

S T R A F F O R D V I L L E  
G E N E R A L        S T O R E        - 1

In 1857 Robert I. McNaughton, who operated a mill and lumber business on the Little Otter about a mile west and north of Straffordville, built a store on one fifth of an acre (more or less) part of Lot number 125 on the south side of Talbot Road East in the Township of Bayham, according to Jesse P. Ball, surveyor at that time.

On Oct. 31, 1857, it became the property of John Brown and John I. McKenzie, merchants of Hamilton, Ont. In 1866 they sold to Thomas Cockburn Kerr of the same place. On Oct. 31, 1882, George Sudlow Papps, Trustee of the estate of Thomas C. Kerr and Co. of Hamilton sold the same to Mary Desire McConkey, wife of Cicero McConkey of the village of Straffordville.

In 1888 it was sold to Victoria Elizabeth Johnson, wife of Leonard Johnson of Straffordville. Jacob A. Griffin bought the property in 1892 and about the year 1908, it came again into the hands of the Johnson Family and was operated by Johnson and Beasley and later by C. Beasley as a general store until 1919.

For a short time during 1920 it was operated by John McQuiggan and in August 1921, it was bought by Chas. A. Walsh. It was owned and operated by the Walsh family continuously for over forty years, Lyle having purchased it from his father in 1959.

The original building still stands with few changes as to outward shape and size. In 1920, there was a large veranda with railing at the second storey level. There were hitching posts in front which later on gave place to gas pumps. As far as is known the business carried on was that of a general store throughout the years.

Housewives traded butter and eggs as well as dried apples and chestnuts for merchandise. The old cracker barrel occupied a prominent place along with the pot-bellied stove. Candles were replaced by kerosene lamps which in turn were replaced by gas lights before the time of electricity.

In April, 1962, Lyle sold to nephew, Norman Bates, who is the present owner. It was later turned back to Lyle Walsh and was used as a dwelling place until it was closed in 1977.

The following is a list of the Post Masters for Straffordville, Ontario

1st	Mr. Robert J. McNaughton
2nd	Mr. Robert Smuck
3rd	Mr. David Stratton
4th	Mr. J. A. Griffin (in the Chas. Walsh store)
5th	Mr. Thomas Mabee (for 40 years)
6th	Mr. Robert Grant

Among the first Blacksmiths, Adam Yagers, (where Jack Faulkner lived) and Louis King, Blacksmith and Carriage Shop, (where George Grant Lived), Henry Golding, Blacksmith Shop & Store (where Mr. H. Humphrey lived). Soon after William Lipsit opened a shop on the North West corner. There men not only did general blacksmith work but made and repaired carriages and wagons, etc.

Until the coming of the railroad in 1895, Straffordville mail came in via a stage which ran from Port Burwell to Ingersoll. The coming of the railroad gave a great impetus to Straffordville.

The toll road east of Straffordville was bought and set free and became a shipping centre for miles for logs, lumber, timber, ties, etc. In 1896, the Guysboro Corners Cheese Factory building was brought to Straffordville and a large factory was erected. This continued until the middle twenties when the City Dairy came and brought out the shareholders of the Cheese and Butter Factory and erected a large plant for processing and shipping milk. The advent of the automobile and the tobacco industry spelled finis to the Blacksmith and Dairy industry and also to Straffordville as a shipping centre.

In the late Twenties the Royal Bank of Port Burwell started a branch bank in Straffordville coming in a few days a week to do business in Dr. Naismith's office and later built a bank which still later became the Standard Bank and still later was taken over by the Bank of Commerce.

The present Straffordville School is that of the fourth to serve the Village. The first school stood about where Alex Bain's house now stands and in 1864 a new school was built, but burned in 1942 and was replaced by the present school.

The past few years have seen a marked growth in Straffordville. Many new buildings have been erected, among them, three large garages and many fine homes. And also there has been an addition to the populatinn.

