, Miss Marie Symons, Joyce Presczator, Ruby Molitor, Mrs. Sid Smith, Mrs. Cameron, Mrs. Prout, Marg Baker and Marion McLean.

In June, 1920, a steam-heating system was installed, as was electricity in 1929. The school was demolished in 1966 and the township municipal offices built on the site.

S.S. #6

School Section #6 was formed at the same time as S.S. #5 (Crediton) in 1857, council acting upon petitions by the residents. The boundary of this section included Lots 6 to 13 from the 10th Concession to the 21st (Shipka). Thomas Davis was instructed to call the first meeting for S.S. #4. The school was known as Khiva. Records indicate that both Protestant and Roman Catholic children attended until the first school at Mount Carmel was opened.

Some of the teachers were Marjorie Guinan, Cora Schroeder, Ada Willis, Florence Turnbull, Vera Mawhinney, Mary Stewart, Marguerite Knight, Clara Douglas, Janet Turnbull and Helen Jamieson.

S.S. #7

"During 1863, S.S. #7, Shipka was formed. It consisted of 3,422 acres, and had an assessment of \$152,670.

In 1863, the first log school was built on Lot 7, the 16th Concession. About ten years later it was replaced on Lot 7, Con. 17, by a frame building.

In 1901, the section was divided, part of it uniting with the Union School at Corbett. In order to have the school more centrally located, it was decided to move it farther north. One-half acre of land was bought from William Holt on Lot 10, Con. 17, for \$100. During the summer of 1901, the old building was moved to the present site and was used in the construction of a new and substantial brick building, with a frame woodshed at the south side.

The property has always been kept in good condition. A supply of good drinking water was a problem for many years, until a new well was dug in 1928.



In 1910, a special gathering of students, teachers, trustees and local residents was held at the Skipta School, known as S.S. #7, Stephen.

In 1931, W. R. Goulding began teaching music in the school, followed by Lawrence Wein and Douglas Gill.

Graduates of S.S. #7 who entered the Christian ministry include: Pastor Gordon Hewlett, Rev. Paul Webb and missionary teacher Audrey Finkbeiner.

The following men have served as trustees since 1895: Fred Heitzman, John Pickering, Michael Finkbeiner, Norman Buchanan, Peter McKenzie, Dan McPhee, Christian Finkbeiner, Frederick Gaiser, Isaac Bestard, Thomas Keogh, Dougal McIsaac, George Scott, Ernest Gaiser, Matthew Sweitzer, Ross Love, Verne Sharpe, George Clarke, Roy Mason, Ernest Willard, Wellwood Gill, Harry Shepherd, G.R. Godbolt, Lloyd Lampert, Sidney Baker, Ross Brown, Harold Fahner, Ralph Weber, W.F. B. McLaren and Don Flear.

The names of teachers who taught here are: Thomas Gilbert, S.S. Jones, Maggie McKay, Agnes McKay, Mary McLachlan, James Westman, Daniel McKenzie, Ira Harton, Patrick Houlahan, A.D. Dixon, Wilbert Hall, William Hast, William Gillespie, Christian Noble, Esther Weston, Clinton Hogarth, J.M. Robertson, Ernie Durr, Christina Edmeston, Minnie E. Sheritt, Mary Watson, Muriel Fallis, Leona Finkbeiner, Violet Sharpe, Florence Triebner, Muriel Nicholson, Lavina Smith, Rhena Colling, Edna Pfaff, Dawson

Woodburn, Mary MacMillan, Gertrude Schilbe, Lillian Thompson, Alma Ratz, Mildred J. Hicks, Mrs. Melvin Desjardine, Irene Finkbeiner, Helen Becker, Marie Symons, Evelyn Desjardine, Janet Desjardine, Ken Flear, Donald Finkbeiner, Marion Fleischauer, Mrs. Martin and Stanley Haist.

Shipka School section joined the Stephen School Area on January 1, 1945." - *Shipka Reunion Folder*

Union S.S. #8 (STEPHEN AND BOSANQUET TOWNSHIP)

*"Under a spreading white oak tree
The village school house stands"*

"With apologies to Longfellow, these lines aptly describe the location of the first schoolhouse at Grand Bend, built in 1861. A log building, it stood near the northern entrance to the Grand Bend cemetery under a large oak tree. The late Henry Hueston of Exeter, and a Mr. Hamilton, taught in this school. The inspector was Mr. Miller. Average attendance was 64 pupils. During the winter months, many of the pupils were young men who, realizing that their limited education was inadequate for their needs, sought to add to their knowledge. The late Joseph Sharro, and probably others, attended school with his own children.

Mr. Sharro also told an amusing story of being disciplined at school when he was a small boy. As a result of some misdemeanour, he was made to sit on a stump in front of the school with a tall dunce cap on his head. He was just congratulating himself that he was fortunate in missing his spelling test when the roll of wheels and thud of horse's feet told him someone was about to pass by on the road. Horror of horrors—it was his own father! The real disciplining came that night at home. Mr. Sharro reported.

On the 29th day of June, 1874, for the sum of fifty dollars, a piece of land was purchased from William Fallis. A frame building was erected on this site, with a partition through the centre that came to the platform. Two teachers were employed at this time. Later the partition was lowered to about six feet and one teacher was in charge. J. Elgin Tom of Goderich was the school inspector.

A new brick building was then erected just east of the frame building, next to Mrs. W.B. Oliver's home. The number of school age children soon made it necessary to rent the Maccabee hall and



This debenture, for the "Corporation of the Township of Stephen", was issued on December 15, 1926, to help fund construction of Ulmen School 5.S. #8, Stephen and Rosenau.

use both buildings — the school for the senior classes, the hall for the juniors. Isaac Sharro, James Patterson and Joe Ravelle formed the school board at this time.

In 1925, under a board consisting of Maurice Brenner, Aaron Ireland and Harold Walper, a two-acre site was purchased from Solomon Polluck and the splendid school in use at present was built. The old school was sold to the B-line school board, who had it torn down and rebuilt on the B-line where it still (in 1950) serves that district. The new school consists of two classrooms, a full basement with a furnace and a teachers' room. The school was erected for a cost of \$9,000 and at the time was considered to be one of the finest schools in Huron County.

In the spring of 1938, 125 trees were planted on the school grounds. The next year, each child got five trees to take home and plant in honour of the Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to Canada.

The school was wired for electricity in 1939 and water was put in two years later. The school section became a member of Stephen Township School Area #1 in 1948.

When a third classroom was needed in 1948, space was rented.

ed in William Glenn's restaurant.

Music supervisors have been Roy Goulding, Lawrence Wein, and Douglas Gill.

In 1921 the first school fair was held at Grand Bend with five schools taking part, (B-line, Miss Brooks; S.S. #10, Miss Hobbs; Weyburn, Miss Guenther; Shipka, Miss Smith; Grand Bend, Edna Slade and Annie Babb).

A parade of all the children with suitable banners led the crowd from the Grand Bend school to the old football grounds (where Wonder Grove Cabins were located). Here the races and sports were staged. All the exhibits were on display in the hall above the Brenner Garage. One of the most interested spectators at the fair was the late Henry Hueston of Exeter, one of the early teachers at Grand Bend."

Other teachers were Andrew Meldrum, George Meldrum, George Foster, Frank Bolton, K. Struthers, L. Cunningham, Jennie Mills, Jessie McKenzie, Ruby Shearer, Verna Robinson, Pearl Willert, and Edith Peddie. - Compiled by Mrs. Emery Desjardine

Grand Bend school became part of the Lambton County Board of Education in 1969.

S.S. #10, HARPLEY

On November 1st, 1863, a meeting was called by James Wilson, at the home of James Burly, to make plans for building a school. The school was to be built on the corner of Lot 6, Con. 21 on the farm of F. Angus. Price paid for the land was eight dollars. The salary of the teacher was raised by direct taxation. Each parent with children going to school was to give one day cutting wood. The price of building the first school was \$128.

The first teacher was William McKinnon, hired in 1863 at a salary of \$180. The first school trustees were Rufus McPherson, Colin Ferguson and Murray Walker. The original school served the community for nine years.

A frame building was erected in 1873, situated on the same grounds. The land was part of the Baker farm. For this reason, the school was known as the Baker schoolhouse. Much of the section was bush. The land was sparsely populated but the families were large. Around 1880, there were as many as 80 pupils attending school.

The early settlers in this section were families named McPher-



This photo of the teacher and students at the frame S.S. #10, Harpley school was taken in April, 1915.

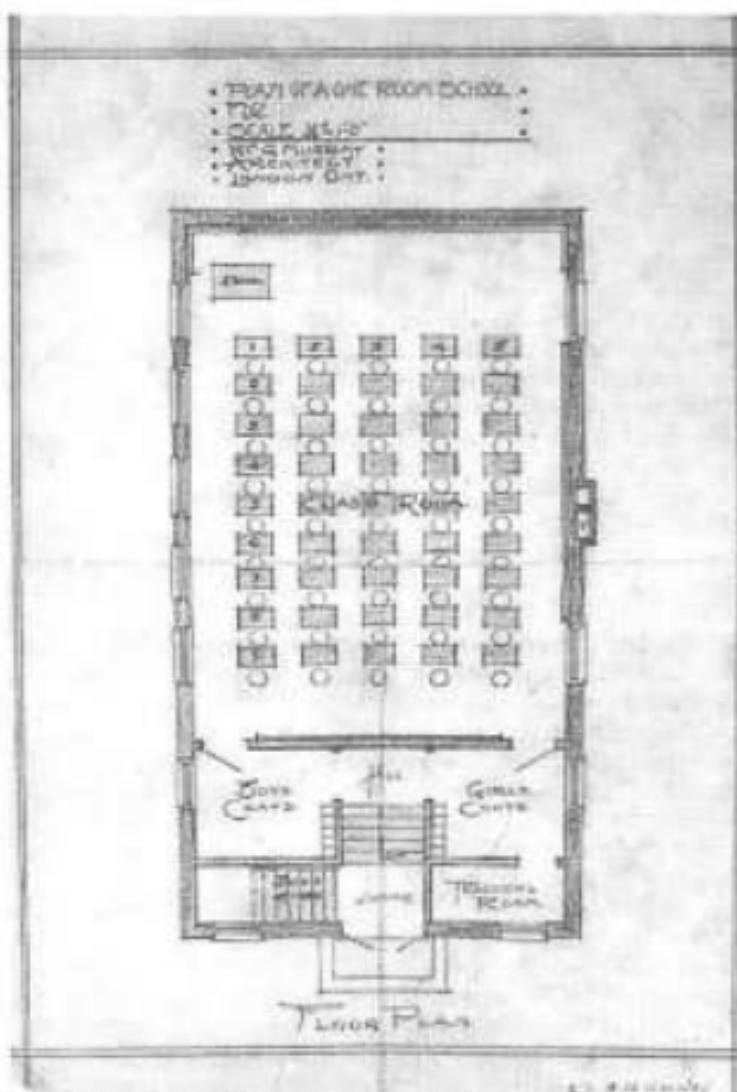
son, Shank, Ranson, McLinchey, English, Webb, McClay and Cronyn. The frame schoolhouse needed some repairs, so it was veneered with brick, which made the building much warmer. With the bush being rapidly cleared away, the school was exposed to the winds. A bell was purchased in 1890 and installed in a belfry on the roof.

In 1892, William Hayter lighted the fires and swept the school for \$5 annually.

In 1896, Geromette and Wilson bored a well for \$60 and guaranteed a good supply of water. The water, however, was not good and the old stone well was cleaned out. In 1901, the children carried water by the pail from Robert Armstrong's home. On June 8, 1911, Jerry Brophy was paid \$73 for drilling a new well.

The third schoolhouse was erected in 1926 at a cost of \$54. The trustees were Thomas Love, David Eagleson, and W.J. Brown.

The first music teacher was Roy Goulding in 1931. The school was the only public building in the section. Although the area became more populated, the families were small and in 1950, only 31 pupils were enrolled.



This is the floor plan for the third school at Harpsley, designed by London architect W.G. Murray. This design is very typical of the layout of one-room schools in Stephen.

Hydro was installed in the school in 1949 — a great help for study on dull days. The teachers who taught here include: William McKinnon, Elliott Thyme, D. McArthur, Matthew Waits, B. Baker, Thomas Gilbert, Miss E. Esler, Laura Baker, George A. Foster, John McWilliams, Laura Baker, Miss Upshall, Mae Hodgins, Lydia Sherritt, Donald R. Finlayson, Eva Woods, Miss Sheppy, Miss Nicholson, Miss F. Hill, Miss M. Hobbs, Miss Miller, Miss Iva Francis, Miss Kirk, Miss H. West, Miss Bolton, Miss A.R. Corbett, Peter Moffat, Mrs. R. Pollock, Miss Kleinstiver, Ina Turnbull, Beatrice Greene, Miss Taylor, Miss Oestricher, Helen Walper, Mary Houlihan, Mrs. Melvin Desjardine, Mrs. Garnet Hodgins and Wilma Desjardine.

In the fall of 1956, pupils of the B-line section and those of S.S. #10 united. The teacher at that time was Mrs. Wilma Desjardine. In 1966, the school was closed and put up for sale. It was purchased by Carman Lovie and demolished.

S.S. #11, BLACKBUSH

School Section #11, Stephen Township, began when a log school was built in 1869 on a half acre of ground purchased from John Preeter on Lot 20, Concession 14. The school house cost \$224.

The first board of trustees was August Schroeder, a man named Winkenweter and secretary-treasurer Henry Soldan.

During the year 1885, the old schoolhouse was replaced by a one-storey, two-room brick school. The larger school was needed to accommodate the increased number of pupils attending, including some from the Dashwood area. At that time the section took in the district from one-half mile east of Dashwood to three miles west of Dashwood, plus Concessions 12, 14 and 16. A board fence enclosed the grounds until 1921.

The name "Blackbush" came from the black-looking hickory trees around the school.

In 1900, a bell was put in the belfry but in 1913, during a wind-storm, the belfry was blown over and the bell fell through the ceiling into the school room. Classes were held in Fred Preeter's house until the school was repaired.

In 1925, single desks replaced the double ones. Proceeds from Christmas concerts were used to purchase a second-hand organ. Annual school picnics were held every year since 1926.

In 1938, a piano was purchased and a new library was built.



The interior of S.S. #7, Stephen is typical of many of the one-room schoolhouses. Teacher Alma Ratz posed with students (first row) Russell Clarke, Donald Ratz, — — —, and Leona Keough; (second row) — Houlihan, Mary Houlihan, Ross Clarke, Elsie Geiser, — — —, Jack Ratz, Audrey Hartton, Joe Kinney and (third row) Ruth Kinney, Melvin Geiser, Margaret Ratz, Lila Finkbeiner, Audrey Finkbeiner, Ross Pickering, Roy Clarke, Jack Pickering and Stuart Sutizer.

During the summer of 1941, the school was completely redecorated. Slate blackboards were installed at Easter, 1943.

The school was wired for hydro during the Easter vacation of 1945 and the power was turned on May 9. A new fence was put around the school yard and the posts were painted white, tipped with green.

Grade 8 student Shirley Pearson won first prize of \$25 in the vocal solos category at the 1949 Goderich Music Festival.

In 1955, a water pressure system, including toilets and sinks were installed. Also at that time a new oil furnace replaced the old iron stove in the centre of the new schoolroom.

The school was closed in December 1964 and the pupils transported to Dashwood.

The following teachers taught at the school from 1869: John Reith, George Wright, Joseph Smith, R. Whiting, Alex Walker, Miss Kinsman, John R. Ross, James Ervin, Asa J. Styles, Hugh Ross, Tom Snell, Joseph Spencer, Miss Davidson, Miss Merritt, May Hodgins, Lily Hartleib, Rita Keys, Isobel Ramsey, Violet Graybiel, Kathleen Genge, Lydia Oestricher, Susie Kleinfeldt, Miss Guenther, Duna Dale, Hilda Neischwanger, Grace Nixon, Laura Snell, Lily Greb, Norma Crago, Marion Nicholson, Marjorie Minnelly, Robert P. Reid, Ada Webb, Irene Haugh, Helen Kleinstiver, Frances Eagleson, Stanley Haist, Marie Salmon and Lenore Trott.

The following men have served as secretary-treasurers of this school since 1869: Henry Soldan, Fred Preeter, Isaiah Tetreau, Albert Morenz, Noah Dietrich, Lawrence Dietrich, Placid Desjardine, George Link, Wes Engeland, Clarence Gale, Otto Willert, Russell Webb, Irvin Devine, Roy Morenz, and Gerald Mason.

S.S. #12 B-LINE

This school was located on Lot 3, Concession A and records show that \$1,000 was borrowed in 1874 to erect a school.

In the 1930s, the teachers were Ardetta Portice and Beatrice Green, the enrolment ranging from 26 to 28 pupils. Louis Farrell was the school custodian.

The school was closed in 1956 and the six pupils were transported to S.S. #10, the Harpley school.

Other teachers were D. Copp, Susie Kleinfeldt, J.D. McCormack, E. Brooks, L. James, Bryon Brown and Wilma Kernokan.

U.S.S. #13, HAY AND STEPHEN — SODOM SCHOOL

Accurate information on the Sodom school was difficult to locate. The school was located on the South Boundary of Hay Township, 4.5 miles east of Dashwood. In a letter to Stephen Township council, dated November 28, 1938, Inspector of Public Schools E.C. Beaumont of Goderich writes: "As you are probably aware, U.S.S. #13 Hay and Stephen has been closed for the past year. Accordingly the amount of township grant to be paid this section is determined by the Public School Act. The sum expended by this section on the transportation of their pupils and their fees at adjoining schools during 1938 was \$243.60."

Teachers who taught at Sodom included Henry Triebner, Elgin Schotz, Luke Snider, Lavina Smith, Mrs. C. Prouty, Miss A. Powers, Gerta Forrest, Evelyn Clarke, Elva Anderson, Joe Reech and Charles Pearce.

S.S. #14 CENTRALIA

Until 1907, when Centralia School was built, the children from the village went to Fairfield. Can you imagine travelling a distance of well over two miles every day in winter time when this area had deep snow and cold, cold weather?

A farmer, Richard Hicks, and his six sons, farmed south of the village (where Jerry Glavin now lives). They also had a farm in the

Estimated Financial Statement for 1953

—OF—

Stephen Township
School Area

RECEIPTS

1—Credit Balance-Jan. 1st, 1953	\$20754.36
2—Provincial Grants based on 1952 app. exp. 12525.79	
3—Auxiliary and Agriculture Grants	50.00
4—Temporary Loans	9521.75
5—Twp. of Stephen, Hwy. Department levies	2140.00
6—Twp. of " grants	1200.00
7—Other sources	1580.00

Total Receipts \$53316.39

EXPENDITURES

Cost of Instruction—

Public School Teachers	\$20754.36
Music Teachers	1540.00
Total	\$22294.36

Cost of Instructional Supplies

2356.51

Cost of Administration

1271.89

School Plant Operation—

Paid	2084.12
Hdms	825.43
Janitors	315.00
Insurance	420.00
Painting & Repairs	161.00
Other Expenses	439.00
Total	3145.00

School Plant Maintenance—

Replacement and Minor Repairs	\$51.43
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Auxiliary Agencies—

Pronto, Kinsmen, Grants to Fairlawn	230.00
Transacting	2679.40

Fees to Other Schools—

Homer #102, Fairlawn 219.76, Grand Bend 41800 2184.28

Capital Outlay—

Wiring at No. 5	8 300.00
Projector	435.00
Drilling Well, No. 3, Shipton	400.00
Tree Service poles, No. 6 1254.81	
Addition No. 12, Centralia	4304.00
Addition 8, Fire, No. 2	2314.43
O/D Fence at No. 7	1050.00
Drilling Well at No. 10	358.00
Other Capital Expenditures	225.00
Total Capital Expenditures	\$12510.17
	1080.06

Total Receipts \$53316.39

Total Expenses 7803.41

Ex. Bal. on hand, Dec. 31, 1953 \$ 383.89

ARTHUR J. AMY, Secretary

This is the estimated financial statement for operation of the Stephen Township School Area in 1953, including an addition to S.S. #14, Centralia.

Fairfield area and drove back and forth every day and gave the children rides to school. This helped the problem of transportation but in 1907, they sold their farm. The citizens of Centralia felt it was time they had their own school but Fairfield did not want to lose either students or taxes. After much deliberation, permission was finally granted by the board to build a school at Centralia.

Tenders were called for Centralia School, S.S. #14, on October 24, 1907. A lot was purchased for \$150 and work began immediately. Excavating cost \$25 (probably by horses and scrapers and lots of shovelling). The brick cost \$338.68, bought from Joseph Haist of Crediton. Total expenses from October 24th, 1907 to February 13th, 1908 was \$2138.55. The school opened early in 1908, so work was delayed until later. By the end of December total expenses were \$2,921.44. This included school seats at \$4.10 each, books, the painting the school, fence posts, insurance costs of \$15.40 and other small bills, but not the teacher's salary, janitorial costs or heating bills.

The story goes that they put the school up so quickly there are three more rows of bricks on one side under the windows than on the other side.

The new S.S. #14 in Centralia was really only half a section. School enrolment in 1941 was 12, in 1942 was 26 and kept growing until 46 were enrolled. This larger number was mostly due to the families stationed at the Centralia RCAF base.

By 1960, when there were 46 pupils, desks had to be brought in and the last seat was almost touching the back door. Imagine teaching 46 children in eight grades! The decision was made to send the Grades 7 and 8 pupils by car to Fairfield. It is ironic that these students were the grandchildren and great grandchildren of those who had fought for building the Centralia School. To solve the problem of overcrowding, it was decided to bus the Roman Catholic children in Centralia village to Mount Carmel Separate School, a distance of ten miles. The school board agreed to pay bussing costs and the Grades 7 and 8 students returned from Fairfield to Centralia. The Catholic families supported the plan of sending their children to Mount Carmel school.

The first teacher in Centralia was Miss Swan. She received \$200 for teaching from February to June of 1908. Yearly salaries for the teacher gradually increased from \$455 for Miss Swan in 1908-1909 to \$1,000 for Miss Evelyn Clarke for the years from September 1934 to June 1938. Miss Clarke again taught at Centralia from Septem-



In 1930-31, the students of S.S. #14, Centralia were: back row, left to right) Stanley Smith, Jack Essery, Charles (Scotty) Haytman, Jim Cook, Orva Stratton, Margaret Cook, Helen Smith, Greta Pollard, Generive Kerriske and Anna Neil. The front row includes: Bill Essery, Clare Stratton, Fred Baumhart, Fred Hicks, Jean Thompson, Margaret Martin, Mary Mestue and Marion Lewis. The teacher was Miss Evelyn Clarke of Gosierich.

ber 1938 to June 1939 and her salary dipped as she earned only \$750 for the 1936-1937 school year.

S.S. #14 was closed in June 1966 when the new Stephen Central School was built west of Creditor. A large picnic marked the closing of the Centralia school. Mrs. Andrew Hicks was the oldest person in attendance. The Tripp twins, Colin and Kevin, were the youngest.

Other teachers at the school were: Maude Horton, Florence Foertner, Verna Pollock, Dorothy Davidson, Margaret Essery, Charles McQuillan, and Verna Hicks.

In 1968, the Stephen Township School Board purchased the J.A.D. McCurdy School situated on the property where the former R.C.A.F. Centralia base was located, from the Ontario Development Corporation, for a "nominal sum." The RCAF station had

closed in 1967. In September 1968, the school reopened and students from Centralia area attended McCurdy School and pupils from the Grand Bend area were bussed to Stephen Central.

U.S.S. #15, SMOKY HOLLOW/WEYBURN

The Smoky Hollow school was built in 1894. At that time there was a flourishing sawmill a short distance east of the school, near where John Pepper's house stood in 1954. Many people lived near the sawmill and worked there. As a result, there were families living on almost every 25-acre lot all along the boundary between Hay and Stephen and also on the 16th Concession of Hay. From 1890 to 1893 some of the people residing in this district were dissatisfied because they were so far from any school. Application was made to those in authority to have a new section formed from parts of the sections of No. 6 Hay, No. 9 Stephen, then one of the schools in Grand Bend, and No. 11 Stephen (Blackbush). A new section known as U.S.S. #15 Hay and Stephen was formed in 1893.

A small part of Lot 34 was purchased from the Canada Company for the sum of \$100 as the site for the new school.

The first board of trustees consisted of Messrs. William Fulton, George Turnbull and Jacob Schroeder with Fulton as the first secretary-treasurer.

In the spring of 1894, the newly organized section rented a frame house owned by William Willert situated on Lot 23, South Boundary of Hay. This served as a school until a new one could be built. The first teacher, Duncan McDougal, taught here from March until mid-summer 1894. That fall, the new school was ready for use. There were about 50 pupils when the school opened — some were 18 or 20-years old and had never attended class before. People by the name of Kenning were the first caretakers and received \$20 per year for their work. Mr. McDougal taught in the new school for three years.

The school became known as Smoky Hollow. The early settlers claim it was so named because there were quite large hills on each side and between the hills it was often so foggy that you could hardly see at all. One of the teachers, J.C. Delgaty, came from Weyburn, Saskatchewan in 1920 to teach at the school. He thought the school situated on a main road and near a flourishing sawmill should have a more appropriate name so he changed it to Weyburn, after his home town in Saskatchewan. However, the name

Smoky Hollow still clings. Since the road was paved the hollow is much less apparent and it is doubtful if oldtimers would recognize the locality.

There have been only five men who served as secretary-treasurer in these 60 years, namely Messrs. William Fulton, Jacob Schroeder, Thomas F. Turnbull, Andrew Turnbull and Edward Willert. The school was made part of the Hay Township School Area in 1946.

In 1921 an organ was purchased for the school and replaced by a second organ in 1935. A piano was purchased in 1943. The interior of the school was painted and redecorated in 1923, 1932, 1945 and 1950.

During the school year, 1938-39, the school board was comprised of Messrs. Fergus Turnbull, Ernest Rader and a third trustee who decided the school yard should be enlarged. The board purchased an additional acre of land from William Turnbull. This acre of land was to be divided into two parts. The western part was to be added to the playground. The northern section, which extended across the back of the new and the old following the outline of the creek bank, was to be planted in trees.

In 1944, a rock well was drilled at the school. This did not prove very satisfactory, however, and another 94-foot well was drilled in 1953. Hydro was installed in 1945. A cedar hedge was planted in front of the school by teacher Charles McQuillan, and the pupils in 1953.

Some of the school's other teachers included: Cora Schroeder, Mrs. Allison, Florence Clark, James Delgaty, Lillian Walker, Alice Hoffman, Mary Switzer, Ray Waghorn and Janet Turnbull.

U.S.S. #16, DASHWOOD

The Dashwood Public School was built in 1897, the same year as the present hotel. Prior to this, the children on the Hay side attended S.S. #8 Hay, one and one-quarter miles north and on the Stephen side, they attended the Blackbush School, S.S. #11 or S.S. #4 Sharon. These schools were crowded and a meeting was held in the Dashwood town hall, now the upstairs of the former Dr. Gulen's building. At first, it was suggested that a branch of the Blackbush school be built at Stade's corner but this proposal was changed.

Henry Willert, John Graybiel, and Mike Fenn took a petition

to Huron County council, asking for a school in Dashwood. The council appointed three men to listen to the arguments for building a new school. The men decided on a section which drew children from Sharon, Blackbush, Hay, and the Babylon schools. There were objections to this and so another board was established. Union S.S. #16 was formed consisting of 900 acres in Hay and 1,850 acres in Stephen.

From January, to the end of June 1897, school was held in the Dashwood Evangelical Association church for \$40 rent. On January 12th, the ratepayers approved of buying one acre of land from George Kellerman for \$150. The trustees were: Fred Baker, a farmer; Chris Stade, a farmer and Joe Snell, a banker. Henry Willert received the contract to build the new school.

School opened in the new building in the third week in August. The school had cost \$2,500 to build. Dennis Brintnell of Hensall was the first principal and Maud Mills of Stratford taught in the second room. When they moved into the new school a third teacher, Alice Hodgins of Clandeboye, joined the staff.

For many years the upper rooms of the school were heated by a furnace and the lower room by a box stove. A brick chimney on the south side was not satisfactory so it was built higher. This was blown over by the wind and many rafters of the roof were broken. A new chimney was then built through the centre of the school. The box stove was discarded and a second furnace installed.

In 1915 a substantial iron fence was built in front of the school. In 1919, the roof was reshingled and hydro installed. A water system was installed for a cost of \$1,400 in 1932. The first school concert was held in 1918 and an organ was purchased with the proceeds.

At the time of the school's closing in June 1966 the school had a piano in every room. The last principal was Donald Finkbeiner of Crediton. The other staff members were Letta Taylor of Dashwood and Lenore Trott of Grand Bend. The school was sold and torn down in 1967. Homes owned by Leeland Restemayer and Gerald Mason were built on the property.

Other members of the teaching staff were: Jarvis Henry, Violet Wood, Almeda Finkbeiner, Mary McDougal, G.S. Howard, Addison Tieman, Miss P. Tieman, Nelson Dahms, Pearl Tieman, Grace Kellerman, Peter Moffat, Nola Gaiser, Alice Hoffman, Grace Pepper, Ada Webb, Doug McCaw and G. Middleton.



In 1915, a substantial iron fence was built around Dashwood School, which served students from both Bay and Stephen Townships.

U.S.S. #17, CORBETT SCHOOL

The Corbett school, which was built in 1901, served students from both McGillivray and Stephen townships. The 25 pupils attending the school in the 1920s bore the family names Hodgins, Sheppard, Steeper, Young, Isaac, Mathers, Goodhand and Mellin.

Teachers at the school, from the 1920s to the 1950s, were: Minnie Sherritt, Nova Setterington, Anna Harrison, Marian Robson, Grace Nixon of Granton, Rubie Creech of Exeter, Agnes Patrick, George Kirkby of Walton, Adella Portice, Adella Desjardine, Jean McBrodie, Nora Isaac (1938-1942), Dorothy J. Emery, Dorothy Chandler, Mrs. Idena Desjardine, Edith Tompkins and Mrs. Idena Desjardine.

By 1949, this school was designated S.S. #17, McGillivray Township and had an enrolment of 22 students. Ten years later, McGillivray Central School opened.

When the Corbett school was closed, a fundraising campaign was started to preserve the building and property as a community centre. That campaign was a success and the renovated school is used for family reunions, community showers and other events. Corbett Fun Days is held every year at the school on the second



This union school at Corbett, now a community centre, served students in both McGillivray and Stephen Townships. (Photo by Stephen Handing)

weekend in August. Profits from this event are used to maintain the community centre.

The old school bell is mounted on the front lawn of the renovated school, which has been an important factor in keeping the community spirit of the Corbett area alive.

U.S.S. #18, UNION SCHOOL (MCGILLIVRAY AND STEPHEN)

"On December, 1902, a meeting was held in the old church with the school inspector present. It was decided that this part of the township break away from S.S. #14 and build a school for this part of McGillivray and part of Stephen.

It was decided that one acre of land be bought from Mr. E. McPherson, as the site for the school.

The school board visited the Corbett school and it was decided to build on similar lines. Mr. William Mellin was given the contract for eight hundred and fifty dollars.

The new school was completed with furnishings by June, 1903. Miss Sutton was the first teacher, engaged for the fabulous sum of \$280.

C.H. Wilson was the first secretary with W.T. Ulens and W.

Belt as trustees. These men remained in office for six years. The secretary was succeeded by W.T. Ulens for a three-year term. His successor was Robert Hutchinson, for a term of three years.

Successors: George Marks, R.R. 3, Parkhill; Roy Hutchinson, R.R. 3, Parkhill; James Wilson, R.R. 3, Parkhill; Robert Bellring, R.R. 3, Parkhill.

School fairs were held for a few years. The attendance decreased and these then proved unprofitable. The teaching of agriculture and school gardens was discontinued.

The teaching of Household Science and serving of hot lunches was started in November, 1933. These proved to be a profitable enterprise for both teacher and pupils.

In 1929, the section became bankrupt due to usage of funds by the secretary-treasurer. Students went to S.S. #10, Stephen Township. The school (S.S. #18) was later reopened.

In 1949, S.S. #13 pupils were brought here.

Teachers at the school from 1939 to 1954 were: Mary L. Brunner, Mrs. Loreen Gill, Mrs. Idena Desjardine, Helen Hayter, Verona Gagan, Mary L. Brunner, Loreen Gill, Miss S. Ackert, Winnie K. Gray, Mrs. Shirley Curts, Mrs Wilma Love and Miss Norma Curts, later Mrs. Norma Waun.

- from the General Register,

S.S. #18, Stephen and McGillivray

Located near the town of Greenway, S.S. #18 was called the "Bellring school" locally, after the family who lived next to the school.

STEPHEN TOWNSHIP CENTRAL SCHOOL

Since 1945, the public schools of Stephen Township were administered by the Stephen Township School Area Board. Different school sections had decided to join the township school area at various times.

After much discussion and controversy, it was decided to build a central school on Lot 11, Concession 10. This location was selected after much deliberation on the part of the trustees: Ross Brown (chairman), Harold Fahrner, Don Flear, Ralph Weber and Melvin Douglas. Architects were Riddle, Connors, Falls and Irvine. The school is a modern, 12-room school with a gymnasium and library.

Students from the township, including Huron Park, were bussed to the new school in September 1966. The official opening of the school was held on May 11, 1967, with the Honourable



The staff at Stephen Central School in 1968/69 was (back row, left to right) Louise Gill, Jay Skillender, Lenore Lethbridge, Fred Negrin, Howard Lawrence, Ann Webb, Helen Jameson, Katharine Becker and (front) Gerda Wagner, Margaret Brown, Margaret Box, Don Finkbeiner, Shirley Moussemu, Lynda Thiel and Mary Ellison.

William G. Davis, Ontario Minister of Education, as guest speaker. Board of education chairman Ross Brown accepted the keys to the school from architect Howard Falls. Brigadier G.M. Smith of Bayfield, a director of the Ontario School Trustees Association, presented a memorial Bible. Greetings were expressed by Robert McKinley, Huron M.P. and by Orville James, president of the school's student council.

The staff members were: principal Ron Heimrich; vice-principal, Donald Finkbeiner; teachers Katharine Becker, Margaret Brown, Margaret Duncan, Stanley Haist, Helen Jameson, Helen Kleinstiver, Sharon Lightfoot, Marion McLean, Sandra Pridham, Jay Skillender, and Lenore Trott. The staff also included: secretary Sharon Zurbrigg; public health nurse Helen West and custodian Jim Laye. The 1966 enrolment was about 420 students.

The Ontario Ministry of Education established school boards on a countywide basis in 1968. Trustees were elected on a regional basis for the Huron County Board of Education. The board's administrative offices were located in Clinton.

Principal Ron Heimrich transferred to a school near Keswick



Stephen Central celebrated its 20th birthday in 1986. Posing with the birthday cake are students (left to right) Brent Love, Jeff Patterson, Erin O'Rourke, and Julie Schade and principal Don Finkbeiner.

in 1968 and Donald Finkbeiner became principal and Sharon Soldan, vice-principal.

The 1991 staff at the school includes: principal John Siertsma; kindergarten teachers Monica Elliott and Mildred Desjardine; Grade 1 teacher Marlene Thornton; Pam Rowell, Grade 2; Jay Skillender, Grade 3; Valerie Thomson, Grade 4; Howard Lawrence, Grades 5 and 7; Donna Miller, Grade 6; John Siertsma, Grade 7; Adriaan Brand, Grade 8; Don O'Rourke, Grade 3-8, French; Jayne Lasenby, Grade 5 and school librarian; Jean Weigand, music and Mary Lou Athill, school resource teacher. Other staff members are

teacher assistants; Pam Bell and Nancy Finkbeiner; school secretary Mary Ann Bender; custodian Jim and Mark Laye and area resource teachers Marg Nicholson and Linda Easton.

Bus drivers for the school are Sharon Gibson, Debbie Obre, Donna Clarke, John Pritchard and Larry Ryan.

J.A.D. McCURDY SCHOOL

J.A.D. McCurdy Dependents School was officially opened on October 31, 1952, by its namesake, the Honourable J.A.D. McCurdy. Mr. McCurdy made history on February 27, 1909, when he piloted the Silver Dart which made the first airplane flight in the British Empire. In August, 1947, J.A.D. McCurdy was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, following a distinguished political career.

During the opening ceremonies, the stage of the school auditorium held an impressive gathering of Group Commander and Mrs. Bean, Mr. and Mrs. McCurdy, Air Vice-Marshall C.R. Siemon, Dr. and Mrs. C.A. Brown, Dr. T.L. Tuskins, Mayor W.G. Cochrane of Exeter and many other guests.

Mr. McCurdy directed his words to the school children and told them of the origin of the Maple Leaf as an emblem of Canada. He closed by saying that the people of Canada appreciated the fine job the Royal Canadian Air Force was doing. The school was officially opened when McCurdy unveiled a bronze plaque commemorating the solemn occasion and that plaque still hangs in the school. A special performance by the students followed.

Donalda Adams of Clinton, a member of the original teaching staff, shared her memories of the school's early days.

"From September 1951, at first, there were only eight teachers and no rooms were used beyond the principal's office.

In these first few years, there was no pavement. To get to the school, it was necessary to use catwalks.

It was not until later years that a parking lot was built. Since then, such celebrities as Gordie Tapp, the Haymes Sisters, and Joan Fairfax have visited the school. Miss Fairfax and her husband were once stationed here. When you think of how it was in the beginning, and how well equipped it is now, you wonder, how did they do it?

Centralia in 1950 was not in very good shape. The Huron Park area was a vast sea of mud."



