

RODNEY CHEESE FACTORY

About 1875, D.G. McArthur, a young farmer from North Alboro, purchased land north of the Canada Southern Railroad, on the west side of Jane Street and erected a two-storey Cheese Factory, with his dwelling upstairs. He soon organized his milk routes and many patrons built milk stands opposite their farms the height of a wagon. The men had long routes and needed strong teams of horses to pull the heavy loads. The milk was collected early in the morning so it was still sweet on arrival at the factory. The driver took back to each farmer a share of the whey for his calves and pigs.

Mr. McArthur was soon turning out great quantities of No.1 Cheese and continued to do so until about 1882, when he sold his business and moved to Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Wm. Johnston, who had just married Christie Hillman, left the farm and moved to town, where he purchased this business and carried on the making of cheese, turning out many tons of No.1 cheese during the summers, and renting his curing room during the winters to Hueston and Southerland of Glencoe, as a roller-skating rink.

By 1888, Mr. Johnston decided to go into the Confectionary business in Rodney. He sold the Cheese business to Arthur Dickinson from the Aylmer district, and after a few years this property changed hands, the business closed up, the factory was sold and moved off the lot to the corner of Jane and Victoria Streets.

This building was used as a livery, carriage and harness stable, with the basement for the horses, and the upstairs as a hay and feed storage and living-quarters for the caretaker. During the night of September, 1915, this building was burned, together with the contents, including eight horses. The caretaker, James Horton, escaped. This livery stable had had several managers, the last John McArthur who never re-built it. To-day the Legion Hall stands on this site.

Written by: E.G. Lusty

E. G. Lusty



Early Fisheries at Port Glasgow

1893

MOORE'S DOCK AND FISHERY

There is no record of the year this dock was built, but it was erected by a man named Moore, and built opposite Lot 1, Concession 13, Aldborough Township, and called Moore's Dock (after the builder). It was used for a number of years before 1872 when the Canada Southern Railroad came through Aldborough for shipping oak staves, cord wood, logs, bolts, and square timber on sailing vessels. On occasions, an excursion boat would take on and discharge passengers, which remained in use until August 9, 1894. On that date an excursion boat came along, gathering passengers for a picnic at Port Stanley. On that morning the steamer Lakeside came along to the various docks, picking up the passengers. The trip was fine going to Port Stanley; but by evening the wind had changed and the Lake had become very rough.

The boat managed to unload its passengers at Eagle, but they were afraid to tie up to the delapidated dock at Port Glasgow, so took all the passengers, including the Rodney Band, on to Moore's Dock, which was in better condition, but not much. They managed to get the passengers off near the outer end of the dock, but the walk to shore was very dangerous as there had been many supports washed away. This was the last boat to unload at Moor's Dock.

In March 1898 Bill Schrubb opened up a pound net fishery here and did a very thriving business, having very large catches of Herring---- as many as five tons out of one pound net---and many fine Sturgeon, which could be bought for fifty cents each - any size. Some of these fish weighed as much as 200 lbs. Mr. Schrubb continued to operate until 1908, when he sold to John Stewart, who carried on for 2 years. Then he disposed of it to George Gray. Mr. Gray ran the fishery, continuing to get very large catches of beautiful herring, which were often sold as

low as two cents per pound. For the most part they were shipped to New York and Chicago, but at times a fishing tug would come over from Cleveland and get the fish at the nets, thus saving the expense of boxes, packing, and icing.

When the heavy runs were on, you could buy all the fine herring you wanted for twenty-five cents per dozen, or less. Mr. Gray continued to fish on these grounds until his health failed in 1945, when he sold to Jas. Hunphrey and Sons, of West Lorne. They are still operating there, and doing a good business (November 1953).

Lake Erie fish were always rated as being about the best fish produced from the Great Lakes, as there is plenty of food in this Lake; the fish were always fat.

Written by: Mr. E.G. Lusty

"PORT GLASGOW FISHERIES"

The first person to try pound net fishing at Port Glasgow was Daniel Paterson in 1880, who came here from Eagle. He built the house at the top of the hill overlooking Cnoch Nellie, which is still standing and owned by the present fisherman.

