

Iona Mills

The Flouring and Saw Mills now in Iona were formerly represented by Jonah Clark and Coughlin Lumley's mills which were situated for a number of years at what is known as Clark's Hollow, one mile directly south of the village. This Hollow, it may be mentioned, was at that time quite a hamlet; among the residents were T.A. Silcox, Coughlin Lumley, Junius Clark, Elijah Clark and Jonah Clark.

In 1863 these mills were purchased by Joseph Britton, of Port Stanley. In 1864 they were destroyed by fire and in the following year were rebuilt on improved plans and shortly after were removed to their present site at Iona. They were thoroughly refitted in 1889 with up-to-date machinery, costing several thousands of dollars. Since this time they have been conducted under the firm name of "Joseph Britton & Son."

In the early fifties, George Brown, the well-known veterinary surgeon, moved into the village and carried on business as a cabinet maker, and a few years afterwards abandoned it and devoted himself exclusively to veterinary practice. For many years there was a practitioner in St. Thomas, one in Glencoe, and perhaps another in Ridgetown, and all that vast tract of country between those points and Lake Erie had to be frequently travelled over by him. He came from Nova Scotia about sixty years ago, and settled in Yarmouth, and afterwards removed to where Shedden now stands. He distinctly remembered being in Port Stanley when the Oneida Indians landed there, from New York State, to settle in their present location on the Thames River. Mr. Brown was a great lover of horses, and owned some of the fastest ones in the Province. He died about two years ago at the age of 74.

A short time after George O. Lumley, better known as Owen Lumley, took up his residence here, where he still remains. His well-known versatile genius in the various mechanical arts supplied the precise requirements of a new country. One son, William Owen, the M.C.R. station agent, Tilbury, and another son, James Owen, the well-known merchant of the village.

James McLandress lived here at a date much anterior to either of the preceding, having come from New Brunswick in 1845. He married a Miss Gow, who still survives, but Mr. McLandress died about ten years ago.

Mr. McLandress had a brother in the military service of the Honorable East India Company, who died many years ago, leaving him a small legacy, which in consequence of some informality could never be properly claimed. It was transferred to the keeping of the British Government where it still remains.

One son named John was recently killed on the M.C.R. at St. Thomas, and the other is William, the well-known stock merchant.

James B. Lowther, another Nova Scotia man, came here in 1855 and started a blacksmith and carriage shop, which he conducted for many years. He afterwards removed to California, where he remained five years, and then returned to the village, where he still resides. Mr. Lowther is a prominent member of the Methodist church, being class-leader, as well as superintendent of the Sunday school.

Another very old resident was the late Peter Sinclair, sr., who came from Scotland in 1850 and started a tailoring business in the village, where he died many years ago. His sons are Dr. Sinclair, and Duncan Sinclair, of Alvinston, already mentioned. His son Peter died some years ago.

(From the writings of James W. Brown, 1896)

INDUSTRIES

Among the earliest settlers of Iona proper or that part called Elliottsville were William Taylor, a Scotchman, and Mrs. Mary Gibson from Cantire, the latter of whom died, but recently at the advanced age of eighty-eight. This part of Iona situated on the Dunwich side of the townline was so called from a survey made into village lots by the late George Elliott, grandfather of George E. Casey, M.P.

Taylor introduced into business in 1846 a Mr. Grossett McKay, of Lambeth, who so far as is known, carried on the first mercantile business in Iona. After his death his widow married Francis A. Tait, a shoe maker. They continued in business for many years, but finally yielded owing to financial depression.

Bissell and Eccles in the latter part of the forties opened a general store. The partnership lasted for some years and then was sold to a Mr. Morrell.

In 1853 Decow and Eccles entered into a partnership as general merchants, which lasted until 1861, Decow continuing the business till 1866, when Liddell and Chisholm, his clerks, bought it out. The business returned to Decow in 1870.

Decow's career had been very successful, so in 1855 he entered into the hardware business, bought furs, hides, wool, timber and grain, and had twenty peddling wagons on the road west as far as Amherstburg. To give some idea of the extent of business done, in November 1861, the credit sales were \$1,614.20. The above is a fair average of sales in the general store alone.

The wool business was on a still larger scale; in June, 1867, \$2,612.62 was paid in cash for wool, and in July of the same year \$3,990.41. This wool undertaking proved very disastrous to Mr. Decow's financial standing.

His father, U.E. Loyalist came from the United States about 1815, and settled on the farm now owned by Angus Campbell, on the Back Street. Here Mr. Daniel Decow was born. Besides the mercantile ventures he was engaged in, he was postmaster, J.P., and Reeve of Dunwich.

Iona in 1868 had a population of about 600 persons; five general stores, one hardware store and tin shop, two hotels, one restaurant, one livery stable, four blacksmith and carriage shops, one plough manufactory, two shoe shops, one merchant tailor shop, two furniture shops, two turning factories, one saw and grist mill, a Division Clerk's office, a Temperance hall, a Masonic hall and three churches.

Barnum's circus, about this time, made regular visits to the village, the tents being pitched near the present site of Iona Fair Grounds.

