

of many a wild and boisterous frolic. With stables full of tired horses and oxen, wagons and carts full of merchandise, hungry and rough teamsters clamouring to be fed and a cellar full of liquor, the nights were not always peaceful.

The Indians, too, soon learned to like the hot stuff they could so easily obtain at the Stakes, and it was the usual thing to see loads of them returning home with none sober enough to drive, but all bundled in the bottom of the wagon, and the horses started for home, sometimes on the run down the middle of the street, sometimes in the ditch, where they would leave part of their loads to wander to some farm house and ask for a night's lodging in house or barn.

Then the religious life of the Five Stakes was scarcely less boisterous. The first preachers to visit the place were two brothers by the name of Ryerson, Episcopal Methodists. They held meetings in the log school house on the corner of lot 41, east side, N. Branch. Shortly afterward came, a Wesleyan Methodist by the name of Jackson. Then the trouble began. Each denounced the other in strong language, Jackson swearing that the Ryersons had shot at him, and wearing his hat in the meeting with a bullet hole through the crown.

In June 1856 John Spackman sold to the trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist and New Connection, part of lot 41, northwest corner, where they erected a frame church. Here they worshipped in peace for a time, and were noted for their fine choir, which rendered the most difficult anthem with orchestral accompaniment, and had good solo singing. But peace was not yet. Brotherly love had a hard time to get a foothold. Often the two leaders were asked to fill the pulpit in the absence of the minister, and jealous feelings arose among them. One Sunday, one brother called on another to lead in prayer. The other responded that he would if he thought he meant it, but he didn't and wouldn't. This was followed by a separation of the congregation and those that withdrew built a brick church on lot 40, southeast side, F. R. near the cemetery. This was called the Bible Christian church, and was well attended for 7 or 8 years, when peace once more drew her mantel over the village and under the ministration of Rev. R. Jackson a new church, the United 1875 Methodist, was built which now stands on the northeast side. The Bible Christian church was closed and torn down and the village united in one congregation once more.

In the 1860 part of lot 42, northeast side, was given by D. Bowlby for a school. A frame, and now a brick school house have occupied this site ever since.

About 1855 Sir Francis Hincks, who has just been appointed Governor of the Windward Islands, passed through the village on a tour of the country. He was met at the Five Stakes by the St. Thomas Brass and Fife bands. The Hon. Colonel Talbot was a



frequent visitor at the village, often stopping over night at the hotels. All the rails and cars for the first Grand Trunk Railway at London and the first engine passed through this village on the way from Port Stanley, the engine being drawn by sixteen yoke of oxen. Also heavy loads of Mexican silver dollars passed along to pay the military then stationed in London, and after pay day silver was plentiful in Five Stakes. During the rebellion 200 soldiers were quartered over night.

After the building of the London and Port Stanley R.R. Five Stakes became a quieter place. A temperance lodge was formed. The Sons of Temperance soon closed the hotels and a more moral atmosphere prevailed the place. Rev. R. Henderson, pastor of the church, was the first worthy Patriarch of Henderson Division Sons of Temperance. The hall built by the Sons still stands and the young people that composed its members have become respectable citizens, industrious and intelligent. Among them are Rev. T. Voaden, Rev. J. Ayearst, J.F. and A. Voaden, Collegiate Institute teachers and principals: Dr. Hicks, Watford; F. Travers, lawyers, Toronto; H. Ayearst, merchant, Winnipeg; J. Orr, China Hall, St. Thomas; E. J. Payne; B. C. B. Wade, California; W. Merrill, South Manitoba; Mrs. Grant, J. and W. Arnold, Dakota; F. Arnold, Granton; Mr. J. S. Finlay, St. Thomas; Mrs. Orchard, Los Angeles, Cal.; Mr. G. Spackman, Glencoe; Dr. Kennedy, St. Thomas; Mrs. Elliott; Tyrconnell; Mrs. Fitcher, Talbotville; D. Boughner; L. Bowlby, H. Branton, Misses Milley, St. Thomas; J. Roberts, traveler, Toronto; W. Roberts, Winnipeg; Edward Trehern, Manitoba; Mrs. J. Bainard, townline; Mrs. Finn, Galt; J. Boughner, St. Thomas, Mrs. Connelly, Hespeler; Mrs. Morley, Chicago; Mrs. J. Orr, Southwold; Mrs. H. Ayearst, Mount Royal, Manitoba; Miss Boughner, St. Thomas; George Boughner, St. Louis; Ed. and J. Boughner, St. Thomas; Mrs. Parsons, Wyandotte, Mich.; Mr. J. Tucker, St. Thomas; Mrs. T. Axford, W. and J. Tucker, Wyandotte, Mich.; and among others living in and around Talbotville at present are William, John and Warren Smith; Daniel and Zeb. Boughner; R. Travers; M. Hunt; J. Barnes; W. Knight; R. and E. Gilbert; R. Hicks; D. Bowlby; J. Coulter; A. Tiller; F. Hunt; J. Orr, W. Voaden; W. Bennett; S. Smith; S. Payne; W. Ackford; F. Merrill; E. Barnes;