Mr. Paterson, assisted by David Dibble who was an expert fisherman from Munroe, Michigan, fished several pound nets and caught thousands of pounds of beautiful fish, landing them at the old Henry Dock, which was built in 1858 by George Henry. Many times in the season these nets would produce more than 5000 lbs. of fish each morning, and would continue to do so for many days. Often they would have as many as 50 fine sturgeon, which could be bought (your choice) for fifty cents each. When they caught such quantities, the prices would drop very low, and many times there was not a bid to be had.

Canada could handle only a small percentage of such catches, and many times the American market was so glutted that the buyers would not offer a bid of any kind, so the fish were left in the nets.

Mr. Paterson continued catching plenty of fish, in spite of heavy storms which destroyed his nets, and poor markets, until 1887. In that year there was such a severe storm that it tore everything to pieces, including fish house and boats, and he decided to sell out and go to Detroit. His daughters continue to come back and visit the old home and surroundings nearly every year.

He sold to Absalom Hoover, with Isaac Thomas as foreman. They operated for some time when Hoover sold out to Thomas. He carried on till 1906, catching plenty of fish. Then after several poor months and bad storms, he sold to George Kay and Frank Randall. They fished only one year and the sold to D.A. McKillop. He continued in the

business for a few years, successfully, when he sold to John and Ernest Miller. After a very short time they sold it to Harry Dromgole, of Wallace-town, and Fred Galbraith of Morpeth.

They were fishing two strings of nets--about six nets in the West string and four nets in the East string. About 1918 they sold the East four nets to Herb Taylor and Frank Galbraith. For the first year they all continued to use the same fish house and tarring equipment. One day, while tarring nets, the vat boiled over, burning all the nets in the vat, a new up-to-date fish house and all equipment. This was a very heavy loss for both companies. Fred Galbraith sold his interest to Bud Skinner of West Lorne; and Taylor and Frank Galbraith moved to the east side of Cnoch Nellie, buying from George Kay the old Henry dock site and the S.B. Morris cottage.

In March 1921 Taylor sold his half interest to E.G. Lusty, the business then going under the name of Lusty and Galbraith. They built a new fish house, as there was none on that site, and continued as partners until March 1927, when Galbraith sold to Lusty. Mr. Lusty enlarged the business to 8 nets, and carried on until January 1943, when he sold to Clifford Graham of St. Thomas, who operated until the Spring of 1949. At that time he sold to James Jones, Harold Baker, and Bruce Sheeler of West Lorne. They are enjoying good fishing. (1953)

After Fred Galbraith sold his interest to Bud Skinner, the firm's name was Dromgole and Skinner. In 1920 Harry Dromgole sold his interest to Duhcan McMillan, and the business was then called Skinner and McMillan. They continued to operate the west string of nets until 1948 when McMillan retired from business, selling to Donald Gray (son of Jos. Gray). To-day (December 1953) the business is run under the name Skinner and Gray.

Written by: Mr. E.G. Lusty

"THE HISTORY OF EARLY WATER MILLS"

Colonel Talbot built a grist mill at Tyrconnell, which ground flour for the district; but during the War of 1813 the invaders burned the mill and in 1819 the Colonel gave the mill stones to Peter McKellar who built the first grist mill in Aldborough, on Creek 16, north of No.3 Hy, on the farm now owned by Mr. Murray McLean, Lot 5. As the creek was 16 miles from Colonel Talbot's farm, it was called Creed 16. Later Mr. McKellar added a saw-mill.

As time went on, other saw-mills were built on this stream, until there were four in all. About 1824 the first saw-mill was built by John C. Gillies, north of the 14th Concession, near Lake Erie, Lot 5. Another was built on Lot 5 North of Middle Street known as the Livingstone Mill. The fourth one, known as the McIntyre Mill was on Lot 5, north side of Hogg Street. As these mills were run by water, large dams were built forming ponds, as plenty of water was needed for operation.

Immense quantities of lumber were cut from the virgin forests. This had to be hauled by oxen, and what few horses there were at that time, to Port Glasgow, where it was loaded on scows and taken out to the vessels, which in turn carried it to markets, mostly in the United States.

In 1858, a pier was built at Port Glasgow by Mr. George Henry. This extended out in the Lake quite a distance, so that a vessel drawing 6 to 12 feet could come along side and load. It was quite a common thing to see two or three vessels loading at one time.

Another mill was built on the Fleming Creek, Lot 1, Gore Concession, run by Neil and Dougald Walker. The lumber from