Iona was also the head quarters of the stage route between St. Thomas and Chatham; John Decow being the proprietor.

About this time there appeared in the village one William Harris, of Annapolis, Nova Scotia, a civil engineer by education, whose first vocation in these parts was that of school teacher. He afterwards entered into partnership with John T. McColl, son of Elder McColl, near Wallacetown, to conduct a general store. He was appointed in 1853 by Judge Hughes, clerk of the fourth division court. He was the first postmaster of Iona and did a large conveyancing business. People who knew him well speak of him as a sincere friend, of a candid and reticent disposition, but commanding ability and wide attainments.

When in proper position to do so he returned to Nova Scotia and took a young wife to his western home. After a few years of wedded life she died. Her sudden demise, far away from friends and kindred, so preyed upon him that his mind became partially unhinged, and his tragic death in the woods near Middlemarch will still be remembered by the older readers of THE JOURNAL.

He had fled, not knowing whither, in an easterly direction across the ravine,

adjoining the village and was searched for during several days by groups of men from different parts of the township, and was finally found in a recumbent position near a small stream on the Anderson farm, as if in the act of stooping to drink.

Himself and wife lie in the Episcopal cemetery at Tryconnel.

Two of his children shortly afterwards died, but the youngest, a son, is still alive in his parents' native home.

John Harris, near the village, and Henry Harris, of St. Thomas, are his cousins which accounts for his settling in this new and remote district.

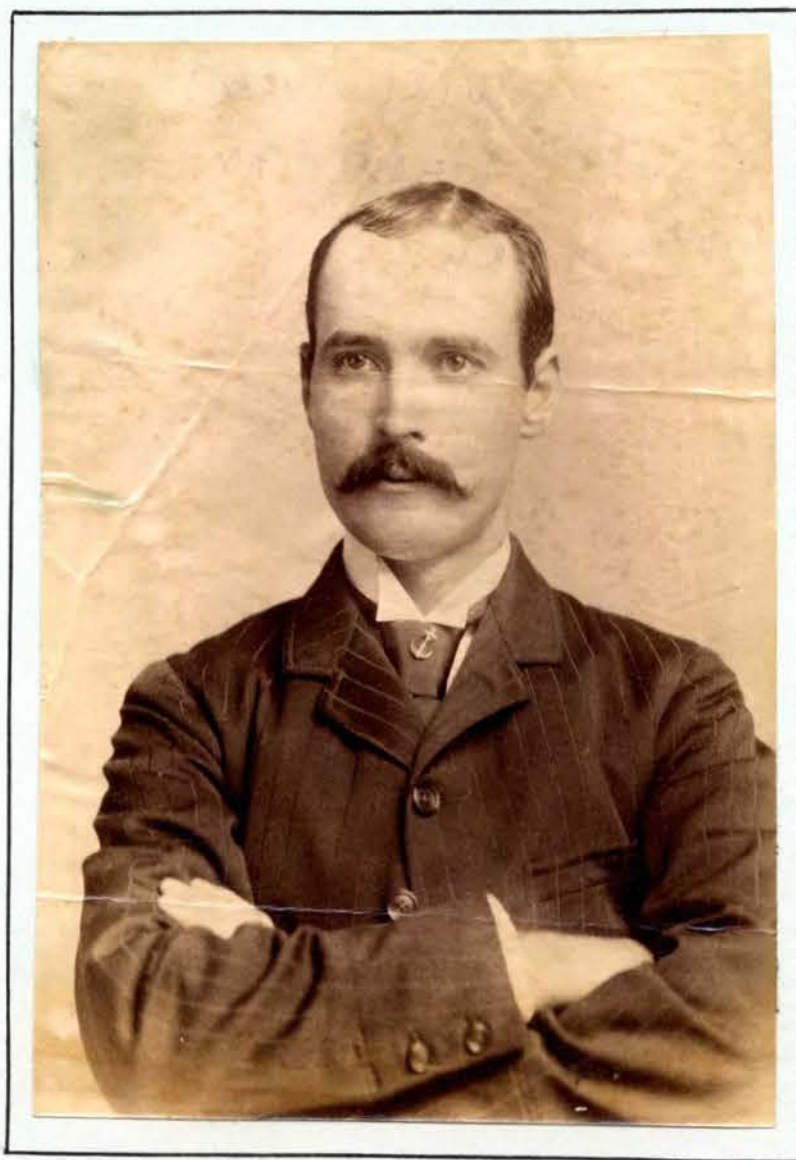
Amongst others who conducted a mercantile business in the village were John A. Philpott, son of the late Squire Philpott; Duncan Black, grocer; afterwards succeeded by John E. Black, now a commercial traveller; William Burgess of Port Stanley; Henry Cole, now many years dead; Benoni McIntyre, at present farmer east of the village.

Duncan Sinclair, already referred to as a public school teacher; William Bride, now of Cornwall; James Greeves, at present a merchant at Glenwalker on the M.C.R., Harry Watts, and at present, J.O. Lumley, who is the sole representative of the once flourishing mercantile centre.

