

# Days When Toll Roads Were Common in Area

## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

### Directors of the Ingersoll and Port Burwell Road Company,

Submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Shareholders convened at the Queen's Hotel, in Tilsonburg, on Monday, December 8th, 1873.

GENTLEMEN, — Your Directors in submitting this, their Twenty-Fourth Annual Report, beg to call your attention to the following statement:—

#### ASSETS.

By balance from 1872			\$769 17
	1872.	1873.	
Gate No. 1	\$1750 52	Gate No. 1	\$179 00
" 2	1778 63	" 2	1795 00
" 3	1462 75	" 3	1208 25
" 4	1417 50	" 4	1170 50
" 5	1276 00	" 5	1381 75
" 6	482 25	" 6	537 70
" 7	1030 25	" 7	992 75
" 8	906 42	" 8	1004 25
	\$10104 32		\$9669 20
	Mail Stage Toll.....		408 00
			\$10846 37

#### DISBURSEMENTS

Paid for 87,510 feet of Plank	.....	\$2130 13
Plank Repairs	.....	1135 54
Gravel and Gravel Repairs...	.....	2321 08
Clearing Snow last Winter...	.....	223 98
Auditors and Directors	.....	51 00
January and July Dividends...	.....	2392 80
Stationery and Postage	.....	22 90
Gate Keepers' Wages	.....	1392 00
Toll House Repairs	.....	10 27
Bridges and Culverts	.....	68 65
Secretary and Superintendent's Salary	.....	500 00
Treasurer	.....	50 00
Balance	.....	548 02
		\$10846 37

Moved by L. Burwell, seconded by E. D. Tilson, and resolved, that the Report just read be adopted.

**THOS. BROWN, Pres. & Treas.**

**R. H. CARROLL, Secretary.**

Tilsonburg, December 8, 1873.

Harry Rowland, Printer, Tribune Office, Ingersoll.

tin pans of all sizes.

The next incident I remember, in 1869, was going with my father and mother to visit at John Colridges near Ingersoll. It was here I saw a train of cars. At this time the Great Western from Toronto through Ingersoll to London was through, but there was no railway at Tillsonburg. Mr. Colridge and Angus McKay were associated with my father in operating a stage route from Ingersoll to Port Burwell, under the name which I remember seeing in big gold letters on a red-bodied four horse coach, Gray, McKay & Colridge. These stages left Pt. Burwell about 8 a.m. and arrived in Ingersoll about 1130a.m. carrying passengers, mail, express and freight. Leaving Ingersoll at 1 p.m., it arrived at Pt. Burwell about 6:30 p.m. It picked up its load at Pt. Burwell, Vienna, Griffin's Corners, Straffordville, Eden, Tillsonburg, Ostrander, Mount Elgin, Salford, Hagets and Ingersoll. At all these points were hotels, licensed to sell wine, beer and spirituous liquors. The driver usually called at all the hotels and received a free drink at each. He would sometimes be so drunk he could not get out of his seat, but never was known to lose his mail or parcels. The road bed over deep sand, was made from 3" and 4" thick pine plank which was likened to driving on a house floor but as the planks began to wear and rot, it became very rough. (Note: the driver would no doubt be very cold in the chillier seasons, and would appreciate a warming drink.)



(March 31, 1874)

Veterans of 1812-15—The following are the applicants from the County of Oxford for the grant voted by Parliament in 1870:—

John Allen, B. P. Brown, Isaac Birch, Ingersoll; Samuel T. Clark, Woodstock; Robert Collins; Ira Fuller, Beachville; John Horning, Otterville; Charles Jones, Embro; Abram Marshall, Drumbo; Richard Mooté, Beachville; Charles McCarthy, Drumbo; Thomas Piper, Otterville; David Ross, Ingersoll; Comfort Sage, Ingersoll; Daniel Smith, Oxford; B. Tree, Woodstock; Francis Ingersoll, Drumbo; East Oxford; Abram VanNorman, Tillsonburg.

Apples are rather scarce in town and in consequence have risen in price. Eighty cents per bushel is now asked.