J.A.D. McCurdy School was opened on October 31, 1952 by its namesake. The former Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, J.A.D. McCurdy made the first airplane flight in the British Empire.



The very dressed-up graduating class from McCurdy School in 1978/79 were: (back row, left to right) Harry Brooks, Bill Reid, Jeff Grib, Mike Gallagher, Gary Spurr, Randy Inley, Harold Borden, Mike Mills, Ron Stelgrave, Robbie Winger, Andy Fraser; (middle row) Louise Driedger, Steve Arizzofler, Paul Smith, Rick Lather, Tracy Sutton, Patti Sussitz, Robin Prece, Cindy Minesall, John Inley, Eric Heath, Eric Powe, John Siersma and (front) Chris Kennedy, Barb Wilson, Joannette Smith, Carole Desjardine, Sandy Somerville, Yvonne Wells, Kim Kennedy, Valerie Morrison and Barb Sussitz.

In September, 1951, students and staff moved into the new J.A.D. McCurdy School. The new P.M.Q.s were just being completed and the student population was increasing rapidly. In February, 1953, more than 400 students were enrolled.

After Mr. Butler retired, Henderson King became principal, remaining at the school for ten years. During that time he earned his B.A., M.A. and Masters of Education degrees. In 1966, Garnet Harland became principal of McCurdy School and when it closed in 1967, he became vice-principal of the school at the Clinton RCAF base.

J.A.D. McCurdy School had only two vice-principals while the Air Force was here. George Farnell served in that post from 1951 to 1957. John McCarroll was named vice-principal in 1958 and remained in that post until the school closed in 1967.

Some may remember the opening of Randall arena, where Mr. McCarroll and his drum majorettes put on an excellent exhibition.

J.A.D. McCurdy School was closed by the Department of National Defence in June 1967. Much of the equipment and textbooks were transferred to the R.C.A.F. bases at Clinton and Camp Borden. All the teaching staff relocated to other schools.

The school was opened again in September 1968 under the jurisdiction of the Stephen Township School Board. Pat Soldan was principal; Bill Linfield succeeded him and stayed until 1973. John Siertsema became principal in 1973 and then Pat Soldan returned to the school.

In 1969, the Huron Hope School was moved to the J.A.D. McCurdy School. In 1978, extensive renovations were carried out in three classrooms to better accommodate these students.

Early in 1982, the South Huron Association for the Mentally Retarded entered into an agreement with the Huron County Board of Education to lease facilities for their pre-school nursery program as well as a program for the developmentally handicapped, school-age children. The school name was changed to McCurdy-Huron Hope Public School and then, in 1989, to McCurdy Public School.

McCurdy Public School presently has an enrolment of just over 200 students, and supports a staff of 15 teachers, one full-time secretary, two custodians and eight teacher assistants.

The staff at the school in 1991 included: principal Donald Finkbeiner, vice-principals Marg Allen and Tom Lyon and secretary Marina Morrissey. The teaching staff included Charlotte Fanjoy,



Robyn Bradley, a kindergarten student at McCann School, was an enthusiastic participant during the school's Pioneer Days celebrated in October, 1991.

Debra Coates, Lynn McCann, Linda Benford, Maxine Miller, Tom Lyon, Doug Pearson, Dorothy Coates, Victoria Butler, Ruth Ann Eagleson, Maryann Topp, Lynn McIlwain, Harry Brooks, Marg Allen and Fred Negrijn, the area resource teacher.

Teacher assistants were: Mary Lou Becker, Angela Bryson, Marlene Lightfoot, Ann DeVries, Shirley Phillips, Linda Motley, Pat Hartford, Sandi Fremlin and Lois Webster. Custodians are Mark Coolman and Darlene LeGoff and the school's bus drivers were Ron Kenny, Phyllis Tomes and Barb Stapleton.

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL SCHOOL

The first log school was built in 1862, about one and a half miles north of Mount Carmel and a little south of the present Arnold McCann residence. The school's first teacher was Miss J. O'Meara.

A few years later, a new school was built closer to the church. There is a mention in the records that this school was built on the northwest corner of the present Neil McCann farm. A third school was built a few years later on the southwest corner of the present school property.



In June, 1966, these Our Lady of Mount Carmel students were doing a little free sitting before the summer holidays. The girls are (left to right) Patsy Regier, Dianne McCann, Susan Brown, Betty Ratten, Cathy Ryan, Cheryl Trainer, Tillie Kester and Dianne Wilds.



Teacher Sandy McQuillen, who taught at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the 1970s, serenades students on the bagpipes during an event at the school which paid tribute to the students' ethnic heritage.



The Haven-Perth separate school junior football championship was won by this Mount Carmel team in 1970/71. Back, left, John Neftz, Robert Van Kerrebeek, William Vanden Bygaert, Fred Van Osch, Jerry McCann, Peter Westelaken, Eric Drueliusnick, Brian McCann, Robert Regier with coach Robert Givenslock at the rear. Centre, Donald Ernest, Brian Regier, Steve McCann, Paul Becker and Paul Westelaken. Front, Gerard Brennan, Maurice Ryan, Mark Cronyn, Larry Regier, John Vandenberk, Derek Regier and Norman Callus.

This, too, was a one-room building and some of the teachers were: Ronald McDonald, Miss O'Meara, Mr. Morrison, Miss Mahon, Miss Downie, Mr. Kilgalin and Miss McCue.

In 1906, a two-room brick school was built on the same site. As soon as the new school was completed, the original frame school was moved across the road, and later used as the parish hall. John Boland, who later farmed in the community, became the principal of the new school at Christmas. Miss Clifford taught in the junior room.

Some of the teachers at this school were: Miss Downie, Miss McCue (later the mother of Rev. Cyril Doyle), Pat Houlahan, Miss Clifford, Mr. Kilgalin, Miss Sullivan (later Mrs. Joe Guinan), Miss Murray (later Mrs. Frank Couglan), Miss Hanlon (later Father Finn's mother), Miss Doyle, Miss Mickesy, Miss Lewis, Miss Trudell, Miss Haney, Miss Austen, Miss Morrissey, Miss Anderson, Miss Queenan, Miss McDonald, Miss Phelan, Bernadette Carey and Madeline Glavin.

In 1924, the sisters of the Ursuline Order came to teach at Mt. Carmel school. The school section bought the home of Joe Glavin in the village and it was converted into a convent. At first there were four sisters in residence — two were school teachers, one a music teacher and the fourth was the housekeeper.

From 1910 to 1930, enrolment at Mt. Carmel ranged from 16 to 40 pupils, averaging 30 students. By 1939, 66 pupils were enrolled and classes went up to Grade 10. The next year, Grades 11 and 12 were added. After the school across from St. Peter's Church on Highway 4 was closed in 1945, those pupils came to Mount Carmel. Also, some non-Catholic pupils attended the school because it was closer to their home than either the Exeter or Parkhill high schools.

When the Shipka and Khiva elementary schools were closed, Catholic pupils from these schools also transferred to Mount Carmel. The two rooms could not accommodate the additional students, so the parish hall was used for classes. With the extension of the high school grades, more Ursuline sisters came to teach at the school.

A new school was built in 1956 and consisted of three rooms and a small office for the principal, on land donated by Michael J. Ryan. The Most Reverend John C. Cody, introduced by Pastor Rev. J.E. Kelly, was guest speaker at the school's official opening ceremonies. Two school alumni who attended that ceremony were Rev. Basil Sullivan of St. Michael's College, Toronto and Father Basil Glavin.

On November 23, 1960, the school boards of S.S. #1, McGillivray (St. Peter's Parish) and #6 Stephen had a special school board meeting and voted 28-7 in favour of a union of the schools. Much discussion took place regarding the bussing of pupils.

At the school board's annual meeting on January 5, 1961, the Union Board of #6 Stephen and S.S. #1, McGillivray approved the proposal to build two new classrooms, one of which was called a general purpose room. That same year, Pat Marrinan was hired to operate three school buses at a cost of \$800 per month. In 1964 and 1968, two more classrooms and a gymnasium were added to the school.

In June, 1964, only 14 students were enrolled in Grades 9 and 10. The next years, the teaching of grades 11 and 12 was discontinued, and in 1966, grades 9 and 10 were dropped. In 1968, S.S.

#18, Bosanquet, the Separate school which served the Grand Bend area, was closed and the pupils from there came to Mt. Carmel. The first kindergarten class at Mount Carmel School was offered in 1971.

As the number of Catholic schools increased, there were not enough teaching sisters for the added positions, so it became necessary to hire lay teachers. In the order in which they were hired for the Mount Carmel school they were: Mrs. Mary Hall, Mrs. Theresa McCann, Mrs. Evelyn McKeever, Mrs. Helen Ryan, Mrs. Harrigan, David Sharpe, Paul Gaynor, Glenna Tripp, Robert Govenlock, Mrs. Marjorie Glendenning and Lorne Rideout. William Reiger was the caretaker at the school for over 20 years.

In 1968, Robert Govenlock was the first male teacher to be hired at Mount Carmel school. By 1977, the remaining Ursuline sisters left the village, leaving an entirely lay staff at the school. Garry Birmingham was the first lay principal, followed by Laurie Kratcheck and Fran Craig.

The Mount Carmel school selection became part of the Huron-Perth Roman Catholic Separate School Board in 1968. One trustee represented Stephen and Usborne townships and the town of Exeter on the board. The first representative was Jack McCann, followed by Gregory Fleming and Michael Ryan.

The staff at Mount Carmel school in 1991-92 are: principal Fran Craig; teachers Helen Ryan, Gaylene Haggarty, Beth Breer, Jeanette Eybergen, Carla Revington, Caroline Poel, Adara Hartman, John Maycock, Gloria Miotto-Wilks, and Susan Kraftcheck. The support staff includes Marion Sullivan, William Regier, Patricia Glavin, Theresa Kester and Diane Andrews.

CENTRALIA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY (CCAT)

As Stephen Township celebrates its sesquicentennial, Centralia College of Agricultural Technology (CCAT) also marks a special anniversary. The college, the only post-secondary school in the area, is holding a series of special events to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Located on the former RCAF Station Centralia, the college was opened in 1967 on a trial basis without either a permanent campus or the experimental farm usually associated with agricultural colleges.



Charles McNaughton, Treasurer of Ontario (left) and William A. Stewart, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture at the opening of Centrelle College on March 1, 1968. The two men were instrumental in locating the college campus on the former RCAF Station Centrelle.

Ontario's Minister of Agriculture William A. Stewart, and Huron County's member of parliament Charles McNaughton, the Treasurer of Ontario, were instrumental in establishing the college on the abandoned base.

In an 1989 interview, William Stewart recalled, "We felt that with the growing interest in soybean and white bean crops in North Middlesex, Huron and Perth, an agricultural college somewhere in the vicinity would be quite useful. Young people interested in farm management should not have to go away to another college to learn methods which might not be relevant to their land and soil conditions."

During the college's history, over 2,400 students have received their diplomas from the school, including several international students.

Originally, Centrelle College only offered two-year diploma programs in agriculture and home economics. Students attended classes in the former RCAF barracks, on the 36-hectare campus in Huron Park.



This is a view of Huron Hall and part of the Centraalia campus as it looked during the first years of college life.

Two years after the school opened, Ministry of Agriculture officials decided the courses needed to be more specialized. As a result, the agriculture program became the Agricultural Business Management program. One of the prime components of the business-oriented program was, and remains, the farm analysis project. Every year, selected area farms are used as "laboratories" and students apply what they have learned in the classroom instruction to actual farming situations. Graduates of this course usually follow careers in the fields of agribusiness or farm management.

The Home Economics program was revised the same year, and divided into Food Service Management and Fashion. In 1979, the fashion program was changed to Consumer and Community Studies. That course was phased out in 1984, due to declining enrolment in the program.

In 1969, another course was added to the college curriculum when the Animal Health Technology program was moved from Ridgetown College to Centraalia. Graduates of this program are primarily employed as assistants to veterinarians in private practice or in research work. The program was renamed the Veterinary Technology program in 1990.

Although not originally designated a research facility, Centraalia College is now noted for its agronomy research. In 1975, college staff established experimental plots, to provide support for the growing white bean and rutabaga industry in southwestern Ontario.

Ten years later, the college purchased its 150-acre experimen-

tal research farm, just north of the campus, from Larry and Sandra Dobson. College staff and students use the farm to conduct various yield, herbicide and management trials on crops such as field beans, sweet corn, coloured beans, canola, rutabagas, process peas and forage crops.

As well as its diploma courses, Centralia College also offers a variety of continuing education programs for adults. These courses began in 1968 with a short course on Beef Feedlot Operations. The continuing education program has expanded to include on-campus courses ranging from one-day courses to eight-week evening courses in the areas of computers, agriculture and livestock management.

The college has also developed a number of agriculture-in-the-classroom programs for elementary and secondary school students in surrounding counties, as well as AgExcursion tours for high school students studying environmental science.

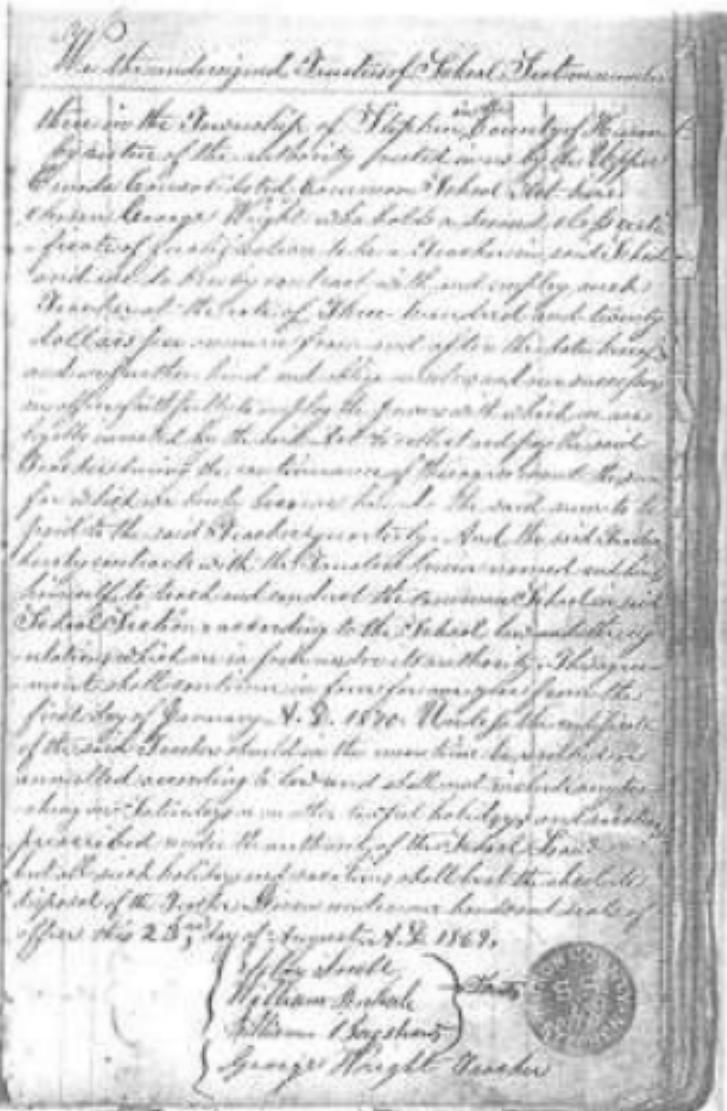
The college has undergone major renovations during its 25-year history. Huron Hall, a 200-bed residence, was added to the existing cafeteria and student lounge in 1980. Bruce Hall underwent major interior and exterior renovations in 1984. A provincial grant enabled the college to make a number of additional improvements to the campus in 1991. The recreation centre and playing fields were upgraded and the entire campus was landscaped. Two of the original RCAF base buildings, Oxford and Perth Halls, were recently dismantled.

The four principals who have directed the college during its 25-year history are: Jim MacDonald (1967-1979); Doug Jamieson (1979-1987); Bill Allen (1987-1991) and current director, Kathy Biondi. The associate director of the college is Violet Currie.

Every year, college staff make recruitment visits to about 130 high schools in southern Ontario. College graduates hold jobs in agribusiness or the banking industry, operate their own farms, work in hospitals and in the research field.

The college enjoys extensive support from the surrounding community. Organizations and private businesses present a number of awards, bursaries and prizes to students, including an annual scholarship presented by Stephen Township.

From very modest beginnings on the abandoned base, Centralia College of Agricultural Technology has become a leader in new technological, educational and research initiatives.



This is a typical pioneer contract, dated 1869, between a teacher (George Wright) and his Board of Trustees, S.S. No. 3



Today, over 300 students annually attend the very modern campus of Centralia College, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 1992. (Photo by Stephen Harding)

Chapter 15

Communicating With the Outside World

"Railroads...are positively the greatest blessing that the ages have wrought out for us.

They give us wings; they annihilate the toil and dust of pilgrimage, they spiritualize travel."

— Nathaniel Hawthorne

After Stephen Township's first settlers established their homes in the new land, they looked to the world beyond their doors. There was the practical need to transport market goods to larger centres and also the need to communicate with friends and far-distant family members. But they also wanted to communicate with the imagination through books and literature.

After township residents had established farms and thriving enterprises like sawmills and tanseys, they required better methods of shipping products outside the immediate area. And as more people obtained a basic education, they wanted to correspond with relatives in other parts of Canada or in their native lands. From the 1860s to the 1920s, life in Stephen Township changed dramatically with each new link to the world beyond the boundaries of the township.

When the railway arrived in Canada in 1851, it did not take long for the notion of a network of railways crossing the Huron Tract to gain converts. The Great Western Railway reached London, Ontario in 1853. Three years later, the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway angled across southwestern Ontario, passing through Seaford, Clinton and Goderich. The Grand Trunk Railroad completed a line between Montreal and Toronto in 1856, which was

later extended westward through Lucan, Ailsa Craig, Parkhill and on to Sarnia.

There were 1,895 miles of railroad in Canada by 1860 but the area of rich farmland north of London was still not directly served by a railway, a handicap for Stephen farmers with produce and crops to market.

On August 1, 1866, a public meeting of ratepayers was held at Isaac Hill's Inn in Creditor, to consider financing a London-to-Bayfield railway. That railway did not materialize, but by the 1870s further meetings were being held to discuss building a railroad from London through the Huron Tract.

The London, Huron & Bruce Railway was the result. Farmers and businessmen both needed a quicker means of transporting goods like produce, grains, lumber and potash to markets in London, Toronto and Buffalo. Also village shopkeepers wanted a more reliable means of getting goods from the city to their local customers.

The major promoter of the railway scheme was Patrick Kelly. He was not only the reeve of Blyth, but also the owner of a saw-mill and a sash and door factory. Kelly had developed a substantial export trade for his products, but was hampered by the fact the closest rail terminal was 12 miles away at Clinton. When Kelly met with Great Western officials in Hamilton, they advised him to secure subsidy guarantees from area municipalities. If he was successful, then the railway officials would consider building a railway north from London, which could link up with the Grand Trunk, opening up further markets in the west.

As well as Kelly, other influential businessmen promoting the scheme included Isaac Carling, the Exeter tannery owner and his brother, brewer John Carling of London, who was a director of the Great Western Railway.

Stephen Township ratepayers voted to subsidize the railway in a vote at Creditor town hall on August 19, 1871. Local municipalities had been understandably cautious about the venture. The councils all remembered the extensive losses suffered by Huron, Bruce and Perth counties with the earlier collapse of the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway scheme. But Stephen residents enthusiastically agreed to: "aid and assist the London, Huron & Bruce Railway Company by giving \$17,500 by way of bonus to said company to issue debentures therefore and to authorize the laying of a special rate for payment of the debit and interest thereon. . ."

The bylaw was signed by Reeve Thomas Greenway and clerk Chester Prouty. The London, Huron & Bruce Railway was incorporated February 15, 1871, after the promoters could assure Great Western officials that financing was in place.

When canvassing began for funds to support the railway, the response was enthusiastic. Municipalities contributed \$311,500, the provincial government \$178,630 and businessmen, merchants and farmers purchased individual shares. As well as carrying freight, the line would also provide passenger service and speed up the delivery of mail to rural areas.

The only municipalities which balked at subsidizing the railway were Lucan and Biddulph Township. As a result, the London, Huron & Bruce went north from Hyde Park, through Ilderton, Brecon, Clandeboye, Centralia, Exeter, Hensall and on to Clinton, running parallel to the London Road. At Clinton it crossed the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway line and continued north to Wingham. There, the new line connected with the Kincardine branch of the Wellington, Grey and Brussels Railway.

The London, Huron & Bruce bypassed both Lucan and Biddulph, to the consternation of Biddulph residents, crossing the Grand Trunk line two miles west of Lucan. Later efforts to bring a spur line to Lucan were rejected by railway officials.

The only Stephen Township station was at Centralia, built on land donated by Thomas Trivitti. That station, exactly 26.25 miles up the tracks from London, survives today. Long abandoned, the little station is barely visible among the buildings of a local farm supply dealer.

On January 10, 1876, the London, Huron & Bruce made its first run from London to Wingham. The locomotive pulled 11 freight and five passenger cars. This was indeed a red-letter day for communities north of London and there were celebrations all along the route. At Exeter, a huge bonfire was built beside the tracks while the town's band was drawn to the station on a wagon pulled by young men of the town.

The next day, a special train filled with civic officials, railway promoters and other invited guests left Wingham for London. When it reached the Great Western station in London, the train was met by a regimental band as the bells of St. Paul's Cathedral pealed in honour of the occasion.

The London Free Press reported: 'The celebration of the success-

ful completion of the London, Huron & Bruce Railway which took place today was in every sense a success. For a long time the opening had been looked forward to with much interest not only by Londoners but by the huge population inhabiting the fertile agricultural lands and most towns and villages lying between this town and Kincardine."

The ceremonies climaxed with a grand banquet at city hall, hosted by Mayor Benjamin Cronyn and attended by 600 guests, including Stephen Township officials. One of the guest speakers was Thomas Greenway, former Stephen reeve and the future premier of Manitoba. The event included toasts to agriculture, commercial and manufacturing interests and to the press.

The first locomotives on the new railway were wood-burning engines. The tender carried cord wood instead of coal, in tremendous quantities. This was picked up from long cordwood piles stacked along the right of way. Later, oil-burning engines became familiar sights on the line; these eventually gave way to diesel engines.

THE BUTTER AND EGGS SPECIAL

So many farmers and farm wives travelled to London to sell their produce at the market, that the railway was affectionately named "the Butter and Eggs Special." Although the seats on the early passenger cars were not cushioned, riding the train was still a great improvement over a bumpy stage!

When a train arrived, the Centralia station was a hive of activity. The stage arrived from Creditor carrying passengers and mail from local post offices. Passengers went to the station waiting room to purchase their tickets to London. There was a round wood stove in the centre of the room and seats built against the walls. The station master unloaded the mail from the stage, onto a car, ready for the train's arrival.

Commercial travellers were frequent passengers and came with large trunks of goods to display to local store and shop owners. They were met by the livery man who loaded the trunks on a light wagon and drove the travellers to their destination. The trains ran six days a week — there were no regular Sunday runs on the London, Huron & Bruce line.

The 1879 Huron County Atlas reported that in proportion to its length and the construction costs, the London, Huron & Bruce "was

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY										
	1876 TIME TABLE			1876						
LONDON-HURON & BRUCE RAILWAY										
GOING NORTH				GOING SOUTH						
STATION	DEP.	ARR.	MAIL	STATION	ARR.	DEP.	TIME			
LONDON	Dep.	4:30	9:30	Wingham	Dep.	7:30	A.M.			
4:25	Hyde Park Junction	7:50	5:10	Belgrave		7:35	P.M.			
11:25	Huron	8:30	5:25	Smyth		8:15				
15:15	Bruce	8:45	5:40	London-London		8:30				
19:30	Claudetown	9:15	5:55	Clarence		8:55				
20:00	Centralia	9:25	6:20	Brockville		9:15				
21:25	Elmwood	10:30	6:35	Ryerson		9:30				
27:00	Huron	11:15	6:55	Revelstoke		9:45				
29:25	Bracebridge	11:35	7:00	Kawartha		10:00				
40:35	Brockville	11:55	7:15	Centralia		10:15				
50:00	Clarence	12:00	7:40	Claudetown		10:30				
50:25	London-London	12:15	8:00	Bruce		10:45				
50:55	Elmwood	12:45	8:15	Huron		10:55				
51:25	Belgrave	1:00	8:30	Elmwood		11:05				
54:00	Wingham	1:30	9:00	Hyde Park Junction		11:15				
			74:00	LONDON	Arr.	11:30				

This is the schedule for the London-Huron & Bruce Railway, which carried passengers, freight and mail from London to Wingham. The railway was more affectionately known as the Butter and Eggs Special.

the best paying piece of railroad in the Dominion." Just three years later, on August 12, 1882, the Great Western Railway, including the London, Huron & Bruce, amalgamated with the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada.

Les Bronson, a London historian, wrote that the Butter and Eggs Special "was the homely, chatty kind of railway on which passengers talked politics, transacted business, sold or traded farms (perhaps horses too), and the crewmen would make unscheduled stops to pick up passengers."

From 1890 to 1918, the trains were made up of a bulging baggage car and six to eight passenger coaches. Stephen Township residents could either spend a day shopping in London or go north to Goderich or Wingham. The coaches, with their red plush seats, contained wood stoves for heating on winter runs and brass oil lamps which swung wildly and flickered incessantly. The railway also had special excursion train and during Western Fair, put on

special late-night trains so fairgoers could stay for the evening entertainment.

"The Bruce", as the trains were also called, was a familiar sight in Stephen Township. Farmers in the fields and women and children at home heard the shrill whistle and watched the trains pass by as regularly as the cows were milked. Meeting the train became part of the pattern of daily living in the small communities. In spring and summer months, the smell of freshly mown hay would mingle with smoke from the locomotives.

On Saturdays, cattle and other livestock were shipped to market by train — most stations had a cattle yard and chute. A number of railroad section men lived at Centralia and maintained the tracks in the area. They rode up and down the rails on hand-pumped jiggers to check their section of line.

Since "the Bruce" operated in southwestern Ontario's snow belt, one challenge for the crews was keeping the tracks open in the winter months. Storms first closed the line in 1879. Then in the winter of 1904, the line was closed for several days. Toward the end of January, both north and southbound trains were stalled in snow banks near Exeter. Passengers were taken into Exeter. The entire track from London to Wingham was opened on Monday, but another storm on Tuesday completely blocked it again. Early in February, a special Sunday freight train brought coal for the dealers who had no supplies. In March, storms again closed the rail line. A band of 50 men worked on a Sunday with a snowplow and two locomotives north of Exeter — and managed to clear only one mile of track.

In later years, the track was closed again in March, 1947. Section men had to walk the track from Hensall and Clinton to dig the train out of 20-foot drifts.

In the 1920s, the Grand Trunk Railway, in turn, was absorbed by Canadian National Railways. Riding on the London, Huron & Bruce, however, remained a popular excursion. *The London Free Press* noted that on one Saturday morning in 1925, the train was so crowded 150 passengers stood in the baggage car. The railway was also used by students travelling to high schools in Exeter and Clinton.

Inevitably, the automobile, improvements in highway travel and the use of trucks to transport goods, spelled doom for the railway. In 1917, a decision was made to remove the morning train



The station in Centralia was the only official stop made by the London-Huron & Bruce Railway in Stephen Township, although the friendly train crews were known to make unscheduled stops along the route to pick up passengers and freight.

north and the evening train south. There were further cuts to passenger service in 1932, causing problems for Stephen students who rode the train into Exeter to attend school.

On April 26, 1941, the Butter and Eggs Special carried passengers between Clinton and Wingham for the last time. Ironically, passenger travel on the southern half of the route increased dramatically in the 1940s. With the opening of RCAF Station Centralia, the railway built a special spur line from Centralia to transport both personnel and supplies to the base.

By 1952, passenger service on the line was reduced to one train per day. It was cancelled entirely in 1956. During the last week, 18 students from Fairfield Public School were brought into Exeter. They rode back to Centralia on the train coach, their last opportunity to travel the rails in Stephen Township.

In the 1980s, the railroad tracks from Hyde Park north to County Road 5 were torn up by the financially-troubled Canadian National Railways. This followed a growing trend by national railways to sell off or tear up smaller "shortline" tracks. This trend has left many farming and other communities without a reliable means of transporting their goods to urban markets.

In 1991, *The Globe and Mail* announced the proposed sale of a railway branch line in Huron County. The sale included the 39-kilometre line running from Cook's elevators at Centralia north

through Exeter to link with the Goderich line at Clinton. The company who proposed to buy the "shortline" was RailTex Incorporated of San Antonio, Texas. If the sale is completed, the route will be renamed the Goderich-Exeter Railway Company. Just as the need to move farm products built the railway originally, agricultural products will remain the major freight carried on the new line.

During the nineteenth century, it was the railroad that truly united Canada "from sea to shining sea." Today, fewer and fewer passenger or freight trains survive: the romance of train travel is already only a memory for many Canadians. But the Butter and Eggs Special will long hold a special place in the collective memory of Stephen residents who listened for the friendly whistle of a little train that was even known to pick up passengers between stops.

THE AGE OF TELEGRAPHY

While the railroad transported people and produce to the city, the telegraph provided "instant" communication with the people and places beyond the township boundaries.

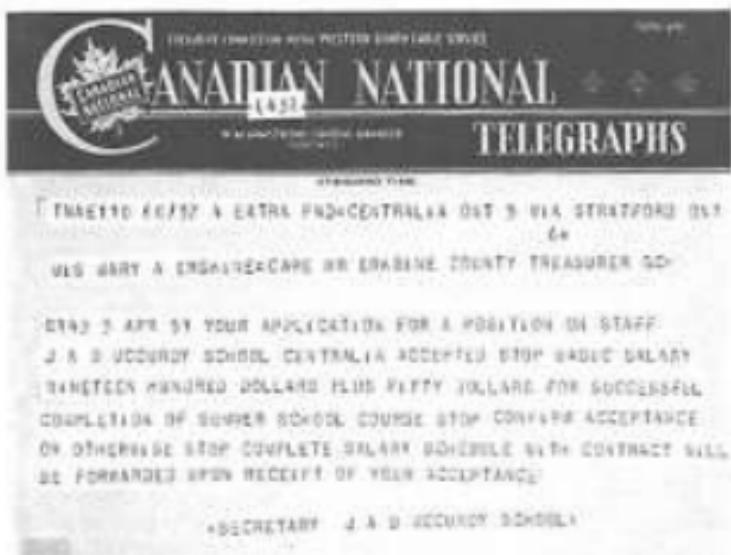
The telegraph allowed messages in Morse code to be transported by wire and was already well-established by the time the railway reached Stephen. But the staccato click-click-click of the telegraphy key did not become a familiar sound in Crediton until the 1870s.

In 1868, Stephen Township council minutes record that council resolved to give a \$50 bonus to any telegraph company constructing a line from Lucan to Exeter, if Usborne Township would match Stephen's grant.

The September 6, 1873 council minutes note, "Mr. John Parsons was granted \$50 to assist in buying poles for the telegraphy lines." Parsons was the Crediton postmaster and operated a general store in the village. The telegraph would provide a more efficient means for him to keep in touch with his city markets. Parsons delivered produce to London twice a week with a wagon and team and had also established branches of his business in the west.

By 1875, the Montreal Telegraph Company, one of the two main telegraph companies in Canada, had also established an office in Centralia.

When John Parsons opened the Crediton office, his second son, Tom, learned to operate the key. The dispatchers were often called "brass-pounders" and they tapped out the dot-dash code on a sin-



Telegrams were once a common means of sending either important family news or communicating about business matters. This telegram, sent from Centralia, confirms that Mary Erskine was offered a teaching position at McCurdy Public School.

gle key. Operating the key required a great deal of skill, accuracy and speed, as did transcribing messages received over the wires.

By 1882, the Crediton telegraphy office was listed in *Lovell's Business and Professional Directory of the Province of Ontario* as the "Montreal, Dominion and Great Northwestern Telegraph Company" but it was still likely housed in the Parsons store. When Tom Parsons left Crediton to take charge of another branch of the business, Walter Clark took over the telegraph duties.

The general store was eventually purchased by Charles Brown, Fred Wuerth and August Haist. The telegraph was still operated for a time by Charles Brown's son. When Sam Brown took over the store, Mrs. Beulah Orme, the doctor's wife and a clerk in the shop, also learned to operate the telegraph key.

The telegraph remained an important part of the communications field until the 1940s. Anyone receiving a telegram expected serious news, either of a business or personal nature. In their hey-

day, "brass-pounders" were indispensable in newspaper offices, railway stations and for ship-to-shore communications.

By the 1930s, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways had taken over most of the telegraph services in Canada and by the 1960s, the "golden age of telegraphy" was over. Today the FAX machine and computer modems have almost spelled the end of this once popular form of communication.

RING, RING. . . THE TELEPHONE COMES TO STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, but at first, his invention was considered little more than a scientific toy. Telegraph companies competed with the new invention in a neck-and-neck race for customers. Despite initial misgivings, by 1880 the Bell Telephone Company of Canada had been incorporated and held a Dominion-wide charter for the new service.

In the early 1890s, Crediton was a prosperous and progressive village of 625 residents. It was more than 40 years since the first settler had taken up land on the corner, which was known as Sweet's Corners. William Sweet, known to all as Grandpa Sweet, came from Cornwall, England and settled in Crediton in 1849. It was not unusual for him, even in old age, to walk to London or Goderich and home again.

The Sunday before Sweet died, at the age of 85 years, he started to walk to the little church in McGillivray, three miles south, after having attended morning services in Crediton. James Clark overtook him and gave him a ride.

If William Sweet was the founder of Crediton, the story of the telephone in Crediton revolves around the Clark family. James Clark moved to the village from Usborne about 1870. A harness maker by trade, he set up his business in the building later used as a barber shop. Clark started a livery business as a sideline and as it grew, he sold his harness business to concentrate on the livery stables. He also drove the mail stage to Centralia. Then in 1890, he sold his livery business to the Brown brothers and decided to return to the harness shop, setting up business on the east side of Christian Beaver's store.

The telephone had reached Exeter in 1889 and by 1891, the Bell Telephone Company had expanded its services with a line from Exeter to Grand Bend. Crediton did not want to be left out. The

Bell officials were asked if the line could be built by way of Devon and Crediton. After some negotiations, this was arranged. Crediton residents offered to do the extra work which this change necessitated. James Clark drew all the poles needed for the line from the Centralia station. The men of the community devoted their spare time to digging holes and assisting in the erection of the poles. In 1899, the first telephone, installed in James Clark's shop, came to Crediton. When he moved into his new building, the telephone was moved across the street.

Crediton was a one-telephone community for many years. The Clark's telephone was a long-distance telephone without a local exchange or operator. Calls came directly from Exeter and London and later from Dashwood. Messages were received and dispatched by Mr. Clark. If the party calling wished to speak with someone in the village, that person was sent for and went to Clark's shop to take his call. The young boys of Crediton were often employed as messengers. A nominal sum was charged for this service, depending on how far the messenger had to travel. The rates were five cents for calls within a quarter mile of the office. If the distance extended over a quarter of a mile, but was less than half a mile, the messenger charged 10 cents. The fee was 20 cents for distances of more than half a mile. If authorized, livery charges were extra.

Crediton was listed in an 1899 directory as having one telephone with James Clark as manager. The line, by 1903, had been extended by old and young alike; from watching the skilful hands of the Exeter. Crediton was listed as a toll office in 1900 and long-distance charges amounted to \$168. The hours of service for the telephone "office" were from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays, 2 to 4 p.m. on Sundays and 10 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on holidays.

This situation remained until 1906 when Henry Eilber, MPP for South Huron, requested that a telephone be installed in his office. Mr. Eilber was also the township's clerk/treasurer and he operated an insurance and conveyancer office with his son, Herbert.

Henry Eilber, the second telephone owner in the village, eventually had his own private telephone line built from his home to his office and later to the home of his son. It was a great thrill for a youngster to be allowed to speak into one and hear a voice answering!

Mr. Eilber's request for his own telephone actually launched

the expansion of the Bell Telephone system in Crediton. In October, 1906, a shipment of five telephones and a switchboard arrived at Exeter for the Crediton exchange. Francis W. Clark took over as local manager from his father the same year and operated Crediton's first telephone switchboard. The small, table-like switchboard was installed at the back of the family's harness shop.

By 1907, Crediton had eight subscribers, whose names were listed in a directory of all the telephone users in Western Ontario. They were:

Eilber, Henry, MPP	Conveyancer, insurance	Main
Sovereign Bank		Main
Zwicker, Charles	General merchant, seeds	Main
Hill, August	Hotel	Main
Motz, Josiah	Grocer	Main E.
Sweitzer, Henry	Miller	Main E.
Brown, Samuel	General merchant, seeds	Main
McCue, Dr. P.J.		Main

In 1908, John Young and Sons, who operated a hardware business, also installed a telephone. The hardware store retained the same number, No. 9, until the business was sold in 1959. Gerald Zwicker, who took over his father's business, also maintained the original telephone number until the 1960s.

The telephones installed were very different from the models used today. The phones were mounted on a board which was fastened to the wall. A box on the upper part contained a magneto generator with a receiver and holder on the left side and a crank on the right, for ringing central and other subscribers on your line. The mouthpiece was in the centre and the batteries for talking current were housed in the lower box. During the winter months, a bag of camphor was often placed on the mouthpiece to prevent the spread of germs.