Martin Galor started an ashery in 1851, on the southeast corner of the celebrated Brooks' farm, where he manufactured great quantities of crude potash. After a few years the business was disposed of to Francis A. Tait, a merchant heretofore mentioned, who conducted it till the year 1855, when it was closed, owing to dullness of the market.

(From the writings of James W. Brown, 1896)

POST OFFICE



William Harris from Annapolis, Nova Scotia, Iona's first Post Master. Appointed clerk of fourth division Court by Judge Hughes in 1853.

(From collection of Mrs. Ray Johnson)

Much can be said of the past citizens of Iona, but more can be said of their industry, combined with the cleverness of their purposes. This is especially true when one thinks of the one-time greatness of this little hamlet.

Let us, for instance, take an imaginary journey through Iona of 1870. We should be sepecially interested in the first departmental store in Western Ontario, owned and operated by the late Daniel Decow. He, it was, who first glimpsed the probable growth of the mail order systems so in vogue today. But his system employed his own help as delivery men, having 51 peddling wagons traversing the roads between Amherstburg and Niagara, giving in exchange tinware of serviceable kitchen and farm utensils, for firkins of butter, lumps of tallow, wool, furs and hides and eggs (in the nearer localities.

In Decow's store from 1850 onward could be found the first ready-to-wear garments in Western Ontario. He employed his own skilled help in carpentry, tin-smithing. Miss Retta Payson was head of the millinery department. Uncle Tom Lumley was the cooper, who had sometimes an unsavoury job of putting the heads on overripe butter firkins. Shoes and any leather product might also be bought, and one could purchase innumerable and plenty of the small necessities of the household and farm.

The following - some entries from his Day Book of 1867 go to illustrate the opposite trend of prices compared with the present time - Tea from \$1.67 to \$2.40 a pound; Whiskey from .25¢ to .50¢ a gallon; Butter 10¢ a pound; Eggs 5¢ a dozen; while the best of crepe, much used at the time 25¢ a yard.

In his warehouse one could purchase various grains, wool, carded or not, spinning warp, tallow candles, and one might at one time see quantities of dressed pork, in fact, whole housefuls. Much more could be said of this wonderful store of the early '60's, but time does not permit further details.

Let us look into some of the early cobbler shops. We find Edmund Roach - "Shoemaker" Young, and Mr. McLarty busily engaged in keeping the early community dryshod.

An interesting and unique example of the fortitude of the pioneer women could be cited of the first butcher's wife of Iona, Mrs. Magill by name, who, when her husband leaving a lamb he was about to butcher, tied up, and the creature jumping over a bar and strangling itself, rushed out with a butcher knife and bled it, so that the meat would be still edible.

Following butchers of interest were: "Butcher Bird", Butcher Coats Keillor. One might buy almost anything in the line of coopering from Clay Jim Lumley, who excelled in this art, making numerous tubs, barrels, hogsheads, firkins, almost anything which involved the use of staves.

Occupying an equal place in this practical skilled art, was Thomas Lumley, known by everyone as "Uncle Tom", who obtained the necessary black ash for the hoops from the woods of the late William Lodge. He was a quaint and frequent figure in community life, being seen carrying these huge black ash slabs on his shoulder.

Those who might be seen moulding the stubborn iron into various and useful gadgets were Neil McKay, Robert Beadle, J.B. Lowther, English Brown and a man commonly styled as "Old Parker", who apparently was very slow as the saying "as slow as Old Parker" is still to be heard.

Pineo, Fraser and Edgecombe were engaged in the manufacture of wagons and carriages.

A necessary and useful industry owned and operated by James McSherry for the purpose of manufacturing ploughs, and very good ploughs too, being renowned from Amherstburg to Niagara, similar to DeCow's wares. From 3 to 4 men were employed in this industry.

Inclusive in the early shopkeepers of the community were the aforesaid Daniel Decow, Mrs McKay, Henry Cole, John Crosby, Duncan Sinclair, John Black, Ben McIntyre, Liddle and Chisholm and latterly Owen Lumley and his son James Owen, who succeeded him.

Those engaged in clothing the community were the late Peter Sinclair and Dugald McCallum, who both had sometimes to work on into the night in order that the supply might fit the demand.

When a death occurred in any of the households, one might, of necessity, call upon the late John Edgecombe, George Brown or Dan Pineo. The price of a fine walnut case being from \$25 to \$30. These handsome coffins, highly polished and exquisitely lined, might be purchased in either pine, covered in conventional black cloth or the polished pine, oak or walnut.

These same men also could make any of the desired furniture of the period, colonial ladder-back chairs, or spindle-back chairs, beautiful hair cloth sofas or settees, and distinguished parlor centre tables much prized by those of us who are fortunate enough to have them today, - and copied by the modern furniture factories, the price being 10 to 20 times in machine work what was obtained for the handwork of this period. George Brown ran a one-horse turning lathe, (not to be taken literally) from which many of the turned parts of furniture we now possess, were formed.

