

this mill was shipped from Clearville. This mill also supplied lumber to build the Baptist Church in Rodney.

These mills were all kept busy as long as there was enough water to make power to run the saw; but as the land became settled, cleared, and drained, the ponds dried up. Steam mills then came into being. The Walker mill reverted to steam.

Written by: Mrs. E.G. Lusty

SAW, PLANING AND SHINGLE MILL

Erected by Stoddard and Stewart.

In 1863, these men arrived from Shrewsbury, near Blenheim, and purchased from Wm. Hoskins of Centerville five acres of land beside the Forest Inn, on Lot 6, Gore Concession, for a mill site. They brought with them Albert Humphrey, their foreman; Luther Carpenter, storekeeper; Henry Newcombe and Neil Sinclair, blacksmiths; and other men to assist in the erection of buildings required. They first erected several houses for their men on the extreme north end of the grounds, then a store on the south end, with the upstairs as a boarding house and living quarters for Albert Humphrey. The blacksmith shop was erected across the road on Lot 7, opposite the mill. They then proceeded to get out the timbers for the mill, which had to be hewed in the woods. The mill was soon erected and was placed about the center of the lot. By the time it was finished, there were many logs on hand.

The mill was a good one and capable of manufacturing lumber quickly. While it was running the men had to work fourteen hours a day for their working day: two hours before breakfast, and two hours after supper. The district was being settled very fast and required a lot of building material. What was not required immediately was drawn by horses to Port Glasgow - two loads each day - and loaded on vessels for larger centers. By the end of the first year, many farmers had erected buildings on their lands and the whole district was being settled. Their mail had to come from either Wardsville or New Glasgow, which was about seven miles to either place.

On January 10, 1865, along with other travellers who were guests at the Forest Inn, came the Post Master General. During the evening the men from the mill and guests were sitting around discuss-

ing everything in general, and finally the matter of a Post Office was suggested. Centerville would be a logical place for a Post Office, and it was decided to arrange for it; but the name did not appeal to the group as suitable. It was finally agreed that Rodney would be a better name, after Admiral Rodney, and that Albert Humphrey, who was the Foreman, would be the proper person to be Post Master.

Mrs. Humphrey was running a boarding house upstairs, over the Carpenter Store, where Mr. Humphrey had his office. There was an outside entrance, and he agreed to add the extra equipment, and accepted the position at a salary of \$30.00 per year. The contract was signed January 10, 1865, and as soon as the equipment arrived the office was opened. It brought lots of people from many miles around, and this added much business to the Forest Inn, in fact, so much that Stoddard and Stewart decided to build a hotel. They purchased an extra piece of land from Mr. Hoskins and erected a very fine hotel, so they could reap some of the business. By January 1867 the hotel was completed, named the Rodney House, and Mr. O.B. Sheldon from Blenheim was engaged as manager.

At this time the mill was manufacturing great quantities of lumber and dressing it through the planers for interior and exterior finish. Their shingle mill was steadily running and making great quantities of shingles out of the butts of the over-grown chestnut trees which the mill was unable to handle, and the teams could not load onto sleighs. These were cut into bolts in the woods and drawn by the cord - many of these chestnut trees were from 7 to 8 feet in diameter, with the odd one up to 10 feet.

Before 1871 this property changed hands to Dan McLaren and John McArthur. They carried on, cutting lumber and disposing of their surplus stock over the Dock at Port Glasgow until the Canada Southern Railway

began to run their trains through New Rodney in 1873, when the shipping was done there, and the Post Office was moved to New Rodney.

During the years from 1865 to 1872, inclusive, the Aldborough-Agricultural Society had been holding their Fairs on the mill grounds, and the upstairs of the mill was their Crystal Palace.

On June 2, 1877, this mill was burned down but rebuilt again and was kept running continuously until the early 80's, when it was traded to the Galley's of New Rodney for their business there. It was moved by them over to Lake Huron.

About 1874, the Carpenter Store had been sold to William and S.B. Morris and moved to New Rodney where they opened their general store. The Rodney House had been kept open by different managers until after the mill was taken away, then the main part was moved to New Rodney and is now owned by D.A. Scott & Son. It is used as an Auto Show Room. The kitchen part of the Hotel was being used by Mrs. Anderson (Baker) Coville, whose husband had been the last owner of the hotel, and it was in this kitchen that Eliza Lowry was murdered in 1905, which murder was never solved.