In 1910, another telephone system arrived in the area. Dr. Joseph W. Orme, the doctor in Centralia, bought Dr. McCue's practice and moved to Crediton. Dr. Orme was also interested in the telephone and that year, he started building the lines which served the communities of Crediton, Centralia and Mount Carmel for many years. The farmer's wife could now visit with her neighbours without leaving her own home. This was known as the Crediton Rural Telephone System and Dr. Orme was the sole owner.

Arrangements were made with Bell Telephone to serve these

customers through the Crediton exchange. There were 35 subscribers to Dr. Orme's service in the first year, subscribers who farmed in Biddulph, Stephen, Usborne and McGillivray townships.

In October, 1913, fulltime service was established at the Crediton telephone office. This was accompanied by a \$3 per month increase in pay. A bell was provided for the operator and a night bell awakened him when the occasional call came in. F.W. Clark or members of his family took this night "trick."

For many years, the exchange was operated exclusively by members of the Clark family. James Clark was the first operator, followed briefly by his son Alfred, and later, by his son Francis. All the members of the Clark family could operate the board. Merle, Frank's daughter, was day operator until her marriage to Victor Kestle.

The combined telephone office and harness shop was a fascinating place to visit. The aroma of leather, oil and dust spread a pungent fragrance throughout the shop, which was often visited by old and young alike. From watching the skilful hands of the Clarks transform pieces of leather into glistening new harness to the equally competent hands of Merle Clark manipulating the numerous cords on the switchboard which was located at the back of the shop.

As the number of subscribers increased, it became necessary for Mr. Clark to engage additional operators. After finishing school, many Crediton girls earned their first wages in the telephone office.

In 1918, there were 42 subscribers in the village and 244 on rural lines. In 1920, plans were made to re-arrange the Crediton office. This work was done the following year and additional equipment was added. By 1921, Crediton had 50 telephone subscribers.

Francis Clark purchased the Crediton Rural Telephone System from Dr. Orme in 1926. On March 7, 1927, Clark received a franchise to construct, equip and operate a telephone system on the public highways of the Township of Stephen to be known as the Crediton Telephone System and the Centralia Mount Carmel Telephone Company. These were later merged as the Crediton Rural Telephone Company.

In 1930/31, there were 62 telephones in the village, the highest number recorded. Fifteen years later, there were only 44 phones in Crediton. In 1947, Francis Clark sold his telephone system to the Bell Telephone. At the same time, he retired as local manager.



The staff members who operated the Crediton telephone system in 1938 were (left to right) Martin Markel, Aldonna Wuerth, manager Francis Clark and chief operator Midge Gertinger. (*The Stephen Township Sesquicentennial Program*).

after more than 40 years of service. He was succeeded by Mrs. G.L. Heideman. In May, 1950, Miss L.M. Clarke, later Mrs. Maleida McCann, was appointed the local manager.

When the Bell Company took over the rural lines, there was a total of 230 subscribers. This increased to 255 the following year, but in 1950, there was a loss of 79 subscribers when several decided to join the Hay Township Telephone System. A re-adjustment of the lines transferred other subscribers to the Exeter exchange.

Before World War I, the range for satisfactory telephone calls, with clear transmission, was about 1,000 miles. By 1920, calls could be made to any point in Canada and the United States, although calls outside Ontario and Quebec were only available on United States lines. The first all-Canadian transcontinental telephone line was inaugurated in 1932.

At one time, there were as many as 22 telephones on one line. The Bell Company rebuilt many of these lines and reduced the maximum number of telephones on one line to eight.

After Francis Clark retired as manager, Bell Telephone continued to lease part of the building, remodelling the shop. A partition separated the telephone office in the front from the harness shop in the rear.

When the dial service opened on Sunday, February 19, 1961, this ended the contact of the Clark family with the Bell Telephone



F.W. Clark, 85, manager of the Crediton telephone system for nearly 30 years, placed the first call on the new dial system, launched locally on February 19, 1961. Mr. Clark enjoyed a "delightful" six-minute chat with his daughter in Calgary, Alberta.

Company, a partnership of almost 70 years. The company erected a building on King Street North in Crediton to house the new dial-switching equipment. Crediton was the first community in Huron County to receive the new, all-number calling system.

With progress comes many changes. After the direct-dial system was introduced, subscribers often missed the friendly association with the local operators. The operators when the local exchange was closed were: Mrs. McCann, chief operator; Mrs. John Wade, Mrs. Maurice Beaver, Miss June Kuhn, Mrs. Harold Glanville and Mrs. Lloyd Gaiser. Mrs. McCann, known as "Sis" local-

ly, was transferred to the Clinton office. June Kuhn went to the Bell office in Strathroy.

When the new direct-dial system was introduced, a "telephone night" was held in the Crediton Community Centre to introduce local subscribers to the new technology. When the system was launched early Sunday morning, F.W. Clark, 85, the longtime telephone manager, placed the first call to his daughter in Calgary.

THE HAY MUNICIPAL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

The Hay Municipal Telephone System, which also serves Stephen Township residents, remains one of Ontario's independent telephone systems. In the early 1960s, there were 400 to 500 similar companies, usually located in rural Canada. While many of these have since been absorbed by Bell Canada, several independents, like the Hay system, still thrive along Lake Huron's eastern shore.

The Hay Municipal Telephone System operates today from dial exchanges at Grand Bend, Dashwood and Zurich. This system has also been associated with two local families, both of Swiss descendant, for much of its history.

In 1906, Edmund Zeller, publisher of *The Zurich Herald*, saw the need for a telephone system in the Zurich area. A telephone line had been erected from Crediton to Dashwood in 1893 and Zeller wanted to extend the line to Zurich. The publisher combined efforts with William Hess of Zurich, a mechanic and telegraph lineman by trade, to bring the telephone to their community. The first two telephones in Zurich were installed in a bicycle shop owned by William Hess and in a jewellery store owned by Fred Hess. The telephone switchboard was installed in Zeller's newspaper office on Victoria Street. Telephone lines were gradually extended to rural subscribers around Hay Township. These were connected to the Bell Telephone switchboard in Dashwood, operated by Peter McIsaac.

Edmund Zeller called his system the Farmers' Exchange Line, incorporating it in 1910 under the title the South Huron Telephone Company Limited. The company was granted permission to operate in Stephen Township by a bylaw passed in April, 1910 and signed by Reeve Samuel Sweitzer and clerk Henry Eilber.

The public interest in telephone service continued to grow and telephone meetings were held around the area. Some citizens be-

gan to promote the idea that a telephone system should be operated by the township as a public utility. This idea gained acceptance and in 1911, the Hay Township Municipal Telephone System was established. The Municipal Corporation of Hay bought the entire Zeller system, which served the villages of Zurich and Dashwood and subscribers in Hay and Stephen, for \$7,150. The new system had 138 phones; within two years it was serving almost 400 subscribers. The Hess family remained directly involved with the company until the late 1950s.

Peter McIsaac remained manager of the Dashwood office, assisted by his wife Lacinda, their sons, Milfred and Erwin and by Miss Sadie McIsaac. T. Harry Hoffman managed the Dashwood and Grand Bend exchanges from 1939 to 1949.

A favourite anecdote about the early years of the Hay system is this story of an early subscriber. The man refused to sign the petition for the new service until he was assured that he could talk over the telephone in his native German. After his telephone was installed, the man complained that the service had been misrepresented. He had tried to speak to his son's wife in German but she could not understand him any better than if he had been right in her home. (The son's wife, unfortunately, simply did not speak German!)



Gertie (Hoffman) McCrae uses one of the telephone operators who worked in the Dashwood office of the Hay Municipal Telephone System.

In 1916, the Bell Telephone Company sold their four remaining telephones and local facilities in Dashwood to the Hay system for \$100. Then in 1931, Bell also sold its trunk lines running through Dashwood to Grand Bend and Parkhill along Highway 81, to within two miles of Greenway, to the Hay Municipal Telephone System.

In April, 1947, the Hay system purchased part of the Crediton Rural Telephone System, owned by Francis Clark, for \$2,275. This consisted of telephone lines and equipment installed in part of Stephen and McGillivray Townships.

Until the 1960s, switchboard operators still served the Hay Municipal Telephone subscribers. Not only did they make switchboard connections, but also politely answered queries on everything from time of day to the art of properly changing a diaper. The last operators worked in Grand Bend in 1962; the dial-conversion program was introduced at Dashwood Central in 1964.

Today, the Hay Municipal Telephone System, located in an office on Lot 21, Con. 10, Hay Township, serves over 3,200 customers in Huron County. The simple touch of a telephone dial today can put Stephen Township residents in touch with the world.

Library Services: A Good Book is a Joy Forever

*"The man who does not read good books
has no advantage over the man who cannot read."*
— Mark Twain

Reading material was often a luxury for Stephen's first settlers. Some families were able to bring books with them but most had few reading materials besides their treasured Bible. When a paper or periodical was received from 'home', everyone gathered to hear the news, even though that news was weeks old.

Something of the character of the people who came to Stephen can be gleaned from the fact that in 1853, only the second year of municipal government, the council established a township library.

A committee of seven men, chaired by the reeve, was appointed to order books from Dr. Egerton Ryerson, Superintendent of Education in Upper Canada. Forty pounds was set aside for this purpose. William Sanders and Robert Walker were appointed librarians.

More books were purchased in 1855 and Miss Margaret Walker acted as librarian, receiving a wage of three pounds, 4 and 1/2 shillings. When council voted \$105 for new books and the Department of Public Instruction matched the amount in 1861, the library was considerably enlarged. The older books were repaired and recovered. Eight new cupboards were built and the collection was divided amongst them. The cupboards were put at nine locations throughout the township, one in each school section. A librarian



This document, from the Department of Public Instruction for Upper Canada, was sent to Thomas Galley, reeve of Stephen Township in 1861 regarding funding for library books.

was set in charge of each collection, receiving \$6 a year for his or her work. The librarians in 1862 were:

Fairfield	School Section No. 1	Chester Prouty
South	School Section No. 2	Ellen Coughlin
Shapton	School Section No. 3	William Sweet
Sharon	School Section No. 4	John Lewis
Foster's	School Section No. 6	William Yearley
Shipka	School Section No. 7	Owen Mitchell
Grand Bend	School Section No. 8	A. Armstrong
Exeter	School Section No. 9	Charles Gidley

Timothy Coughlin distributed the books and received \$12 for his work.

In 1866, books totalling \$60 were purchased by the township. There is no record of the total number of books in the library but each cupboard had 100 to 200 volumes and by the end of 1866 there were ten cupboards.

Farm families must have derived much pleasure from these books as they were read aloud through long winter nights. The township library remained in circulation for over 20 years. It would be interesting to know if any of the books still exist.

By the early 1870s, Sunday Schools and public schools were also establishing libraries. Stephen had four public school and five Sunday School libraries by 1871, representing about 800 books.

THE COUNTY LIBRARY CO-OPERATIVES

Miss Rose Aitken, the Goderich librarian, was instrumental in organizing the Huron County Library Association in 1941. She was the first county librarian, holding that part-time position from 1941 until 1945. No libraries existed in either Stephen or Hay townships at the time.

The next record of a public library in Stephen comes some 70 years later, in 1945, when Alice Jean Eckmier was hired as librarian for the Huron County Library Association, or the County Co-operative Library.

In 1947, the Huron County Library Co-operative purchased a bookmobile, which was nicknamed the "Miss Huron." The International one-ton truck was the first self-contained library truck in Ontario. Before it was purchased, Mrs. Eckmier and her husband transported books around the county in their car.

The work of the bookmobile and of the Huron County Library



Mrs. Jean Eckmier, the county librarian, and her husband Glenn, serve a patron from the bookmobile, nicknamed "Miss Huron."

Co-operative was featured in a film titled *The Books Drive On*, made in 1948. The movie was shown across North America and even abroad to give potential immigrants an idea of what life was like in rural Canada.

The association provided the incentive for setting up several small libraries around Huron County, including four in Stephen Township.

CENTRALIA BRANCH LIBRARY

The Centralia Library Association was formed on September 9, 1946 to serve 137 village residents. Roy Ratz, township reeve, met with Reverend and Mrs. Gordon Weir, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Andrews, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Gates, Mrs. Lorne Hicks, Miss Agnes Anderson, Mrs. William Parsons and Mrs. Mary Kershaw at the Centralia parsonage to discuss plans for a library.

The first library was located in Fred Werner's barbershop, next to the post office. It was only officially open for two hours on Wednesday afternoons. In 1947, the library contained 62 books. Mrs.

Lorne Hicks was chairman of the board, Mrs. Gordon Weir was secretary-treasurer and Ralph Gates was appointed librarian.

In June 1948, a larger room with a stove was rented from Mrs. Harry Mills. Ralph Gates had earned his class "E" librarian's certificate and was paid \$10 per month for opening the library for four hours every week. Ralph Gates also served as secretary of the Stephen Township Film Council until it was dissolved in 1952.

The library board was able to purchase a building in 1953 for \$300. It was moved to the Gates property, renovated and opened in October. During Mr. Gates' term, he increased the book stock by obtaining used books from Toronto for the cost of shipping. New books were purchased as money became available. These, with the



The Centralis library has been located in a barber shop, at J.A.D. McCurdy Public School and has found a permanent home in the Centralis community centre. (Photo by Stephen Harding).

800 books loaned annually by the county library, provided a varied selection for patrons.

In January 1959, Mrs. Frank Osborne was appointed librarian and secretary-treasurer. The library itself was moved in June, 1963 to the east end of the Frank Smythe lot on Prince Alfred Street. Leonard Wilson was librarian from 1964 to 1970, at which time Mrs. Al Preece took over the duties.

The library moved to more spacious quarters in the J.A.D. McCurdy Public School in Huron Park in 1977, and was renamed the Huron Park Branch Library. When the school required this space, the branch was moved to the Centralia Community Centre, with a 37 per cent increase in the circulation of books. Maxine Hyde is now the Centralia branch librarian.

CREDITON BRANCH LIBRARY

Over the years there were several attempts to provide library services in Crediton. At one time the village was part of the Imperial Circulating Library, although the details of this arrangement are not recorded. Henry Eilber had a large private library, duly numbered and catalogued, and he was generous in lending them to interested readers. A book club was formed in Crediton at one time. Each member purchased a book and regular meetings were held at which the books were discussed and exchanged.

One of the first projects of the Crediton Women's Institute, organized in 1919, was the furnishing of a reading room. The Institute members subscribed to a number of magazines and applied for books from the Provincial Travelling Libraries. This system did not prove successful however, as the selection of books was limited and often not suited to readers' interests. The travelling library system was tried again in 1939 under Mrs. Freeman Morlock's leadership.

The Institute sponsored a public meeting in 1949 for those interested in forming a Library Association. County librarian Jean Eckmier attended and explained the co-operative system. The meeting participants resolved to form an association library and join the County Co-operative Library. Reverend Harold Currie was appointed chairman of the board, Mrs. Keddy, librarian, and Mr. Keddy, secretary-treasurer.

A request for book donations met with limited success but with the 100 county books the library was opened in the public school.



Mrs. Marie Fydenchuk has ably served as librarian in the Crediton branch library, located in the basement of the town hall, since 1969. (Photo by Stephen Hening)

The following June, the Keddys moved away. Reverend Currie and Miss Ella Morlock served as acting librarians until October when Mrs. Wilfrid D. Mack accepted the position of librarian, at an annual salary of \$100. By this time, the library had 50 members and a circulation of 811 books.

The collection was moved to a room in the Forester's Hall on the second floor of the bank building. There were no shelves and the books were set out on tables when the library was open, then packed into cartons and stored in a nearby room. The Women's Institute soon saw the need for better accommodation and paid for the construction of a three-section cupboard with shelves and doors that could be locked. This cupboard housed the books until 1952. In that year the library was moved to a room in the renovated town hall. For several years the Women's Institute sponsored a Library Night to raise funds to buy books for the library; later they gave a cash donation for the same purpose.

In 1965, Steve Brierly was appointed librarian. He was succeeded by Mrs. Sharon Zurbrigg in 1966 and Mrs. Marie Fydenchuk, who remains the librarian today, in 1969. The library remains in a small room in the basement of the Crediton Community Hall, where it has been located since 1952.

DASHWOOD BRANCH LIBRARY

The Dashwood Library Association was formed in 1946, partly due to the women who belonged to The Stitch and Chatter Club. At a meeting in November, 1946, Harold Taylor, Helen Nadiger, Mrs. R.H. Taylor, Sprole Currie, Edgar Restemayer, Mrs. J.M. Tieman and Mrs. Elgin Merner were appointed to the library board.

The library was initially housed in Tieman's Furniture Store, with board members acting as librarians. The following year, Mrs. William Wein was hired as librarian at an annual salary of \$60. She was succeeded by Marion Rader in 1955, Barbara Koehler in 1958 and Mrs. Ernest Koehler in 1960.

In 1967, Dashwood Library joined the Huron County Library. At this time, the library was located in a room in the Koehler Bakery.

After 25 years in that location, in 1981 the library moved to a building owned by the Boyle family. The library was located in the former grocery store cooler. Bernice Boyle became the new branch supervisor and remained in that position until November, 1990 when the Dashwood branch library was closed.

GRAND BEND LIBRARY

The Farm Women's Club of Grand Bend corresponded with Rose Aitken from 1941 to 1944 about establishing a library in Grand Bend. It was not until 1948, however, that a library was finally organized in the village, as a branch of the Huron County Library Co-operative.

The Grand Bend Library also paid membership fees to the Lambton County Library. In 1954, after the village of Grand Bend joined Lambton County, the library became part of the Lambton County Library system.

In January 1967, the Huron County Co-operative Library, as the Association had been renamed, became the Huron County Library and the small association libraries became branches of the county system. Services provided by the County Library include a quarterly exchange of books for the branches, filling of special requests by the county office, delivery of books to county residents unable to go to a library and the extension of borrowing privileges in Huron and Middlesex County libraries.

Despite the attraction of television and movies, many in Stephen Township continue to appreciate the library services — and the joy of reading a good book.

APPENDIX**LIBRARIANS SERVING STEPHEN TOWNSHIP****HURON COUNTY LIBRARIANS**

Miss A. Rose Aitken	1941-1945
Mrs. Alice Jean Eckmier	1945-1961
Mrs. Mary Lou (Stirling) Clements	1961-1965
Mrs. Helen Pirie (Acting)	Jan.-June, 1966
Mrs. Catherine Huffman (Acting)	1966-1967
Miss Carolyn Croke	1968-1969
Miss Betty Mackenzie (Acting)	1969-1970
Miss Ethel Dewar	1970-1974
Mr. William Partridge	1974-1987
Mrs. Sharon Cox (Acting)	Feb.-Dec., 1987
Ms. Beth Ross	1988-

CENTRALIA LIBRARY SUPERVISORS

Ralph B. Gates	1946-1947
Mrs. Pauline Weir	1947-1948
Ralph B. Gates	1948-1964
Leonard E. Wilson	1964-1970
Mrs. Carol Preece	1970-1978
Mrs. Marlene Munn	Feb. 1978 - Apr. 1979
Mrs. Maxine Hyde	May 1979 - present

CREDITON LIBRARY SUPERVISORS

Mrs. Keddy	1949-1950
Mrs. Wilfrid D. Mack	1950-1965
Stephen Brierley	1965-1966
Mrs. Sharon Zurbrigg	1966-1967
Mrs. Marie Fydenchuk	1967-present

DASHWOOD LIBRARY SUPERVISORS

Mrs. Barbara Wein	1947-1955
Mrs. Marion (Rader) Howe	1955-1958
Mrs. Barbara (Koehler) Martene	1958-1960
Mrs. Elda Koehler	1960-1978
Mrs. Isobel Rader	1978-1981
Mrs. Bernice Boyle	1981-1990.

(Dashwood Branch Library was closed in November, 1990).

Chapter 16

Members of Parliament

"Public officers are the servants and agents of the people, to execute the laws which the people have made."

"Your every voter, as surely as your chief magistrate, exercises a public trust."

Grover Cleveland

Stephen Township has been honoured by having nine men elected to represent the people of the riding in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the House of Commons. One of these politicians was also elevated to the Senate. They are some of the men who have helped to pattern the destiny of our country.

MEMBERS OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

1868-1871	Isaac Carling
1898-1919	Henry Eilber
1919-1923	Andrew Hicks
1943-1947	R. Hobbs Taylor
1973-1989	John Keith Riddell

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1875-1878	Thomas Greenway
1878-1887	Timothy Coughlin
1896-1900	Valentine Ratz
1900-1904	John Sherritt
1904-1909	Valentine Ratz

MEMBER OF THE SENATE

1909-1924	Valentine Ratz
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It is interesting to note that the four men elected to the House of Commons from Stephen Township all had previously played important roles in the municipal affairs of the township. Thomas Greenway, Timothy Coughlin, and John Sherritt and Henry Eilber were all serving as reeve in the year they were elected to parliament. Valentine Ratz was reeve the year before his election, serving 16 years on council.

For eight years, three of these men, Ratz, Eilber and Sherritt, sat together on council for six consecutive years. This could be called the flowering of political leadership in Stephen. Together these five men served a total of 50 years in the federal and provincial Parliaments. Valentine Ratz served an additional 15 years in the Senate.

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

ISAAC CARLING

Isaac Carling was born in London Township in April 1825, the third son of Thomas Carling and Margaret (Routledge) Carling. Thomas came to Canada from Yorkshire in 1818. In the spring of 1819 he walked from Niagara to Colonel Thomas Talbot's home in Elgin County where he was granted Lot 14, Con. 8, London Township.

Thomas Carling married Margaret Routledge the following year. Years later Sir John Carling, Isaac's younger brother, told of the difficulties his parents encountered in solemnizing their marriage. In London Township at the time there were no churches, ministers or civil authorities able to issue a marriage licence. Thomas had to appear before a Justice of the Peace and then post three signs giving notice of his intention to marry: one sign on a mill door, another on a distillery door and the third on a large tree at a cross-roads. Anyone with objections to the match had to appear before the Justice of the Peace by a time specified on the notices. Thomas and Margaret were married by Justice of the Peace, the surveyor Mahlon Burwell.

We know little of Isaac's early life although it seems clear that he apprenticed as a tanner. He arrived in Stephen Township in 1847 and purchased land on the southeast corner of Lot 21, Con. 1, now the corner of Main and Huron Streets in Exeter. There he erected a house and a tannery. According to the 1851 census, he employed seven men, one of whom was his elder brother William. By this time he was married to Ann Balkwill, of the Devonshire



Isaac Carling of Exeter was South Huron's first Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Settlement, and daughter of one of the first families to settle in Stephen, and had a daughter, Margaret Jane. The Carling home was a two-storey building in which family and employees all lived together. The tannery closed in the late 1860s or early '70s.

By that time Isaac had diversified his holdings. He owned considerable land and operated a small store. When this store was destroyed by fire in September 1865 it was replaced by a substantial two-storey brick building long known as the Carling Block. The new store was divided into two sections with a large archway in the wall between them: dry goods were on the north side and groceries, boots and shoes on the south. In later years Isaac's two sons, Thomas B. and William J., operated the business as partners. It was sold in 1913.

Records indicate that the spacious Carling home on the north side of Huron Street was built before 1866. This property was purchased for the South Huron District Hospital in 1951. William J. Carling built a large brick residence on the south side of Huron Street and Thomas B. lived on Main Street, south of Huron.

Isaac Carling became involved in local municipal affairs shortly after he opened his tannery. He was a councillor for the United Townships of Stephen and Usborne and became reeve of Stephen Township in 1867. That same year, he was elected as South Huron's

first member of the Legislative Assembly after Confederation. During his time in office, Carling petitioned the government that certain lands in the Exeter area be removed from Canada Company control and sold to settlers.

Isaac Carling also served as the first reeve of Exeter. The businessman/politician was a strong supporter of the Anglican Church.

Isaac Carling was a man of strict integrity and did much to promote the prosperity of Exeter. He died in August 1895. Carling Street in Exeter commemorates the family's name.

Isaac and Ann had three sons and seven daughters. The youngest son, Isaac Routledge, studied law, practised in Exeter and was appointed a King's Counsel (K.C.). He died in October 1934.

HENRY EILBER

No other man in Stephen has given as many years of service in local and provincial offices as Henry Eilber, or Harry as he was more familiarly known.

Harry was the eldest son of John Jacob and Sarah Finkbeiner Eilber. Jacob was born in Balersbronn, Germany, where his father and grandfather had both been "Bürgermeisters". Because the young men of the community were being forced into military service by a powerful neighbouring German state, the Eilber boys began to emigrate to North America. In 1840, Jacob's brother Frederick, his wife and the remaining members of the family moved to Pennsylvania, where one son, George, had already settled.

Jacob visited Canada in 1850 and was favourably impressed by the opportunities. He returned to Pennsylvania and married Sarah Finkbeiner in 1853. Jacob purchased an acre of land on the northwest corner of Lot 10, Con. 6, in 1855, and erected a log cabin for his wife and infant daughter, Sarah. Before long his parents, his brothers Frederick, Charles, and Christopher, and his sisters Dorothea and Caroline joined him in Stephen. Another brother, Henry, settled in Zurich. Of his other brothers, Gottlieb went to Brazil and was never heard from again, Gottfried died at the Battle of Gettysburg in the American Civil War and Christian settled in Columbus, Ohio.

In November 1857, Jacob's eldest son Henry was born in Crediton. He received his education in the log schoolhouse south of the village. As a young man he went to work for J. D. Freeman, an

early Exeter merchant. A year later, Mr. Freeman moved his stock to Listowel and Henry moved with him. After several years Henry returned to Crediton and opened a store in partnership with his father in the newly-erected brick block east of the main corner. He built a fine brick house on Victoria Street and in November 1880, married Elizabeth Kruttiger.

When his father died in 1901, Henry sold the business and opened an insurance and conveyancer's office. From 1881 to 1933, Henry was manager and secretary-treasurer of the Hay Township Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company. On the 75th anniversary of this company, a special tribute was paid to him:

"Special mention must be made of the long tenure of service to the company of Henry Eilber. His zeal was a perpetual source of inspiration to successive generations of presidents and directors and under his adept management the company established itself firmly and started that period of expansion which has continued uninterruptedly until the present day. Henry Eilber had always had the best interests of his community at heart. His life was one of devotion to those whom he was privileged to serve and his ability and integrity won him the loyalty of the whole constituency."

Henry was elected deputy-reeve of the township in 1882 and held that position for 14 years. He then served as reeve for three years. In 1899 he was appointed clerk of the township, an office he held for almost 35 years.

On March 1, 1898, he was elected to a seat in the Ontario legislature for South Huron with a majority of 159 votes. He went on to participate in five more elections and was the sitting member for the next 22 years. He served under the Honourable George W.

"He is a man of great HONORABLE MANNERS and not equal to others in word or voice and manners etc."



Henry Eilber operated an insurance and conveyancer's office in Crediton for many years.



Henry Eilber of Crediton served as a member of the Ontario legislature for 22 years.

Ross, Sir James P. Whitney and Sir William Hearst. He was chairman of the Private Bills Committee and the Agricultural and Educational Committee, and did special work in the area of municipal law. At the end of his term in 1919, he did not seek re-election.

According to one writer: "For many years he was the idol of the Conservative Party and in a special way he represented the German element in the country. His fine practical common sense and evident desire to serve the public faithfully and earnestly earned the applause of all classes."

Wrote another: "Mr. Eilber was always a pleasant, alert, capable public servant who put the interests of the people first and whose assistance was available to his constituents whether Conservative or Liberal."

Henry Eilber was a supporter of the Evangelical Church and was chairman of the building committee when the present brick building was erected. He also designed the first entrance to the Crediton Cemetery.

Among his hobbies were an extensive library and a beautiful rose garden with many rare, imported species. He was fond of birds and his Blue Martin 'apartments' sometimes attracted as many as 25 families of the birds during the summer months.

Harry was ably supported in his work and hobbies by his capable wife, Elizabeth. The Eilbers celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in November 1930. Henry Eilber died on January 17, 1943.

ANDREW HICKS

The Hicks families were the first to settle in the southeastern corner of the township. They came from Devonshire in 1846 and arrived in Stephen the following spring.

Andrew was the son of Richard Hicks, son of one of the original settlers, and Jane Elston Hicks. He married his cousin, Maude Hicks, on October 30, 1898 in Centralia Methodist Church. He and Maude had three daughters and three sons. One son, Donald Hicks, was killed over Germany during World War II. The three daughters all graduated from the Victoria Hospital School of Nursing.

Andrew Hicks was a grain merchant in Centralia for several years before taking over his father's farm south of the village. He and his wife were active in the Methodist, and later United Church. He led the church choir for many years and was a member of the church building committee. He sponsored the building of the Centralia school and served as trustee for 21 years.

Hicks was also a strong supporter of the Centralia baseball team. He once recalled that members of the team attended his nomination meeting at Hensall and gave him cheering support.

The United Farmers of Ontario (U.F.O.) was founded in March 1914 in Toronto. When war began later the same year, farmers found themselves short-handed but working harder than ever to



Andrew Hicks of Centralia served one term in the Ontario legislature as member of the United Farmers of Ontario party.

maintain food supplies for the home population, the armed forces and the British people. In the spring of 1918, Ottawa announced that farmers' sons would no longer be exempt from conscription. When protests failed to change the policy, farm groups decided they must have a voice in parliament. In the provincial election of 1919, the U.F.O. adopted a political platform and nominated 64 candidates. Andrew Hicks was one of those candidates, and one of the 44 U.F.O. candidates to win a seat. Through an alliance with Labour members, the party was able to form a government under Premier Ernest Charles Drury, a Barrie-area farmer. Andrew Hicks became Party Whip for the term.

The 'Farmers' Parliament' accomplished a good deal in its short life. It enacted the first social legislation in the province, including Mothers' Allowance Act, pensions for the civil service and the Adoption Act. The U.F.O. government also established the Provincial Highways System, promoted rural electrification and strengthened the reforestation program. The U.F.O. experiment in government ended in defeat in 1923.

Andrew Hicks and his wife Maude continued to live at their farm after they retired. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in October 1958. Andrew Hicks died in April 1961.

ROBERT HOBBS TAYLOR

Robert Hobbs Taylor was born in London on December 20, 1893, the son of William Taylor and Alice Jane Hobbs Taylor. He received his early education at Central Collegiate, London, Ontario and at the University of Western Ontario Medical School, then pursued postgraduate programs in surgery and medicine in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and at Victoria Hospital in London.

In October 1916, he established a practice at Dashwood. He served the surrounding community for 29 years, operating his own small hospital. Dr. Taylor was appointed Medical Officer of Health for Stephen Township in 1940. During that year he introduced the first inoculation program for diphtheria and scarlet fever in the township.

Dr. Taylor was chairman of the Dashwood Public School Board for 15 years and was instrumental in establishing a public library in Dashwood. He also served as a village trustee and president of the District War Services Board and the Huron County Medical Society.



Dr. Hobbs Taylor of Dashwood campaigned for construction of the highway between Dashwood and Exeter during his time in the provincial government.

He married Letta Ruth Guenther of Dashwood in September 1926 and they had one daughter, Anne Kathryn.

After an unsuccessful bid for election in 1937, he was elected to the Ontario legislature for the riding of Huron in 1943 and again in 1945. He was a Progressive Conservative and served under Premier George Drew.

As a member of the Legislature, the interests of his constituents were continually in his heart and mind. Among his accomplishments for his riding were the erection of the modern bridge at Bayfield and the construction of the highway from Dashwood to Exeter.

In July 1947, Dr. Taylor sold his practice and hospital to Dr. Donald B. Ferguson of London. He died in December of the same year.

Premier Drew paid Dr. Taylor this tribute: "No member of the Legislature has given more unselfish and devoted service. Prior to his recent illness he has worked hard and faithfully for the people of his own riding and for the welfare of the whole province. His death is not only a great loss to the people of his community but also to the whole of Ontario. We have lost a close personal friend and the people of Ontario a great public servant."

In the comparatively short time of 30 years, Dr. Hobbs Taylor

made a valuable and lasting contribution to the health and prosperity of Dashwood and the surrounding communities.

JACK RIDDELL

The Riddell family has farmed in southwestern Ontario since the 1830s.

Jack Keith Riddell, born in 1931, was the son of William Keith Riddell, the Middlesex County agricultural representative, and his wife Dorothy. Jack graduated from the University of Guelph in 1952 with a diploma in agriculture and farmed first in Blanshard Township, and then in Biddulph. He returned to Guelph in 1953 to earn his B.S.A. degree and then worked as an agricultural representative and livestock specialist for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF).

In 1959, Riddell returned to the family acreage in Blanshard Township to raise livestock. From 1963 to 1965, he worked as an agricultural representative in Essex County. After two years with the Ontario Stock Yards in Toronto, in 1967, he returned to farming, this time on a property located on Highway 83 between Exeter and Dashwood.



Jack Riddell, who lives on the family farm near Exeter, served two terms as Ontario's Minister of Food and Agriculture.

Jack Riddell was nominated as Liberal candidate in the 1973 provincial by-election in the Huron Middlesex riding. In a surprise upset, he won the election and ended a 37-year Conservative hold on the riding. He won successive elections in 1975, 1977, 1981, 1985 and 1987.

Following the 1985 election, Jack Riddell was named the provincial Minister of Agriculture and Food. He was retained the same cabinet post after the election of September 1987. During his four-year tenure as minister, Jack Riddell introduced over 100 new programs and increased Ontario's agriculture and food budget by 73 per cent.

Riddell, now retired from politics, still lives on his family farm near Exeter, Ontario. He is married to the former Anita Mora. Since retiring from politics, Jack Riddell has opened a consulting firm, operated from his farm, to assist clients in finding their way through the bureaucratic channels in Queen's Park and Ottawa.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

TIMOTHY COUGHLIN

Timothy Coughlin's parents, Daniel and Mary Regan, emigrated from County Cork, Ireland, in 1832 and settled in the Township of Yarmouth, Elgin County. Timothy was born in January 1834, the second son in a family of nine. He received his education in the common schools of Yarmouth and Westminster townships. In 1846, the family moved to Stephen Township where Daniel took up Lots 3 and 11 on Concession 5. Later he moved to Lots 10 and 11 on the South Boundary.

Timothy Coughlin married Mary Ann Clavin of Biddulph Township on May 22, 1870. He purchased Lot 19 on the South Boundary where he built a fine brick house. Timothy and the other members of his family were successful farmers and stockmen. They raised sheep and cattle for the overseas market and were also drovers, buying and selling livestock raised by other farmers.

Coughlin had considerable experience in municipal government: he was treasurer for Stephen Township for 16 years and was serving as reeve in 1878 when he was selected as the candidate for the Conservative party in the federal election.

The ridings had recently been adjusted; Stephen and Exeter were now part of North Middlesex. His opponent, R.C. Scatcherd, had held the seat since 1867 and had twice been re-elected



Timothy Coughlin of Mount Carmel, treasurer of Stephen Township for many years, served in the House of Commons for 11 years.

by acclamation. Timothy won the seat with a majority of eight votes and held it for the next 11 years. On one occasion his leader, Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, made a special visit to Lucan to influence members of the Orange Lodge to vote for Timothy Coughlin, who was a Catholic.

Politics played an important part in rural communities of the time. Political meetings were well attended, providing a welcome diversion for rural and village residents. Without television and radio, these meetings were the only opportunities for electors to see and hear their candidates. Eloquent and forceful speakers were highly valued. Discussions between loyal supporters of the two parties often became very heated, especially during an election campaign.

Timothy and Mary had four children. One son, John Joseph became a lawyer and practised in Stratford. He was appointed a judge in 1916 and served on the bench for over 25 years. He died in 1956 at the age of 84. Timothy's second son, Daniel Francis, operated the family farm until his retirement. The two daughters, Mary and Madeline, became Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

The first Catholic church in the Mount Carmel area was a log building on Timothy's farm. The Coughlins played an important role in church and community affairs in Stephen. Timothy died in August 1912 and was buried in the Mount Carmel cemetery.

THOMAS GREENWAY

Thomas Greenway, the eldest son of Thomas and Elizabeth (Heard) Greenway, was born on the coast of Cornwall, in England

on March 25, 1838. His parents came to Canada in 1844 and settled at Hampton, north of Bowmanville. Two more children were born there, William Heard and Lisa Jane.

By the spring of 1848, the family had moved to Stephen Township and were located on Lot 13 on the London Road. Shortly after their arrival Thomas senior died. His eldest son left school to help his mother finish their cabin. He worked on a farm for a time, then was apprenticed to a tinsmith in London. He walked home to spend Sunday with his family whenever possible.

Little is known of the early years of his working life. Thomas married Anne Hicks of Devon in 1860. After some years in Bruce County, the couple returned to Devon, where Greenway opened a general store. On January 1, 1865, he was appointed the postmaster of Devon, holding that position until his younger brother William succeeded him in 1872.

Thomas became deputy reeve of Stephen in 1867. He was elected reeve two years later, a position he held for seven years. It was while he was serving as a member of Huron County Council that Greenway began to realize the value railways would be to the development of the province. He maintained a special interest in railways for the remainder of his political career.

In the first federal election after Confederation, Thomas ran against the sitting Liberal member, Malcolm Cameron of Goderich, but lost by 85 votes. The two men contested the 1872 election and again Greenway lost by a small margin. Cameron triumphed a third time, in 1874, but because of an election irregularity was unseated. On February 11, 1875, Greenway was elected by acclamation as an Independent Conservative.

During the 1870s, he became involved in a variety of different enterprises. He and his brother William operated the Holman farm on Lot 10 for a brief time. He also managed a brickyard in the Centralia area and built several buildings. From 1873 to 1877 he and a partner ran a sawmill in the swamp three miles west of Exeter. In April 1874, the local newspaper reported that: "Mr. Greenway has material to erect a super family residence to cost \$3500."