The lumber for this furniture was, of course, to be taken from the primeval forests, but first had to go through the milling process in Jonahs' hollow, where Joseph Britton ran a water saw and grist mill, an unheard of combination at this time. This was later supplanted by a steam engine and moved to the village. It employed a number of men. The price of sawing or grinding was taken in a toll of the produce brought to be milled.

Engaged in the sawing industry and prior to Britton, was a mill run by horse power and in operation in 1815 by the late Thomas Talbot and latterly taken up by Tren and Samuel Keillor, who also did a large amount of business. Much could be said of their ingenuity, more could be said of their personal kindness, but they leave hallowed memories with us, though many of them have been gone, some over a half century, some not so long ago, but still to us older ones, they are pictured as clearly and vividly as they were in life and though we have laid them away in dust, may the kindly hand of times blot out their imperfections and leave only their marvellous spirit of advancement to us, their successors.

(Written for the Iona Women's Institute by Mary (Mrs. Robert) Morris).
October 1936.

Under the leadership of Mr. Moses Lumley and his assistant Mr. Dan Pineo, the Iona Band was organized in 1866. Mr. A. Dangerfield, First tenor; Mr. J. Potts, Second tenor; Mr. Wm. McLandress, First alto; Mr. D. Brown, Bass; Mr. J. Harris, Second bass; Mr. A. Boston, Baritone; Mr. J. Clark, Drummer; Mr. W.A. Decow, Snare-drummer.

In 1882, the band was reorganized with Mr. D. Pineo as leader. Mr. W. Lodge, E. Flat Cornet; Mr. Moses Lumley; Mr. J.J. Piper, First baritone; Mr. Joe Canfield, Bass; Mr. A. Silcox, Alto; Mr. W.H. Lumley, Alto; Mr. Sam Lumley, B. Flat tenor; Mr. W.J. Lumley, Second baritone; Mr. Will Piper, Tenor; and Mr. Archie McCallum, Drummer.

This band was active until 1904, and was considered one of the best brass bands in the district. The band did much to enliven the Iona Fair and other events in the community.

From an old record it is learned that this band had been reorganized in 1869, also with Mr. Lumley still as leader. Mr. J.O. Lumley playing the alto horn and Mr. Joseph Canfield, the bass horn. Mr. John Piper was a member and William Templar had joined.

This curator remembers the Iona Band in existence after 1902 with Mr. Templar as leader. At a concert in the schoolhouse at No. 5 Dunwich, the young men made a game of watching Mr. Templar closely, so that they could call out "Ready, ready, play" just a split second before he did. No wonder Mr. Templar's resentment was so strong as to make an impression that is still remembered. The speed the suspected ringleader attained with Mr. Templar in pursuit, must have established a record!

(Curator, Mrs. Ray Johnson, 1966).

The Iona Fair had its Official beginning April, 1854, with the formation of the "Agricultural Branch Society of The Townships of Southwold and Dunwich of the Agricultural Society of the County of Elgin", signed by:

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| John Horton | Arch Thompson | Henry Hamilton |
| Amasa Wood | Arch Patterson | Don Carmichael |
| John Williams | Nicol McColl | James Ferguson |
| Moses Warner | Colen McIntyre | John Lumley |
| Zechariah McCallum | Elisha Best | John McPhail |
| Malcom Campbell | William Sells | Arch Carswell |

The Fair grounds, consisting of five acres on the Southwold side of the village was donated by Mr. John Decow. This would be the land on the east side of Argyle Street, immediately opposite lots 13 to 19 on the west side of this same street and which are bordered on the south by Queen Street and on the north by East Branch of the North Talbot Road (No. 3 Highway). This land is now part of Percy Whall's farm.

The Fair was successful. Auditors John Liddell and John Silcox in 1867 reported a steady and flourishing condition, with 125 members in 1865, 152 in 1866, and 179 in 1867. This condition began to change in 1872, when the Canada Southern Railroad was built two miles to the north, until the Fair was moved to the Village of Shedden in 1896. Old records indicate that the Iona Fair was held for over fifty years which would mean it was in existence before the recorded time of the Agricultural Society, and before Shedden was on the map.

The first president of record is Thomas Pearce who was president in 1879 and 1880. Mr. Pearce was secretary in 1896 when it was moved to Shedden.

Secretaries of record were D. McPherson 1854-55, D. Carpenter 1856-1862, E. Eccles 1863-64, F.A. Tait 1865, James Philpott 1866-1870, L.J. Else was secretary while Mr. Thomas Pearce was president. An Iona man, Mr. Frank Silcox, served as president in 1907 and as secretary from 1908-1910, when the Fair had been moved to Shedden. William Wallace was president and John Liddell secretary in 1884.

In 1861, Mr. John Carswell built a large drill shed on Lot 13, corner of Queen and Argyle Streets, adjacent to the Fair Grounds, for use by the men of Canada's volunteer army, B Company of the 25th Regiment. It was also used in connection with Iona Fair as the Crystal Palace.