Mr. McNaughton came from Straffordville County, England, and when a name was sought for a new Post Office in 1851, it was he who gave it the name of his native town. Hither to central Bayham Township residents had received their mail at Bayham Post Office, commonly called Richmond. In 1851 when the Plank Road (now known as No. 19 Highway) was surveyed out, Mr. McNaughton saw the possibilities of a new town and built a store in the South East corner of Talbot Street and No. 19 Highway, which still remains and is owned and occupied as a store by Mr. Charles A. Walsh (at this time it is Mr. Lyle Walsh).

Likewise Mr. Rod Hubbard saw possibilities and on the South West corner of said intersection built the Hubbard House, and a little later, Mr. Robert Smuck, built a hotel in the North East corner of said intersection. Before this, the business section for the neighbourhood was situated one quarter of a mile west and was known as Sandy Town. This consisted of a few log dwellings, a store or two, and a hotel conducted by a Mr. McCarthy.

About the time the first buildings were completed in Straffordville, the principal buildings in Sandy Town were burned one night. It was supposed to have been [redacted] and [redacted] for they got out of the country shortly after and never came back, till they were shipped back dead.

Among other enterprises, Mr. McNaughton engaged in, was in the building of a barn and a sawmill on the Little Otter about one mile and a half north west of Straffordville, and a carding mill on a small creek midway between Straffordville and his saw mill. In the memory of many of the present residents of Bayham, the timber of the dam was clearly visible, causing a deep swimming hole and also the old waterwheel remained on the small creek. The timbers of the old carding mill are now a barn close to Straffordville.

Mr. McNaughton married the widow Hoag. She had three sons, all of whom went to the Civil War, 1861 to 1865. Charlie was killed there. Mott got home to die at the early age of 27 and Walter lived for many years in Aylmer. On a visit back to his native land, Mr. McNaughton brought back 3 black thorn canes, one of which he gave to the late Robert Garnham, and which now is the possession of his great grandson, Croft R. Garnham. (AMERICAN)

Mr. McNaughton was the first Postmaster of Straffordville, and afterward Mr. Robert Smuck kept the Post Office in the building just east of the office of the Bayham Township Council and after that for many years the Post Office was in a building owned by Mr. J. McNaughton and was used as a tenant house.

David Stratton store was built and operated first by Moses Saunders.

Toll gates on First Plank Road at 3rd Concession Bayham, South of Otter Hillis, opposite Fanning Place and at Mabee Side Road, south of Tillsonburg, David Ribble was a Harness Maker - 1900 and before.

Mr. Robert J. Mc Naughton died March 7, 1871, and was buried in Straffordville Cemetery.

The foregoing was recorded by M. L. C. Garnham.

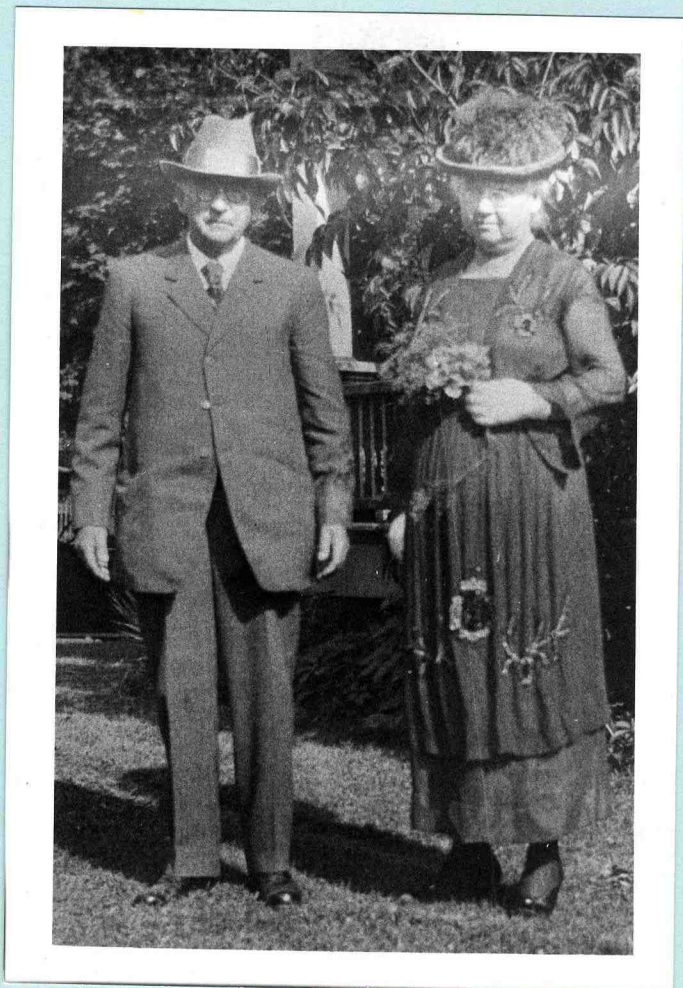
OLD SCHOOLHOUSE + BRIDGE IN VICINITY.