His wife, Anne, died of smallpox in 1875, leaving Greenway with three sons and four daughters. By July 1 of that year, he had rented his store and was devoting himself to his parliamentary duties, which included campaigning for free trade policies. In 1877, he married 22-year-old Emma Essery, daughter of John and Mary



Thomas Greenway, later Premier of Manitoba, was elected to the House of Commons by acclamation in 1875. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba)

Essery of Concession 5, Stephen Township, a talented musician who was a teacher and church organist before her marriage.

Greenway declined the nomination for re-election in 1878 and instead made a trip to southern Manitoba to inspect the land available for settlement, believing there was an opportunity for land speculation. On his return, he travelled extensively through Huron County, promoting settlement in Manitoba through the Rock Lake Colonization Company. Over the next few years he arranged several excursion or settlers' trains to transport people from South Huron and neighbouring communities to rural Manitoba.

The Exeter Times reported on March 27, 1879:

Mr. Thomas Greenway, on his return from an extended tour in Manitoba last fall, went through the surrounding country lecturing and painting up with vivid colors, the advantages possessed for the poor and struggling man by the Prairie Province. He expatiated on the richness of the virgin soil, the almost limitless expanse of the area now occupied only by feathered songsters or trodden by the untamed buffalo or waked by the echoes of the prairie dog's howl... Centralia - the home of Mr. Greenway - was the head-

quarters of the movement. Arrangements were made to start on the 25th of the month for the Rock Lake Region, about 18 miles north of the international boundary, and a brisk trade has been done by the merchants of the vicinity of the lines of goods which would be most needed in the "great lone land."

The first contingent of settlers, which filled 21 railway cars, arrived at Emerson, Manitoba in April 1879, then travelled west by wagon or ox cart to the junction of the Boundary Trail and Crystal Creek. Here, the community of Crystal City was established. In December 1879, Thomas Greenway was elected by acclamation as the first member of the provincial legislature for the newly-formed tiding of Mountain. He ran initially as a "non-partisan" candidate.

Greenway was elected leader of the Liberal Party in 1883, and early in 1888, he became Premier of Manitoba. During his time in office, Greenway's government passed the controversial Schools Act (1890), which eliminated government support for denominational schools, which included the Catholic schools in Manitoba. In 1895, the federal Conservative government ordered the province of Manitoba to restore public support to Roman Catholic schools. Eventually, Greenway's Liberal government in Manitoba and the federal Liberals under Laurier, reached a compromise in 1896.

Thomas Greenway and his cabinet resigned as the government of Manitoba on January 6, 1900. By then, the Liberal Party was increasingly representing urban residents; Greenway was the only rural member remaining in the cabinet.

Thomas Greenway, now facing financial difficulties, had hoped to be appointed to the Senate of Canada. When this did not happen, in 1904, he ran for office again. He was elected to represent the riding of Lisgar in the House of Commons. On this occasion an article in the *Farmer's Advocate* stated:

"The return of the Honourable Thomas Greenway as M.P. for the constituency of Lisgar, Manitoba, widely known as a successful breeder of Shoethorn cattle and other purebred stock on his farm at Crystal City, ranks among the noteworthy events of the recent election and brings an influential and impressive member to the Canadian Parliament where he began his legislative career many years ago."

In 1908, Thomas Greenway was appointed to the Board of Railway Commissioners, but never assumed his duties on the board. Thomas Greenway died of a heart attack in Ottawa on October 30, 1908.

Thomas Greenway, a Methodist, was very active in the church activities in Crystal City and supported local sports and concerts. He was also known as "a very kind and indulgent father" to his 14 children. Those children carried on the tradition of service through active participation in public office, business and community affairs.

The Greenway home in Crystal City was converted to a hospital which has since been enlarged. The name is also commemorated in Thomas Greenway Collegiate. In Stephen Township, the family's contribution to Stephen Township is commemorated by the crossroads' community of Greenway.

VALENTINE RATZ

Valentine Ratz's grandfather, Valentine Senior, emigrated from Hessen, Germany to Canada in 1828 and settled in Waterloo County on land that is now part of Kitchener-Waterloo. His eldest son Jacob was born that year. Later the family moved to St. Jacobs where they cleared land for a farm.

Jacob developed an extensive lumber business in Wilmot Township, Waterloo County. His son Valentine Jr. was born on November 12, 1848, the eldest of eight children.

On February 13, 1872, Valentine married Mary Yeager of New Hamburg. Three years later Valentine and his younger brother John purchased 500 acres of land in Stephen Township comprising Lots 10, 13, 14, 15 and 16 on Concession 14. Most of the land was virgin forest owned by the Canada Company. The Ratz brothers bought a sawmill which had been operated for some years on the east half of Lot 10 in 1875 but before they were able to take possession of it, the mill burned to the ground. In October a local paper reported: "A splendid new mill is being erected on the site."

Valentine and John were enterprising businessmen and capable managers and the mill was well located on the Crediton Road near the centre of the township. They soon built up a thriving lumber business. To "feed" their mill they continued to acquire neighbouring lands. The heavily forested acres were cut for lumber, the land was 'stumped' and then sold for farm and pasture.

In 1879, Valentine was elected to the township council. He served as councillor for two years, deputy-reeve for one year, and reeve for 14 years. He was selected as Warden of Huron County in 1886, the first Stephen Township resident to hold this office. It was during his term as reeve that the Grand Bend Cut to Lake Huron was completed.

During the late 1890s, Valentine and a partner organized and financed the South River Lumber Company Limited, located 30 miles south of North Bay. Here they operated a store and sawmill, employing up to 100 men. The mill burned down in 1911 and was not replaced.

Valentine was nominated by the Liberals to contest the riding of North Middlesex in 1896. Electioneering began with a meeting in the Crediton town hall in February sponsored by the Liberals and The Patrons of Industry. Valentine and two other speakers gave fiery speeches charging the government with mismanagement of finances.

The election campaign became more heated over the next months. In June, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, leader of the Liberal Party and an eloquent speaker, visited Ailsa Craig on behalf of Valentine Ratz. In the same month Prime Minister Charles Tupper visited Exeter in support of the Conservative candidate. According to reports, Sir Charles Tupper was met at the station and conveyed to the meeting place in an impressive procession which included carriages, two bands, hundreds of people on foot and 20 militiamen.

The 1896 election campaign revolved around the issues of tariffs and funding for denominational schools. Both sides were confident of victory and public feeling was intense. In the end the Liberal party swept into office — but in Ontario, the Liberals and Conservatives won an equal number of constituencies. In the North Middlesex riding, W. H. Hutchins, the Conservative candidate, won by five votes. Valentine Ratz, the Liberal candidate, asked for a recount. On July 6, "In a reserved decision affecting the marking of ballots in the North Middlesex recount, Judge Masson declared Ratz elected with a majority of 62 votes." It was the 1896 election which ended the domination of federal politics that the Conservative party had enjoyed since Confederation.

Valentine served until he was defeated in the election of 1900 by John Sherritt, also of Stephen Township. Before the next election in October 1904, the ridings were changed and Stephen and



Valentine Ratz, who operated a sawmill on the Crediton River, is the only Stephen Township resident ever appointed to the Senate of Canada.

Exeter again became part of the South Huron riding. Mr. Ratz moved to Parkhill and won the North Middlesex riding running as an Independent Liberal. He was appointed to the Senate in 1909.

Valentine and Mary Ratz lived in Parkhill for five years. When he became a Senator they moved back to Waterloo County and settled in New Hamburg. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in February 1922. Valentine Ratz died on March 2, 1924.

JOHN SHERRITT

John Sherritt was born on November 22, 1851 in Stanley Township, Huron County. He was the son of John Sherritt and Mary Armstrong, both of Irish descent. He attended a rural school with his three brothers, Thomas, George and William. In his youth Sherritt worked as a carpenter.

In August 1872 he married Letitia Keys. By the mid-1880s, they were settled on Lot 10, Con. 20 of Stephen, then known as Harpley. Sherritt farmed and bought and sold cattle and horses. He was a big strong man with an acute business sense.

In 1888 he was elected to the Stephen Township council: he served second deputy reeve for six years, first deputy reeve for three years and as reeve for two years. During his second year as



John Sherritt was elected to the House of Commons in 1900, serving in the opposition Conservative party for four years.

reeve, in 1900, he was elected to the House of Commons, where he sat, as a member of the opposition Conservative party until 1904. During his term, Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier initiated the building of a second transcontinental rail line and sent a Canadian contingent to fight in the Boer War.

Mr. and Mrs. Sherritt had five daughters and three sons. After Letitia's death, Sherritt married Mrs. Dannie Ulens.

Converted in early manhood, Sherritt was an active member and elder of the Greenway Methodist Church. He served as director of the Hay Township Fire Insurance Company for 18 years.

About 1915 Sherritt moved to Guelph where he worked as a provincial purchasing agent and continued his stock-dealing business. About 1918, he moved to Blanshard Township where he died on September 14, 1923 after a brief illness.

CONCLUSION

Stephen Township residents hold a long and admirable record of public service, both at the municipal level and in provincial and national affairs. The township was the original home of a Premier of Manitoba, and of a member of the Canadian Senate. It is hoped that a spirit of community service will continue to inspire township residents to seek public office in the years to come.

Chapter 17

Go West, Young Man

Although life in Stephen Township was becoming more comfortable, the pioneering spirit remained unquenchable in some settlers. Almost as soon as Stephen pioneers had cleared some land and built comfortable houses some of them moved West to begin the process all over again in Manitoba or the Dakotas.

By the late 1860s, a few of Stephen's young men had made excursions to the new territories, and were impressed with what they had seen. It was not until the mid-70s, however, that settlers began to head out to Manitoba in significant numbers.

In 1870, Manitoba was incorporated into Confederation and Ottawa began to advertise land for homesteading in the West. Newspaper coverage of the Red River Rebellion, which erupted in 1869, publicized the area further, and "western fever" began to spread. Popular slogans were: "Go west young man and grow up with the country," or, "Come to Manitoba where you can plough a mile-long furrow and never meet a tree or a stone."

Southern Manitoba had been surveyed into square-mile sections of 640 acres each by 1878 and the best land east of the Pembina River and along the Assiniboine River had been taken up. That year a few families crossed the Pembina and took up land. The Rock Lake District, as this new area was known, was a rich rolling land covered with tall grass and a profusion of colourful prairie flowers.

Thomas Greenway, Stephen's first Member of Parliament, came to this area in 1878 accompanied by James Handford, a school chum who had worked in Greenway's Devon store for several years. Handford was making his first shipment of horses to Winnipeg. Greenway was obviously impressed by what he saw: the following winter he organized a group of eight men into the Rock Lake Colonization Company. They agreed to travel west together,

settle in the same community and work together during the first year. The members of the company were: Thomas Greenway, his brother William, Thomas Sando and James Baker, both carpenters, Arthur Rollins, James McNamee, J. J. Ring and William Parr, all from the Centralia area.

The first Greenway party left Centralia on March 25, 1878. Before the departure a large group met at the Greenway residence and presented him with \$200.

The trainload of freight, livestock and passengers arrived at Emerson on April 1 and began the 100-mile trek to the Rock Lake District. The only road was the Commission or Boundary trail which surveyors of the International Boundary had used. Although the Pembina and other streams had to be crossed, there were no bridges. Some settlers built rafts to ferry their belongings across the water. Those who had watertight wagons could float them across; horses and oxen had to swim. It was a slow, wearisome journey.

Several members of the Greenway party took up land where the trail crossed the Crystal River, calling their new home Crystal City. They lived in tents until they were able to build houses. Thomas Sando's house was the first to be built. Some settlers built temporary sod houses: the walls of were sods laid one on top of the other with wooden doors and frames and a roof of sods laid over poles.

Another group settled in the Snowflake area, so named for the large perfect snowflakes that covered the ground one morning. Snowflake was southeast of Crystal City, close to the international boundary. As soon as possible Thomas Greenway had town-sites surveyed at both locations and, by fall, a church and a store had been erected at Crystal City.

In addition to the eight members of the company, Centralia residents who settled at Crystal City were: John Greenway (Thomas' brother); Edward, Thomas and Joseph Rollins; James E. Parr; Joseph, Thomas and James Rogers. W. H. Rogers was the first teacher in Crystal City and the first trustees were Arthur Rollins, W. H. Greenway and William Parr.

In the Snowflake area, John Patterson, John Harvey, John White and John Hicks settled on sections 15 and 16, which became known as Johns' Corner. From the Exeter area James Blake, James D'Vignou, Samuel Tribble, Robert Dew and Samuel Oke settled near



Crystal City, which started as "one tent for the dormitory and one for the dining and cook room", had progressed to a main street by 1885. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba)



Greenway invested heavily in the Prairie Home Stock Farm, in Crystal City. Largely through his leadership, this area of Manitoba became noted for the quality of its horses, cattle and sheep. Ironically, much of the livestock was exported to eastern Canada. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba)

Snowfiske, Thomas Cabel, Isaac Handford and Samuel Holman were from Devon.

Coleman Hogarth, Daniel Gower and Thomas Smallcombe located in the Purves community. Several Crediton families settled in the Rollins District (honouring pioneer settler Joseph Rollins): William Baker, William J. Hedden, John Cudmore, Harry Essery, Joseph and James Gower, Robert and John Sims and William and Robert Lawson. John Saundercok of Exeter and Dashwood settled at Clearwater, three miles west of Crystal City. In 1881, 37 more Stephen residents left on the Greenway Excursion train for the West.

PIONEERING IN THE WEST

For pioneers, the most important difference between Stephen Township and the prairies was the absence of trees. In Manitoba the land was waiting to be cultivated and used. But life in the West was by no means easy. Homesteaders had to contend with prairie fires, late spring and early fall frosts, grasshoppers, gophers, hail, rainy and dry seasons. The roads were as bad as they had ever been in Stephen and it was much longer journey to Emerson than it had been to London for supplies. Most winters were very cold with blizzards that obliterated all landmarks. Snow blindness affected men and animals. But the people were optimistic and the soil was rich. When good years did come, nature was bountiful and the granaries overflowed.

By 1885, a C.P.R. line was completed through the Rock Lake District but it did not pass through all the established townsites. As a result the inhabitants of three places, Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Clearwater, packed up during the winter of 1885-1886 and moved their towns to the railway line.

Thomas Greenway's farm of 2,000 acres, called the Prairie Home Farm, was located one mile south of Crystal City. It was choice wheat-growing land. Greenway also developed herds of excellent breeding stock using, in part, animals purchased from Stephen Township breeders. By the late 1890s, the Shorthorn and Ayrshire herds at Prairie Home Stock Farm were considered the best in the Northwest.

J. J. Ring, another member of the Company, expanded his quarter section to include 1,000 acres. For many years he kept fine herds of Shorthorn cattle and Clydesdale horses. Ring was known



Emily Essery, also a Stephen Township native, was Thomas Greenway's second wife. Before her marriage she was a teacher and church organist. Mrs. Greenway died in 1934. (Collection of Dorothy Larson)



Thomas Greenway, Stephen Township's most celebrated native son and the Premier of Manitoba from 1888 to 1900, a year or two before his death in 1908.

as the "Tree Planter" of Crystal City for his habit of planting small trees every spring. Ring lectured on farm topics, served on various agricultural boards and received an honorary diploma in agriculture from the Manitoba College. In 1937 his farm became an Experimental Sub-station.

BACK IN STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

At a time when some former township residents were carving out new lives in Western Canada, many Stephen Township farmers were becoming increasingly prosperous. This prosperity was reflected in the commodious brick houses built around the turn of the century. One farm magazine of the period stated that "...a comfortable house can be built for \$2500 or less."

Most homes now had ample space for the comfort and pleasure of the family — a parlour or sometimes a double parlour with an archway between the two halves, a dining room, kitchen, washroom, pantry and four to five bedrooms. In addition most houses had a summer kitchen to which the cook stove was moved during the hot weather. Stoves had replaced fireplaces for heating and some houses had three or more chimneys and wall openings in all the rooms to provide complete winter comfort. Spacious verandas provided a pleasant place to relax and to visit with friends.

CONCLUSION

The migration to Western Canada in the 1870s, led by Thomas Greenway and the Rock Lake Colonization Company, reflected that Stephen Township's pioneering spirit still flourished. The best farmland in southwestern Ontario had now been cleared and settled. Adventurous sons and daughters of pioneers, like Greenway, were forced to look for "wild" lands farther afield. Homesteading in Western Canada was the new adventure.

Two factors were responsible for the success of those who moved to Manitoba. One was the building of the transcontinental railway. The other was the development of Red Fife wheat, with a shorter growing season suited to the prairies.

During World War I, many more township residents would again heed the call of "greener" pastures. This time they were lured to cities like Detroit, Michigan or London and Hamilton. The attraction was steady work and good pay in the automobile or munitions factories. For women, the cities offered the promise of jobs as housekeepers or in factories. But few of those "exiles", carved out as impressive a career as former Centralia shopkeeper Thomas Greenway.

Chapter 18

The War Years

*"From little towns in a far land we came,
To save our honour and a world afame,
By little towns in a far land we sleep;
And trust the world we won for you to keep!"*

— Rudyard Kipling

*"If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders Fields."*

— John McCrae

On August 4, 1914, Great Britain declared war on Germany and life for many Canadians, including Stephen Township residents, changed forever. Canada, as one of the British dominions, was immediately plunged into "the war to end all wars."

Early in September, 30,000 young Canadians, most with no previous military training, sailed in a convoy to England. The Canadian forces were civilian soldiers who left jobs or work on the farm to enlist. They, like most Canadians, thought it would be a short and glorious war.

In the first years of the war, tens of thousands of enthusiastic civilians, including many young men from Stephen Township, volunteered to serve. Clergymen, women's organizations, service groups and politicians all supported the propaganda campaigns that encouraged young Canadians to serve "King and Country" while preserving the British Empire.

Church and other community groups shipped food, cigarettes and warm clothing to the soldiers overseas. They also raised funds

for the Red Cross relief efforts in Europe and tried to ensure that the soldiers' families in Canada were taken care of. The adult Bible classes of the Evangelical Association Church in Creditor, for example, raised \$70 for the war effort by harvesting four acres of flax.

Farmers were encouraged to be even more productive in supplying food both for the Allied forces and the British people. Farmers' sons and farm labourers were asked to do their part for the war effort by staying on the land and producing the crops needed to feed the hungry armies.

Conditions on the battlefields of Europe were horrendous. Many of the soldiers lived in mud and rat-infested trenches and dugouts, which flooded when it rained and were under a steady barrage of shell fire. Diseases, fed by the unsanitary living conditions, also claimed many casualties.

The war years also changed the lives of civilians. The country had been in a depression when war broke out, but unemployment soon gave way to a shortage of labour as more and more men enlisted. Due to the shortage of manpower, women were given jobs in industry for the first time. It was these contributions to the war effort that were directly responsible for women being given the vote.

As the war dragged on, more and more young people were leaving the farms and country towns to find work in the factories of Detroit or Flint, Michigan and London and Toronto, Ontario. Young women who first moved to the cities to do housework, were soon working in munitions factories. So were many of the men who were not accepted into the services. Rural Canada, including Stephen Township, never completely recovered from the depopulation that began between 1914 and 1918.

One of the most spectacular battles involving the Canadian forces during the war was the capture of Vimy Ridge in April, 1917. The victory, however, claimed a high price. There were 3,598 Canadian soldiers killed in that campaign alone. One of them was Sergeant Percy Lawson, a member of Creditor Methodist Church. The memorial service for Sgt. Lawson was so well-attended the church could not hold all the mourners. A war memorial to Canadian soldiers was later erected on Vimy Ridge. It is often still the site of services for Canadian veterans.

By 1918, Canadians were disillusioned with the war and its patriotic propaganda. Farmers were disheartened because of a ceil-



"Our Soldier Boys", published in the 1919 Golden Jubilee history of Crediton Methodist Church, was a photo collage of church members who served in World War I.

ing on farm prices imposed by Ottawa. Then, as voluntary enlistments declined, Prime Minister Robert Borden's government talked about conscription (compulsory enlistment). Farmers feared their sons would no longer be exempt from military service. To relieve those fears, Ottawa issued an order-in-council two weeks before the 1917 election exempting farm workers from compulsory service.

The First World War ended in 1918 with a loss of 60,000 Canadian lives. Thousands more soldiers were badly wounded or suffered from the effects of the poisonous chlorine gas attacks. Some of the township residents who lost their lives were William Lamport, George Smith, Thomas W. Penhale and Thomas Mason.

When the Germans surrendered on November 11, 1918, the Armistice Day celebrations were a wild event. Fire sirens sounded, factory whistles blew, and bands paraded through the streets

of towns and villages across Canada. There were also special services of thanksgiving held in local churches, as people welcomed the return of peace. Many households, however, remained in mourning for fathers, sons or daughters who had lost their lives overseas.

HONOUR ROLL, WORLD WAR I, STEPHEN TOWNSHIP VETERANS

Appleton, D.G.	Kenny, Ernest
Appleton, T.W.	Kenny, Jack
Baynham, Wes	Kestle, Rufus
Beaver, Emanuel	*Lamport, William
Beaver, William	*Lawson, Percy
Brokenshire, Arva	McIsaac, Jack
Brown, Clinton	*Mason, Thomas
Brown, Herbert	Motz, Roland
Brown, Maurice	*Penhale, Thomas W.
Brown, Melvin	Plattin, Herbert
Carter, George	Ratz, Milton
Eilber, Merner	Ratz, Roy
England, Lloyd	Rau, Garnet
Fahrner, Emmery	Schenk, Harry
Fahrner, Everett	Schwartz, Harry
Finkbeiner, Harrington	Sims, S.W.
Finkbeiner, Roy	*Smith, George
LaFond, Francis	Smith, Walter
Haist, Herb	Spickett, Thomas
Haist, Wellington	Treitz, Edgar
Haugh, Milton	Treitz, Edward
Hedden, Alonzo	Webb, Art
Hill, Harvey	Wein, Daniel
Holtzmann, Harrison	Wenzel, Emerson
Holtzmann, Murray	Wuerth, Sylvester
Hutchinson, Ernest	*Died in active service

(This list may not be complete, since a World War I honour roll for the township could not be located.)

WORLD WAR II

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, after an armistice of only 20 years, Canada was much better-equipped than

in 1914. Canada declared war on Germany on September 10, 1939, and Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King pledged that Canadians would not be conscripted. By 1944, following a national plebiscite, conscription became a fact of life.

This time, Canadians were more apprehensive and subdued. Gone was the optimism and the cheering in the streets that had occurred during the outbreak of war in 1914. Canadians knew that this second conflict would be costly both in terms of loss of life and even in the changes for civilians.

Canadian soldiers not only fought on the European front and in North Africa, but with the declaration of war against Japan in 1941, Canadian servicemen were also stationed in Hong Kong and Asian countries.

World War II also changed the physical landscape of Stephen Township. In 1941, construction started on the 600-acre Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) base at Centralia. Residents of Centralia, Exeter and Crediton found themselves involved in providing housing, food and other supplies for the hundreds of construction workers working on the new training facilities. Having the RCAF training school right in the township also literally brought the war into the backyards of Stephen residents.

The war again lifted Canada out of a depression and regenerated the farming industry. Both the troops overseas and civilians in Britain and Europe clamoured for food. The burden of producing that food often fell on the shoulders of older farmers, women and the children of farm families. The senior grades in rural public schools were given leave from class to assist with farm work. They helped to plant the crops and were not required to return to the classroom until the harvest was over. Also, many city students were mobilized in the Ontario Farm Service Corps to work on farms and in orchards.

Canada's raw materials, such as ore and lumber, were in high demand during the war year. Foodstuffs, such as milk, sugar, butter, tea and coffee, however, were rationed. Tokens were eventually required to purchase meat. Gasoline was also rationed, which restricted civilian travel. Perhaps to compensate, the federal government introduced benefits such as unemployment insurance and family allowance payments during the war years. The government also provided veteran's benefits which assisted demobilized soldiers in buying homes or gave them a chance to pursue an education.



Construction of RCAF Station Centralia, which began in 1941, drastically altered the rural landscape of this part of Stephen Township. Other buildings were being erected at the same time for the RCAF airport near Gnauf Bend. (London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, D.B. Weldon Library, UWO)

Over 150 Stephen Township residents enlisted in World War II. The Schroeder family of Centralia had four sons in the Royal Canadian Air Force — Gerald Schroeder was lost while flying a mission in India. Charles, Fred and Gordon Baynham were three more Centralia brothers who all enlisted. The Preszcator family sent four men to war — brothers Howard and Stanley and their cousins, Calvin and Lorne.

Lloyd England of Crediton, a World War I veteran, re-enlisted in World War II, taking his sons, John and Gerald with him. Six members of the Desjardine clan also served. Five women from the township enlisted, most as nursing sisters.

For the families left behind in Canada, the war years were filled with uncertainty. One young man, first listed as missing in action, was Flying Officer Harold Brown, 20, of Crediton. Brown, serving as a wireless air gunner, had graduated from the bombing and gunnery school at Dafoe, Saskatchewan in 1943. He was the youngest graduate at the time to receive a pilot officer's commission.

An only son, Harold Brown was reported missing after flying a mission over Warsaw, Poland. His crew were flying arms to the underground resistance forces in the city. In April, 1945, Henry Brown received final confirmation from Ottawa that his son was



Harold Braun, 20, of Crediton, was declared missing and presumed dead after flying a mission over Warsaw, Poland.

presumed dead. A further letter sent on February, 1946 noted: "The remains (of the plane's crew) gathered were sent to Dabrowa Tarnowska and buried in the State Cemetery by the Rev. Jaku-biak.... the burial was carried out in secret because the German Gestapo were then in the district ..."

I regret to advise that due to the apparent severity of the crash and the fact that all those personnel who were known to be evaders or captured have returned to the United Kingdom, it is unhappily impossible to hold out any hope for the survival of any of the crew members of your son's aircraft."

Canadian soldiers played a key role in what became the decisive battle of the war. This was the D-Day invasion of Normandy, on June 6, 1944. The war on the European front ended with Germany's surrender on May 5, 1945. During the final days of the war, Canadian soldiers helped to liberate Holland. That, and the fact that Queen Juliana and her daughters had taken refuge in Ottawa during the war, forged special ties of friendship between Canada and the Netherlands which still exist today.

The Pacific conflict ended with Japan's surrender in September, 1945. One township resident stationed in the Pacific was Leroy Schroeder of Centralia, who served in Ceylon. His role in moonlight operations laying mines entailed many dangerous, double



The township paid tribute to the men and women who went into the armed forces at a special ceremony in Crediton Community Park. Alonso McCann, *war reeve*, is seen holding up the honor roll with Dr. Hobbs Taylor, M.L.A. for South Huron, who did the unveiling. (London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, D.B. Weldon Library, UWCO)



Miss Mildred Elliott of Crediton, who served as a nursing sister, is being presented with her cheque for wartime service by Roy Ratz of Dashwood, *reeve of Stephen Township*. (London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, D.B. Weldon Library, UWCO)

crossings of over 1,000 miles of sea. He also made repeated low-level flights over enemy territory. These flights and other acts of bravery earned the young airman the Distinguished Flying Cross award. His citation read, "This officer has at all times displayed a high degree of courage, skill and devotion to duty."

The people of Stephen Township paid tribute to the 138 men and women from the district who returned from the war at a special ceremony in the Crediton community park.

Dr. Hobbs Taylor, M.L.A. for South Huron, unveiled the honour roll (which now hangs in the Crediton community centre bearing the names of the 151 township residents who enlisted - 13 men died in service).

Harold Eilber of Crediton, a former township clerk, presented the scrolls in remembrance of those lost in the war to family members.

"We have gathered here with mixed feelings," Dr. Taylor told the audience. We are glad to greet those who have returned but our gladness is mixed with sorrow when we think of those who made the supreme sacrifice."

Dr. Taylor emphasized, "We must be vigilant to maintain personal liberties and guard that those in authority in our country are not the army, or the air force, for this is not an army or an air force country, but a country of peace. Pray God, to lead the world leaders so that future honour rolls will not be necessary."

Alonzo McCann, township reeve through the war years, recalled the efforts of township residents to send comforts to service people. Reeve Roy Ratz presented cheques to the returning service men and women, in tribute for their war effort.

HONOUR ROLL, WORLD WAR II, STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

Row 1

*Brown, Harold	*Ryan, Thomas	Baynham, Charles
*Collins, Dennis	*Schroeder, Gerald	Baynham, Gordon
*Hicks, Clifford	*Treibner, Edward	Baynham, Roy
*Hicks, Donald E.	*Weilberg, Raymond	Beaver, Eugene H.
*Maier, Harold L.	*White, Kenneth J.	Bender, Lloyd
*Penhale, Allan F.	Anderson, Jack	Bender, Roy
*Pflaff, Ward	Anderson, John F.	Bowman, Rodney
*Pollock, Addison	Atkinson, Percy	Clarke, James H.

Cleave, John C.	England, Gerald	Finkbeiner, Eugene
Desjardine, Emmerson	England, John W.	Finkbeiner, Howard
Desjardine, Everett	England, Lloyd	Finkbeiner, Matthew
Desjardine, Glen	Fahrner, Austin E.	Fisher, Emery
Desjardine, Irvine	Fahrner, Calvin	Flynn, John Alvin
Desjardine, Ivan	Fahrner, Wallace S.	Ford, Lloyd
Desjardine, Lester	Faist, Lewis	Gaiser, Arthur
Dietrich, Anthony	Falconbridge, John	Gaiser, Melvin
Eagleson, Raymond	Fields, Robert C.	Geromette, Norman
Edwards, Harold	Finkbeiner, Dalton	Gibson, Albert
Edwards, Wilbert		

Row 2

Gill, Harman	Jory, Leland	Misener, Claire C.
Gill, Stanley	Kleinstiver, Lorne	Mitchell, Orville
Gladman, Donald	Lawson, Samuel	Mitchell, Walter
Goetz, Albert	Lightfoot, Clayton	Moelock, Martin
Grossman, Garret	Lillow, Kenneth	Morrissey, Cyril
Green, Bertram	Lochner, William	Neeb, Sidney
Hainz, Arthur G.	Love, Mervin	Neil, Murray
Hartle, Stanley	Louie, Emmerson	Ness, William W.
Heaman, Lloyd	Mahoney, John	Parsons, Frayne
Heywood, Eric	Mahoney, Justin	Perkins, Harold R.
Holt, Erwin	Maier, Carl	Pfaff, Harvey C.
Holtzman, Harold	Mason, Graham	Preszczator, Calvin
Holtzman, Howard	Mathers, Ernest	Preszczator, Howard
Hopcroft, Fred E.	Mathers, George	Preszczator, Lorne
Hopcroft, Robert	McKeever, Austin	Preszczator, Stanley
Howe, Kenneth	Merriam, Rupert	Prouty, Ivan.
Jesney, John W.	Miller, Albert N.	

Row 3

Prosty, Stewart	Schroeder, Earle	Stone, Chester
Rader, Irvine	Schroeder, Orville	Sturgeon, Russell
Regier, Jerome	Schroeder, W. Leroy	Thibault, Renne
Regier, Leo	Schwalm, Austin	Thomas, Leslie
Restemayer, Donald	Sims, Alvin	Tiederman, Henry
Ryan, Hugh	Sims, Charlie	Tieman, Lorne
Sanders, Gordon	Sims, Fred	Tieman, Russell

Treibner, Douglas
Truemner, Howard
Voigt, Lorne
Waghorne, Harvey
Waghorne, Lawrence
Walker, Alden
Wanner, Lorne
Webb, Norris

Weber, I. Keith
Weiberg, Garnet
Wein, Leonard J.
Wein, Wilmar D.
Werzeba, Otto
Wolfe, Harold
Wolfe, John Robert

Wright, Stewart
Ziler, Henry J.
Dietrich, Hilda
Elliott, Mildred
Oliver, Cora
Ratz, Reia
White, Alma



The honor roll containing the names of all the Stephen Township residents who served in World War II hangs in the township community centre in Crediton. The first names on the honor roll are those of men who died in active service. (Photo by Stephen Harding)

POSTWAR EMIGRATION BENEFITS STEPHEN

The end of World War II brought a flood of emigrants from Europe to the Western nations. These newcomers could be compared to a transfusion that revitalized township life. Many farms had been in the same family for generations and now there were no family members left to carry on. The older farmers were tired from their hard physical labour during the war, when there was a shortage of farm help. The newcomers to Stephen Township were welcome additions to the community. In emigrating to Canada, many of them gained both land and an independence that would have been difficult in their homelands. In return, they brought a new energy and commitment to the township, particularly in the farming community.

RCAF TRAINING SCHOOL COMES TO STEPHEN

The sesquicentennial year for Stephen Township is also a special anniversary for the men and women who once worked at RCAF Station Centralia. The first graduates of the new RCAF Station Centralia received their pilots' wings 50 years ago this November. During its history, more than 15,000 personnel passed through the base. Many former personnel will be returning in June to take part in a reunion held in Huron Park.

The construction of the Centralia base on land which had formerly been used to grow sugar beets drastically changed the face of Stephen Township.

In 1941, as World War II entered its third year, there was a sound of some unusual activity on a 600-acre parcel of land just west of the village of Centralia. The sound was the pounding of hammers as hundreds of workmen worked around-the-clock building what would become the Royal Canadian Air Force base. The village, which had been bypassed by Highway 4 many years before, was suddenly given a new lease on life.

Between 400 to 600 craftsmen and labourers, rushing to complete 40 large frame buildings, hangars and runways before winter. The "owl crews" often poured concrete by floodlights during the night. The workmen were constructing a new \$1.5-million Service Flying Training School (SFTS) on the farm fields where pilots from British Commonwealth countries would be trained for wartime service. The new base was to be one of the largest stations of its kind in Canada.

Building RCAF Station Centralia was a race against time — construction was supposed to be completed by February, 1942 so the first class of trained pilots was to be ready for overseas flying duties by late spring. Before this, the pilots had trained on noisy Harvard aircraft at another training school located in Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

Construction of the base at Centralia generated an instant economic boom for Stephen Township and the Exeter area. The *London Free Press* reported, "Centralia, Crediton and Exeter have become the "boom" centres. All classes of merchants report increased sales, and on Saturday evenings, Exeter is busier than many places three times its size." Since the influx of hundreds of construction workers resulted in a housing shortage, many local families took in boarders. Houses that had formerly rented for \$15 per month, now rented for twice that amount.

Free Press reporter Kenneth Armstrong concluded, "The prosperity which has come to Huron County as a result of the war is reflected in houses and barns that have been newly-shingled or painted, in new farm machinery, improved roads and high-grade livestock in the fields. But the frugal people of Huron County are not allowing the "good times" to run away with their common sense."

When the Centralia base opened, it was officially designated the No. 9, Service Flying Training School (SFTS). Despite good intentions, personnel from the Summerside base did not arrive in Stephen Township until June, 1942. They lost no time in establishing friendly relations with local communities. The County of Huron welcomed the men and women in blue by donating \$1,800 to equip the station's recreation hall. Base personnel soon made themselves "one of the family" by capturing the Huron County Softball Championship in three keenly-contested matches with the Crediton team.

While the SFTS was located in Summerside, it trained pilots on single-engined planes. At Centralia, the training school's role was to produce pilots experienced on twin-engined planes. More sedate Ansons replaced the strident Harvard airplanes that had been used at the P.E.I. flight school.

The first trainees reported to the new Centralia base on August 2, 1942, as workmen were still rushing to put the final touches to runways, hangars and barracks. Group Captain E.G. Fullerton,



These were an estimated 7,000 people who attended the opening of the new \$1.5-million training school in Centralia, described as "the last word in flying school." (Exeter Times-Advocate)



These Ansons flew in formation above the heads of the thousands of spectators attending the official opening of RCAF Station Centralia. (Exeter Times-Advocate)

formerly in charge of the Summerside base, was the commanding officer at Centralia. As well as the men in the air force, more than 100 airwomen were stationed at Centzalia.

The official opening ceremonies for the base, on September 23, 1942, attracted 7,600 guests. Sitting outside on folding chairs, in front of the new aircraft tower, the spectators watched as Air Vice-Marshall G.O. Johnson cut the ribbon across the runway to officially declare the new RCAF Centralia Station "operational." The Air Vice-Marshall noted, "This is the last word in an air station. It combines all the improvements of service flying training schools built during the past three years." He explained that airports at Grand Bend and St. Joseph were built in association with Centralia and that the project had been completed in record time. Then A/V/M Johnson added, "It is the aim of the RCAF to co-operate with this prosperous farming community around it in every way."

The ceremony concluded with a march past of the station's personnel, headed by the drum and bugle band, while three Anson aircraft droned overhead in formation.

Just two months later, on November 20, graduation ceremonies were held for the first 49 students who had earned their pilots' wings.



As spectators watch, the opening ceremony at Canada's newest air base concluded with a march past of the station's personnel, headed by the drum-and-bugle band. (Exeter Times-Advocate)



The Centralia Coronet, a monthly magazine, was one of the publications produced at RCAF Station Centralia during the history of the base.

The Centralia RCAF Station soon earned a reputation, not only for its skilled pilots, but also for its famed pipe band. The band, which made its first public appearance in 1943, owed its existence to the enthusiasm of G/C Fullerton. Several London businesses donated uniforms for the band and the commander designed a special RCAF tartan. That tartan, for the only pipe band in the Canadian Air Force, was duly approved by the Air Council and registered in the archives of Scottish Clans.

The band was composed of 12 pipers and seven drummers. With Glengarry caps, plaid sporrans and kilts and tunics with special trimmings, the band, led by its drum majorette, created a sensation wherever it went. After the war, when the pipe band was "dissolved", the RCAF lost one of its most colourful organizations.