Mrs. Luke H. Brown of Iona, who passed away in 1955, had vivid recollections of the gayety of the Iona Fair with the horse races, exhibits of horses, sheep, cattle, hogs and poultry. She was also the proud possessor of a log cabin quilt made of woollen material unlike those obtainable today and of woollen blankets made in her home of wool from their sheep. These articles won first prizes at the Iona Fairs and later at Wallacetown Fair. Her recollection of the prize winning salt rising bread were not all pleasant. The large quantities, which her mother made in order to produce her one loaf exhibit, lasted long after the Fair. In those frugal days had to be eaten whether the family enjoyed it or not. Mrs. Brown remembered the joy of the children, who followed their own "Pied Piper", attracted by his call of "Taffy, taffy, two for a cooper apiece." This delicious candy was carried in tin containers suspended from a yoke which rested on his shoulders.

The taffy man, whose name was Mr. Shackelton, was reported to be a prosperous gypsy from Scotland. He had two sons and three darkly handsome daughters, who were quickly sought in marriage by three well known pioneers. His two sons also married maidens and settled down as good citizens.

The Iona Band added to the pleasure available at the Fair.

Mrs. J. Lumley remembers her grandfather telling her how he enjoyed seeing Tom Thumb at the Iona Fair.

(Curator - as dictated by her Mother - Mrs. L.H. Brown).

The Farmers' Club was formed and was flourishing about 1910. There had been a group of the "Grangers", but it is not known if it had any connection with the Farmers' Club.

The Farmers' Club and the Women's Institute joined to support the old church as a Community Hall.

Mr. L.K. McCallum was one of the first presidents. Mr. Hugh McPhail and Jim Graham were secretaries at one time. Mr. W.R. Pollard was the last secretary.

This Club raised money by having "Oyster Suppers," which drew crowds in good and bad weather alike. Oysters were served in quart dippers, one full dipper being a serving and as many refills as wished were given. Hams in abundance were served. The suppers were a financial success, and the money was invested in the Hall.

(Written by the Curator from information told to her by Wm. R. Pollard).

4-H CLUBS

In 1935 the Homemaking Club Program was initiated in Ontario. The Elgin County records start in the following year. With Mrs. Roy Stacey as Leader and Miss Edith Zavitz as the Home Economist, the Iona Women's Institute sponsored the Club in 1938. Mrs. William Pollard was President and Mrs. Charles Hyde the secretary-treasurer. Some of the Clubs were held jointly, in this case Iona and Iona Station. They met both spring and fall.

These 4-H Clubs - Junior (12 to 15 years of age inclusive), and seniors (16 to 26 years inclusive) are sponsored by the Women's Institutes who provide the leader and an assistant. The Home Economist of the County or District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, directs and guides the programs. Two day training schools are conducted for the Leaders and their assistants. Achievement Days for the Clubs are held for the Districts in the Fall and Spring for the completed projects. These projects are related to Food and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles, Home Furnishings, Fitness and Citizenship, Homecrafts and Gardening. All Clubs participate at the same time.

From 1948 to 1954, inclusive, there were no records to show that the Iona 4-H Club was active.

A member completing the courses, receives several credits, namely - a Certificate of Achievement, for two completed projects; County Honours for six projects and Provincial Honours for twelve completed projects.

The official emblem of 4-H Clubs in Canada, as in a number of other countries, is the green four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf to symbolize equal training of the 4-H's, which stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health.

The 4-H Pledge is:

"I pledge
My Head to clearer thinking,
My Heart to greater Loyalty,
My Hands to larger service,
My Health to better living for my club,
my community and my country."

The Motto: "Learn to do by doing."

The following names of the 4-H Leaders and Home Economists (in that order), with some of the projects completed, are recorded at the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food office in St. Thomas: - 1938, Mrs. Roy Stacey, Miss Edith Zavitz, Cottons May be Smart; 1938, Mrs. Roy Stacey, Miss Carrie Taylor; 1939, Mrs. Roy Stacey, Miss Carrie Taylor, Clothes Closets up to Date; 1940, Mrs. W.R. Pollard, Miss C. Taylor, Being Well Dressed and Well Groomed; 1941, Alice Silcox, Miss C. Taylor, Milky Way; 1947, Iona and Iona Station, Mrs. J.D. Galbraith, Gardens; 1946, Mrs. G. Brown, Miss Jean Scott; 1947, Mrs. G. Brown, Miss Jean Scott, Sleeping Garments; 1948, Mrs. G. Brown, Miss Jean Scott, Cottons May be Smart; 1955, Iona and Iona Station, Mrs. Loren Pearce, Miss Jane Anderson, Gardens; 1957, Mrs. Jack McAlpine, Miss Jane Anderson, Cotton Accessories, Milky Way; 1958, Mrs. Charles Barfelt, Miss Beverley Duncan, Dressing Vegetables; 1959 as 1958;



Iona 4H Club - 1960

Patricia Wells
Margaret Pyatt
Ann Graham
Caroline Fillmore
Anne Deitrick
Joan Barfett
Norma Willson