Among the oldest inhabitants now living are Mrs. D. Boughner, Mrs. Wilcox, St. Thomas; Mrs. Jane Marr, Union; Mrs. P. and M. Matherson; Winnipeg; Mrs. and Mrs. Sam Day, St., Thomas; Mr. and Mrs. J. Stacey, St. Thomas; Mr. and Mrs. C. Gilberts, Talbotville; Mrs. J. Tucker, Southwold; Mr. and Mrs. F. Payne, Paynes Mills; Mrs. J. Smith, Talbotville; Mr. and Mrs. J. Hicks, Talbotville; Miss Spackman, Mr. J. Spackman, Mrs. Sam. Knight, Mr. and Mrs. W. Smith; Mr. W. Voaden; Mrs. W. Axford; Mr. and Mrs. Travers;

Among the men and women who may be said to have exercised the best of influence in the village are Mr. and Mrs. J. Stacey, brother of Thomas Stacey, St. Thomas, born in Devon, England, came to this country in 1856, married a Miss Weir of London township, learned the wagon building with his father, kept the



Talbotville Post office and general store in 1858, and retired in 1877. He was a man of refinement, a great lover of music and flowers, played the flute in the church orchestra, and kept a garden that was the envy of the village. Mrs. Stacey was a strict but pleasant disciplinarian and chaperone for the young ladies of the village. Mr. W. Roberts came from Cornwall, Eng., in 1857 married a Miss Dingle, a sister of Mrs. Miller, wife of the Deputy Minister of Education. He was a good carpenter and a class leader in the Methodist church. He had one leg amputated at the age of 60, but lived many years after, and was much loved by all who knew him. Mrs. Roberts was a devout woman and a great worker for the church.

Mr. J. Tucker, of Devon, England, married a Miss Stacey, a sister of J. Stacey, a carpenter by trade, a devout man, a class leader and with Mr. Roberts Sunday School superintendent for many years. Mr. Tucker also had lost one leg, but was so energetic and agile he could do almost anything any other man could in the way of work. It was rather a strange sight to see the two men leading class in the church at the same time, each with his crutch. Mrs. Tucker is well known for her kindness to the sick, and her busy life in the church.

Mr. F. Payne took an active part in the temperance agitation. He gave and hewed the timber for the hall, and was Worthy Patriarch for many years. Mrs. Payne was an active member of the church, and a Sunday school teacher.

Among the odd characters of those early days was Thomas Perkins, a miller and religionist. He, when dressed for church or for a visit, wore a long, fawn frock coat, with brass buttons, a high fawn hat, stock and high, stiff collar, kid gloves and a cane. He would arrive at church before the minister and getting up in the front seat would wave his arms and shout his disapproval of the way of the young, telling them, "It's the Devil makes thee laugh so, and thee'll sure to come to a bad end for they pride." He was very fervent in his "Amens," calling out every few minutes while the minister was preaching. He carried the mail for some years between St. Thomas and Talbotville.

Another religious enthusiast was a Mrs. Pie, a little English woman, who wore a plain dress and a poke bonnet, and shouted "Amen, Praise the Lord" in the shrillest voice at all time and on all occasions when at religious meeting. She lived about half a mile west on Back Street.

Another well remembered man was Daved Wedge, a little wee man, who wore a long grey coat and fur cap with all the fur long before wore off. He carried a leather bag with rosin and solder and a soldering iron and went from house to house mending broken utensils. He was quite a gossip and was often welcomed on that account. When asked if he would "sit up and have a bite," he would always respond; "I never say no, for my grandfather once refused a good meal through being too polite, and had to go without anything to eat for three days afterwards." He had a son whom he called "Aaron because he said when he called him son,



EARLY DAYS OF TALBOTVILLE  
ARE RECALLED BY RESIDENTS

Mr. and Mrs. John Orr Recall Life in Village of Talbotville

Royal Years Ago

LONDON, Ont. -- Talbotville Royal, located on the old London and Port Stanley highway, was one of the important post offices of Elgin County in the earlier days of the settlement. It had received its appellation from Colonel Thomas Talbot.

Mail was brought into Talbotville Royal by horse and rig from St. Thomas. It went out to two other post offices in the district, Frome (on highway No. 3) and Calder, in Delaware Township. Every letter bore the stamp "Talbotville Royal". Prior to the establishment of this famous post office, the corner was known as "Five Stakes".