The air force also bolstered morale at RCAF Centralia Station by publishing a magazine called *The No. 9 Flyer*, which appeared eight times between December, 1944 and July, 1945. In later years, another magazine called the *Centralia Coronet*, combined articles on the Stephen Township area with air force news.

By the end of 1944, the Centralia training school had produced such a reserve of trained aircrew that rapid reduction of the base training establishment was possible. The last wings' parade was held on March 29, 1945, when 112 pilots (42 RCAF and 70 RAF) graduated. A few weeks later, G/C Fullerton was awarded the Air Force Cross in fitting tribute to his outstanding service as commander of one of the major flying schools of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

TRAINED FOR PACIFIC THEATRE

In 1945, with the surrender of Germany, the training school role of the Centralia base was officially over. Plans were being made for further air force participation in the Pacific theatre. The Centralia base was named a "conditioning centre" and started classes for 104 pilots in June, 1945. Included in the four-week syllabus was leadership training, tropical medicine, survival, geography and other courses to bring aircrews up to a high level of physical fitness.

The non-flying training courses and conditioning continued until September, when Japan surrendered. With World War II over, the need for specialized training had also ended.

CENTRALIA BECOMES FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

After the war, RCAF Station Centralia was organized as the No. 1 Flying Training School for Canada's peacetime air force. The new base commander was Group Commander N.S.A. Anderson, who assumed his duties on November 9, 1945.

During the first four months of the training school, little actual flying time was logged. Instead, the emphasis was on demobilization and the reduction to peacetime establishments. In January, 1946, actual flying lessons began, using Harvards, Ansons, Beechcraft and Cornellis but at month's end, flying was abruptly stopped. The aircraft were put into storage and the station was reduced to a care-and-maintenance basis.

With this change, C/G Anderson left Centralia, handing over command of the school to Flight-Lieutenant J.F. Edwards, DFC. By the end of May, only a skeleton staff remained to complete the job of storing the aircraft.

The base remained quiet for the rest of 1946. Then, in 1947, life on the station began to stir again. Personnel were posted in to build up its strength and the aircraft were taken out of mothballs. This activity centred around No.1 Radar and Communications School at Clinton, where the influx of radio operators and technicians for training had exceeded the school's capacity. To handle the overflow, Centralia was "reactivated" in January, 1947. Centralia provided accommodation, administration and training facilities for the radio mechanics. The Centralia base had now started a new phase of its history — as one of the major training centres for the peacetime air force.

CENTRALIA STATION

Centralia was elevated to its new status, under the command of Group Commander M.D. Lister, in April, 1947. In addition to Station Headquarters, the base also now included No. 2 Radar and Communications School, the Radar and Communications School Flight and the No. 1 Instrument Flying School.

The base was reborn as No. 1 Flight Training School (FTS) on September 1, 1947, and equipped with ten small Harvards. Fifteen students — all RCAF officers — comprised the first course at the school, arriving in September, 1947. Fourteen pilots received their wings at a ceremony on June 21, 1948. These men were the first pilots trained by the RCAF since the war ended. The school later

also trained pilots for the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN).

With the re-birth of the base as a training centre for the peace-time air force, the need for housing became acute. Many of the base personnel had left their families behind in the Maritimes or Western Canada when they were transferred to Stephen Township.

In 1948 it was announced that a new community of 300 homes, complete with churches, school and a market, would be constructed for Centralia personnel and their families. The new community, which eventually became Huron Park, was carefully planned to feature crescents, parks and playgrounds on a 100-acre site purchased from William Elliott. Roads were to run behind the houses and sidewalks in front. The children of base personnel would attend a new, 12-room public school in the community and two churches were to be built to serve the town. The *London Free Press* reported: "The new community will be an outstanding example of careful planning and will go down in history as another progressive milestone in the area."

A feature article on life in Huron Park, published in 1953, noted that the only problems facing residents were too many dogs, not enough lawnmowers and no hockey teams for the "young sprouts." The reporter added since there were few teenagers living near the base, bachelor air cadets often acted as babysitters.

The Radar and Communications Flight School, which had operated at Centralia since 1947, was transferred from Centralia in the spring of 1951. The station gained a new unit with the formation of the School of Flying Control. This school provided instruction for flying control officers and aircraft control assistants, for both navy and air force personnel.

NATO AIRCREWS TRAINED HERE

Canada, as a contribution to Mutual Aid for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), began training crews from other NATO nations in 1950. The station's first NATO graduation came on May 18, 1951, when pilots from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Italy received their wings in a colourful ceremony. This ceremony was attended by Minister of Defence Brooke Claxton, senior RCAF officials, and ambassadors from five European nations and other NATO representatives.

Just 11 days later, an Expeditor aircraft from the base crashed and burned one mile from the runway. The pilot was thrown clear



Air Vice-Marshal C.R. Stenon, Mr. and Mrs. Bell of Woodstock and Mrs. McCurdy and the Honorable J.A.D. McCurdy, pioneer aviator, display a lively interest in students' work at the opening of the J.A.D. McCurdy Dependent's Public School on the base.



Airwoman Anne Dunham, of Moose Jaw, Sask., and Aircraftman Paul Melanson, Moncton, N.B., held the Air Force Day welcome sign for the RCAF Station Open House in June, 1954. (RCAF photo, London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, D.S. Weller Library, UWCO)

of the wreckage, but two flight cadets were trapped inside the burning aircraft. Wilhelm Koele, a young Dutch immigrant working nearby, rushed to the crash scene. He pulled the two young fliers to safety and beat out the flames on their clothing. Koele was later awarded the George Medal for his heroic actions.

In 1952, a new sound was heard over Centralia and area. The light DeHavilland Chipmunk aircraft, painted a bright yellow, were introduced on a trial basis in July. An article described the new two-seater training planes, with their simpler instrument panels, as "a streamlined descendant of the famous old Tiger-Moth bi-plane."

On October 31, 1952, the Honourable John Alexander Douglas McCurdy, who made Canada's first successful airplane flight in 1909, visited Centralia to open the new public school named in his honour. McCurdy was noticeably moved during the opening ceremonies.

Personnel at the base were alerted on May 21, 1953, when it learned that a tornado had struck Sarnia and areas south of Centralia. Salvage equipment was immediately sent to the disaster areas and 100 armed flight cadets were transported to Sarnia to prevent looting. In September of the same year, the base itself was struck by a line squall, with winds of 100 miles per hour, which did considerable damage to buildings on the base.

Another special event which drew hundreds of spectators to RCAF Station Centralia was the 1954 visit of members of the British royal family. On September 2, the Duchess of Kent (Queen Elizabeth's aunt) and her daughter, Princess Alexandra, visited the base. The royal motorcade drove from London to Centralia along Highway 4, as hundreds of well-wishers lined the route.

The Duchess accepted the Royal Salute upon arrival at the base and then inspected the Guard of honour. She was then taken to the Officer's Mess to meet senior officials, their wives and the 18 pilot trainees over tea. From Centralia, the Duchess and her daughter boarded an RCAF transport command for their flight to Halifax.

A historical article, "Service Aviation in Western Ontario", published by Wing Commander F.H. Hitchins of London in 1956, recalled some of the history of the RCAF Station Centralia. The author noted that during World War II alone, over 2,000 pilots from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada had trained at the Stephen Township base.

The last course of the FTS was graduated on March 6, 1957. After that, pilot trainees leaving the training school at Centralia went on to one of the bases on the prairies for the remainder of their training. This meant the drone of the noisy Harvards was no longer heard over township fields.

Centralia also lost two other units in 1957 — the Instrument Flying School and the School of Flying Control. Both were transferred to other bases. On July 14, 1958, however, the RCAF Officers' School was moved here from London, Ontario. Among the roles of this school were basic military, executive and development training for officer candidates of the RCAF and NATO and RCAF Flight Cadet aircrew orientation. By August, the Primary Flying Training School and the Pre-Flight School were amalgamated to form the Primary Training School.

For many years, Centralia had been also training pilots from the Canadian Navy. In 1959, base personnel began training Canadian Army pilots as well. The first class of Army pilots graduated on January 29, 1960, after receiving ground instruction and 60 hours of flying time on the Chipmunks. From Centralia, they went on



Members of the British royal family visited Stephen Township in 1954. The Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra, her daughter, reviewed the troops and had tea with senior officials and their wives at RCAF Station Centralia. (London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, D.B. Weldon Library, UWO)

to a station at Rivers, Manitoba to complete their training.

More changes took place at RCAF Station Centralia in the 1960s. The RCAF Officers' School was disbanded in 1960, and the next year, the Primary Training School followed suit. The training was taken over by the new Primary Flying School which provided basic light aircraft pilot training to RCAF, RCN and Canadian Army pilot trainees.

It was also in the early 1960s that three notable acts of bravery by Centralia personnel resulted in special awards. The first was the presentation of the Bronze Medal of the Royal Canadian Humane Society to Corporal A.S. Harvie. The award was for the corporal's rescue of two children who were drowning in the waters of Lake Huron, just off a Grand Bend beach.

On April 6, 1962, a Chipmunk training aircraft crashed and burned on a Centralia runway. Despite the flames and the threat of explosion, S/L McLaren, OC of the Primary Flying School and Flight Lieutenant I.K. MacKenzie, chief flying instructor, pulled one of the aircraft's occupants from the wreckage. Both men received burns during the rescue. They were awarded the George



One reminder of the air force presence which remains in Huron Industrial Park is this logo in the sidewalk of the former sergeants' mess, now the Albatross Tavern. (Photo by Stephen Handing)

Medal for "leadership and courage of a very high order at grave risk to themselves."

On May 8, 1966, however, Group Captain G.F. Ockenden was given the unpleasant task of confirming the rumours that Canadian Forces headquarters in Ottawa was considering closing down RCAF Station Centralia. There were still four training schools operating at the Centralia base when it was learned that closure was a very real possibility. There were 1,800 servicemen and their families residing at the base and that figure included about 640 school children who attended McCurdy Public School and Exeter high school.

Defence Minister Paul Hellyer eventually announced that the base, the largest "industrial" employer in the area, would be closed in September, 1966. Closing the base was expected to drain an estimated five million dollars annually from the surrounding area.

When the RCAF officially vacated the base on September 6, 1966, the 628-acre site was put up for sale as a complete unit by the federal Crown Assets Disposal Corporation. Included in the sale were 362 houses, recreation facilities that included a skating rink, curling rink, bowling lanes and a swimming pool and seven hangars and 75 other buildings that had been used for military purposes.

Almost immediately, the Exeter board of trade and Huron County officials started the search for replacement industries which would employ at least some of the hundreds of civilians who had worked on the base.

By November, 1966, Ontario Agriculture Minister William Stewart announced that his government was looking at purchasing the base as a site for an experimental or research farm. The former base and Huron Park were eventually purchased by the Ontario Development Corporation. Some of the RCAF buildings were used as classrooms and residences for Centralia College of Agricultural Technology. Others became the Huron Industrial Park, which provided space for a variety of industries. Instead of the base closure proving an economic disaster for the township, the college and the new industries provided employment for many township residences as well as affordable housing in the Huron Park community.



Larger airplanes will again be landing in Stephen Township at the Central-Hunn Park airport with the opening of a new aircraft maintenance company in Hunn Industrial Park in 1992. (Photo by Stephen Harding)

Chapter 19

Stephen Township Today

*"History, by apprising [men] of the past,
will enable them to judge of the future."*

— Thomas Jefferson

One hundred and fifty years after the founding of Stephen, residents have a reason to celebrate the history of their township. Not only can they take pride in individual accomplishments of Stephen natives, but also in the growth and development of the township's farms and villages. Stephen Township not only has a wealth of natural and economic resources, but also a proud human heritage.

When the first settlers arrived in Stephen, they came to a virtual wilderness. The first basic farming was accomplished by back-breaking manual labour, often from sunrise to sundown. The pioneer farmer dragged a treetop around the stumps to stir up the soil. Then he strode up and down his small cleared fields, scattering the seed with the swing of his arm.

Those same settlers cut their harvests with a scythe, bound the sheaves by hand and threshed them with a flail. The chaff and grain were separated by winnowing. Despite the drudgery of much of their labours, they did not lose heart in this strange, new land.

As horses became available, the animals pulled various pieces of equipment that were made to simplify the work of farming. After the plough, disk and rake, came hay mowers, binders and the first threshing machines. Eventually, gasoline-powered, motorized implements took over the fieldwork on the farm, leading eventually to the massive farm machinery of today.



Teachers Dorothy Costes and Mary Lou Becker helped to recreate Stephen Township's past during Pioneer Day at McCurdy School in September, 1991. (Exeter Times-Advocate)

Not only did labour on the farm change, but so did the farms themselves. By the 1960s, farms that were once divided into a number of fields have been stripped of most, if not all of, their fences and trees so that larger acreages can be cultivated. Many farmers today are returning to their grandparents' practices and are replanting windbreaks and implementing other conservation measures on their farms.

In this century, North Americans have travelled from the horse-and-buggy era to the nuclear age and then to the space age. The advances in the fields of science and technology are mind-boggling. The touch of one switch can set a roomful of machinery in motion. In some factories, robots are performing routine tasks once done by human employees. A result of the increasing mechanization of society is the growing concern that fewer people will be needed to work in the factories of the future.

Now man can fly to the moon, walk in space, and lasso satellites and bring them back to earth for repairs. Radio and television programs can be broadcast worldwide, via satellite. This truly makes Stephen Township part of the global village. Medical advances are also awe-inspiring with test-tube babies and "miracle" cures for



Steve Dietrich (left) and his son Dennis have both taken advantage of an Agriculture Canada conservation program. The men are standing on a buffer strip that has been created on Steve's farm to prevent topsoil from eroding into a nearby ditch. (Exeter Times-Advocate)



Hank Brand of Cont. 5, Stephen, and his wife Betty admire triplet calves born on their farm in January, 1992. The Belgian Blue Cross calves are a combination of a Red Holstein mother and Belgian Blue bull. (Exeter Times-Advocate)

once incurable diseases. The twentieth century has produced more new knowledge than all the centuries before it.

What is life like in Stephen Township in this last decade of the twentieth century and the 150th year since the township was created?

Farming remains the way of life in much of the township — but agriculture has become a highly specialized industry. In 1992, Stephen Township has 4,118 residents — approximately one-third of these residents are still involved in agriculture. Many of the remaining residents work in industry or operate independently-owned small businesses. Both rural and urban neighbours in the township co-exist in harmony.

With 90 per cent of the township soils rated as Class 1 or 2 agricultural lands, cash crop farming remains an important type of farming in Stephen. The field crops grown in the township have changed drastically since the first settlers struggled to clear enough land to plant a few potatoes and corn. Currently crops such as soybeans, white beans, rutabagas and corn outrank other crops, although canola and coloured beans are gaining new ground. Each year, several township farmers contract a certain acreage on their farms to grow peas and/or corn for the Nabisco Canning Factory in Exeter. Pockets of very fertile mulch soils produce a variety of market garden produce, often sold right at the farm gate. Hog, dairy, beef and poultry farming are the predominant livestock operations found in the township.

Despite the fact that agriculture has been a mainstay of the township's economy, the farming industry seems to be fighting for its existence in 1992. The international General Trade and Tariffs Agreement (GATT) negotiations are causing concern over the fate of Canada's farm marketing boards. Also, in recent years, prices for many cash crops barely return input costs. As industrial development expands, particularly in the Huron Park area and south of Exeter, this may eventually threaten the township's agricultural heritage.

The former Centralia RCAF Station was reborn in the 1960s as the 767-acre Huron Industrial Park. The former barracks and hangars, owned by the Ontario Development Corporation, now house a variety of industries. These include Exeter Tool and Dye, Poulan Weed Eater, Dunlop Industrial, and the most recent arrival, Clearwater Aircraft Maintenance and Overhaul. The fact the latter



The village of Crediton was originally known as Sweet's Corners and contained only a few scattered buildings and a mill.



Today, the long main street of the village boasts The Township of Stephen municipal offices, Zion United Church, Crediton Community Centre and several other homes and businesses. (Photo by Stephen Haning)

business refurbishes large planes will also give the Centralia Airport a new lease on life. The former training school runway had been home only to privately-chartered planes and a flying club.

The former base is also the location of the township's only post-secondary institution, Centralia College of Agricultural Technology, with an annual enrolment of over 300 students. Area farmers co-operate with agricultural students at the college and allow their farms to be used as actual field laboratories.

The community of Huron Park, which once housed RCAF personnel and their families, now provides affordable rental housing for people working in nearby industries. The 361 homes, still owned by the Ontario Development Corporation, are home to over 1,000 residents. The Grand Cove Estates subdivision, bordering on the village of Grand Bend, is home to over 600 retired residents, making it the second largest residential area in the township.

Other township residents live in the police villages of Centralia, Crediton, and Dashwood, which straddles the boundary between Stephen and Hay Townships. New houses are being built in Crediton, Mount Carmel, Dashwood and as replacements for older and sometimes drafty farm homes.

As well as Centralia College, there are three other schools in the township. The Mount Carmel Separate School is part of the Huron-Perth Roman Catholic Separate School Board. The other elementary schools in the township are Stephen Central, just west of Crediton and J.A.D. McCurdy Public School at Huron Park.

Secondary school students attend South Huron District Secondary School in Exeter.

Today, the residents of Stephen Township enjoy amenities that the pioneers could not even have dreamed would ever exist. For example, fire protection for the township is provided by the Stephen Township Fire Department, in Huron Park. The township is also served by the Dashwood and Area Fire Department, Exeter Fire Department and Grand Bend, Bosanquet and Stephen Fire Department. Each volunteer department assumes fire protection for a specified area of the township.

Stephen also boasts numerous recreational facilities and activities which are welcomed by both the rural and urban population.

The creation of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority has created three conservation areas in the township. The Crediton Conservation Area, which borders the Ausable River as you

enter Crediton, is a scientific picnic area. There is still a special magic to dropping a fishing line into the Ausable and waiting to see what nibbles. The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Forest, which is 1.25-miles west and north of Shipka, is an attempt to maintain a section of the township in its natural state.

Port Blake Conservation Area, adjacent to the Lake Huron Water Supply System north of Grand Bend, offers the perfect setting for sunbathing, swimming or picnicking. The conservation area usually provides a less-crowded beach than those in downtown Grand Bend.

As well, the conservation authority owns two wildlife management areas — Johnson Management Area, just north of the west end of Crediton and Devil's Elbow Management Area, on Con. 5, 1.25 miles south of Highway 83.

In addition to outdoor recreational pursuits, there are also a variety of indoor recreational pursuits in the township. Stephen Township Arena at Huron Park is the scene of an active minor hockey program as well as ringette leagues and hockey schools over the summer months. This is also the home of recreational league



This aerial photo, taken for the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority, shows a grassed waterway near Centralia. The authority provides various programs to support local farmers introducing conservation practices on their farms.

hockey and of a very active figure skating club. A lighted baseball diamond and playing fields for football and soccer, as well as an athletic track, are well-used outdoor facilities. Three other lighted ball diamonds are located beside the Stephen Township municipal offices in Crediton, in Dashwood and in Centralia.

The municipally-operated swimming pool at Huron Park provides recreational swimming and Red Cross swimming instruction.

There are also three halls that are used for a variety of community events from card parties, to banquets, dances and family reunions. These are the Dashwood Community Centre, Centralia Community Hall and the Stephen Township Hall in Crediton. The Crediton hall accommodates such groups as the Crediton and District Lions Club and the Crediton Women's Institute.

A privately-owned recreational facility, the Oakwood Inn Golf and Country Club in Grand Bend, provides a golf course, cross-country skiing trails, an indoor swimming pool and conference and banquet facilities.



In December, 1990, the Stephen Township Novice Kings brought home the medals from a Mount Brydges hockey tournament. Here are, front, left, Steve Hopkins, Robbie Connor, Shannen Stuckless, Shaun Sherwood, Danny Moscinijohn, Beck, left, Adam McCann, J.R. Davies, Jeff Finkelman, Jamie Clarke, Barry Edwards, Bryan Stuckless, coach Dan Connor. (Exeter Times-Advocate)



Stephen's Sesquicentennial celebrations were launched with a New Year's Day levee at the Dashwood Community Centre. Cutting the cake are (from the left) Karen Tieman, Huron County warden Bob Fisher, Alan Walper, Stephen Township reeve Tom Toenes, Huron MPP Paul Klapp and Huron-Bruce MP Murray Cunliffe. (Photo by Ross Haugh)

This year, both Stephen Township and the County of Huron are celebrating their sesquicentennials. Special celebrations in Stephen opened, appropriately, on New Year's Day with a well-attended levee at the Dashwood Community Centre. Reeve Tom Toenes, assisted by Karen Tieman and Alan Walper (co-chairpersons of the sesquicentennial celebrations) cut a large 150th birthday cake. The levee included the launching of a special sesquicentennial program, edited by Ross Haugh of Crediton, which was filled with photos of 15 decades of township life.

Two other special anniversaries are also being honoured in 1992. Centralia College of Agricultural Technology is holding its 25th anniversary celebrations and Alumni Homecoming Weekend in May. Then there will be a 50-year RCAF Centralia Reunion held the first weekend in June, when both RCAF personnel and civilians who lived and worked at the base will have an opportunity to take a nostalgic trip back in time.

The very special Homecoming Weekend, for past and present Stephen Township residents or people who aspire to be township

residents, will be held on the final weekend in June. Events include a gigantic parade, horseshoe matches, a firemen's brunch and a future farmers' Olympics. The special slogan created by Irene Haugh for the sesquicentennial says it all — "Three Times Fifty, Stephen's Nifty."

The residents of Stephen Township have every reason to feel pride in the very special heritage this book has celebrated. Not only is this the story of the township in general, but it is also the history of individual families. Stephen Township is a collage of people from many different ethnic backgrounds. Here, people of British, German, Dutch, and French Canadian heritage live in harmony. They are united not only by the collective history they share in Stephen Township but also by pride in their lives today. Most of all, as the township celebrates its sesquicentennial, residents can share a sense of adventure as they look forward to the promise the future holds.

Family Profiles

(Contributed in 1991 and 1992 by Township residents)

FAMILY OF MOSES AMY SR.

Moses Amy Sr. (b. 1803) was born in Cornwall, England and worked as a labourer and "quarryman" until he moved to Canada with his family in the 1850s. Moses, his wife Mary Neil, and seven children lived in a log cabin built on the 100 acres at Lot 18, Con. 9, Stephen Township. The first meeting of the newly-formed School Section #4 was held at the Amy home on November 8, 1855.

Moses Amy Jr. (b. 1832) was the eldest son of Moses Sr., and moved to Canada with his parents in the 1850s. Moses bought Lot 19, Con. 9 and lived there in a log cabin with his wife, Caroline, and six children.



Arthur and Louise Amy with their daughters, Marguerite, Gertrude and Dorothy.

Thomas James Amy (1860-1920), eldest son of Moses Jr., took over the family farm and married Elizabeth Dodds, a neighbour's daughter. They had six children, one of which was Arthur James.

Arthur James Amy (1889-1978) was raised on his parents' grain and cattle farm and as a child, enjoyed raising and showing ponies. He later took over the family farm. Arthur spent many years on Stephen Township council. He was secretary/treasurer of Sharon School S.S. #4 for 25 years (1919-1944) and continued as secretary/treasurer of the township school area board until 1955. Arthur and his wife, Louise Marion Haist, raised three daughters: Marguerite (Mrs. Alvin Finkbeiner), Gertrude (Mrs. Lloyd Eagleson) and Dorothy (Mrs. John MacKay).

BRAND FAMILY

On April 15, 1953, Hendrick Brand and his wife Johanna (Timmers) and their children, left their home in the Netherlands to come to Canada. After a seven-day journey by boat, they arrived in Halifax, where they continued by train until they reached London. At this point they were met and taken to their first home, located east of Exeter.

In April, 1957 they bought Lot. 15, Con. 5, in Stephen Township, from Wellington Haist. The 200-acre farm was previously owned by Wellington's father, Fred Haist.

Johannes (Hans) Brand married Nancy (Bertelink) in 1961 and



Andrey Jane and Johannes (Hans) Brand with their children, Jonathan Jeffrey and Salvine Jeanine.

they had four children: Mark, Jeff, Lori and Allan. In 1969, the family bought Lot 18, Con. 7, Stephen Township, from Enid Ruggaber, which consisted of 100 acres of land. The farm was previously owned by Gordon Morlock. Hans' son Jeff helps him on the farm, which is a farrow-to-finish hog operation.

In 1983, Jeffrey Brand married Audrey Jane (Van Wieren) and they have two children, Jonathan Jeffrey and Sabrina Jeanine. That same year, they purchased a home and 1.23 acres, on Lot 20, Con. 8, Stephen Township, from Bob and Kathy Heywood. The land was previously owned by Charles Martini. In 1989, the original home burned and was replaced with a new modular home.

— Audrey Jane Van Wieren Brand

BRANT BYLSMA FAMILY

Brant and Anna (nee ten Kate) Bylsma immigrated from Sexbierum, Province of Friesland, the Netherlands, in April, 1948. They arrived in Stephen Township with their sons John (1942), Robert (1943), and daughters Maaike (1945) and Betty (1947). The family arrived at the South Boundary Concession - Lot 6. The farm was owned by their sponsor, Stanley Hicks.

Brant worked as a farm labourer for Stanley Hicks. The school-age children attended Fairfield Public School, near the Centralia R.C.A.F. base. While living at the Hicks' farm, the family was blessed with the birth of a daughter, Ruth, in 1948 and a son, Timothy Stanley, in 1950. As immigrants, the family desired to worship and have fellowship with other Dutch Calvinists. They were involved in the organization of Christian Reformed churches in Ilderton (which was later moved to London) and Clinton (1949) and Exeter in 1951.

In 1950, the Bylsma family moved to the Belgrave area. Brant was employed at Lloyd Doors, in Wingham. While living near Belgrave, the family was blessed with the birth of a son Douglas, in 1952, and a daughter Jenny, in 1954. Sadness struck the family in 1956 with the passing of Anna.

Later that year, the family moved to the Clinton area where Brant was employed by the Seaforth Concrete tile yard. The family was active in the Clinton Christian Reformed Church and the Clinton Christian School. In 1968, Brant started work at Huronview County Home in Clinton, where he worked until his retirement.

in 1980. During his years at Huronview, the family moved into Clinton.

Brant married Elizabeth Jane Stevens in 1969; she died in 1974. Brant married Henry Vanderlaan in 1975. The couple moved to Trillium Village, a retirement home in Strathroy, in 1987 where they are both enjoying life and attending the Christian Reformed Church.

The children attended various public schools in Huron County, the Clinton Christian School and all attended Central Huron Secondary School in Clinton.

The Bylsma Children

John married Agnes Baker in 1967 and they have a son and a daughter. They live in Kingston where John is employed by Dupont.

Robert married Carole Maitland in 1967 and they have three daughters. The family lives in Kincardine and Robert is employed by Ontario Hydro at Douglas Point.

Maaike married Paul Wigboldus in 1967. The couple have three sons and a daughter and live in Strathroy. Paul is a welder by trade and owns and operates Ross Welding in Glencoe.

Betty married Jacobus (Co) Zondag, a Stephen Township resident, in 1968. They have three daughters and two sons and own a mixed farming operation in Stanley Township.

Ruth married James Baker in 1969 and died in an automobile accident the same year.

Timothy Stanley married Kathryn Johnson in 1982 and they have a daughter and son. The family lives in Clinton, where Timothy is a carpenter.

Douglas married Dianne Tyndall in 1974 and they have a daughter and three sons. Douglas is a carpenter and works in partnership with his brother Timothy in a business called Clintwood Builders. The family lives in Clinton.

Jenny married Robert Langendoen in 1973, and they have two sons and a daughter. Robert is a self-employed carpenter. The family lives in Goderich Township.

DIETRICH FAMILY

In 1867, Lot 19, Con. 12, was purchased by Lawrence Dietrich from William Cunningham. The farm was valued at \$650 with 20

acres of cleared land. Livestock included six cattle, nine sheep, two horses and one dog.

Lawrence was the first Dietrich in the area. He raised 11 children: George, John, Deobald, Simon, Christopher, William, Leo, Noah, Magalene (Mrs. George Fisher), Lavina (Mrs. William Lindenfield) and Laura (Mrs. Alonzo McCarus) in a small log house. The main barn was built about 1890 and the present house in 1892, at a cost of \$900. Other buildings were constructed later.

Lawrence was born in 1842 and his wife, Sedonia Buchet, in 1849. He died on November 17, 1913. His youngest son, Noah, bought the farm and married Christina Foster in 1914. They had eight children: Benedict, Anna, Eugene, Louis, Rita, Hubert, Martina and Stephen. In 1937, Noah died and in 1952, Stephen bought the farm. He married Josephine Eugenlink, a native of the Netherlands, in 1962. They have four children: Alice, Irene, Dennis and Rosanne.

— Stephen Dietrich



The farm of the Stephen Dietrich family, at Lot 19, Ctr. 12, Stephen Township.

DUNDAS FAMILY

Joseph and Elizabeth Dundas had 11 children; one of their sons was Stephen. The family, with the exception of one son, George, left the state of Wisconsin, about 1902. There were seven daugh-

ters: Edith (Bruce) McNevin; Millie (Joe) Simpson; Priscilla (Cecil) Ellwood; Lottie (William) Haskett; Della (Roy) Hamilton; Stella (Earl) Dixon and Violet (Lester) Howland. Also four sons: Harvey (Alma); Edward (Elizabeth); George and his wife and Stephen (Dorothy) Dundas.

Most of these families settled in neighbouring townships, except for Stephen. He, his wife and parents originally settled on a farm at Lot 11, Con. 2, McGillivray Township. Stephen and Dorothy had six children. In April 1947, the family moved to Lot 14, Con. 6, of Stephen Township, where he farmed until 1969, when he moved to Crediton. While living in Stephen Township, Stephen Dundas served on the township council from 1966 to 1974. Two of the couple's children live in Stephen Township; their son Donald and his wife Barbara live on the family farm and Geraldine and Paul Schenk also live in the area.

The other children's residences are: Mildred (Pat) Cronyn in McGillivray Township; Lorne (Shirley) Dundas in Burlington; Lillian (Max) Cowan in Peterborough and Barbara (Frank) Rombough, Hamilton.

— *Mildred Cronyn*

EAGLESON FAMILY

During the mid-nineteenth century, many people arrived in the New World with the hope that their children, if not they themselves, would have lives of greater security and substance.

Among the many thousands of people who packed up a few meagre worldly possession and set sail were the brothers, Wilson and William H. Eagleson.

Wilson (b. 1834) and William (b. 1846), sons of farmer James Eagleson and his wife, Margaret, were raised in Moorefields, Kilgad Townland, Conner Parish, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. The Eaglesons of the area had been known as "people of more than average substance" even back as far as the 18th century.

Wilson arrived in this area in 1859 and first settled just south of Bayfield at Range K, Lot 6, Stanley Township, where he built a log cabin. The cabin remained standing until it was torn down in 1990. Wilson's wife Martha arrived in 1860 along with their first-born John. Even though their luggage was crossing the Atlantic on one ship and Martha and John were on another, they felt lucky to survive the journey. The ship carrying their belongings was lost

at sea, along with dozens of crew members and potential settlers.

Four years later, Wilson's family moved to Stephen Township, becoming one of the early families to settle the western part of the township. The Eagleson homestead at N. 1/2 of Lot 4, Con. 20, of Stephen Township had remained in the Eagleson name for 100 years until it was sold in the early 1960s. Of particular interest is the fact the used brick in the back kitchen addition, built early this century, came from the demolition of the Cantin hotel at St. Joseph's.

William H. Eagleson arrived in this country and worked on the construction of the railroad, going out west before he settled in McGillivray Township. Among his farms were Lot 3, Con. 17 of Stephen Township, which has remained in the Eagleson name since then.

The Eagleson families grew in number in Stephen due to the fact that Wilson had 12 children and William had eight children. Many of the children who survived to marry also raised relatively large families (e.g. James Robert Eagleson, b. 1894, married Eliza Hodgins and raised eight children) and have remained in the general area.

Surnames found in Stephen Township today which have a genealogical connection to the Eaglesons due to marriage are — Hodgins, Isaac, Willert, Ratz, Hayter, Guenther, Woodburn, Romphf, Walper, Hicks, Pollock, Webb, Hotson, Armstrong, Bestard, Wilson, etc.

Of particular interest to the writer of this article is the history of Lot 16, Con. 22, Stephen Township, which I farm.

My maternal great-grandfather, Henry Isaac (b. 1844) and his son Thomas (b. 1880), purchased the farm from Henry Brinker in 1906. Prior to this, they had lived in Hay Township, before renting a house and some land from the Canada Company, directly across the road from Lot 16, Con. 22. Thomas married Rose Willert (b. 1891) in 1911. Thomas and his brother William built the present house in 1916.

Thomas and Rose raised seven children:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Evelyn | b. 1911, d. 1951 - married Lisle Woodburn of Stephen Twp. |
| Howard | b. 1913 d. 1929 |
| Vera | b. 1916 - married Lloyd Love of Parkhill |
| Nola | b. 1918 - married Erwin Ratz of Stephen Twp. |

Marjory	b. 1921 d. 1932
Doris	b. 1923 - married James Eagleson of Stephen Twp.
Shirley	b. 1928 - married Harvey Eagleson of Stephen Twp.

When Shirley married Harvey Eagleson in 1946, they purchased the farm from Thomas and Rose and began to raise their children - Carolyn (who married Gerald Merner and resides in Exeter); Helen (who married Hans Bischoff and lives in London) and Gary (who married Christine Haberer of Zurich).

Harvey Eagleson died in 1984 and the farm was purchased from Shirley in 1986, by her son. It is now the home of Gary and Christine and their two sons, Matthew and Jonathan.

The other farm which Gary owns in Lot 13, Con. 22, of Stephen, which was purchased by Wilson Eagleson's daughter Margaret and her husband Robert Armstrong, in 1884. They sold the farm to her sister Nancy and her husband Joseph Pollock in 1908. Transfer of ownership has been from Harvey and Jim Eagleson to Harvey Eagleson to Gary Eagleson. This particular farm has remained in the Eagleson family for over 100 years.

It is with a sense of pride that one can say their roots have remained in one location for over 130 years. It is difficult to envision what the next generation may do with their lives but one can only know for certain that one's own immortality rests only with their children and in those who continue to remember the life and times of oneself.



The Harvey Eagleson farm, taken from the air, in 1952.



The farm of Gary and Christine Eagleson on Lot 16, Con. 22, Stephen Township.

The legacy which I leave will contain the material artifacts that will make an impression on shaping my children's lives. It is hoped that Stephen Township, and what it offers, will play a role in the Eagleson family roots for a long time.

— Gary R. Eagleson, Councillor,
Stephen Township, 1988-1991

NOLA FAIST

Nola Faist of Crediton worked for 17 years, from October 31, 1949 to March 31, 1967, at the Flying Training School and the Central Officers' School at R.C.A.F. Station Centralia. Then she worked at the Township of Stephen municipal offices in Crediton for 13 years, from July 1, 1967 to 1980.



Nola Faist

THE DONALD AND LORNA FINKBEINER FAMILY HOMESTEAD

Michael Finkbeiner was born August 25, 1824 in the town of Baiersbronn-Obertal of the Black Forest area, in the former state of Wurtemberg, Germany. Michael became skilled as a weaver and married Barbara Haist, who was born November 28, 1829. With two brothers, Jacob and Johann Georg; and later a sister Anna Marie, Michael and Barbara immigrated to Upper Canada, reaching the village of Morriston in Wellington County, where others from their native town had settled.

Here Michael worked as a labourer, yearning to have his own farm, and since this rolling area was not well-suited to farming, he searched for a different location for a permanent home. On October 2, 1852, Barbara, and their two children, Christian (1849) and baby Caroline (1850) arrived at Lot 12, Con. 8, Stephen Township, accompanied by Michael's brother Jacob. The family's first tasks, on the leased 100 acres, were to build a log house and a pig sty, and to clear sufficient land so that food could be grown.

According to oral tradition, one day Barbara heard terrifying squeals coming from the pig sty. Rushing outside, she saw a bear trying to wrestle a pig out of the sty. Grabbing a hand spike pole, Barbara rushed toward the bear, which dropped the pig and ran off. She said that if the bear had taken the pig, they would have had no meat for the winter.

In 1860, Michael purchased Lot 12 for \$655 from Major George Miller, an army officer living in Belgium. The family attended the Evangelical Association Church in Crediton and Michael served as a class leader for many years. Between 1851 and 1866, six additional children were born: Jacob (1852-1933), Michael Jr. (1854-1929), Barbara (1856-1924), William (1858-1937), Mary (1860-1927) and George (1866-1953). Caroline died as a young child and was buried north of the log house.

The 1861 farm census reports 35 acres cleared and cultivated with livestock and implements valued at \$300 and \$40 respectively. In 1867, the farm livestock consisted of nine cattle, 19 sheep, five hogs and three horses. Nine people were residents in the house.

As the family grew, a new house was built following the principles of barn construction using heavy posts, beams and 22-inch wide pine boards. Shiplap siding, hand planed, covered the ex-

terior of the one-half storey home. It was located a short distance northeast of the log house and is our home today. In 1884, the present barn was built. It was raised onto a wall at a later date.

After Michael's death in 1892, the farm was purchased by his sons, George and William, with George owning the northern 75-acre portion, where the original log house and present house and barn are located. Barbara died in 1896.