4-H CLUBS

1960, Mrs. William Dietrich, Miss Margaret Burril, Sleeping Garments; 1960, Mrs. Shirley Millman, Miss Jane Anderson; 1961, Mrs. William Dietrich, Margaret Burrill, Featuring Fruit; 1962, Mrs. William Dietrich, Miss K. Jill Young, Separates for Summer; 1963, Mrs. Bartley Willson, Marie Hodgson and Mrs. Dietrich, Cereal Shelf and Supper Club; 1964, Mrs. Arthur Dawdy, Miss Marie Hunt, Cottons May be Smart; 1965, Mrs. W. Dietrich, Miss Marie Hunt, Being Well Dressed and Milky Way; 1966, Mrs. W. Dietrich, Miss Marie Hunt, Working with Wool; 1967, Mrs. W. Dietrich and M. Joyce Pirie, Accent on Accessories and World Food in Canada; and 1968, Mrs. A.D. McFarlane, Miss Ruth Marcou, Meat in the Menu.

The 4-H Clubs have often shown their appreciation for the Institute's support by presenting skits of their projects, prepared and served delicious lunches and displayed many completed projects.

In due time, the Institute presents each of the girls with an appropriate remembrance at the time of her marriage or when she leaves the community to live elsewhere.

Credit is given to the Department of Agriculture, St. Thomas, the Iona Women's Institute Minutes, and the Home Economics Branch, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Mrs. Lloyd Healy, 1968.

The Iona Glee Club was organized circa 1900 by those members of the Iona Literary Society who were musically inclined. Practices were held in the Disciple Church (now the Community Hall) under the leadership of Miss Jerusha Hamilton.



Jerusha Hamilton

Members as recalled were - Miss Laura Liddell and sister Shirley; the three Keillor sisters Winnie, Flossie, and Hazel; William, Samuel and Alice Pearce; Peter Carswell; Gertrude, Jay and Vesta Lumley; Daniel McAlpine and sister Christina; Edythe and Edna Lumley; Mary Jane, William R., Maggie and Lydia Pollard; Margaret and Sadie Graham; Kate Graham; Blake, Gordon and Alice Lodge; the school teacher from No. 5 Dunwich, Laura Graham; and from No. 10, Southwold Malcolm Graham. The director was Jerusha Hamilton. Mary McPherson and Jean Steele were also members. The above information from Mr. William R. Pollard.

Right:

Practice in the Liddell Home.
 Dan McAlpine
 Shirley Liddell
 Tena McAlpine
 Sam Pearce



Left:

Front Row:

Alice Henderson, Samuel Pearce, Tena McAlpine, Peter Carswell and Laura Liddell.

Back Row:

Mac Campbell, Shirley Liddell, William R. Pollard, Janet Pollard, Jay Lumley, Gertrude Lumley, Don McAlpine, Edna Lumley and Vesta Lumley.

Pictures of the Glee Club courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Jack McAlpine. Curator.

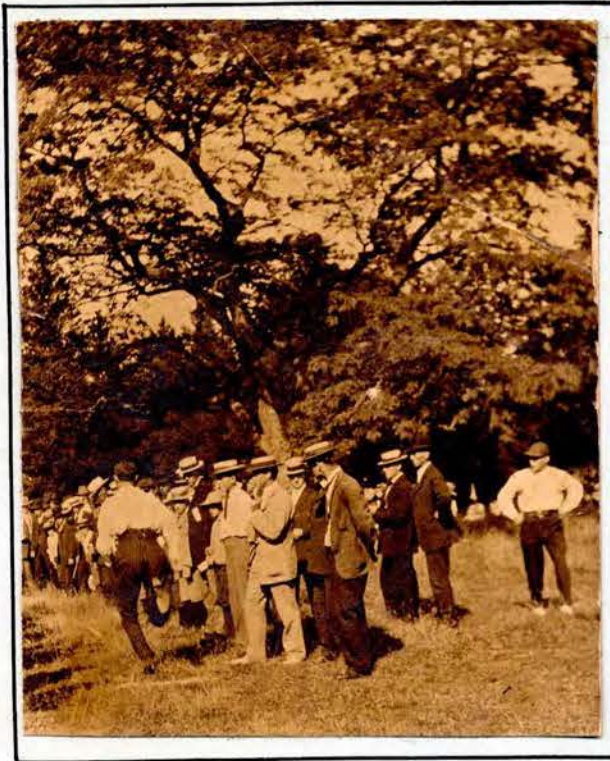
Picture of Miss Hamilton, courtesy Mrs. L.H. Brown.

Mr. Frank H. Silcox was the originator of the Literary Society and its first president, about 1900. Most of the young people of the neighbourhood belonged. Meetings were held in the Disciple Church.

Plays, debates and concerts were offered for the entertainment of this and other communities and the auditorium was usually filled to capacity.

Mr. Samuel Pearce wrote a play for the use of the Society, titled "Magnetawan." A director was secured from St. Thomas and the play was a success, being repeated at many other centres. Miss Tena McAlpine (McPherson) had the leading role. Miss Ruby Armstrong (Cock) was a maid.