Street corner statuary is a scarce article, the corners being devoted for seats by the barroom.

Ray, McKay & Co., the well known managers of the stage line between Ingersoll and Port Burwell, have dissolved partnership.

NOTE: MR + MRS THOMAS WERE TOLL GATE OWNERS AT MANCHESTER.



Several gangs of men were required to remove and replace the worn planks with new planks. About every four miles was a toll gate where every driver had to pay toll, 10¢. For some years this was a paying proposition owned and operated by a company. (Note: copy of Annual report of the Ingersoll and Pt. Burwell Plank Road company.) My father was for some years the Superintendent, collecting the money from the gate keepers and delivering it to the treasurer at Ingersoll, and issuing cheques to the gatekeepers and road repair men.

When I was about 6 years old, we moved to Tillsonburg and operated a livery of horses and buggies, and teams and wagons for the use of commercial travellers who carried several large trunks, filled with samples, and would sometimes have a team and drive away nearly all week. McKay lived in Ingersoll and operated a livery from there. Colridge lived on his farm.

I attended the Tillsonburg Public School while living there. My mother had her teeth removed and had the first false teeth I ever saw while we lived there. I also had a photograph taken then called a Daguerreotype, taken on a thin sheet of iron. In my possession is a similar picture of my father and mother taken in their wedding garments and enclosed in a brown colored case with two brass hooks and eyes to keep it closed, leather lined with red plush and gold like border.

From the livery business which father sold, we returned to the house on the farm at Eden. Always in the house were a number of retainers or hangerson. Among them was a Lower Canadian (French), Paul Chamberlin. He had come to apply for a job with father when he took a contract to deliver a quantity of logs from the woods in Michigan to the river to be rafted down to the Saginaw sawmills. Owing to lack of snow for sleighing on one of these contract trips, he failed to make good, and, after paying his men, had not enough money to pay his own way home and had to borrow from one of his men the railway fare to land him back home.

I do not know whether it was this particular time I was born, but I am told he arrived as far as Ingersoll but had to stop there overnight on account of a storm. Arriving home next day, he found I had arrived. Having two boys he and mother wanted the next to be a girl. On his arrival he was told a girl had arrived at last, and he was so well pleased he went to the hotel in the village and treated the crowd only to be disappointed later when informed it was another boy. Paul Chamberlin came back to make his home with my father and lived until his death with us and is buried in the family plot.

The horses Paul drove to the Michigan lumberwoods from our house at Eden, were a pair of black ponies that were an extra good pair, after being mentioned as The Black Ponies. Father seem to have been interested in nice teams of horses well matched for appearance and style. I remember a pair of black stallions with some white on their faces and on their legs. He had a very nice light, driving, double harness and always drove the



stallions with a bar of iron attached to the inside of each horse's bit to keep their heads apart and to keep them from fighting. Another stallion he owned was a big gray horse called Prince of Wales. A yoke of oxen being stuck drawing a big log, Prince was hitched ahead of the oxen and drew the log alone drawing their yoke up on their horns. Another stallion was Rainbow Rockingham, an extra good sire. A team of brown geldings one of which he bought from a Mr. (Rev.) Moore and the other from a Mr. Griffin, were probably the nicest carriage team ever seen in these parts. The carriage was called a phaeton and had two seats, a square top with fringe and tassels, a curved dash and steps. The Mayor of Hamilton bought them when horses were cheap and paying \$500.00 for them after they had won first prize at the fair. I remember several other teams he matched and sold for fair prices but not quite so fine as Frank and Fred; Jack and Joe, a pair of bays with white faces and white feet; George and Charlie, a pair of grays; Ett and Net, a pair of bay mares and others.

Among the stage horses none ever equalled Kate & Dave. Kate was a bay mare that was a very bad switcher while Dave was a very balky roan. But this pair would draw the two horse stage coach a mile in four minutes all the way from Tillsonburg to Port Burwell. At this time a few race horses were beating a mile in 3 minutes to light sulky on a race track. The greatest feature with Kate and Dave was their endurance. No other horses ever continued so many years without sickness or lameness.