George married Louisa Faist (1865-1951) of Crediton. They had four children: Harrington (1897-1946), Alma (1900-1987), Irvine (1903-1977) and Milton (1906-1934). George continued to clear the land and purchased additional property on Concession 9. In 1908, the farm home was veneered with brick and an addition was added. The barn, too, was enlarged.

In 1936, the homestead property was purchased by Irvine. Ir-



Family members are (back, left to right) Mike Mullin, Don Finkbeiner, Allan Brand and (front) Valerie Mullin, Lorrie Finkbeiner and Suzanne Brand.

vine had married Lavina Smith (1898-1984) of Crediton and they had one son, Donald (1936). They continued to carry on a general farming operation until Donald and Lorna (nee Hayden) purchased the farm in 1966. We have two daughters Valerie (1962) and Suzanne (1968). Valerie and her husband Michael Mullin live in London, Ontario and have a son Christopher, born June 9, 1991. Suzanne is married to Allan Brand. They live in Crediton and have a son Kurtis, born on February 16, 1991.

Our farm home has had a few additions and internal changes made over the years. In our time, two families resided here: Irvine and Lavina; Donald, Lorna, Valerie and Suzanne.

We are proud, in 1991, as the fourth-generation members of the Finkbeiner family, to own and live on this century farm.

Special thanks to Reg Finkbeiner who shared some interesting and valuable information about family history.

— Donald Finkbeiner

MICHAEL FINKBEINER SR. FAMILY

Michael Finkbeiner Sr. (1825-1892) was born in Beiersbronn, Germany. He farmed at Lot 12, Con. 8, Stephen Township. Michael Sr. came to Crediton with his brother Jacob, both of whom settled on the eighth concession of Stephen, which later became known as the Finkbeiner Line.

In 1851, the Evangelical Association was holding meetings in Stephen Township. Michael became the first class leader during 1852-1854.

Michael Sr. married Barbara Haist (1828-1896). They had seven children, one of whom was Michael Jr. (1854-1929). Michael Jr. farmed on the Finkbeiner Line. He was elected in 1912 as one of the first cemetery trustees. Michael maintained beehives most of his life, and was known as "The Honey Man."

Michael Jr. married Caroline Sweitzer and had seven children, one of whom was William Henry (Harry, 1879-1950). William Henry married Ida Lilly Treitz of Stephen Township. Harry bought a 100-acre farm, 1/2 mile south of Crediton, at Lot 8, Con. 7, for a sum of \$8,000. He had a team of matching Clydesdales and he cared for them carefully.

In his youth, he helped with the building of the Evangelical United Brethren Church in Crediton. He told how they drew loads of sand from Grand Bend, with the team and sled, a distance of

12 miles, starting out early in the morning and coming home late at night. It was a long, cold trip but a duty they accepted as part of their church life.

Harry was a deeply religious man, saving Sundays for church and visiting with family. Other than the farm chores, which had to be done, no other work was done on Sunday.

Harry and Ida had three children by this union. They were Alvin Charles (Jan. 10, 1909 to Feb. 21, 1967), Ruby Verna (Mrs. Howard Haist) and Norma Irene (Mrs. Harold Fahner).

ALVIN CHARLES FINKBEINER (1909-1967) FAMILY

Alvin Charles Finkbeiner was born January 10, 1909, in Stephen Township on the Finkbeiner Line. When Alvin was five, he moved with the family to Lot 8, Conc. 7, which is still in the family name.

Alvin always wanted to be a missionary, but because of health reasons, he returned to the family farm. From that time on, he had a deep love and interest in missions, especially in Africa.

He was a conservationist before anyone had coined the word — concerned because the woods were being cut down and not replaced. He and his father began to replant the bush, driving to St. Williams for little seedlings and keeping them cultivated and hoed until they had a chance to settle in.

Alvin married Marguerite Eileen Amy on June 22, 1940. Mar-



The Alvin Charles Finkbeiner family, with Alvin and Marguerite in the top, left-hand corner.

guerite trained at Victoria Hospital from 1936 to 1939 and after receiving her nurse's certificate, she nursed in area homes because there was no local hospital at the time.

Alvin and Marguerite were both very active in the Evangelical United Brethren Church and raised their children with religious beliefs.

Alvin and Marguerite were blessed with seven children and 15 grandchildren. Sandra (Mrs. Gerry Vandeworp) and children Evert and Rhonda; Eric and Thelma (nee Bannerman) and children Anita, Jeremy and Dwayne; Karen (Mrs. Wolfgang Janzen) and children David and Ryan; Gwen (Mrs. Charles Neinkirchen) and children Charity, Caleb and Bethany; Brian and Georgina (nee Obre) and children Jason, Jordan and Nathan; Darrel; Debra (Mrs. Richard Lord) and children Brayden and Amber.

MICHAEL FINKBEINER, JR. FAMILY

Michael Finkbeiner Jr. married Caroline Sweitzer, and settled in Stephen Township. A land deed dated February 28, 1880, shows the transfer of 50 acres of land on Lot 13, Con. 8 (the north section) to Michael and Caroline from his father. The couple had five children: Harry, Dan, Joe, Hannah and Addie. Caroline died in 1908 and Michael in 1929.

George Joseph, Michael Jr.'s third son, also farmed on the 8th concession, which, by the turn-of-the-century, had been dubbed "the Finkbeiner Line." In 1920, he and his wife, the former Hilda Schenk, bought a 100-acre farm for \$5,400. Joe and Hilda remained on this farm, where they raised their two boys, Delton and Eugene. A niece of Hilda's, Dolores Schenk, also came to live with them as a young girl. Hilda and Joe retired to the village of Creditor in 1955 and then moved to Huronview in 1967. Joe died in 1972 and Hilda four years later.

Their eldest son, Delton, did not follow his father into farming. He joined the Canadian armed forces in 1940 and served with the Royal Canadian Regiment until 1943. When he was discharged, Delton returned to Exeter, where he met Norma Parsons, whom he married in July 1943. Shortly afterwards, they took over the Avalon Restaurant, which they operated until 1946. That year, they opened Fink's Meat Market and eventually built their own abattoir, in order to dress and process the meat they sold. They operated that business until 1961, when they sold it to two long-time

employees. Delton was one of three men that started the Exeter rodeo, which became the largest in Eastern Canada, drawing crowds of more than 10,000 people to some performances. Norma and Delton have long been interested in horses and have won many awards for showing their Arabian stock. Delton has travelled around the world as a Canadian representative to the Arabian conferences. In 1987, he was named Horseperson of the Year by the Arabian Horses Association of Eastern Canada and served as president of the association in 1965, 1966 and again in 1971. He was chairman of the breeding horse division of the Royal Winter Fair in 1977 and was presented with a plaque by the Association honouring him as a member of the Agricultural Hall of Fame. In 1982, he was awarded an agriculture service diploma for promoting agricultural activities in Exeter and area. The Finkbeiners live on Highway #83, west of Exeter. Although they are retired, they maintain busy lives. Delton works at numerous carpentry projects and Norma does custom sewing and gardening.

Eugene, Joe and Hilda's younger son, also joined the Canadian armed forces, and became an able seaman in the Royal Canadian Navy in 1943. When discharged in 1946, he studied medical technology at Hamilton General Hospital. There he met Wenonah Einarsen, a nursing student, and they were married in July 1949. In 1953, Eugene accepted the position of chief technologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie. The family first moved to Barrie, and then to a larger home in Thornton where Wenonah became involved in teaching Sunday School and the local 4-H group. Eugene held his chief technologist's position until he retired in 1987. During this time, he was instrumental in establishing a training program for the teaching of medical technologists in preparation for their Canadian registration examination. Wenonah returned to nursing in 1967, retiring in 1988. The couple still reside in Thornton where Eugene keeps busy with carpentry work. Wenonah has earned the title of "Cradle Lady" for the beautiful, hand-crafted cradles she sells from her home.

The couple have four children. Christine is a medical technologist and lives in London with her husband John MacKay and their two sons, Kyle and Neil. Michael works as a CCA, operating his own income tax business in Oakville. He lives with his wife Frances in Burlington. Maureen married Peter Smith and they live in Guelph with their two children, Jacob and Laura. Maureen works

as a public health nurse. Paul, the youngest Finkbeiner, is a civil engineer. He and his wife, Susan, live in Burlington where their son, Dalton Paul, was born on July 18, 1991.

HAROLD FINKBEINER FAMILY OF SHIPKA

I was born on a farm north of Shipka, one of three children born to Lorne and Margaret (Hotson) Finkbeiner. My two sisters are Lila, who married Tom Rosser, and Audrey, who both live in London.

When my father passed away in 1943, my mother and I ran the farm until I got married to Doreen Coulter in 1945. My mother died in 1974.

Doreen and I have four children: William (Bill), Robert (Bob), David and Joan. Bill married Nancy England in 1970, and they have two children, Jason and Lori. Bill and his family took over the family farm.

My wife and I moved down the road to another farm, which we bought from Art Gaiser. This farm originally belonged to my grandfather Christian and Magdaline (Gaiser) Finkbeiner. We still live on this farm.

Our second son Bob, married Dianne Hodge in 1977 and they built a house in Shipka, where they reside with their two children, Jeffrey and Kristopher.

David, our third son, married Mary Wightman in 1985 and resides in Kincardine with their children, Dylan and Leila. Our only daughter, Joan, is single and lives in Exeter.

— *Harold Finkbeiner*

JOHN GILL FAMILY FARM

The west side of the Mollard Line is known as the Aux Sables Concession. In 1860, Thomas Sherritt bought Lots 2 and 3 on the Aux Sables Concession from the Canada Company. Five years later, Thomas Sherritt sold this property to John Sherritt. In 1878, James Page purchased this land from John Sherritt and, in 1892, sold it to Joseph Gill. Lot 4 had been purchased from the Canada Company by William Manus in 1883 who, in turn, sold it to Stephen Webb. In 1904, Joseph Gill also bought Lot 4, so now he owned a 335-acre parcel of land. In 1915, he sold the east half of Lots 2, 3 and 4 to his son, William John Gill, and the west half of the same

lots to another son, Edward Gill. Each son now had approximately 168 acres of farmland.

An L-shaped barn had been built on the John Gill property in 1870 and the house was built in 1890. On E1/2 of Lot 4, the first barn was built in 1900 and a son, Cecil, and his wife Ruth, built a new house on this property in 1933.

In 1940, son Wellwood and his wife Alice acquired E1/2 of Lot 4, from his father, John Gill. When John and his wife Lily retired from farming in 1945, son Willis and his wife Loreen, bought E1/2 of Lots 2 and 3, and later in 1956, they also bought E1/2 of Lot 4 from Wellwood and moved there with their family. A large addition was put on the house in 1967 and in the early 1970s, the barns on both Lots 2, 3, and 4 were covered with steel siding.

— Loreen Gill

FRED HAIST FAMILY

August Haist married Barbara and settled one mile north of Creditor. Their children were: Ezra, Levi, Henry, Fred, John, Christian, Mose, Mary Ann Mawhinney, Leah Holtzman, Lydia Morlock and Louisa Schwartz.

Son Fred (1864-1936) married Magdalina Brown (1863-1937) from Creditor in 1888. He operated the farm and a brick and tile yard one mile north and one mile east of Creditor, beside the Ausable River. Their children were: Laura (Ernot) Gaiser - deceased; Louise (Arthur) Amy - deceased; Everett (Sophia Schroeder) of Zurich Rest Home; Wellington (Irene Willert) - deceased; Herbert (Elizabeth Young), both living in Madison, Wisconsin; Losetta (Emery) Fahrner - deceased; Clara (Roy) Ratz at R.R. #1, Dashwood and Alma (Gordon) Morlock - deceased.

WELLINGTON HAIST FAMILY

Wellington Haist (1895-1970) married Irene Willert in April, 1921. Irene was one of nine children born to Louis Willert and Henrietta Grubbe, who lived on Con. 14, Stephen Township.

Irene and Wellington had eight children: Bernice (Oren) Grace of Clearwater, Florida; Frederick (Donna Wilson) of London; Helen (late Lloyd Jones) (Arnold) Wasnidge of Exeter; Myrtle (late Almer Passmore) (Gordon) Pengelly of Exeter; Eleanor Laurene - deceased; Roy Allan - deceased; Doris (Lorne) Listoen of British Columbia



Aerial view of the farmstead at Lot 4, on the Ausable Concession.



Aerial view of the farmstead at Lots 2 & 3, on the Ausable Concession.



The Wellington Haist homestead on Lot 25, Con. 5, beside the Ausable River, in 1917.



The Haist family portrait includes: back row, left to right: Everett Haist, Louise (Arthur) Amy, Herbert Haist, Laura (Emory) Gaiser and Wellington Haist. In the front row is Frederick Haist (father), Clara (Roy) Ratz, Adine (Gordon) Morlock, Loretta (Emery) Fairner, and Magdaline Brown Haist (mother).

and Maurice (Ruth Ann Jarrott) of R.R. #2, Centralia.

Fred Sr. operated the farm and brick and tile yard one mile north and one mile east of Crediton, beside the Ausable River. It was later operated by sons Everett and Wellington for a few years, and later by Wellington when he married in 1921. The brick yard was discontinued in 1943. Labour was hard to get due to the construction of Centralia Air Base and there was a need to change to a more mechanical operation in the yard.

In 1936, Wellington purchased a former Haist farm one mile east of Crediton, and built a house in 1946. He later bought the 100-acre farm to the south.

His son Frederick operated the river farm until 1956 when they sold it to the Brand family and moved to London.

Wellington served as a Stephen Township councillor in 1950-51 and served as deputy reeve in 1952. During that time, he helped promote the rebuilding of the Crediton Town Hall. In 1961, he retired and moved to Exeter, where he built two houses. Wellington died in 1970 while vacationing in Florida.

Maurice, married in 1961, still operates the farm and has three daughters: Judy in Montreal; Karen in London and Denean, who married Alan Renning and lives in Stephen Township, near Exeter.

A grandson, Larry m. Lois Jones, and their son Douglas, also reside in Crediton.



The farm of Maurice Haist and family on Lot 10, Con. 4, Stephen Township.

THOMAS HARTON FAMILY

Thomas Harton came to Canada in 1849 from Tipperary, King's County, Ireland. He lived in Biddulph and McGillivray Townships. He married Martha Brown in 1858 and they had eight children.

In 1875, Thomas and Martha, with their family, moved to Lot 5, Con. 17, Stephen Township. Their farm is located 1 and 1/4 miles south of Shipka.

Another son Herbert was born in 1882. He later bought the farm from his parents, and in 1912, he married Alberta Sherritt. She was the daughter of William and Elizabeth Sherritt (nee Rathwell), of Lot 10, Con. 18, Stephen Township. Herbert and Alberta had four daughters: Evelyn (Mrs. Clyde Nicholson) of Courtright; Dorothy (Mrs. Lorne Fenner) of Shipka, Mabel Guenther (Mrs. Donald Fraser) of Shipka and Audrey (Mrs. Kenneth Westman) of London.

In 1963, Herbert and Alberta left the farm and moved to Shipka (Lot 10, Con. 17), where they lived until their deaths. Alberta died in 1964 and Herbert in 1981. They had eight grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. It is interesting to note that three generations of the family attended the one-room school at Shipka. The three oldest Harton girls are registered nurses and the youngest is a school teacher.

— *Mabel Guenther Fraser*



Herbert and Alberta Harton celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on October 23, 1962, with their four daughters Evelyn, Audrey, Mabel and Dorothy.

FRANK HICKS FAMILY

In 1846, John and Grace Hicks came to Canada from Devonshire, England. They lived for a short time in Darlington, Durham County. Then in 1847, they purchased Lot 1, Con. 1 of McGillivray Township and Lot 1, Con. 1, Stephen Township, the following year. They built the Hicks Homestead, starting with a one-storey frame house, on the Stephen Township farm. They raised a family of nine children, eight of them born in England. The five sons were John Jr., Sam, Richard, Andrew and Francis. The four daughters were Jane, Mary, Annie and Grace. John Hicks died in 1851 from injuries in an accident with a horse. In his will, John Jr. was deeded the McGillivray farm with the Stephen Township farm to be divided between sons Andrew and Francis. Eventually Francis bought Andrew's half of the Stephen Township farm.

Francis Hicks (1844-1922) was born in England and married Mary Jane Elliott (1850-1919). They had two children - Maud Hicks married Andrew Hicks (son of Richard Hicks) and George Hicks (1880-1968) married Catherine (Kate) Marshall (1888-1976) in 1913.



The Frank Hicks family includes (back row, left to right) Bruce Hicks, son-in-law Tom Deschamps and Brian Hicks and (front) Janet, LeeAnne, Joanne, Sam and Mark Deschamps.

and took over the family farms. He was manager of the Centralia Farmers Co-op for 28 years. Kate taught school in Centralia from 1911 to 1913. They had two children. Their daughter Gwendolyn (b.1915) married John Andrew. They have two children, Georgia and Phillip and four grandchildren and all reside in Alberta.

Archie Francis (Frank) Hicks (b.1922) married Janet Lee (b.1922) in 1944 and took over the Hicks Homestead. They have three children. Joanne (1947), a school teacher, married Tom Deschamps, a tool-and-die worker in the Ford plant in Windsor. They have three children: Mark (1977), LeeAnne (1979) and Sara (1984). The history of Bruce Hicks (1950) and his farm follows this history. The second son, Brian (1956), owns a Kenworth truck, and works for Bob Rowcliffe, hauling cattle, grain and supplies around Ontario and the United States. Brian also helps on the family farm. In 1890, the house roof was raised and a second floor added to the house. In 1933, a windstorm damaged the barn. Over a period of 144 years, there have been many renovations and additions to the house and farm buildings.



This 1985 Kenworth transport truck, owned by Brian Hicks, is parked in front of the home of Frank Hicks.

BRUCE HICKS FARM

In 1904, George Hicks (Bruce's grandfather) bought 50 acres of land on Lot 1, Con. 2, Stephen Township. Originally William Reily had purchased the 100-acre farm from the Canada Company in 1854. He divided it, selling the east 50 acres to W. Reily. The land was then owned by R. Sanders, followed by John Farmer, from whom George Hicks bought the farm. Frank Hicks became the owner in 1949, and the site is now owned by his son, Bruce Hicks. The barn, damaged in a 1933 windstorm, was torn down and the lumber used to repair the barn on the George Hicks' farm at Lot 1, Con. 1, which had also suffered wind damage. The brick house on the farm had been demolished some years before.

Bruce spent the summers of 1973-1975 in the McKenzie Mountains, Northwest Territories, as a hunter and guide, living in log cabins. Since he found them comfortable and easy to heat, he proceeded to build his own in Stephen Township. The logs he used are white cedar, mostly 18-feet in length. Inside, the living quarters measure 1,000-square feet of floor space. The home is heated by a wood stove but also has electric heat as a backup. A large barn, silo and implement shed and storage area for large hay bales have also been built. At present, Bruce has a cow-calf operation of 70 Simmental crossbreeds. He also rents part of his father's farm, and some of his neighbour's land for feed and pasture. By 2004, Bruce Hick's farm will qualify as a century farm.



Bruce Hick's log cabin home and farm on Lot 1, Con. 2, Stephen Township.

SAMUEL HICKS FAMILY

The Hicks family who now reside on the west half of Lot 2, Con. 2, Stephen Township, are descendants of Samuel and Betsey Hicks, who emigrated from England about 1846. Samuel died six weeks after arriving in Upper Canada. He was a brother of Richard, John and Robert who settled on Con. 1 of the township.

One of Samuel and Betsey's children was William. As a young man, he worked for Thomas Trivitt, the first clerk of Stephen Township.

In 1867, William purchased the west half of Lot 2, Con. 2, from James McPeik, for \$400. Eight years later, William bought the adjoining property, the west half of Lot 1, Con. 2, from his uncle, Richard Hicks.

The following year, William married Mahala Jones. Her father, Francis Jones, a cabinetmaker in Clandeboye, made the furniture for their log house. The white brick house on the property was built by Mr. Handford and the family took up residence in 1898.

Byron was the eldest child of William and Mahala. In 1914, he purchased Lot 6, South Boundary, from William Reilly. Two years later, Byron married Loretta Essery of Usborne Township. Their four children were born while the family was living on the South Boundary farm.

The Hicks moved into the brick house on Lot 2, Con. 2, in 1928. Byron's parents had died - William in 1900 and Mahala in 1925. In addition to his Stephen Township property, Byron owned and rented land in Biddulph and McGillivray Townships. His work as a drover took him to England several times to sell boatloads of cattle.

A car/train collision at the C.N.R. level crossing in Lucan claimed Byron's life in 1932. His widow, Loretta, managed the farms until they were purchased by her son, Stanley. The younger son, Clifford, served as a fighter pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War II, and was killed in action in 1944.

In 1957, Stanley married Mabel Mather of Vancouver. Their daughter, Randie, and son Clifford, are involved in the family-owned beef feedlot and cash crop operation.

— Stanley Hicks

MICHAEL HIRTZEL FAMILY

The site known as Lot 7, Con. 6 was first settled by Michael Hirtzel in 1851. Michael Hirtzel was born in 1829 in Alsace, France

and came to Canada with his parents after first settling in New York State. He died in 1917 and was buried in the Crediton cemetery. He was married to Catherine Kraft (1835-1882) and the children from this marriage were:

Henry,	1857-1880 (unmarried)
George,	1858-1936, farmed and operated a brick yard on Con. 5, Stephen Township
Elizabeth,	1860-1943, married and moved to Michigan
Magdalena,	1862-1959, married and farmed near Guelph, Ontario
Catherine,	1865-1948, married and lived in Preston, Ontario
Louisa,	1867-1960, married and lived in Detroit, Michigan
Michael Jr.,	1870-1959, married and lived in North Dakota
William,	1872-1928, married and lived in Detroit, Michigan
Louis,	1874-1978, married, farmer in Michigan and retired to Detroit
John,	1876-1945, married and farmed the home farm.

After his first wife Catherine died, Michael married Catherine (Krein) Roeder (1846-1912). The three children of this marriage were:

Wesley,	1883-1974, married and farmed in the Peace River District of Alberta
Saloma,	1888-1961, married and lived in Detroit
Eva,	1890-1985, married and lived in Bad Axe, Michigan and Detroit

John Thomas Hirtzel bought Lot 7, Con. 6, from his father in 1912 after renting it for several years. John married Laura Matilda Treitz (1880-1960) in 1905, and their family included:

Lawrence,	1906-1987, married and lived in McGillivray and Biddulph Townships
Laurene,	1906, married Emerson Wein and farmed north of Crediton
Dorothy,	1907 - married Howard Renney and lives in Detroit
Henry (Harry),	1914 - unmarried
Maurice,	1916-1983 - unmarried

On the death of their father, John Hirtzel in 1945, the two sons, Harry and Maurice, bought the farms which at that time consisted of Lots 6 and 7, Stephen Township. The farm on Lot 6, Con. 6, was acquired by their father in 1921. Their mother continued to reside with them on the farm until her death in 1960.

Henry and Maurice continued to build a purebred Hereford herd which had been started by their father. In 1950, more property was purchased - Lot 6 and the south half of Lot 7, Con. 5 were acquired. Due to Maurice's ill health, the farm was sold to Johanna and Maria Govers in 1972 and the Hereford herd was sold by auction. The sale was very successful and 150 head of cattle sold for the highest average price of a purebred dispersal sale of Herefords in Eastern Canada up until that time.

Henry and Maurice retired to Crediton, where Maurice died in 1983.



The wedding photograph of John and Laura Hirtzel, 1905.

PETER HOFFMAN — JOHANNA CALLFAS FAMILY

Peter Hoffman was married to Johanna Callfas in Berlin (Kitchener, Ontario) on March 23, 1853 by Rev. W. Schmitt. Conrad and Isaac Hoffman were witnesses to the marriage; the family is not certain if these men were the groom's brothers.

Peter Hoffman stated he was born March 3, 1826, in "Alsace Lorraine" but we have not been able to find the name of the town where he was born. Johanna was the daughter of Johannes (John) Callfas (Kallfasz/Kallfas) and Eva Catharine Rau. They came to Morriston, Puslinch Township, Wellington County, from Baisersbronn, near the Black Forest in Germany, about 1830. Johanna was born March 10, 1835, in Canada. She had eight brothers and sisters. She and her new husband settled in the Crediton area and on February 5, 1854, our great-grandmother, Wilhelmine, was born. Wilhelmine married Robert Stanley, of the Lucan area. Their daughter Almeda married Arthur K. Hewitt of Listowel and their son, Arthur Rupert, died in Listowel in 1979. Son Bill died in Edmonton in 1980. I have been compiling the family history for some time now.

Wilhelmine had nine brothers and sisters: Mary married Wilhelmine's husband's brother Stanley and died at a young age, on July 19, 1891. Sophia died at three-and-a-half years of age from mumps, on Feb. 23, 1861. Charles married Sarah Fanny Williams and went to Filmore, Saskatchewan to homestead, where he died April 30, 1931. Christian married Hanna Balsdon and lived in the Crediton area before he passed away on April 14, 1926. John was a baby who died in 1865 — Eliza Ann died when she was 24, in 1890. William (Wilhelm) married Clara Faust and lived with his family in the Crediton area until his death July 10, 1942. Luis, another baby, died at two months of age, in 1872 and Jane (Jennie) Deborah married Arthur Benedict and lived in the Kitchener area until she passed away May 31, 1935.

Family trees have been compiled on the above families and this small article is to serve as an "in memoriam" to the lives of these special pioneers of Huron County. We would give anything to have heard more stories about our ancestors but not much information has been saved. Both Peter and Johanna were active in the Evangelical Church and were very well regarded by all who knew them. Peter suffered a stroke when quite young and never completely recovered. He died on January 5, 1913, just a few weeks from his

60th wedding anniversary. Johanna died February 5, 1918 and they are both buried in the Crediton Cemetery.

— Pat Hewitt,
Edmonton, Alberta

JAMES B. HODGINS FAMILY

James B. and Catherine Hodgins (nee Carter) came to Harpley (a village with a post office and a shingle mill), in 1877.

James B. was a blacksmith and wagon maker in Clandeboye, whose shop and home was burned at the height of the "Donnelly feud" in the Lucan area (see *The Donnelly Album*, by Ray Fazakas, chapter 21, paragraph 5).



James B. Hodges and his wife Catherine.

The Hodgins were accompanied by their six children, Sarah, Robert, James, Ida, Isabella and Martha. Four children were later born in Harpley — May, Maude, Ada and Mansell.

The family acquired the N 1/2, Lot 10 and the S 1/2, Lot 11 in 1877 and 1878 by making five separate transactions. Apparently the two half lots had been divided into "village-sized" lots, as part of Harpley. They were previously owned by James Baird, David Hollenback (owner of the shingle mill) and John Ryan.

In 1918, after the death of James B., his son Mansell continued to farm the two half lots. Mansell's wife Mae (nee Carruthers) also died in 1918, of Spanish influenza (flu).

When Mansell died in 1971, the lots became the property of two of his children, Nola (Hodgins) Love and Ila (Hodgins) Kayes.

Mansell and Mae had four children, Nola, Ila, Beulah (Hardy) and Edith Marion (deceased 1918).

Trees were planted on the property, first by James B. in 1887 (the large maples in the lane and down the sideroad) followed by trees planted by four generations of his descendants.

— Ila Kayes



Mansell and Mae Hodgins.



The original Hodgins home.

THE PETER MacGREGOR FAMILY

Peter MacGregor, my grandfather, sailed to Canada from Argyleshire, Scotland as a 12-year-old child, with his parents, in 1856. His parents were Archibald and Lizza MacGregor and their children were: John, Peter, Dan, Duncan, Neil, Jessie, Mary, Bella and Nancy. It took several weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean. On the trip, the family lost a two-year-old child and an infant that were buried at sea. The family settled on the 20th concession of McGilivray Township.

At the time, there was no railway and no town of Parkhill. Pinehill, Sylvan and Nairn were the only market centres. Peter helped to cut down the forest and while the railway was being constructed, he worked with the oxen. He also worked in the brick yards and helped draw bricks for some of the oldest buildings in what is now the town of Parkhill.

In 1882, he was united in marriage to Susannah Lovie and they settled on the 19th concession of Stephen Township. Later, in 1904, they moved to the Molland Line (Con. 22) in the township, where they resided until Peter's death on January 5, 1926. The couple had nine children — William, Janie, Susie, Wesley, Wilfred, Charlie, Jessie, Annabelle and Russell.



This picture shows the Peter MacGregor farm, on Lot 11, Con. 21, Stephen Township, where the windmill and small shed still stand. Peter is holding the horse (on the left), with Susannah and Jessie in the buggy.



An early threshing scene with the MacGregor boys.

William married Carrie Armstrong and farmed in Stephen before moving to McGillivray Township. The couple had 14 children — Lloyd, Ford, Kenneth, Douglas, Inez, Ross, Wesley, Donald, Mary, Gerald, Margaret, Mildred, Alvin and Stuart.

Janie married Willie Desjardine and had three children — Nola, Donald and Howard.

Charlie married Lulu Snider and had three children — Helen, Cameron and Jean.

Jessie married Gerald Snider and had five children — Irving, Grace, Myron, Russell and Marion.

Susie died as a child, and Wesley and Wilfred died of the flu in 1918.

Annabelle married Clifford Sherritt.

Russell never married.

— Grace (Snider) Horner

HUXTABLE HOMESTEAD

This century home, on Lot 2, Con. 1, Stephen Township is the homestead of the Huxtable family. In 1850, Thomas William Huxtable purchased 50 acres of land from Richard Hicks, which became Lot 2, Con. 1 of Stephen Township.

Thomas had two wives. His first was Jane Hicks, and they had two daughters, Mary Anne and Elizabeth. The second wife was Frances Yearly, and they had one son, William Huxtable.

Thomas farmed the land from 1850 to 1886, when he died. After his death, his son William, then 16, took over and ran the farm. He later married Priscilla Boyes and they had three children — one daughter and two sons. Their daughter, Francis Florence, married Hector Mitchell. Wilfred James married Anna Love and they had a daughter, Margaret, and a son, William (Bill). The younger son, Frederick William, married Lina Rader and had a daughter, Marie, and a son, James.

In 1919, William purchased six acres of land with buildings from Elizabeth (Stevens) Smith next to the homestead farm. The family made their home on this lot, part of the original home was used as a farm shed. William farmed the land from 1886-1925. After his death, his wife Priscilla rented the farm to Lorne Hicks from 1926-1928. From 1928-1930, her son Frederick and his wife Lina worked the land. Then, her eldest son Wilfred took over the farm

in 1931 and married Anna Love, two years later. They had two children: Margaret (1943-1947) and William (Bill) 1950. In 1942, Wilfred and Anna moved the house from Lot 1, that his father had bought in 1919, to the original homestead on Lot 2.



The Wilfred Huxtable farm.

WILLIAM AND JAMES KERR FAMILIES

Two brothers, William and James Kerr, immigrated from Sligo, Ireland, and worked in brick making in Hamilton. They then sent for their brother, John. When John arrived in Montreal, he had only 25 cents, and a wooden chest which is now in the possession of his granddaughter, Edna Robertson. After living on Concession 3, Stephen, John bought N 1/2, Lot 12, Con. 5, Stephen Township, where they first made "slop" brick. He later bought the south half of Lot 12 where a brick, tile and lumber yard was operated by his son, Fred.

John Kerr died in 1905.

William married Sarah Jane Luker, whose daughter Elizabeth married Allan MacDonald. James married William's widow and moved to Ailsa Craig where he operated a brickyard. Their children were:

Margaret Ann married Will Harris

Wesley William married Sadie (2) Amy Gilbert

Martha married Thomas Hutchison (moved west in 1892)

Aaron Luke married Jane Welch (moved west in 1890)

Robert George married Anne Gilbert

Hannah Maria married Samuel D'Arcy McGee (Regina)

Clara Beatrice married Phillip Coneybeare (Regina)

Clifford married Cora Neville (moved west in 1905)

John married Caroline Wilson, daughter of Charles Wilson, Lot 1, Con. 13, Stephen Township.

William married Mary Taylor and kept a millinery store and delivery wagon, at the corner of Elmwood Ave. and Ridout, in London. They later moved to California.

Son Lorne married Edna Brown. Children — Robert and Betty. Grandchildren — Jim and Karla and Ken and Gerald.

Charles married Mary Dixon and after leaving Crediton, moved to Benmiller, where they ran a tile yard. Children — Courtland married Blanche Cunningham. Grandchildren — Lillian married Don Cameron (Mar. 8/67). Carol - Mar. 20/70. Glen - Feb. 21/72.

Winston married Leni Leuwly (of Port Credit, 1966). Shawn - Jan. 1/67. Greg - Feb. 21/69.

Loretta married Aljoe Sanders, son of Sidney, in 1942, and they kept a store in Exeter. Grandchildren - Brian C.S. (Aug. 22/44) - married Lynda MacDonald (Feb. 20/47) June 28/69. Brenda - March 2/71. Geoffrey - May 20/71. Janice - May 4/76.

Sharon M.J. (August 22/47) - married Harold Chappel (Nov. 18/42, Woodham) - Apr. 20/68. Christine - Nov. 18/74. Charlene - Feb. 2/78. Cathleen - Apr. 8/80.

Wesley married Vinetta Barnes.

Frederick married Mary Ethel Walker, daughter of James Walker, son of Andrew Walker.

Daughter Lulu Irene married F. Aljoe Culbert and lived in the Lucan district. Grandchildren - Frederick Wilson lives in London, Mary Margaret E. married Norman Hankala - USA (Karen and Maureen), Carol Ann married Brian Telfer - Illderton district (Scott and Kara), Doris - Cheshire Home, London.

Evelyn married Edwin Beaver and lived at Crediton. Daughter - Edna married Arnold Robertson, and has written histories of the Kerr and Wilson families. Grandchildren - Anne married Barrie J. Neal (Robert and Jeffrey).

FREDERICK KERR, 1876-1957

Fred Kerr took over the farm and brick and tile-manufacturing business at his father's death, adding a sawmill to the operation. Timber was shipped to the Welland Canal as well as to the Grand



Aaron Sweitzer working at the Kerr kiln, at the Kerr family's brick yard.



Fred, Wesley, Charles, Will and Endyn Kerr.

Bend pier. Farms were needing draining and new houses were being built to replace the original log houses. Also, larger barns were being erected, so business prospered. Several local men from Credition East, such as the Sims, the Motz and Lewis families and others worked most of their lives on the yard until the Centralia Air Base opened. At that time, the yard was closed.

Mrs. Kerr had a busy life as there were usually one or two men to work the farm and often help out in the yard. Many customers would put their horses in to feed while they would eat with the family. Fred was interested in sports and umpired many ballgames. He was also a successful trapshooter at meets in many Ontario cities as well as in Montreal, Chicago and Ohio. He brought home many trophies and prizes. Fred was also a Mason and belonged to the Scottish Rites. Mrs. Kerr belonged to the Order of the Eastern Star in London. The farm was sold and the Kerrs retired to Exeter. Fred died in 1957 and his wife in 1965, and they were buried in the Exeter cemetery.

LOVE FAMILY FARM

In 1897, John Love, who was the second son of Hugh Love and Christina Forrest, and his wife, Alice Turnbull, purchased the 100-acre farm at Lot 11, Con. 20, Stephen Township, from James Petty. At one time, Harpley Post Office operated from their home, with John Love acting as postmaster. Their family included Elsa M., William H., Robert M. and Colin K. Love.

Robert M. and his wife, Edna Pfaff, farmed here from 1925-1928. Colin and his wife, Fern Gill, owned the farm from 1929-1953. Their family included Morley K., Glenn M. and Gerald M. Love.

Glenn and his wife, Betty McDougall, and their boys Daniel and Richard, operated the farm from 1953-1961.

Gerry and his wife Brenda Mollard and their children Paul, Heather and Brent, are now farming on Lot 11, Con. 20, Stephen.

LIGHTFOOT FAMILY

William Baker was born in Stephen Township about 1863 and married Elizabeth Heaman. The couple farmed on the 4th. concession of Stephen for many years, moving to Exeter in 1911. They had one daughter Ella (Mrs. Clark Fisher) and one son Alvin, who married Myrtle Hirtzel, daughter of George and Mary (Mantle) Hirtzel. The Hirtzels operated at tile yard on the 4th. concession of Stephen.

Alvin and Myrtle farmed on Con. 6, Stephen Township, and had one daughter, Doreen, who married Howard Lightfoot. Their son Douglas married Phyllis (Schade) and is still on the family farm on Con. 6, Stephen, south of Crediton. Their two sons, Steven and Mike, and their wives, live in Exeter.



William Baker and his wife, Elisabeth Heinen.



Alvin Baker and his wife, Myrtle Hirtzel.

"THE MOLLARD LINE"

More than 100 years ago, Mr. and Mrs. John Mollard, with their five sons — James, Isaac, William, Charles and Thomas — left their home in Hull, England, to seek a new home in Canada. They first settled in Upper Canada at Markham, in York County. After several years, during which the boys married, the family decided to move to the Huron Tract. They travelled by train to Thedford and then, loading their few precious possessions on an ox cart, they proceeded north until they reached the Ausable River. The family were helped across the river by the Indians. The Mollards journeyed north east through dense bush until they reached the desired spot. The land would have been previously bought from the Crown. Here they built themselves a shelter and cleared land, dug their wells, and erected barns and fences. As the land was cleared, a road was built and very aptly called "The Mollard Line." It is still known by this name today.

"THIS WAS MY HOME" — THE TOM LOVE FARM

"This Was My Home" is a reference to a news item in *The Exeter Times-Advertiser* in 1942, when Mervyn Love, with the R.C.A.F., landed his aircraft on the home farm. This was the home of Tom and Annie Love and their family: Ross, Hugh, Lloyd, Edith and Mervyn.