Mr. W.R. Pollard had a role in the play which he well remembers. Luke Vernon Brown, (then a small child), now of St. Thomas, was to stick a pin in "W.R." and then laugh. He did a very good job - "W.R." says, "Much too good."



Literary Society Picnic
at Port Talbot.

The accompanying picture was taken at Port Talbot, probably between 1900 and 1910. At this time the Iona Literary Society was a going concern. Regular meetings with fine programs were held regularly in what is now the Iona Community Hall. A successful play written by Samuel Pearce was given in many other towns by eager invitations from these centres.

At the regular monthly picnic at Port Talbot, where the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Watkins made them welcome, a gay time was enjoyed. Food was excellent and plentiful. A main event introduced by Dougald McAlpine, who was attending the University of Toronto at that time, was barrell boxing. Contestants stood in barrells within reach of each other. The winner was he who could first push his opponent and his barrell over. Mr. William R. Pollard was the undefeated champion.

Popular bands were hired for this and other events.

The Society was disbursed about 1910 by the writer's best calculation.

For some reason not made known, the grounds at Port Talbot were made unavailable for these picnics, and the good times were no more.

Picture courtesy Mrs. Jay Lumley.

Curator.

On the evening of November 18th, 1864, in the "Travellers Home" then kept by R. Bodman, Benjamin Thompson, school teacher, Cascaden, M.D., Daniel Decow, merchant; John Edgecombe, carriage maker; William Chisholm, merchant; I.P. Stoliker, Ephraim Lumley, James McLandress, R. McCullough, C.A. Brown, James C. Lumley, and James Mitchell all members of Warren Lodge, Fingal, met for the purpose of forming a Masonic Lodge at Iona. Benjamin Thompson was chosen as Chairman and John Cascaden as secretary of this meeting.

The proposed lodge was given the name it now bears "Prince of Wales". The following officers John Cascaden, W.M.; John Edgecombe, S.W.; William Chisholm J.W.; James McLandress, treasurer; James T.C. Finlay, secretary; Ephraim Lumley, S.D.; John A. Philpott, J.D.; William Simpkins, I.G.; I.P. Stoliker, Tyler. Being elected, it was decided to request a charter from the Grand Lodge.

On February of the next year a dispensation was obtained under which the lodge was conducted till the following July when a charter was duly granted.

The first regular meeting was held on March 17th, 1865 in their lodge room over Burgess' store. Soon after this as there was no organization of this kind for many miles west, a goodly number of prominent persons came from the different parts of Aldborough and Oxford to the then thriving village of Iona to be initiated into the secrets of the Ancient Free Masonry.

John Cascaden, the first W.M. afterwards became D.D.G.M. of this London district.

(From the writings of James W. Brown, 1896)

The first meeting for the foundation of such a lodge was held in Decow's Hotel in Dunwich previous to 1865. The lodge was organized on the 13th of July, 1865 and the charter members being John Cascaden, John Edgecomb, Wm. Chisholm, Isaac Stoliker, Daniel Decow, James T.C. Finlay, Ephraim Lumley and James Mitchell. The meetings were held for a time in a store situated on the west side of Townline, and in 1868 they purchased a hall which stands on the corner of Townline and Mary Street. The lodge now has a membership of forty-two.

(From an article by Miss Mary Hamilton, 1896).

Prince of Wales Lodge at Iona Seventy-Six Years Old

Birthday Will Be Marked by Visit of Pastmasters' Association of the St. Thomas District

To commemorate the founding of Prince of Wales Lodge at Old Iona, the Pastmasters' Association of St. Thomas Masonic District is having its winter meeting at Iona on Wednesday, December 11, at 7.15 p.m. Christmas supper with all the trimmings will be featured at Iona, after which the pastmasters will repair to the lodge hall at Iona Station for an address by Captain Wood, R.C.D., attached to the R.C.A.F. as Supply Officer.

Prince of Wales Lodge originated in a meeting at Bodman's Hotel in Iona, minutes of which bear date of Nov. 18, 1864. John Cascaden seems to have been the prime mover and acted as secretary. When it was

decided to ask for a charter, with Warren Lodge of Fingal sponsoring, John Cascaden was elected Master. C. J. S. Askin, of Chatham, was D.D.G.M. The charter was received on Feb. 24, 1864, and the first regular meeting thereunder was held on March 17, 1865, with twelve members and ten visitors from Warren and St. Marks at Port Stanley. At that date, of course, there was no railroad communication, and Dutton, West Lorne, etc., were not yet on the map. Wallacetown, Duart and Newbury are frequently mentioned in the records, however.

At the first meeting four applications for membership from men of Iona, Aldborough, and Duart were received. William Risdon, afterwards

well-known proprietor of the Erie Iron Works, St. Thomas, was the first candidate to be initiated, the date being April 14, 1865. The lodge prospered and along in the eighties John Cascaden became D.D.G.M. of the district in token of his ability and in recognition of the work of his lodge.