Mr. and Mrs. John Orr, of Talbotville, who are spending the winter with their daughter, Mrs. D. S. Breen, Dufferin Avenue, recently recalled many interesting incidents connected with the early life of Talbotville Royal and vicinity. A grandson of Col. William Orr, who organized a brigade during the Rebellion of 1837 and who was a close friend of Col. Thomas Talbot, Mr. Orr has heard many tales of the days when Talbot, mounted on his fine steed, rode up to the door of the Orr homestead.

The estate of Col. Orr was located on the line between Westminster and Southwold. Mrs. Orr, however, was born in the Village of Talbotville Royal over 80 years ago, her father, John Stacey, being one of the early postmasters and merchants. Mr. Stacey has also conducted a blacksmith and woodworking shop at the corners. It was in the year 1841, when a lad of 17, that he came, with his father, from England to St. Thomas, father and son opening a blacksmith and wagon shop on William Street, St. Thomas. 6. 1824

Telling of Talbotville Royal, the village she knew so well, Mrs. Orr recalled the little white frame New Connection Methodist Church, where she was organist for many years. Among her choir members were William Arnold, William Boughner, Miss Arnold, Mrs. Coulter, Mrs. Bowlby. The old school at Talbotville Royal was also an important educational institution of the district. About 100 scholars were enrolled. Dr. Archibald Sinclair, who later practiced in Paris, Ont., was one of the school masters. Dougald Graham was another. Gillean McLean, however, was the instructor who introduced new methods in teaching geography.

Among pupils who became widely known in the educational, religious and business field, were the Voadens. The late Theodore Hunt, who acted as city solicitor of Winnipeg for many years, was also a former pupil of Talbotville Royal school.



"Activities of women in the early village centred about the church. In the homes they engaged in spinning, quilting and hooking mats. The Reilly family, who lived a little distance from the village, carried on an extensive weaving business, turning out carpets and flannel goods for dresses, shirting and blankets.

"The majority of villagers kept a cow and chickens and thus were enabled to have a supply of fresh cream, milk, butter and eggs. In the summer time, women and girls took their pails and went away early in the morning to a distant wild berry patch," Mrs. Orr states.

Village children had their winter sports, sleigh riding, skating and tobogganing. Sleighs were homemade in that day.

Written by Mr. & Mrs. John C. Orr.

Pioneer  
settlers.



Mr. & Mrs. John C. Orr, Elmdale Farm. - taken on  
Christmas Day, 1932. - Picture sent by their daughter.  
Miss Mary B. Orr, London, Ont. - Dec. 21st, 1953.



## Days of Long Ago at Talbotville

The following paper was prepared and read by Mrs. J. W. Coulter at the July meeting of the Talbotville-Paynes Mills Women's Institute held at the home of Mrs. John R. Auckland, on July 17, 1928. Mrs. Coulter was formerly Miss Ellen Bowlby, daughter of the late Alexander Bowlby and had lived in this community all her life up to this time. After the death of her husband in 1935, she moved to St. Thomas where she resided until her death on November 26, 1940 in her 90th year.

"Youth lives in anticipation of the future. Age is reminiscent of the past. The happiness of twilight hours lies in living over again the story of the busy days, and when one has had seventy-seven years in a young and growing country, this memory becomes a gallery of magnificent dimensions in which hang countless pictures of the good old days.

Mr. + Mrs. Bowlby  
In 1817, my grandfather and grandmother moved on the old home, now occupied by Mr. James Travers, Talbotville (now in 1946 by Mr. John Longhurst). They took up the government grant of 200 acres, then just a dense forest. They had six sons. My father was two years old when they moved up from Simcoe, and the baby a few months old, was carried on a pillow. They had to go to mill to Simcoe, a distance of about sixty miles with just a trail blazed through the woods, so took several days to make the journey.

There were two more families who moved here about the same time, - the Smiths, and the Boughners. These families grew up together and then married. I think about seven Bowlbys married seven Boughners and all settled right around here.

My grandfather died at an early age and left my grandmother with eleven children to raise, no easy matter in those days. The family grew up, married and scattered. Three of my uncles went out and settled in the bush, one in Adelaide and two in Brook township. There was a spare time between sugar-making and seed-ing in the spring, when we would go out to visit them. Talk about mud, it would roll off the wheels then. The first vehicle we had was a one-seated wagon, and my sister and I sat on chairs in the back. Then we bought a three-seated democrat, but no backs on the seats. When anyone died, this vehicle generally carried the corpse or the bearers; no hearses, no flowers in those days. My cousin still owns the democrat. My father was a good singer. We first had a Jew's harp, then an accordeon, then a dulcimer, and finally a melodeon.

I remember well my first school teacher, Mr. Neil Mumroe, a big fine-looking man. I still have a ticket, a reward of merit for being good. We had good teachers, but had no copy-books until we were about twelve years of age, and no examinations. We went to school as big as we liked. I know of girls who attended until they were twenty-five years of age, and big boys went to school in winter and worked at home in the summer.