Among the cows on the farm, four generations of red Durham cows with red and white brockled faces are worthy of creditable mention. Each generation were good butter producers as well as good milk yielders. After the family had all the milk wanted, 14 lbs. of butter per week would be made from the cream secured by setting the milk in shallow flat pans until the cream raised. Kept in a crock, until enough for a churning was secured, which was about twice a week, and then churned in a dash churn. The butter was then lifted out of the buttermilk with a wooden ladle into a wooden butter bowl, the butter milk worked out and the salt worked in and made into rolls or packed in stone jars or crocks.

The family, when all were at home, generally consisted of father and mother, my brothers, Abram and Courtland, and Nellie, before mentioned as my cousin whose mother died not long after the bread and milk and mitten incident, after which she came to live with us, and grew up like a sister. In addition there was Paul Chamberlin, Philander Caswell, whose mother was a sister to Grandma Havens (Leach) and two girls who helped my mother as she was never very well after I was born, having to always wear an elastic bandage on one leg. Nancy Wall, later Mrs. Robert Kennedy, was longer in the house than any other. She and Paul did not get on very well together. On one occasion they quarreled so seriously that they did not speak for three years. Paul used to say "It was no harm to get drunk once a year" and he lived up to his belief, going away for about a week once a year and



being drunk all the time he was gone. Returning from one of these annuals, he brought Nancy a very fancy hat, and spoke to her ending the long speechless quarrel. A hotel in the village owned by my father becoming tenantless, Philander, Paul and Nancy took charge. Beer was usually in wooden kegs. A hole had to be bored in the end and a wooden faucet inserted from which to draw it. In the process the beer would foam very much running the mugs over with considerable noise. Paul was in the habit of helping himself whenever he wished to do so. On tapping a keg on one occasion, Phi did not get it just right and the faucet did not fit very well, so Phi warned Paul, and added "You had better let me draw it for you." but Paul did not heed the warning; so drew or attempted to draw for himself with the result that the faucet came out and the part full keg having got "a head on" sputtered out on the floor and Paul seized the keg, set it up on end; but it continued to send foam and beer to the ceiling. And in its mad career drenched Paul's fur cap. Paul began to call for help and as Phi came in Paul exclaimed, "Phi, Phi, she bus; she bus!"

When a tenant or purchaser was secured for the hotel, they returned to the farm home with us. Potatoes were kept in the cellar under the drive barn. Paul decided in the spring-time he had better sprout the potatoes, that is, go over every potato breaking off the sprouts that had begun to grow. A heavy trap door made from inch lumber doubled came down, hitting him on the head, knocking him unconscious and catching the ends of his fingers smashing the ends and taking flesh and nails off. He was taken to a doctor in Tillsonburg and I continued afterward driving the horse and buggy every other day taking him to the doctor to have his hand dressed. He never fully recovered being under the doctor's care all summer, and died in September of that year. I sat with him alone while the other members of the family were eating the midday when the end came. The first death I had ever witnessed. Phi also continued a member of the family until his death. A gold dollar tie pin in my possession had been his prized possession.

Two other incidents in Paul's life or possibly more than two come to present themselves. There was no granulated sugar; in those days a dark, sticky muscavada sugar was put up in large hogsheads. One of these had been emptied and rolled out on the corner lot in the village of Eden, and Paul used to hide in this and watch to see which young men accompanied the girls home from church, etc., and then have fun at the expense of the young man or woman. One occasion some of the young men turned the hogshead over him and held him prisoner until he was released. Another occasion was a township election. My father had been Deputy Reeve while Captain McBride of Pt. Burwell was Reeve. Father decided to retire. McBride was opposed by R. P. Scidmore, a strong Tory. McBride won. Father sent Paul with crape to tie on Scidmore's door. Scidmore expected something of the kind and hired two men to guard him. They caught Paul and tied his hands behind his back, with the crape. He could not get loose so returned to Father who untied him. The next night, the guards being off duty Paul was successful and when the morning appeared