Lost All By Fire

About 1896 the village was being side-tracked by other places on the various railways, and as Lawrence Station was growing the lodge was moved there and continued to thrive. In 1923 fire destroyed the building occupied by the lodge, and its furniture and most of its records were unfortunately lost.

Warren Lodge again came to the assistance of its northern brethren and Prince of Wales met in the Fingal lodge room for several years. In 1933-34 John Dundas was honored for his services to Prince of Wales by being elected D.D.G.M., and largely through his enthusiasm a movement was started which resulted in the purchase of premises at Iona Station, and the new and

comfortable quarters were duly dedicated on April 25, 1935.

During the years many young men who have been initiated and who have received Masonic instruction in the old lodge have gone out to prominent positions in the world. In all, around 260 members have signed its register, McColls, Browns, Campbells, Turners, Galbraiths, and all the other common names of that district being represented. One of the oldest survivors is Dr. F. O. Lawrence, who was initiated on Nov. 23, 1890. He transferred to St. Thomas four years later, and became Master of Old 44 in 1901. Other St. Thomas men who saw the light in Prince of Wales Lodge are Dr. J. W. Snell and J. D. Thomson, county clerk, the late A. P. Campbell, the late Sheriff McColl, the late N. D. McLachlin, the late J. J. McKillop, and the late J. W. Brown.

The district pastmasters will try to celebrate the birthday in a fitting manner this week. F. R. Palmer is secretary and John Milner, of West Lorne, is president of this live organization.

1964 R. W. J.

In 1850 s Sons of Temperance Lodge consisting of about twelve members was organized. Their first lodge was over Charles Harris' cabinet shop, the site of which is now occupied by John Liddell's dwelling. This society prospered, and in 1853 they were enabled to erect a hall in which to hold their meetings. The organization flourished for about twenty years, then it gradually decayed until the final dissolution about five years later. The Royal Templars of Temperance succeeded them, but ran a brief career. The original lodge was the means of doing a vast amount of good in the community. Many old men testify at the present day to its influence in guarding them from a life of drinking.

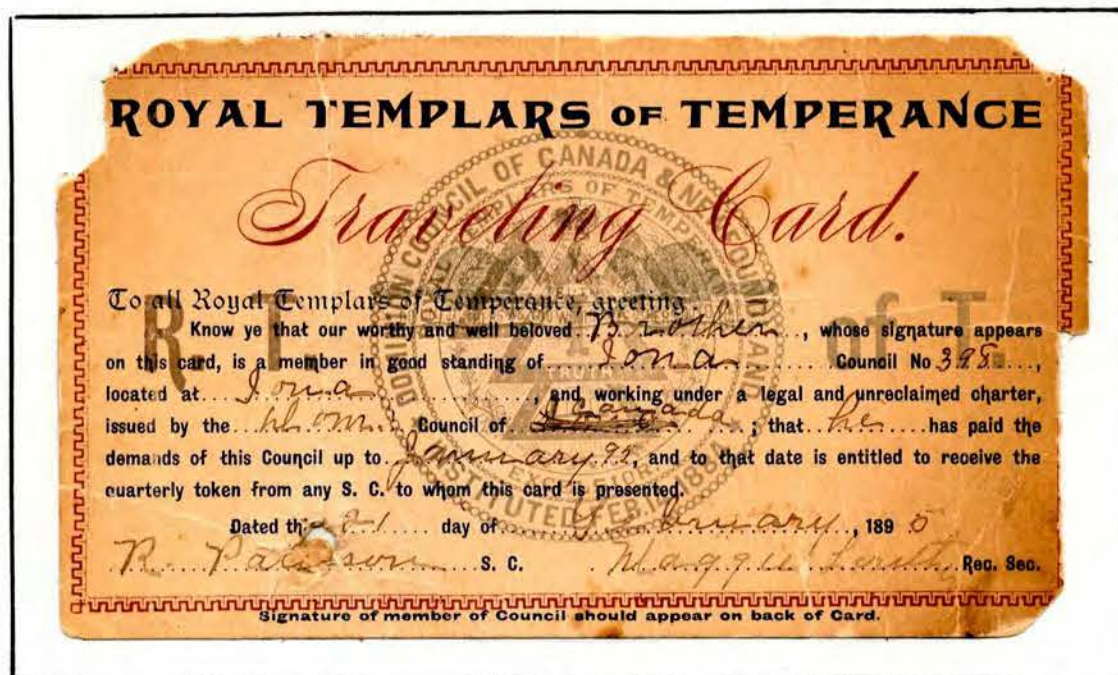
The Grangers during their ephemeral life also met here for business, and the division court was held in the same building from 1853 till about 1870.

(From the writings of James W. Brown, 1896).

In the early nineteen hundreds, (about 1905), this hall was purchased by Mr. Luke H. Brown, who moved it to a new location about sixty feet west, and converted it to a barn.

In 1956 it was demolished by Mr. Austin Brown and Mr. Fred Hurst, who expected to save some of it's old timbers. However, time and weather had so damaged the building that little could be salvaged.

(The Curator).



This card belonged to Mr. Luke H. Brown, who was an early member of this Iona Council.