Written by: Mr. Ernest G. Lusty

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GALLEY'S STEAM MILL

About 1879 Galley and Sons built a saw, stave and grist mill in the Village of Rodney, opposite the end of Sanford Street, on Queen Street. This mill was kept running quite steadily most of the year. All their surplus lumber was loaded on the Canada Southern Railroad, and shipped to many points. About 1884 they traded this mill to McLaren and McArthur for their mill that was at Old Rodney, as it was then called. The new management carried on a good business for a few years when they sold to John Bale. After a few years, this mill was burned.

Many of the staves at this mill were made of large elm trees and manufactured into barrels in a cooper shop on the Keutch farm east of the creek, north side of Queen Street. These barrels were for apples, potatoes, sugar, beans, etc., and were manufactured by Dick Sands. After the mills burned down, Mr. Bale moved the cooper shop to another lot and had it made into a good house. (It is still standing in Rodney and the people owning it do not know what they are living in).

Written by: Mr. E.G. Lusty



Mill built by Wm. Mobray. Later run by Wm. Plater.
Rodney 1900



Old Gawley, McLAREN, McARTHUR^{rs}, Bale. saw, Stave^s, Grist Mill
Rodney. 1887

ROBERT MOWBRAY'S SAW AND SHINGLE MILL

After the Dock was built at Eagle in the middle sixty's, this mill was built on the top of the hill just across the road from the present West Lorne water works, west of the Graham Road. Lots of lumber was cut there until 1885 and the products were shipped from the Eagle Dock. At this time Mr. Mowbray decided to move the mill to Rodney. They dismantled the mill and rebuilt it on some acres of land a few rods north of Centre Street on the east side of the Furnival Road in Rodney. It was run by Robert Mowbray and sons Mack and Dan. They built a very nice saw and shingle mill and ran it to its full capacity for about three years when they sold their business to J.H. Greer and son William, who had come from West Lorne, where they had been running a similar mill but had been burned out.

When the Greers were living in West Lorne, Mr. J.H. Greer had, in the early fifties, been running a saw mill on Creek Sixteen, about one mile from Cnoch Nellie, and was shipping his lumber from the dock there. This was a water driven mill and had been built by John C. Gillies in 1824. This was the first saw mill built in Aldborough, and as it was the only mill for many miles around, had supplied all the lumber used in the early years. Mr. Wm. Greer built a very good house in Rodney across the road from the mill for his wife and small children, which Dorland Plyley owns and is living in to-day.

As the Greers were experienced and good lumber men, they were soon turning out of their plant well manufactured lumber, and buying and shipping good lumber to many markets. After carrying on for a few years, until Mrs. J.H. Greer's health failed and she passed away, they decided to sell out and leave Rodney. They went to Searcy, Arkansas, to go into the same kind of business there.

There were many companies interested in buying including:

James Hay & Co. Woodstock; The Aylmer Furniture Co. Ltd.; Mr. Wright, with Mr. Ashton Fletcher as Solicitor. The business was enlarged by making waggon hubs, which were turned out of very tough wood of the Pepperidge tree, which was very hard to split, and also cutting out shooks for chair legs and spindles etc. This part of the business did not prove very profitable, so they soon ceased making these two products and went back into the manufacturing of lumber, with Mr. Wm. Flater as manager after 1893.

They carried on in this way, manufacturing good stock and plenty of it until September 11, 1895, when Mr. Flater purchased the business, continuing to buy and sell logs and lumber until May 3, 1903. He purchased a large building used as a bean picking plant from S.B. Morris, which stood on the side of the M.C.R.R. (now N.Y.C.), and had it moved onto the back of his land on Ridout Street. He engaged James Drake as foreman and started a basket factory, which was the first basket factory in Rodney. They soon installed a Veneer machine and went into the basket business in earnest. They carried on the lumber business as usual, also. He took his sons into the company, which was a thriving business until March 5, 1911, when the mill burned down with all the machinery in it at a total loss.

The basket business was not destroyed. The Flaters not wishing to rebuild their mill, again sold that building to Mr. Neil Campbell, carriage-maker, who moved it to a lot west of the Furnival Road, on the north side of Queen Street. He, and Jack Jennings, blacksmith, went into partnership, building carriages etc. By 1918 Mr. Campbell had died; and the building was sold as a garage and run by Neil Ford for some years. Mr. Flater and his sons started a new basket factory at Forest.

Written by: Ernest G. Lusty