

In the 1930's the late Archie Carmichael started a gravel industry on the Haning farm dragging gravel out of the Thames River. It was then hauled by trucks and spread on the Township concessions in north - east Aldborough township.

This Industry was carried on for a few years until there were no more gravel deposits in the river.

Jack Humphrey's Cloverleaf Sawmill - Originally J. C. Humphrey opened a sawmill on the Duff Leverington farm, Concession 4, Aldborough in 1947 and later moved it to Lot 21 in the seventh concession on Highway 76, where he operated it until he quit about the year 1970. He bought logs and sold lumber in Aldborough and West Elgin.

In 1916 and later we on the Aldborough - Dunwich townline had two General Stores serving us weekly. Mr. Nesbitt from Wardsville toured the area with a grocery truck. Mr. & Mrs. Sandy Turner of Campbellton had a store, later purchased by Harry Miles. That store is now replaced by a new dwelling place owned by Mr. & Mrs. Hillman who teach in West Lorne.

Tyrconnell Distillery made liquor for Colonel Talbot:

Besides being a one - time prominent shipping centre, Tyrconnell founded in 1823, boosted a distillery in 1826. One of those who patronized it was Colonel Talbot and in a letter to a friend he complained that his order for spirits had not been filled.

The barter was 5 quarts of whisky for a bushel of wheat and the letter stated that "that scoundrel McIntyre (the distiller) owes me 374 gallons, a quart and a pint of Whisky".

Many years ago a Potash Industry was located on the farm of Philip McCallum.

Potash was obtained by leaching or running water slowly through the ashes of burned wood and boiling down the solution in large open kettles. The residue, a white solid, was called Potash and was used in the preparation of soap. An ideal spot for this Industry was alongside a running creek which ran through this farm. Today this spot is at the bottom of the hill on the west side of the farm and the creek on its east side and the concession 2 of Dunwich to its north side. When Arthur Zoller was doing bulldozing of stumps in 1974 over this area the machine began sinking. The earth that was coming up showed greyish in colour. It was then that Philip McCallum remembered of hearing of this long time ago industry on that spot.

After much difficulty of removing the machine we all can remember the location and now realize how soft the bottom must be because of the operation once situated there.

Up until about 1897 Lumbering was a major Industry carried on in the townships of the area. Farmers cut hundreds of trees to clear land on which to farm.

The Thames River, being the major waterway nearby, was used for transportation of the logs to a sawmill.

Men in the north-western part of Dunwich along the Aldborough-Dunwich townline would haul their cut logs and square timber from the farms near the present railroad to the river. They hauled logs through the Mac McAlpine farm to a point north of the barns of Ken McAlpine, along the river bank. There huge piles of logs would be seen piled waiting for spring breakup in the river. A man from the lumber mill would stamp the ends of the logs so each man could be paid for his correct amount of board feet. The pay was small because a few years later a man received \$3.00 a thousand board feet for logs which he delivered by himself to the West Lorne Mill.

The logs would be rolled down the river bank into the Thames River in the spring. Men on a raft would keep the logs in order and would keep them floating west down the Thames River to Sucker Town. The raft was constructed of square timber tied and pinned together.

This is an account written for the Tweedsmuir History in August 1978 - by Philip McCallum.

The Thresher

My first bout with threshing was in 1900. My cousin, Dan McKay had a big threshing outfit. He wanted me to help Archie Leitch, his engineer, while he was away from the outfit. I was twelve years old then and was big for my age and there were not many jobs I could not do. So this day I went to a farm owned by Alex Black, down the road from where the Dutton Police Station is today. When I got there in the morning, Archie Leitch was already there. He asked me if I could keep the old pot hot for awhile - that is the steam engine - as he had to go to a McNeils for an hour. I said I could. When the men came to work there was no body to help me, so I got the belt on and started threshing wheat at about ten o'clock.

We finished and moved. Well, I never handled a traction engine in my life. It was a little know how and a lot of nerve. I got everything hooked up and got out on the road and moved down the road to the John McIntyre farm where Mrs. Jack Ross now lives. I got the machine into the barn and started threshing again and still no Archie Leitch came until the next morning. Dan McKay came back by about five o'clock and that was 78 years ago and those were the Happiest days of my life. The steam got into my blood and never came out.

The next year I started with Sandy Buchanan and worked for him for three years and then bought his outfit - a Waterloo engine. I worked it for eight years and then had the separator burnt in March in Peter B. S. McPherson's barn (farm next to my home) during a thunder and electrical storm. The next morning I had to go to London to the Conscription Board to see whether I was fit to be a soldier for the First World War. I passed the test but didn't need to go until November but the war ended before that.

In the spring of 1918 I went into London and bought a whole new outfit; traded in my old Waterloo engine and separator on a new George White engine - \$3,000. (\$25,000. today) and a White separator - over \$1800. I used these until the summer of 1926.

I moved to the first place to thresh in 1926 and sold out and took my team of horses and went home. I started back threshing in 1927 and bought an International Gas tractor and ran it four years. I made the worst mistake of my life by buying a gas outfit and

been sorry ever since. It was no comparison to steam but I stuck with it for forty years but was a headache all the time.

In 1929 I bought the Rumley - Oil Pull 25-40 horsepower and a Goodison separator. I've used three George White separators, and a Goodison machine still remains in my barn, I bought it about 1932 when I traded in two smaller separators. Three years before I sold the Rumley I replaced the steel wheels with rubber tires. The Rumley was sold in August 1952 to a Mr. Wilson at Campbellville, Ontario. A few years later in the 1960's I recognized it from the 401 highway in a barnyard near Milton - where it had been running a machine threshing oats.

For two years before selling the Rumley I threshed with a John Deere A.R. gas tractor and continued until I quit. A second John Deere A.D. was bought in 1950, and used for threshing.

Besides the wheat, oats, clover and all seed threshing, I purchased in 1926 a Bean Mill but for two years after I got it I never used it because of it being too wet and then blight hit the beans. In all my threshing of grain and seed, I threshed only one field of rye and that was for Jack Campbell - on the old brick yard farm north of West Lorne. There were ninety loads and all threshed in one day.

It would take me a year to write all the happenings of my threshing days. I've travelled many miles during those years as my route was in Dunwich from my home on the second concession to Dutton and west as far as Clachan in Aldborough and north along the Thames River and across the river into Middlesex and south of West Lorne.

After I quit the steam, I didn't call it threshing!