SOUTH EAST OF STRAFFORDVILLE



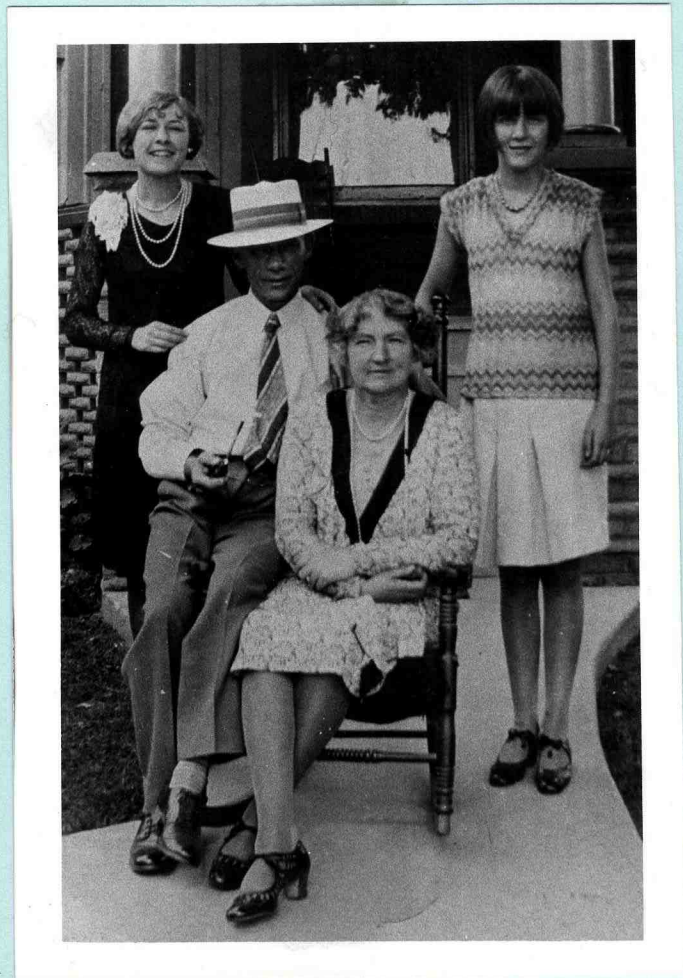
GLADE MEADOWS  
WM + SUSAN LIPSIT  
6 CHILDREN HARRY



LEN + TORY JOHNSON



LIPSIT HOUSE



IVANEL ELSA  
JOE MAUDE LIPSIT

87  
Staffordville Buildings



CITY DAIRY



BLACK SMITH SHOP



HOTEL (PREVIOUSLY)



WALSH STORE

Stores on the corners - south side



Public School,  
Staffordville, Ont.