The Loves were greatly affected by World War II, when the government took over their farms for the Grand Bend airport. Ross and Nola (Hodgins) had to relocate south of Shipka; Hugh and Edith (Greb) to north of Exeter. By 1937, Tom and Annie, who had owned 300 acres, had moved to Grand Bend. Lloyd, then of London, married to Vera (Isaac), was an instrument technician on R.C.A.F. aircraft.

THIS WAS THE HOME of Tom's parents Hugh and Christina (Forrest), emigrants from Scotland. Hugh purchased Lot 12 from the Canada Company in 1849, moved from Hillsgreen, Stanley Township in 1864, and built a log home. Their family was Robert, Jean, John, Janet, Mary, Anna, Christina, Thomas, Margaret, Isabella, James and Alec. The girls' married names were respectively: Webb, Farrell, Turnbull, Hodgins, Turnbull, Taylor and McGregor.

THIS WAS THE HOME of Ross and Nola's family: Betty (Datars), Donald and Clare, until they moved to Shipka where Kathryn (Lobb) was born; and of Hugh and Edith's son, Maurice; their daughter Arlene was born in Usborne.

Lloyd and Vera's family are Ronald, Barbara (Moore), Thomas and Robert.

Edith married Douglas Gill, a Stephen Township music teacher. They lived on the Mollard Line with their family: Onalee (Welsh), Janice (McCutcheon) and John.

Mervyn married Wilma (Gillilan), a Stephen Township school teacher. Their family is Allan and Carol (Taylor). Carol had the experience of parachuting onto her dad's home farm. Tom and Annie's great-grandson, David Love, piloted a plane onto the same land, with his dad and brother Dan, as passengers.

David's grandmother Nola, lives in Grand Bend. Ross, Hugh and Edith (Greb) are deceased. Lloyd, now of Parkhill, owned a hardware business; Edith, now of Exeter, was a school teacher; Mervyn, now of Bayview, a United Church of Canada clergyman.



Tom and Annie (Taylor) Love, married in 1905.



A three-generation home, Lot 32, Con. 20, Stephen Township.

WILFRID AND SUSAN MURIEL (NICHOLSON) MACK

The Mack family, David and Rachel, emigrated from Northern Ireland in the 1840s and settled on Lot 15, Con. 4, Hay Township, in the newly settled Hensall district, where they raised their large family of 11 children. These were Wilfrid Mack's grandparents.

Wilfrid D. Mack was born on this farm on January 23, 1897. In 1901, he moved with his parents, David and Mary Jane, to a farm on Concession 3, the Hay/Stephen townline. The Macks took off three crops on this farm, moving to Exeter in 1904. Wilfrid had three sisters, Mary, Bertha and Alma.

Late in 1917, Wilfrid enlisted as a gunner in the Cobourg Heavy Battery of the Canadian army. It took 11 days to cross the ocean to Liverpool. Wilfrid served in France, Belgium and Germany. He was transferred from gunner to driver—since there were no trucks, everything was transported by horse and wagon. Wilfrid was stationed in Seigburg. Returning to Exeter after the war, he worked as a clerk for Ben Beaver and J.A. Stewart.

Wilfrid courted Susan Muriel Nicholson, born November 14, 1900, daughter of Evaline and Godfrey Nicholson of Crediton, for eight years. Muriel was a public school teacher. They were married June 30, 1923, in the Crediton Methodist Church by Rev. Duncan McTavish, the new minister. This was Rev. McTavish's very first wedding and they were the first couple to be married in the new church. The former church had been destroyed by fire in 1922. The minister was at his new charge on Thursday and the wedding was scheduled for Saturday. The couple went to London for the rest of the day, this being their honeymoon, and then returned to Exeter where they lived.

Their first child, a son, Bryce Johnson, was born May 17, 1924. In 1925 they moved to Crediton and lived with Muriel's parents. Her mother, Evaline Rebecca Nicholson, died February 7, 1926. While the Macks lived here, Evaline Jean (Whiting) McAllister was born on March 28, 1926.

After Christmas that year, the Macks moved to a farm, 2.5 miles west of Crediton and a short distance south on Concession 10. Wilfrid Mack had purchased the farm in 1925.

In the spring of 1929, with another addition to the family on the way, Wilfrid sold his first farm. He purchased a 100 acre farm about 1 and 1/4 miles to the east, on Lot 7, Con. 9, from the Wilfred Lawson estate. This farm had a much larger house. The Mack's

second daughter, Edith Winnifred (Leslie) Jette was born on September 25, 1929.

Wilfrid raised cattle, pigs and chickens and used horses to assist with the farm work. He also raised hay and grain crops and the family had a large garden and fruit trees. Muriel did a good deal of canning. She sewed all the family's clothes and knit sweaters, socks and mitts. On November 30, 1932, a third daughter, Rosalie Muriel (Cann) was born.

There was no hydro on the farm. During the Depression years, Wilfrid gave up the car and drove a horse and buggy. Wood was cut from the bush and used in the cook stove and in a Quebec heater to warm the house.

In 1946, Wilfrid and Muriel contracted to drive the school bus, taking children from the S.S. #2 school area to Crediton Public School. They drove the bus for 18 years.

In 1950, the farm was sold to Ross and Donna Clark. Wilfrid, Muriel, Winnifred and Rosalie Mack moved to a large white brick home on King Street South in Crediton. That same year, Wilfrid



Susan Muriel Nicholson of Crediton and Wilfrid D. Mack of Exeter were married at Crediton Methodist Church on June 30, 1923.

took over the mail route contract from his father-in-law, Godfrey Nicholson. Wilfrid also got another contract to do the R.R. #2 route and for a few hours each week, he worked in the corner grocery store for Loene Hodge and later for Art Attfield. Wilfrid was also a volunteer member of the Crediton fire department for 20 years.

Muriel Mack was active with the Ladies' Aid, the Crediton Women's Institute, the Mary Hastings group, the South Huron Hospital Auxiliary and was instrumental in reviving the Huron County Historical Society. She travelled abroad several times. In 1968 the Macks visited their daughter Rosalie and her husband Lorry Cann, who was in service in Germany. Lorry took them to Seigburg and Wilfrid was able to find the factory that had been used to house himself and his fellow soldiers during World War 1. He enjoyed the experience very much.

In 1974, the Macks sold their Crediton home and moved to an apartment in London. The following year, they bought a cottage at Turnbull's Grove, about five miles north of Grand Bend. They enjoyed many summers there and celebrated their 60th anniversary with an open house at the cottage on June 30, 1983. Due to Wilfrid's failing health, a family celebration of the occasion was held May 15 at the Pine Ridge Chalet, Hay Township, with all the family members present.

Wilfrid passed away October 3, 1983. Muriel Mack continues to reside in her London apartment.



The Mack family included (left to right) Wilfrid, eldest daughter Evaline, son Bryce, daughters Rosalie and Winnifred and their mother, Muriel Mack.



Wilfrid Mack's second farm, which was a mixed farming operation, was located on Lot 7, Concession 9 of Stephen Township.

ARNOLD McCANN FAMILY

Arnold and Theresa (McIntyre) McCann of Lot 8, Con. 12, moved to their present farm in 1951. The McCann's had five children and seven grandchildren. Their children are: Mary F. Gallagher, London; Rita McCann, Toronto; Peter McCann (died, 1975); Edward McCann, Stephen Township and Catherine Veal of Ushorne Township.

The farm is now operated by their son Ed, with other farms in McGillivray Township, as a beef feedlot operation, growing corn, mixed grains and hay.



The McCann family farm in Stephen Township.

McCURDY FARM

The lands known as Lot 10, Con. 1, Stephen, were patented by the Crown to the Canada Company in 1830. On July 23, 1845, the Honourable G.J. Goodhue sold the 100 acres to Lewis Holman for the sum of 87 pounds. Lewis Holman and his wife, the former Jane Bealy, would spend approximately 40 years raising a family of 12 children while clearing the farm of trees to provide a family home.

At a similar time, the Devon settlement was taking shape. From May of 1854, some of the settlers were: George Webber, William Tremain, Thomas Trivitt, Thomas Greenway and William Martin. Lewis Holman sold five acres off the northeast corner of the farm to make up part of the Devon settlement.

In the same year, 1854, one George Webber bought 12 acres on the south border of the farm. Another portion was added from Lot 9, Con. 1, to make up approximately 50 acres. Sandford Lawson resided there for many years.

In 1875, the railroad company, called the London, Huron and Bruce Railway, procured a deed for three to four acres. Some of these tracks were torn up in 1990 — other parts of the tracks are still in use, although on a limited scale. When the railroad was established in 1873, the post office moved from Devon Corners down to Centralia. In 1990/91, the post office went to a franchise ownership and blue and green mail boxes.

Samuel Holman purchased the farm in 1879. Richard Davis and his son Sid Davis purchased Lot 10, Con. 1, in 1888 and 1898 respectively. In 1909, Daniel McCurdy Sr., purchased the 85-acre farm.

For the next 21 years, Daniel McCurdy Sr. (a widower), three daughters and one son lived in the small house. Daniel obtained a house from the old Devon Corners. He moved this house on log rollers to its present position. The house was put up on cement blocks at the south part of the original house. As time went on, families were started, and in 1930, Daniel Cooper McCurdy, Jr., and his wife Elsie Ethel Reeder, obtained the 82-acre farm. Two daughters and a son were born into the McCurdy household: Joanne, Donald, and Carol.

In 1977, Donald McCurdy and his wife Marion Lamport, and their three daughters — Nancy, Barbara, Sandra and a son, Shawn moved to the 77 acres. The three girls finished their education and were married from the farm. Shawn started high school in the fall of 1991.

With each new owner, the farm shrinks in acreage as road and railway allowances are required. If the present ownership or next of kin is maintained until the year 2009, a century farm will be the legacy of future McCurdy descendants.

THE FRED NEIL FAMILY

Earl William Neil (the son of Frederick J. Neil and Lila E. Sherritt) was born on Lot 18, Con. 14, McGillivray Township on April 20, 1926. His father Fred. J. Neil was born and lived his life on Lot 18, Con. 14, McGillivray Township. Fred's wife, Lila, was born in Stephen, on Lot 12, Con. 21. The couple had ten children: Crystal, Violet, Roland, Ervin, Myrtle, Clarence, Gladys, Merton, Earl and Marion.

THE KING FAMILY

Earl married Jean Eveline King on Sept. 21, 1946. Jean was the daughter of Melvin K. King and Ruth E. King (Robinson) of Stephen Township. Melvin was born and raised on Lot 9, Con. 7, Stephen and married Ruth E. Robinson, who was born and raised on Lot 4, Con. 3, Stephen, on October 10, 1923. They farmed on Lot 12, Con. 3, Stephen, where they raised their four children — Edith, Russell, Jean and Melba.

THE EARL NEIL FAMILY

Earl and Jean have three children and ten grandchildren. James Earl Neil was born Aug. 18, 1947. Wendy Jean Neil was born April 7, 1950 and Brenda Louise Neil was born Nov. 29, 1957. James married Anne Herdman of Usborne Township, Aug. 12, 1972. They live at Lot 16, Con. 4, Stephen Township and have four children — Christopher, Melanie, Jason and Zachary.

Wendy married James H. Kerslake of Usborne Township on April 4, 1970. They live on Lot 11, Con. 1, Usborne and have three children — Sherry, Jeffrey and Joanne.

Brenda married Steven H. Schroeder of Dashwood, Hay Township on Oct. 7, 1978. They have three children — Jessie, Brittney and Carly — and live at 175 Helen Street, Dashwood.

Earl and Jean moved to Exeter from McGillivray Township in 1948 and built an open-air roller skating rink, which they operated for 16 seasons. In the spring of 1951, they bought a 50-acre farm

in Stephen Township, from William and Minnie Parker, on N1/2 Lot 13, Con. 2, where they still live in the original home built by Steven Joshua Hogarth in 1882.

QUALITY PRODUCE (EXETER) LIMITED

In 1955, Earl and Jean Neil purchased the farm across the road, Lot 13, Con. 2, Stephen Township, which was the former Septimus Hogarth property. They cash-crop farmed it for three years and in July, 1958, started their own business, Quality Produce (Exeter) Limited. Earl was president and manager and Jean was secretary-treasurer. This was the first limited-farm operation in Huron County. The operation washes, waxes and packages rutabagas (turnips) in 50-pound containers for human consumption. The majority are shipped by trailer-transport to American markets from the eastern seaboard south to Miami, Florida, and west to the state of Mississippi. The main brand name was Circle E, named after the founder. At this time, the farm also got the name Circle E Farms.

Working with local farmers, the company found it necessary to supply planters and sprayers for rental and to supply fertilizer and spray materials, so in 1961, a bulk fertilizer shed was erected on the same premises, consisting of five-bulk bins. In the spring of 1962, an addition was added to the waxing plant and in September, 1962, an insulated storage building, 40 by 112 feet, was built allowing turnips to be stored in pallet boxes four-by-four-by-four feet, each box holding approximately 40 bushels. The boxes are stacked 16-feet high by use of a fork lift.

In 1966, a second insulated storage shed was erected 48 by 112 by 20 feet. The two previous storage sheds were connected in 1968, making the third storage area. In 1972, a cold storage was installed in the building, 48 by 112 feet, allowing a much longer shipping season.

Brian Sanders of Exeter joined the office staff June 19, 1965, and is now office manager and salesman. Son James E. Neil graduated from Ridgetown Agricultural College and joined the staff as farm manager in 1968. His wife Anne started part-time in the office in 1979.

Quality Produce (Exeter) Limited is now owned and operated by Jim and Anne Neil, after Earl and Jean retired from the business on June 1, 1990.

Earl and Jean have always enjoyed an active community life. Jean is a member of the South Huron Hospital Auxiliary, Exeter and a life member of the Crediton Women's Institute. She is presently treasurer of the Crediton United Church Women. Earl is a charter member of Crediton District Social Club and an elder of Crediton United Church.



Earl and Jean Neil and their children, Wendy Jean, Brenda Louise and James Earl Neil.



The farm of Earl and Jean Neil, on the N1/2 Lot 23, Con. 2, Stephen Township.

GODFREY AND EVALINE (JOHNSON) NICHOLSON

The Nicholson family originated in Southern Ireland. Godfrey's grandfather settled in Hay Township in 1852. Godfrey was one of a family of eight and lived on his father's farm. In March, 1899, he married Evaline Rebecca Johnson from the Sylvan area. Evaline had taught school for four years at the Bronson Line School (1.25 miles west of Zurich and one mile south). Their daughter, Susan Muriel, was born in November 1900.

In April, 1908 they moved from their farm on Lot 24, Con. 13, Hay Township to Crediton. The wagons were loaded with their possessions and were ready to leave around eight o'clock in the morning. A neighbour girl, Dora Geiger, assisted Mrs. Nicholson with the packing and settling after the move. The Geigers lived on the next farm to the south and were very fine people and wonderful neighbours.

It was 13 miles to Crediton and travelling was slow due to the ruts in the road. Mrs. Nicholson, Muriel and Dora travelled ahead in the buggy, arriving at Crediton around 11 o'clock. They ate their dinner at the hotel. The reception room was upstairs and they waited there until the meal was served.

Godfrey had purchased the house next to the athletic field on the east side of the village, where he went into the butcher business. The shop was on the south side of the street, about halfway between the main corner and the last of the building lots. Charles Zwicker's store was across the street. The ice house was in the southeast corner of the athletic field, next to Godfrey's property. This building was filled with blocks of ice packed in sawdust. The ice was used in the storage room of the butcher shop to keep the meat from spoiling. Blocks of ice were also peddled in the village, in Centralia and along nearby concession roads. Godfrey was assisted in the shop by Mr. Mittleholtz and later by Tom Lawson. After Mr. Lawson died, Otto Ewald helped in the shop.

In 1917, Godfrey Nicholson gave up the butcher shop and started into the flax business. He rented acreage for the planting of flax and hired help at harvest time. A flax binder was used and some flax was pulled by hand and put into sheaves and stooked. It was taken to the flax mill and thrashed. Some of the fibres would be spread back onto the land to decay and some were shipped to Ireland to make linen. There was a big demand for linen during World War I since it was used to cover airplane wings. After a few

years, Godfrey gave up flax growing and became a drover.

Evaline Nicholson was a very active member of the Ladies' Aid Society of Crediton Methodist Church. She also taught the young adults in Sunday School for many years and helped organize the first Mission Band at the church.

Evaline Nicholson was also the founder of the Women's Institute group in Crediton. Some of the school teachers boarded at the Nicholson home. Mrs. Nicholson passed away at the age of 56 in February, 1926.

In 1933, Godfrey received his first contract to deliver mail. He met the train in Centralia twice a day to pick up the mail and delivered mail to boxes between Centralia and Crediton once a day. Mr. Nicholson held the mail contract for 17 years, then it was taken over by his son-in-law, Wilfrid Mack.

Godfrey died at the age of 80 in August, 1952, at the home of his daughter Muriel in Crediton.



Susan Muriel Nicholson, with her parents Evaline (Johnson) and Godfrey Nicholson in front of their home in Crediton.

A HISTORY OF OAKWOOD GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

Oakwood began eons ago with sand dunes created by the forces of wind and water. The first Indian inhabitants were followed by the white man and his philosophy of more permanent communities.

The white man's ingenuity and sense of adventure led to the motor car which provided him with the means of escaping the ever-increasing heat and noise of his urban settlements. The mixed blessings of the automobile helped create resort communities.

The Clayton MacPherson Walker family, of Wingham, were early visitors to Grand Bend, the neighbouring resort village founded in the 1890s. Frederick Clement Walker, son of C.M. Walker, first saw Grand Bend in 1907, as a boy of eight. He enjoyed summers at a cottage on Walker Street, near the north boundary of the village.

In December, 1919, C.M. Walker purchased several hundred acres of ostensibly worthless sand dunes and scrub oak immediately north of Grand Bend, with three-quarters of a mile of Lake Huron frontage. He paid \$5,000 for the unfarmable tract covered by unmerchantable "timber." The locals thought him foolish and called the venture "Walker's Folly", but C.M. Walker pressed on, driven by his vision of development. During the next few years, this "worthless" bunch of scrub was surveyed, with a plan of subdivision granted February 8, 1922. This was Plan #22, Township of Stephen, County of Huron, and resulted in the founding of Oakwood Park, a very exclusive resort community.

Later that same year, 1922, Oakwood Inn was founded with the construction of the Lodge, the first hotel building. The Clubhouse, the oldest existing building, and the golf course, date from 1926. The latter was built from farmland and swamp at great cost in time, effort and funds between 1922 and 1926. Improvements continue to the present day.

Food was served in the Clubhouse until the Dining Room, the largest building, was added about 1950, setting standards in excellence in cuisine. This was the stage by stage development of a family business, beginning with a father and son partnership and involving three generations of the Walker family over a period of 52 years.

Additional hotel accommodation was provided with the construction of the "catwalk", an elevated board walk which connected six duplex cottages, built about 1928, and by other duplex and

single-unit cottages built in the '30s and '40s.

The hotel buildings, including the Clubhouse, were all built of red pine logs from the Pinery, until 1946, when the last log cottages were added. The rustic log atmosphere was becoming ever more expensive to build and maintain and three new single-unit cedar clapboard cottages built between 1953 and 1955 began a trend to more modern construction. In 1958, the "catwalk" was torn down and replaced with the "longhouse", completed in 1959. "Ranchwall" was used on this modern, winterized, 16-unit building, which is still in use today. By this time, Oakwood Inn and Golf Club had grown from a large two-storey house, accommodating 15 or 20 guests, to a resort hotel with a capacity for 90 guests.

In 1972, Oakwood quietly celebrated its half-century and looked back on decades of satisfied clientele. Some guests had come every year for over 30 years. However, a new generation was gradually replacing them and changes were inevitable. Tennis was available in the early days, then disappeared, but in the last ten years, has become popular again. Shuffleboard was begun at Oakwood in 1955 but has since gone into decline. Change is part of the price of progress, and the clientele became more demanding of comfort, luxury and new facilities at an ever-increasing cost.

In 1974, the Walker family sold the Oakwood Inn and Golf Club to two London businessmen, Peter and Richard Ivey, both residents of Oakwood Park. The business was sold again, in 1981, to businessman David Scatcherd, also an Oakwood resident.

In the last ten years, Oakwood Inn has seen enormous changes with a tremendous expansion in accommodation and other facilities. Three impressive new hotel buildings have been built. An indoor swimming pool, fitness centre, pub and convention centre have also been created. Accommodation has been expanded from 90 rooms to over 200.

A new professional, tournament-length golf course is being planned for the east side of Highway 21. In 1992, Oakwood will be 70 years old and well before it celebrates 75 years in 1997, it will become a world-class resort. Old Clayton MacPherson Walker would have been pleased!

— Philip F. Walker

DONALD AND JULIA O'ROURKE FAMILY

The present owners, Donald and Julia O'Rourke, took up resi-

dence at Lot 18, Con. 12, with their three children, Sean, Lee and Justin, in 1975.

The maternal great-grandfather of Donald O'Rourke, Lawrence Dietrich, had purchased the south half of Lot 18 in 1878 from John McDonald and the north half in 1880 from the Canada Company. In 1913, Leo Dietrich, one of the many children of Lawrence Dietrich, was left this property in his father's will. Leo retained the farm until 1947, when it passed to one of his sons, Leonard. Leonard married Dorothy Ziler and they raised their children and farmed Lot 18 until 1975, when Donald and Julia O'Rourke purchased the land. Donald is a nephew of Leonard and Dorothy Dietrich. His mother Clare O'Rourke is Leonard's sister.

The present house was erected on the north half of the farm. A stone foundation was built and an existing frame house was moved from across the road to sit on this foundation. The present kitchen area was added at that time and the entire home was covered with brick.

THE PATRICK O'ROURKE FAMILY

In the years following the great potato famine of the early 1840s in Ireland, many Irish immigrants made their way to North America. The majority of them journeyed to the United States but many also settled in the rich virgin soil of southwestern Ontario.

Some of the immigrants that originated from Limerick, Ireland travelled north from London to the Huron Tract, particularly to the area now known as Mount Carmel, where there were many good farms available from the Canada Company. Patrick O'Rourke was one of the first settlers to purchase land west of the Ausable River, in the centre of the township. He homesteaded on Lot 10, Con. 12, comprising a 100-acre parcel which he acquired on October 28, 1852, directly from the Canada Company. This property is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Huron County Roads #2 and #4. This crossroads was first known as Holt's Corner and in later years, as Khiva.

During the family's first ten to 12 years in Canada, six sons and one daughter — John, Richard, James, Thomas, Timothy, Michael and Mary Ann — were born to Patrick O'Rourke and his wife Mary.

After Patrick's death on November 25, 1875, the family continued to farm on Lot 10, Con. 12, until the youngest son Michael

married Johanna Collins in 1898. He acquired the property and built a large, two-storey yellow brick home on the property in 1898. The house still stands today. On the back of the original photo, taken after the completion of the home, it was written that the total cost of the structure was \$460, including the window blinds.

During the next 12 years, four daughters and two sons were born to Michael and Johanna. They were Mary, Eileen, Nora, Josephine, Gerald and Dennis. The two sons purchased the home farm from their father in March, 1934. Gerald purchased his own farm on Lot 12, Con. 12, Stephen Township in 1942.

Dennis married Clare Dietrich in 1938. Over the next 20 years, they raised a family of seven sons and one daughter. Their children are, in order of birth, Michael, Donald, Wayne, Glenn, Patrick, Joseph, Gerard and Mary.



Michael and Johanna O'Rourke, standing in front of their newly-constructed home on Lot 10, Con. 12, Stephen Township. This picture was taken in October, 1898 shortly after completion of the home. The house is presently home to Patrick and Gwen O'Rourke and their daughters. Patrick is a grandson of Michael and Johanna O'Rourke.

Dennis continued to farm until his death in 1966. His wife Clare and the children remaining at home farmed the property until 1976 when Dennis' son Patrick purchased the homestead from his mother.

Patrick was married in 1973 to Gwen Clausius. The family consists of three daughters: Erin, born in 1976; Kerriann, born in 1980 and Meghan, born in 1986. They continue to live in the original O'Rourke homestead.

PERTSCHY FAMILY

Stefan Pertschy was born in Yugoslavia on August 20, 1931. He later moved to Austria before immigrating to Canada in October 1951. His father Franz (1891-1975) and his two sisters, Anna and Maria, remained behind. Anna presently lives in Exeter, Ontario and Maria still lives in Germany.

After arriving in Canada, Stefan lived and worked in Wingham until March 1952. He then moved to Stephen Township, where he worked at Centralia Airport. He bought his first farm, located at Part Lot 11, Con. 5, Stephen Township, in March 1954. The farm is presently owned by Drew Robertson.

On May 15, 1954, Stefan married Erika Martin. Erika was born in Poland on October 30, 1935, but later moved to Germany.

Erika and her parents Sina (Seidell) and Robert Martin Sr. (1896-1972) and brothers Robert and Peter all immigrated to Canada from Germany in June 1950. Her mother Sina, and brothers Robert and Peter, still live in Crediton.

Stefan's father Franz Pertschy moved from Austria to Canada in September 1954 where he lived and worked with Stefan and Erika on their farm.

The first of the couple's three children, Mary Ann, was born March 4, 1956. The fall of that same year, Stefan's sister Anna and her husband Stefan Eberhardt, arrived from Austria and settled in Crediton.

The second of their three children, Robert Franz, was born November 25, 1958. Elizabeth Ida, the couple's third child, was born April 4, 1960.

The Pertschys bought their present farm, at Lot 9, Con. 6, Stephen Township in March 1963.

Mary Ann is presently working as a registered nurse. Her job has taken her to a variety of places including England, Arizona,

Florida, Louisiana, Michigan and Ontario.

Robert is farming on Lot 9, Con. 7, along with his wife Marg (O'Neill) and their four girls Christine (1980), Carissa (1983), Danielle (1985) and Melissa (1989). He is also a member of the Stephen Township fire department.

Elizabeth works as a dietary supervisor at a Toronto hospital. She and her husband Christopher Peltipas have recently purchased the late Irving Stahl's farm at Lot 8, Con. 6, Stephen Township.



Stefan and Erika (Martin) Peritsky on their wedding day, May 15, 1954.

PICKERING FAMILY

This branch of the Pickering family in Canada began when Thomas Pickering (born April 4, 1804) emigrated with his wife and grown family of three sons and one daughter from Yorkshire, England. It took eight weeks to cross the Atlantic.

They settled in on Lot 4, Con. 10, McGillivray Township, where their farm was bought for 69 pounds from the Canada Company in April, 1856.

Their second son John, (born July 18, 1833 in England) married Sarah Smith, also born in England. They also lived in McGillivray, but in June 1886, they bought Lot 7, Con. 17, Stephen Township from the Carsada Company. Sarah lived to be 99 years of age.

Ten years later, in 1896, John and Sarah sold the farm to their son John. John Jr. (born 1863) married Mary Sheardown. They had seven children. John died of tuberculosis when he was only 43 years of age. The couple also lost two of their sons in childhood, and a daughter Clara at age 21.

Mary Sheardown Pickering later married Jim Flynn and lived near Crediton.



John Pickering Jr. and his family with (left to right) Mary, Mervin, Ethel, Elmer, Clara, John and Vera.

ELMER PICKERING FAMILY

Elmer Pickering (born 1893) was only 13 years old when his father died, but the family managed to hang on to the farm.

In 1918, Elmer married Martha Baynham. Martha was born in 1898 in Shipka and lived there with her parents, John Baynham and Betsy Bestard, until her marriage. Elmer and Martha had 18 children and most of them settled in the area.

In 1928, the family moved to Lot 6, Con. 17, Stephen Township. Their son, John, took over the original home farm in 1951 and still lives there with his wife Marilyn.

Elmer died on Sept. 16, 1965 and his wife Martha passed away on Dec. 25, 1970.

Two of their sons, Jim and Ken, still live on Lot. 6.



Members of the Elmer and Martha Pickering family are: (back, left to right) Ross, Earl, Jack, Eve, Donald and (second row) Marilyn, Leonard, Harvey, Ken, Glen, Betty and (front) Rena, Eva, Hazel and Grace.



Elmer and Martha Pickering.

ROSS PICKERING FAMILY

Ross Pickering (born 1925), the seventh child of Elmer and Martha Pickering, married Evelyn Shank in 1951. Evelyn was the youngest daughter of John Shank and Ethel Blair of Parkhill.

The couple lived at Shipka for six years. Ross drove a gas truck for Russell Fuels for 15 years, and then worked four years for Arnold Home Heating. In 1957, Ross and Evelyn bought a 100-acre farm on Lot 11, Con. 12, Stephen Township, from Jerome O'Rourke. They have five children — Stanley, Michael, Susan, Nancy and Jane. Ross and Evelyn built a new house on the same farm in 1977. Their son Michael and his family moved from Crediton to live in the farm house.

MICHAEL PICKERING FAMILY

Michael Pickering was born in 1954, and attended the one-room Khiva school. When it closed, he attended school in Shipka. Then in 1966, the new central school was built on the 10th concession and all the students were bussed there. Michael also attended Exeter high school.

In 1974, he married Jo-Anne Inch. Jo-Anne's parents were Ken Inch and Betty Dodge, who lived in Crediton for three years.



Ross Pickering and family of RR 3, Dushwood, Ontario.



Michael and Jo-Anne Pickering with their children, Chad, Angels, Rebecca and Pamela.



The home of the Michael Pickering family on Lot 11, Con. 12, Stephen Township.



A photo of the Pickering home in earlier years.

Michael bought an Alfa-Laval dealership in 1976. One year later, his family moved to the vacant house on his father's farm on Lot 11, Con. 12, Stephen Township. Mike and Jo-Anne bought the farm from Ross and Evelyn in 1981.

Mike and Jo-Anne have four children — Chad, Angela, Rebecca and Pamela. The children attend Stephen Central School and South Huron District High School.

Over the years extensive changes have been made to the farm buildings and house.

PRESZCATOR CENTURY FARM, 1849-1991

Fredrick Preszcator, in 1849, purchased Lot 19, Con. 3, Stephen Township, a 100-acre farm, from Thomas Snell for 87 pounds, 10 shillings. Fredrick came up from Puslinch Township, in the Guelph area, to the homestead leading an ox and horse hitched together, pulling a cart. Fredrick had four children — Catherine, Christina, Christian John and Sophia. The family built a log cabin down by the creek.

On Feb. 13, 1850, Fredrick turned property over to his son Christian John. The father later disappeared and it is believed he returned to Germany.

Christian John married Grace (Sanders). Their children were Grace, Samuel and twin John (who died), John, Mary Jane (Prong) and Elizabeth Ann (Wilson).

The present house was built near the road in 1881, a storey-and-a-half frame house.

On Sept. 17, 1894, son John Preszcator was left the Lot 5 1/2 19, Con. 3, Stephen Township by his father Christian John Preszcator. The N 1/2 of Lot 19 had been sold earlier.

John Preszcator was married to Alberta (Snell) and their children were: Hilda (Tate), Fredrick, Olive (Coulter), Verna (Twitchell), Edward, Ethel (Kelly), Wesley Basil, Alice (Harding), and Eveline (died in infancy). All are deceased except Alice.

The barn was raised to its present foundation in 1899. On Aug. 19, 1935, this property was sold to Fredrick John Preszcator by his father, John. Fredrick was married to Flora (Kleinfeldt) and their children are Calvin, at R.R. 2, Credilton; Lorne in Credilton; Wilmer, R.R. 1, Exeter; Lorraine (Torres) and Robert, both of London.

This property was sold on Aug. 14, 1946 to its present owner, Wilmer Preszcator, by his father, Fredrick Preszcator. Wilmer is

married to wife Helen (Budden) and they have six children. These are Wayne of Stouffville; Barbara (Pepper) of Bayfield; Stephen of Mt. Brydges; Beverley (Shea) of Seaforth, Murray of London and Donna of Burlington. The six grandchildren are Sherry, Ansanda, Ryan and Ashley Preszator and Krissy and Luke Pepper.

— *Helen Preszator, with the assistance
of brother-in-law Lorne Preszator*

ERVIN RATZ FAMILY

In 1828, Valentine Ratz and his wife, both 30 years old, left Hessen, Germany and sailed for Canada. During the voyage, which took nine weeks, their oldest son Jacob was born. They settled in Waterloo County, eventually building and operating a sawmill near St. Jacobs, Ontario. Jacob, one of their seven children, made quite a success of running the sawmill.

Jacob married Mary Opfer in 1848 and they had eight children. In 1875, when lumber became scarce around St. Jacobs, he and two of his sons, Valentine and John, came to Stephen Township, scouting for land for a sawmill. They stayed with Samuel Schweitzer's parents north of Crediton. On December 8, 1875, the brothers purchased the east half of Lot 10, Con. 14, Stephen Township, from the Canada Company and built the sawmill. They bought the west half of Lot 10 from Walter McDougall on January 18, 1876.

Valentine and John moved to Khiva in 1876. They opened the Ratz sawmill and operated it day and night. When they began operations they owned 500 acres of timber lands, having purchased Lots 13, 14, 15 and 16, Con. 14, as well as the mill property.

During the following winters they cut logs from the surrounding woodlands. In one section of the mill, they cut the pews for Zion Church, Crediton. Other products included shingles, clothespins, barrel staves and lumber for toothpicks, in addition to the regular cuts of lumber used for building. It is also noted that Fisher Carriage Company asked the Ratz family to make frames for the bodies of their carriages. Since the Fishers did not have money, they gave the Ratz family shares in their company as payment. When the Fisher Company flourished, the firm bought back the shares. Also Seagrams did the same thing, asking the Ratz's to make casks for their product and offering shares in their company as payment. Later, the Seagram company bought back the shares.

In 1877, John married Barbara Finkbeiner. Two houses were built — one east of the mill for John and his wife and one west of the mill for Valentine and his wife Mary. John had nine children. In 1909, his oldest son Jacob married Martha Gieser and they lived in his father's house, since John had moved to Shipka, where he bought the store. On Dec. 1, 1909, John's second son William married Lavina Fahner and they moved into Valentine's house. Valentine had already moved to Parkhill and entered politics. He became a senator in 1909.

Valentine sold his share of the land and mill to John when he entered politics. In 1907, John formed a partnership with his two sons, William and Jacob, and they operated the sawmill until 1924 when the partnership was dissolved. William Ratz then operated the mill, gradually phasing out the business by the mid-1930s and turning his attention entirely to farming. The mill has since been torn down.

William's home is now owned by his son Ervin and wife Nola (Isaac) Ratz. William's other son Earl, and wife Olive (Dinsdale) Ratz live on Lot 13, Con. 15. Their daughter Dorothy Jones is living in Ailsa Craig and their daughter Gertrude is in London.

Ervin's son Larry and wife Barbara (Webber) Ratz live on Lot 7, Con. 11, of Stephen Township.



The Ratz sawmill on Lot 10, Con. 14, Stephen Township.



This picture of the Ratz home, built on the west side of the sawmill in 1876, was taken in 1912 when William Ratz and his wife Lorraine lived there.



The home of Ervin and Nola Ratz, as it looks today, after many renovations.

HARVEY RATZ FAMILY

Valentine and Anna Ratz, both aged 30, arrived in Canada in 1828 from Hessen, Germany.

After crossing the Atlantic in a sailing ship, which took seven weeks, they arrived in New York. Their oldest son Jacob was born during the crossing. The family travelled by train and canal to Buffalo and by horse cart to Waterloo, Ontario.

A blacksmith by trade, Valentine erected the first blacksmith shop in what is now the city of Waterloo. The first brick house in the city was built by our forefather. Valentine settled in Waterloo County where he conducted a lumbering business near St. Jacobs. They cleared the land, established a farm, and later started a flourishing sawmill. There were five sons and two daughters in the family.

Jacob and Maria Ratz had three sons and five daughters. When lumber became scarce around St. Jacobs, two of Jacob's sons, John and Valentine, moved to Stephen Township.

In 1876, they established the Ratz sawmill about one-half mile west of Khiva. The cement piers that the boiler was mounted on still stand where the sawmill was once located.

Valentine served as postmaster at Khiva, and was also prominent in municipal and industrial affairs. For 15 years or more, he was elected reeve of the township by acclamation. From Khiva, Valentine moved to Parkhill and eventually became the member of parliament for North Middlesex and was eventually elevated to the Senate. Valentine had four daughters and two sons. There are no known descendants of their family living in Stephen Township.

John married Barbara Finkbeiner, the daughter of Michael and Barbara Finkbeiner, who was born on the Finkbeiner Line (Lot 12, Con. 6, Stephen). They had three daughters — Clara, Ida and Laura and six sons — Jacob, William, Simon, Milton, Roy and Gordon.

John Ratz was a member of the Crediton Evangelical Church, a staunch supporter of the Liberal Party and an ardent fisherman.

In 1909, John and his two oldest sons, Jacob and William, formed a sawmilling company, John Ratz and Sons. The partnership was dissolved in 1923 and William continued to operate the sawmill on his own.

John purchased the Shipka General Store in 1909 and operated it until 1917, when he sold it to his son Milton and moved to Lot 10, Con. 15, where he resided until his death in 1942. Milton

started the first chopping mill in Shipka. Roy was reeve of Stephen Township (1946-47) and served on the council in different capacities for 17 years.

All the members of the Ratz family in Stephen Township are descendants of John and Barbara Ratz. In 1991, there are approximately 44 descendants and their spouses living in the township and approximately 126 descendants and their spouses living in other parts of Ontario.

Some of John Ratz's descendants are now working on a book *The Sandust Trail*, consisting of approximately 170 pages and 30 pictures, which is one sale during Stephen Township's sesquicentennial celebrations.



The Ratz sawmill operation.

PAUL SCHENK-WILHEMINA WEIN FAMILY

Paul Schenk, a man in his 23rd year, son of Charles Schenk and Barbara Zwicker, came to Canada from Wurtemberg, Germany in 1877.

When he arrived, he had 13 cents in his pocket. His sister Sophia, who later married a Fahrner, came to Canada a few years earlier. They left behind ten brothers and sisters in Germany.

Wilhemina Wein, daughter of Gottfried Wein and Agnes Fahrner, was born in the village of Crediton, on September 28, 1863. She had two sisters and one brother, Lydia (Gaiser), Susan (Bowman) and George.

After Paul and Mena were married they lived in Crediton East for a few years and later moved to a farm $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile north of Crediton. They lived there with Grandpa Gottfried Wein and Grandma

Agnes. Later they purchased 100 acres from a Mr. Treitz, one mile farther north. They farmed there until they retired to Crediton.

Paul and Mena had nine children, including Charles (deceased June 23, 1887, aged two), Henry, Nelson, Hilda, Hugo, Herbert, Roy, Maleeda and Beatrice.

Henry was born August 24, 1887 and farmed on the home farm for a short time, before moving to Thedford to open a meat market. He married Pearl Witmer, and they had one daughter, Jean. Jean married Hugh McEwen and they lived in the Corunna area. They were engaged in the agriculture business and Jean worked as a cook in various nursing homes. They had six children and one grandchild. Jean died December, 1979 and her father Henry, March 23, 1960.

Nelson was born May 30, 1889 and married the former Katherine Pfaff. They farmed on the home farm until they retired to Crediton. They have four children — Helen, Gerald, Gladys and Paul. Nelson died on February 20, 1980. Helen died as a young girl. Gerald married Rita Fuller and they farmed near Crediton and are involved with racing standardbred horses throughout Ontario and Quebec. They have five children — Charmaine, Don (who died in 1979), Tammy, Susan and Lorie and 13 grandchildren.

Gladys married Andy Bierling and they have three sons — John, Dennis and Bob. Gladys worked with Andy farming and they owned and operated A&H Grocery Store in Exeter. They retired to Usborne Township. Andy died April 18, 1988. There are seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Paul married Geraldine Dundas and they have one son, Howard. Paul is also a farmer and along with Geraldine, farmed on the original homestead. They have three grandchildren. During renovations a few years ago, a brick was found on the verandah that said, "Paul Schenk moved here November 9, 1905."

The oldest girl, Hilda, born November 15, 1891, married Joseph Finkbeiner and they had two boys, Delton and Eugene. Hilda and Joe farmed west of Crediton and they retired to the village. Hilda died November 18, 1976 at Huronview, the Home for the Aged, where the couple spent their later years.

Delton (Fink, as he is known to many), married Norma Parsons and lives on Highway #83, near Exeter. He opened Fink's Meat Market in Exeter and was very involved in Arabian horses and represented Canada for the Canadian Arabian Horse Association.

throughout the world. In recognition of his work with the Royal Winter Fair, Delton was honoured by being made a member of the Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Eugene married Wenonah Einarson and they live in Thornton. Before his retirement, Eugene was chief technologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie and was instrumental in starting a training program for medical technologists for their Canadian examination. They have four children, Christine, Michael, Maureen and Paul and five grandchildren.

Hugo, born January 16, 1894, married Marion Dowdell and they live in Creditor. Hugo worked for Charles Zwicker Seed Store and later opened his own meat market. He did his own killing and processing of meat. They have two children, Edward and Jeanette. Hugo died May 24, 1979. Edward married Dorothy Clarke, who died in 1970, and then married Marlene Coon and later, Darlene Devine. They have two daughters, Julie and Kathy. Edward worked with personal finance and later in the management field for J.I. Case throughout Canada. He was in charge of the Ontario division of the firm. Edward died in June, 1986. The couple had four grandchildren.

Jeanette married Earl Lippert and was a partner in the trucking business. She did the books and operated the business from their home on Main Street, Creditor. She is now employed at Merner's Meat Market. The Lipperts have three children, Larry, Linda and Lisa and three grandchildren.

Herbert (Herbie) was born January 14, 1896 and joined the army in World War I. When he returned, he worked at various jobs in the Creditor area, and later for Charles Zwicker Seed Mill. He died March 24, 1979 at Huronview Home for the Aged, near Clinton.

Roy, born February 11, 1898, was the youngest son and he married the former Mayne (Mary) Allison. He learned his trade as a blacksmith from Dan McIsaac. He later purchased the Weir Blacksmith Shop in Brinsley where they raised their two children, Joyce and Harold. Roy is presently living in Ailsa Craig at the Craigholme Nursing Home. Joyce married Jack Ryan and they live in London. Joyce worked as a clerk typist and later was a homemaker raising their children, Darlene, Paul and Darrell. She also sews and enjoys her five grandchildren. Harold married Kae Pickard and they live in London and have two children, Kent and Jill. Harold worked in the office of Continental Can and is now with the Farm Busi-

ness Consultants in London.

Maleeda, born August 17, 1904, worked in Crediton as a house-keeper for Herbert Eilber and, later, as a cook in South Huron District Hospital, Exeter. She had one daughter, Dolores. Maleeda died January 19, 1980. Dolores (Lossy) married Jack Fuller, and lives in Exeter. The couple have four children, Launa, Gail, Cathy and Jeffrey. Lossy works for an accountant and is a longtime member of Exeter council, serving as deputy-reeve. She also serves on Huron County Council in Goderich and is very involved in community service.

Beatrice, the youngest girl, was born March 6, 1907, and lived in Hamilton and area for many years. She married Jim Tate who died December 15, 1942. Beatrice worked for the telephone exchange in Waterdown and later for the Hudson Bay Company as a sales clerk. She retired in Exeter and is living in the Helen Jermyn Apartments.

From Paul and Mena Schenk, who married October 23, 1884 until the printing of this book in 1992, and Stephen Township's 150th anniversary, there are only four great-great-grandsons to carry on the Schenk name Jonathon, Bradley, Kelly and Kristan. All are great-grandchildren of Nelson and Katie Schenk.

Let that name go down in history.

— *Lossy Fuller*



Paul Schenk and
Wilhelmina Weir.

EMERSON WEIN

Emerson Wein of Crediton is Stephen Township's oldest resident. A special 95th birthday celebration in Mr. Wein's honour was held on December 28, 1991 at the Crediton hall.

Emerson Wein was born in a farm house north of Crediton on December 28, 1896, the second generation in his family to be born in Canada. His grandfather's family came from the town of Baiersbronn, in the Black Forest region of Germany.

During his youth, Emerson Wein worked on the home farm and for neighbouring farmers. He also worked on jobs like the Black Creek dredging project. His pay as a farm labourer was \$2 per day; when he worked at Sylvester Wuerth's feed mill during the winter months, he earned \$1 per day.

In 1923, Emerson went on a summer harvest excursion, arrang-



After retiring from farming, Emerson Wein built many of these distinctive windmills, which decorated the yard at the couple's Crediton home.

ed by Canadian Pacific Railways, to work on a farm at Conquest, Saskatchewan. He later worked at Timkin Axel in Detroit, Michigan, before returning to Creditor in 1937.

Emerson married Laurene May Hirtzel on April 10, 1937 at the Evangelical United Brethren Church parsonage in Creditor. He purchased the family farm (Lot 22, Con. 7, Stephen) from his father for \$4,000 that same year. The Weins had a mixed farming operation which produced beans, cream, milk, beef and pork. Corn became an important crop in the 1960s as it did on many Stephen Township farms. Major jobs on the farm, such as threshing, were made more enjoyable by neighbourhood work bees, popular until the mid-1950s. Hydro was brought to the farm in 1946, followed by the first tractor three years later.

Emerson and Laurene Wein had three children—Ross Wallace of Edmonton, Orville Leroy of London and Eleanor Elizabeth (Rader) of Dashwood. The children attend Sharon Public School. Emerson and Laurene Wein have six grandchildren.

The Weins sold their farm to Jim Morlock in 1974, retiring to Creditor, where they remained active with gardening and other hobbies. Emerson was noted for building the distinctive wooden windmills which decorated the couple's yard for several years.

JOHN SMITH FAMILY FARM

The original owner of the Smith farm was Regina Wirth, who came from Wuerthenburg, Germany in the 1800s with her two daughters, Katherine and Ann Mary. She purchased 25 acres of land in Stephen Township, (part) Lot 19, Con. 6, from the Canada Land Company, for 150 pounds. Soon the first house was built from logs and it was located near the concession road. Katherine married Jacob Oeohle of Dashwood, and Ann Mary wed Jacob Smith, who had immigrated to Canada from Switzerland.

One son, John Fred, was born to Ann Mary and Jacob Smith on July 22, 1865. Jacob worked for several years in logging camps in Northern Ontario. John never knew his father well, since Jacob was unable to travel home to visit very often. Jacob died in a logging camp in 1887 and was buried nearby.

John and his mother purchased a cow in Exeter and had to walk the cow home. They crossed the river on a log; the cow swam across. John lived at home with his mother until 1888, when, at

age 23, he took over the farm and purchased an additional 50 acres on Lot 20 (part), Concession 6. On September 20, 1888, he married 18-year-old Mary Ann Klump. She lived 2.5 miles north of Crediton and was the daughter of Michael and Elizabeth (Heyrock) Klump. John and his bride lived with his mother until her death (age 92). Michael Beaver of Crediton was hired as a carpenter in 1874 to build the house and barn that presently stand on the farm. Mr. Beaver walked to and from the job site every day, carrying his carpenter tools, since no other transportation was available.

Seven children were born to John and Mary Smith: William Henry, Idella (Sims), Buelah (Sparling), Lavina Viola (Finkbeiner), Alma Irene (Morlock), Eldon Orville John, and Roy Lawrence (deceased, age 6, 1907). They had three grandchildren: Gerald Smith, Clare Sparling and Donald Finkbeiner.

In 1900, John and his two brothers-in-law, John Klump and Gottfried Fahner, purchased the first threshing machine in the area. It was operated by horsepower and a few years later, the partnership was dissolved, with John becoming the sole owner. A steam engine and blower were purchased from George White and Sons of London shortly afterwards. A self-feeder was attached to the



The family of John and Mary Smith included: (back, left to right), Lavina, Alma, Delta and Buelah and (front) John Smith, William, Mary Smith and Eldon.

thresher and a clover huller was purchased in 1912. In 1919, John's son, William, took over the threshing business.

A sawmill became part of the total operation in 1910. The party-line telephone was installed in 1909. Electricity arrived in 1922. Ontario Hydro demanded that at least three farmers per 1.25 miles subscribe for the installation. Ed Morlock, Herman Oestreicher and John Smith did so. Service charge was \$25 for a three-month period (\$100 per year).

In 1955, Eldon assumed the responsibility of the farm and also continued as an employee of Stephen Township. He worked for the township for over 30 years, selling the farm in 1971.

John and Mary Smith formally celebrated their 50th, 60th and 66th wedding anniversaries. They were members of the Evangelical Church. In 1946, Mrs. Smith was one of the first members of the Ladies Aid. She and her husband received many awards from the church school for regular attendance. Mrs. Smith's hobbies included mat-making and quilting. Her husband was keenly interested in sports and enjoyed radio broadcasts of hockey and baseball games. Both John and Mary lived to the age of 89. John passed away in 1954, Mary in 1959.

Eldon and his wife, Ruth, and Alma and her husband, Gordon Morlock, presently reside in Crediton.

PATRICK SULLIVAN FAMILY

Unlike most of their fellow immigrants journeying to North America in the mid-1800s, Patrick and Ellen Connelly Sullivan left Mayo County, Ireland, before the great potato famine of 1845-47. They arrived at Grosse Isle, in the St. Lawrence River, sometime in 1836 and settled in New York State. Their first two children were born in the United States before they immigrated to Canada, about 1843. They settled on a farm in Pickering Township (now Pickering, Ontario). In the early 1850s, Patrick and Ellen bought a farm in McGillivray Township in Middlesex County and finally, in 1861, they purchased the south half of Lot 9, Con. 13, from the Honourable J.G. Goodhue in 1861. Goodhue had purchased large tracts of land from the Canada Company the year before. Patrick's brother, James Sullivan, bought the north half of Lot 9.

Of Patrick and Ellen's twelve children, only one son, Patrick Sullivan II, remained on the farm. The others moved to various places including California, Minnesota, Dutton and Amherstburg.

Patrick II bought both halves of Lot 9 (100 acres) in 1879 from his father and uncle for the sum of \$2,200. In 1887, he married Mary Guinan and had four sons and one daughter. Mary died in childbirth and the children were raised on the farm by Patrick II and his unmarried sister, Ellen.

Again, only one son, Patrick Sullivan III, remained to take over the family farm. His youngest brother was killed in France during World War I and another died in a flu epidemic while in military training in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Another brother Basil, was ordained a priest and ended his long teaching career at St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto.

Patrick III married Catherine Kairns in 1923. They had four daughters and one son. Patrick worked the farm for many years taking care of his father and Aunt Ellen, and title to the land was passed to him in 1935 for "natural love and affection and \$1". He added the north half of Lot 8 in 1953.

Patrick and Catherine's youngest child, Patrick Sullivan IV, married Marion Regier in 1959 and purchased the farm from his father the same year. The farm was officially named a "Century Farm" in 1967. The family purchased the south half of Lot 8, Con. 13 in 1971 and in 1990, the south quarter of Lot 10 was added to the farm. Patrick and Marion Sullivan have three daughters and still reside on the family farm at R.R. #3, Dashwood.



The Sullivan family farm, at Lot 9, Con. 13, Stephen Township.



Patrick and Marion Sallinen and their three daughters.

SWEET-HILL FAMILY

Robert Sweet came over from England to homestead in the early 1800s. This parcel of land is the southwest corner of Crediton, known first as Sweet's Corner. He purchased 100 acres of land, cut the trees and built a log house and barn. Great-grandfather and Grandmother Sweet raised a family of two sons and three daughters.

One of their girls, Louisa Mary, married Richard Hill. They farmed on the fourth concession of Stephen Township. Their son, Lawrence Hill, who married Leita King, took over the farm while Grandfather and Grandmother Hill bought the Sweet farm. By this time, a number of houses had been built on the corner of the farm.

In 1925, our grandparents built a new brick house in front of the log house. Lawrence and Leita Hill moved into this house in 1960, having sold their farm to Earl Neil. Lawrence and Leita Hill had four daughters. Our mother still lives in this house.

I remember my Dad telling me that Great-grandfather Sweet gave the land for the United Church in 1867. Harry Hirtzel now lives on that lot, since the church burned down May 4, 1969.

I am the oldest Hill girl, Doris, having married Allen Pfaff of Crediton. Eileen lives in Grand Bend, married to Robert Jennison. Velma lives in Seaforth, married to Ken Preszator. Labelle lives in London, married to John Hoffmeyer.

— Doris Pfaff



Robert Sauer, his daughter Louisa Hill, and her son, Robert.

SWEITZER FAMILY

Henry Sweitzer, whose parents were German, came to Canada from Pennsylvania. Henry was born in 1820 and died in 1902. He resided in Crediton, where he was a member of the first board of trustees of Zion Evangelical United Brethren church in Crediton. He and his wife had 10 children, six sons and four daughters.

Samuel Sweitzer was one of his sons, born in 1857, and married to Lydia Morlock, who was born in 1860. They resided in Crediton before moving to Shipka, to live in the house now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gibson.

Samuel Sweitzer was accidentally shot in 1911. The couple had five children — Simon, William, Matthew, Ida and Martha.

William married Ida Ratz, daughter of John and Barbara Finkbeiner Ratz. They lived in Shipka where they had the chopping mill, the sawmill, the flax mill and the apple butter mill. The couple also farmed. William Sweitzer was on Stephen Township coun-

cil for 15 years and a member of Huron County Council for six years. He was deputy reeve of Stephen Township for three years, reeve for three years and warden of Huron County in 1928.

The Sweitzers had four children — Evelyne, Mrs. Glen Brenner; Ida, Mrs. William Scholes; Sam, and Wray, who married Madeline Rundle in 1944, and farmed on the 16th concession of Stephen. Madeline and Wray have two children Barbara, Mrs. Donald Dundas of Crediton and Ronald Sweitzer of Stratford and six grandchildren.

— *Madeline Sweitzer*



William and Ida Sweitzer and their daughter, Evelyne.



Wray and Madeline Saeitzer on their wedding day, August 19, 1944.



The home of Wray and Madeline Saeitzer, on Lot 15, Con. 16, Stephen Township.



The home farm at Lot 14, Con. 16, with the William Saeitzer home.

TOMES FAMILY

Tom and Phyllis Tomes have lived in Stephen Township since 1965, when they purchased the Centralia Village Store. They operated the store for 12 years, and after selling it in 1977, they built their home at the edge of the village (Part Lot 5, Con. 1, Stephen Township).

The Tomes family includes George, a graduate of the University of Waterloo, who now lives in Vancouver. Shelley is a student at the University of Guelph, and Jamie, who has just finished high school, is attending college.

Tom served first as trustee for the village and then as a Stephen Township councillor from 1974 to 1986. He is presently serving his third term as reeve of the township.

Tom has been a volunteer fireman for 26 years, joining the Centralia Village fire department in 1965.



The Tomes Family: (back) George, Jamie, Shelley; (front) Phyllis, Thomas.

VAN RAAY FAMILY

In 1950, Cornelius (Case) Van Raay came to Canada from Holland. He worked as a farm labourer in Dover Township, near Chatham, Ontario. Two years later, he briefly returned to Holland to marry Joanne (Annie) de Klerk (March, 1952). The couple settled in Blenheim, working as sharecroppers. Case also worked as a factory labourer and later in construction, becoming a skilled carpenter.

The couple took what was then considered a major gamble in the spring of 1961, buying a farm from Wallie Wein on Part Lot 20 and Lot 21, North Boundary, Stephen Township. The Van Raays started farming with a 23-cow dairy herd. Annie was raised on a dairy farm in Holland so her skills were very useful. At the time, the Van Raays had six children. In 1965, they purchased another farm on Lot 22, Con. 8, Stephen Township from Conrad DeCort and two years later, in centennial year, they bought Lot 23, North Boundary, from Andy Diepstraten. At this time, Case also became a dealer for Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited. In 1969, the decision was made to change their livestock operation from dairy to finishing hogs. Using his construction skills, Case and his family built a hog-finishing barn.

Martin joined his father in 1980 and together they built a 150-sow farrowing barn. In March, 1982, Martin married Teresa Hicknell and they both worked on the family farm. Case and Annie built a retirement home in 1983, on the corner of the original farm. Martin and Teresa moved into the home place. Construction continued with an additional hog-finishing barn built in 1983 and a drive shed in 1984. In 1986, Martin and Teresa purchased the farm operation and incorporated it as Van Raay Farms Limited. Martin and Teresa have also continued as representatives for Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited. In 1990, Van Raay Farms Limited purchased Part Lot 20, North Boundary of Stephen, from Ralph Weber. In 1991, Victor and Irene Hartman sold them Lots 18 and 19, North Boundary and Lot 23, Con. 10, of Stephen Township.

As a founding member and chairman of the South Huron Association for the Mentally Retarded, Case helped to establish ARC Industries in Dashwood. Annie also enjoyed 10 years on the board of directors of the Blue Water Rest Home.

Case and Annie have eight children: Cora, Adrianna, Bernadette (deceased 1971), Donald, Martin, Joanne, Teresa and

Michael and 14 grandchildren to date.

Martin and Teresa have three children, Jessica, Dean and Philip.

The Van Raays have enjoyed their participation in various community-related boards and with St. Boniface Church in Zurich.

THE BLACK FOREST-STEPHEN TOWNSHIP FAMILY CONNECTIONS

My long-standing, personal family interest, my position as county registrar in the Black Forest of Germany and my trips to North America in 1981, 1985, 1988 and 1991, have enabled me to piece together the jigsaw puzzle of the German-Canadian connections in Stephen Township. Family research has received growing attention in recent decades so I now receive visits each year from North American families who bring much information.

The early peoples, called Swabs, of the Black Forest region, can be traced back through written records for almost 2,000 years to the time of Julius Caesar. About 200 A.D., they began to use the name "Alamannen" for themselves and by the Middle Ages they became Swabians. Towns developed and for the families I want to discuss, we should remember the founding dates for Freudenstadt (1599) and the much older Baiersbronn (8th century — first written record of the name Baiersbronn in 1292.)

Our ancestors were attracted from many parts of Germany to become associated with farming, wood cutting, charcoal burning, glass production and metal production. They also came to the Protestant Freudenstadt to escape religious persecution and war. The German Peasants Rebellion of 1525, Thirty Years War of 1618-1648 and France-German Wars of 1674 and 1714 are examples.

These wars and other factors caused the Swabians to move away from the Black Forest as well. In the years of 1816 and 1817, failure of harvests brought famine to south Germany. Following this, people moved to the United States and areas of Poland and Russia.

Political unrest led to a revolution in 1848/49 and rebels left for North America in a hurry! Subsequently, restricted religious and political freedoms and more famines in 1853 and 1854 led to officially-sanctioned, systematic emigration programs to lighten the economic and social burden of the poor on the state.

In 1854, for example, we find 13 families and five unmarried

persons (bearing surnames of Fahrner, Finkbeiner, Haist, Lambarth, Morlock and Wein) emigrated to New Orleans. The emigration figures remained constant throughout the 1850s and 1860s and only in 1870 and 1871 did the numbers drop off sharply as the founding of the new German Empire (1871) brought a boon in German industry and commerce. It was during this period that the Baiersbronn families settled in Stephen Township and elsewhere. If your surname is Braun, Eilber, Faist, Fahrner, Finkbeiner, Gaiser, Haist, Klumpp, Lampert, Moslock, Wein or Wuerth, you can surely look to the Black Forest for your family roots. If your surname is Gunther, Bernhard, Haug, Kalfass, Klehmanni, Lehmann, Link, Schatz, Schmidt, Schneider, Schwartz, Schweitzer, Stahl, Trick, Wolf or Wurtz, there is a high probability that you have some Swabian blood.

To explore your family history in the Black Forest, you might wish to consult the parish registrars of the Baiersbronn church and the Village of Baiersbronn Archives or even the Archives in Freudenstadt. Newspapers of Baiersbronn (*Der Grenzer* - published 1847 to 1942) could be extremely useful for general historical background.

— Gerhard Wein PhD, Kreisarchivier,
Freudenstadt, Germany.

THE WEIN FAMILY

Nikolaus Wein (born 1686, died 1754), our oldest known ancestor, was a charcoal burner in the Scharzwald (Black Forest) of Germany. He and the next few generations worked in the forests of Freudenstadt and Baiersbronn, cutting logs and firewood as well as producing the charcoal for heating and for the metalworks locally and down the Rhine River valley.

Günther Frey, in his 1961 book titled *Ortsgeschichtsbuch Baiersbronn*, published in München, Germany, describes the family trees for this area for the years 1627-1808. From this and other historical documents, we know that the Weins moved from the Black Forest over time to Russia and more recently, to the New World of Australia, the USA and Canada. Immigrants to the Virginia area of the States arrived before 1800.

The five founding families of Stephen Township consisted of three brothers (Gottfried 1834-1916, Mattheus 1837-1912, Johann

F. 1841-1924), their cousin Johannes (1837-1904) and Ludwig (1843-1911), a more distant relative. All families lived on farms in the Crediton area and attended the German Evangelical Church. The book by R.W. Wein, published in 1981 and entitled *Descendants of Charcoal Burners*, contains details of these families.

The Johannes Wein family has the greatest number of descendants, especially from the son Gottfried, who had 12 children. The grandsons Emerson (born 1896) and Lloyd (born 1909) are retired and live in Crediton.

The Gottfried Wein family consisted of three daughters who raised families and one son who did not, so the Wein name was lost.

Similarly for the Mattheus Wein family of five girls and four boys, only the girls raised families.

Of the John F. Wein family of two boys and two girls, only Christian (who died in 1977 at 97 years of age) raised one daughter, Marjorie.

The Ludwig Wein family of four girls and five boys led to descendants scattered across North America.

As the history of these families is studied, it is interesting to realize the events that influenced their lives. For two and even three generations, German was the language of the home and church (services in German until 1930) and people were all linked to the land.

As the land near Crediton became completely settled and expensive, some descendants took up land in Northern Ontario and in Western Canada. The booming cities of Michigan attracted many descendants in the 1920s and even the 1930s. These English-speaking Weins entered a wide range of occupations. Links to the Old World were largely lost.

Now we have pieced together something of the Wein history by re-establishing links between family members, primarily in the Black Forest of Germany, the Alsace of France and in North America. We look forward to finding other groups in Russia, Australia and South America.

— Ross W. Wein
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta

— Gerhard Wein
Kreisarchiv
Freudenstadt, Germany

ZONDAG FAMILY, CONCESSION 15, STEPHEN TOWNSHIP

Rudy (Roelof-1912) and Wilma (Wilhemina-1914) Zondag were both born in the Netherlands. Married in 1942, they lived in Geldermalsen, Gelderland and had two sons, Jack (Jacob-1943) and Co (Jacobus-1957). In May, 1951, they arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia as immigrants aboard the S.S. Georgic and settled in Dashwood. Rudy was employed by Valentine Becker and worked for him until the spring of 1952. Rudy helped to establish the Christian Reformed Church congregation in Exeter in the fall of 1951.

From 1952 to 1954, the Zondag family lived in Usborne Township, while Rudy worked for Edgar Cudmore. While there, their third child, Nelly Ann, was born in 1953. Then in the spring of 1954, Rudy moved his family to Lot 21, Con. 15, of Stephen Township, to sharecrop the farmland owned by George and Susan Link. Jack and Co attended and graduated from S.S. #11, Blackbush School and sister Nelly graduated from Stephen Central in centennial year, 1967.

Rudy and Wilma were granted Canadian citizenship on election day in June 1957 in Goderich and cast their first votes in Dashwood that same day.

In early 1960, Rudy purchased a 50-acre farm located on the N1/2 of Lot 13, Con. 15, from the estate of William Ratz (formerly the Pearl Keyes farm). There he operated a mixed-farming operation.

Jack graduated from Grade 13 at South Huron District High School and worked at London Life. He then moved to Michigan in 1964 to attend Calvin College and later Western Michigan University. In 1965, he married Mynie Verkerk of Crediton and the couple had four sons and one daughter, all born in Michigan while Jack taught at a Christian Junior High School in Grand Rapids. Jack and his family returned to Ontario in 1981 and currently Jack is the principal at Dundas Calvin Christian School.

Co graduated from Central Huron Secondary School in Clinton in 1966. He was then employed by the Ontario government as a R.N.A. at Cedar Springs and later at Goderich. In 1974, Co purchased a mixed-farming operation on Lot 11, Con. 13, Stanley Township, from his aunt and uncle, Gerrit and Mary Zondag. Co married Betty Bylsma in May 1968 and they have three daughters and two sons. Betty is the daughter of Brant and Anna Bylsma,

who at one time lived on SBC Lot 6. Co and Betty and their family attend the Exeter Christian Reformed Church.

Nelly graduated from South Huron District High School and was employed for some time in Zurich. She married Arnold Steckle in 1973 and they have one daughter and one son. Arnold farms the family homestead, Lot 8, Con. 13, Stanley Township.

Wilma Zondag passed away in 1978 and Rudy passed away in 1985 at age 73. He enjoyed farming and never regretted moving to Canada. His Christian faith was his strength and the legacy he gave his children. In 1989, the farm was sold to the Kester family of Stephen Township.

— *Co Zondag*

Appendix

Members of Stephen Township Municipal Government 1951 - 1992

COUNTY OF HURON, THREE-YEAR TERM, 1992 - 1993- 1994

Reeve	Tom Tomes
Deputy-Reeve	William Weber
Councillors	Gary Eagleson Harvey Ratz Wilmar Wein
Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer	Laurence (Larry) Brown (appointed April 1, 1991)
Deputy-Clerk	Linda Oliver (appointed April 1, 1991)
Deputy-Treasurer	Mary-Ellen Greb (appointed April 1, 1991)
Road Superintendent	Eric Finkbeiner
Chief Building Official	Milton Dietrich

COUNTY OF HURON, THREE-YEAR TERM, 1989 - 1990 - 1991

Reeve	Tom Tomes
Deputy-Reeve	Gary Baker
Councillors	Patrick O'Rourke Gary Eagleson William Weber Wilmar D. Wein
Clerk-Treasurer	Eric Finkbeiner
Road Superintendent	Milton Dietrich

COUNTY OF HURON, THREE-YEAR TERM, 1986 - 1987 - 1988

Reeve	Tom Tomes
Deputy-Reeve	Kenneth McCann
Councillors	William Weber Gary Baker Andrew Robertson - Resigned December 31, 1987 Patrick O'Rourke -Appointed January 19, 1988
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Eric Finkbeiner
Chief Building Official	Milton Dietrich

COUNTY OF HURON, THREE-YEAR TERM, 1983 - 1984 - 1985

Reeve	Alan Walper
Deputy-Reeve	Ralph Weber
Councillors	Tom Tomes Kenneth McCann Ruth Miller
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Eric Finkbeiner

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1981 - 1982

Reeve	Douglas Russell
Deputy-Reeve	Alan Walper
Councillors	Ralph Weber Tom Tomes Kenneth McCann
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Eric Finkbeiner

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1979 - 1980

Reeve	C. Kenneth Campbell
Deputy-Reeve	Douglas Russell
Councillors	Ralph Weber Alan Walper Tom Tomes
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Frank McIsaac
Assessor	Province of Ontario

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1977 - 1978

Reeve	Cecil Desjardine
Deputy-Reeve	C. Kenneth Campbell
Councillors	Ralph Weber Alan Walper Douglas Russell
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Frank McIsaac
Assessor	Province of Ontario

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1975 - 1976

Reeve	Cecil Desjardine
Deputy-Reeve	C. Kenneth Campbell
Councillors	Ralph Weber Alan Walper Douglas Russell
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Frank McIsaac
Assessor	Province of Ontario

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1973 - 1974

Reeve	Joseph Dietrich
Deputy-Reeve	Cecil Desjardine
Councillors	Stephen Dundas C. Kenneth Campbell W. David McClure
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Frank McIsaac
Assessor	Province of Ontario

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1971 - 1972

Reeve	Joseph Dietrich
Deputy-Reeve	Cecil Desjardine
Councillors	Stephen Dundas Gerald Dearing C. Kenneth Campbell
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Frank McIsaac
Assessor	Province of Ontario

COUNTY OF HURON, TWO-YEAR TERM, 1969 - 1970

Reeve	James C. Hayter (Warden)
Deputy-Reeve	Joseph Dietrich
Councillors	Cecil Desjardine Stephen Dundas Gerald Dearing
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	County of Huron

COUNTY OF HURON, ONE-YEAR TERM, 1968 (Terms of elected office one year for municipal councils from this point to 1950)

Reeve	James C. Hayter
Deputy-Reeve	Joseph Dietrich
Councillors	Cecil Desjardine Stephen Dundas Gerald Dearing
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1967

Reeve	James C. Hayter
Deputy-Reeve	Edmond Hendrick
Councillors	Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine Stephen Dundas
Clerk-Treasurer	Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1966

Reeve	James C. Hayter
Deputy-Reeve	Edmond Hendrick
Councillors	Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine Stephen Dundas
Clerk-Treasurer	Geraldine Schenk January 1—March 31 Wilmar D. Wein
Road Superintendent	April 1—December 31 Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1965

Reeve	Glenn Webb (Warden)
Deputy-Reeve	James C. Hayter
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine
Clerk-Treasurer	Ross Haugh January 1—August 31 Geraldine Schenk
Road Superintendent	September 1—December 31 Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Ross Haugh January 1—August 12 Wilmar D. Wein August 13—December 31

COUNTY OF HURON, 1964

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	James C. Hayter
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine
Clerk-Treasurer	Ross Haugh
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Ross Haugh

COUNTY OF HURON, 1963

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	James C. Hayter
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine
Clerk-Treasurer	Ross Haugh
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1962

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	James C. Hayter
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine
Clerk-Treasurer	Ross Haugh
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1961

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	James C. Hayter
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Joseph Dietrich Cecil Desjardine
Clerk-Treasurer	James Mawhinney January 1—January 31
Road Superintendent	Ross Haugh February 1—December 31
Assessor	Lawrence Hill Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1960

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	Edward Gill
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Stephen Dundas James Hayter
Clerk-Treasurer	James Mawhinney
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1959

Reeve	Glenn Webb
Deputy-Reeve	Edward Gill
Councillors	Edmond Hendrick Stephen Dundas James Hayter
Clerk-Treasurer	James Mawhinney
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Wilmar D. Wein

COUNTY OF HURON, 1958

Reeve	John Morrissey (Warden)
Deputy-Reeve	Glenn Webb
Councillors	Edward Gill Stephen Dundas Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	James Mawhinney
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Donald Gaiser

COUNTY OF HURON, 1957

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Gordon Ratz
Councillors	Glenn Webb Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1956

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Gordon Ratz
Councillors	Glenn Webb Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1955

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Wellington Haist
Councillor	Gordon Ratz Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1954

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Wellington Haist
Councillors	Gordon Ratz Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1953

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Wellington Haist
Councillors	Gordon Ratz Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1952

Reeve	John Morrissey
Deputy-Reeve	Wellington Haist
Councillors	Gordon Ratz Edward Gill Edward Lamport
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	James Mawhinney

COUNTY OF HURON, 1951

Reeve	Alonzo McCann
Deputy-Reeve	Roy Swartz
Councillors	Wellington Haist Stewart Webb Addison Tieman
Clerk-Treasurer	Freeman W. Morlock
Road Superintendent	Lawrence Hill
Assessor	Matthew C. Sweitzer



Valentine Ratz - 1886



William R. Elliott - 1918



John J. Hayes - 1922



William J. Svitser - 1935

Reeves of Stephen Township who became Wardens of Huron County.



John Morrissey - 1958



Glenn Webb - 1965



James Hayter - 1969

Reeves of Stephen Township who became Wardens of Huron County:

Stephen Township's Chief Municipal Officers 1842 to 1950

HURON DISTRICT COUNCIL, 1842 to 1849: Councillors were elected annually at the Town Meeting in January. Members sent from the United townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay were:

1842	William McConnell
1843	David McConnell
1844	David McConnell; William May
1845	William May
1846-48	Richard Blackwell
1849	Isaac Carling

In 1850 municipal government was changed essentially to its modern structure. The District Council was re-named the County Council (United Counties of Huron, Perth and Bruce 1850-52; United Counties of Huron and Bruce 1853-1866; Huron County after 1867). Township Councils of five members, headed by the Reeve, were established; the Reeve sat on County Council. The United townships of Usborne and Stephen sent these members to County Council:

1850	James Scott	1851	Thomas Lamb
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In 1852 Stephen Township separated from Usborne. Its Reeves follow:

1852-53	Andrew Walker	1860-63	Thomas Gidley
1854-56	Robert Walker	1864-66	Richard Sweet
1857	Thomas Hedden;	1867	Isaac Carling
	Isaac Carling	1868	John Parsons
1858	Silas D. Blackwell	1869-75	Thomas Greenway
1859	Henry Sweitzer	1876-77	Septimus Hogarth

1878	Timothy Coughlin	1912	Henry Willert
1879-81	Septimus Hogarth	1913-19	William D. Sanders
1882-95	Valentine Ratz	1920-26	Alexander H. Neob
1896-98	Henry Eilber	1927-28	John J. Hayes
1899-1900	John Sherritt	1929	Alexander H. Neob
1901	Samuel Sweitzer	1930-31	Reuben A. Goetz
1902-04	Henry Willert	1932-36	William Sweitzer
1905-06	Samuel Sweitzer	1937-39	Chester Mawhinney
1907	Henry Willert	1940-45	Alonzo McCann
1908	Stephen Webb	1946-47	Roy Ratz
1909	Henry Willert	1948-50	Elmer Lawson
1910-11	Samuel Sweitzer		

This office of Deputy Reeve was first occupied in Stephen Township in the year 1863 by right of the township's increase in population. From 1883 to 1895 there was also a Second Deputy Reeve. After 1895 the size of county councils in Ontario generally was reduced by legislation; for a brief period Stephen had no Deputy Reeve. About half the men who were elected as deputies over the years became Reeve in later years.

The office of Clerk, starting in 1852 for a century was held by only a total of seven persons: Thomas Trivitt, 1852-57; Chester Prouty, 1858-99; Henry Eilber, 1899-1933; Herbert K. Eilber, 1934-44 (1935-44 as Clerk-Treasurer); Nola L. Faist, Acting Clerk, 1944; Lloyd B. Hodgson, 1944-47; Freeman W. Morlock, 1948-50 (Clerk-Treasurer).

The office of Treasurer changed hands frequently. Thirteen men held office 1852-1950: David Elliott, 1852; Joseph Rogers, 1853-54; Andrew Walker, 1855-56; Joseph Acheson, 1857; Timothy Coughlin, 1858-76; Dr. J.A. Rollins, 1877-82; John Lewis, 1882-88; Charles Brown, 1889-1905; Samuel Brown, 1905-16; Herbert K. Eilber, 1916-33; Charles Zwicker, 1934; Herbert K. Eilber, 1935-44 as Clerk-Treasurer; Lloyd B. Hodgson, 1944, 1947 (June-Dec.); Freeman W. Morlock, 1944-47; 1948-1950 as Clerk Treasurer.

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