

Community Activities and Customs and Ideals

Community activities are attended by nearly every one in the community. The main community activities are the Sunday School picnic, the annual church fowl supper, and the Sunday School Christmas entertainment. The Sunday School picnic, although held in the middle of July, a very busy time of the year for nearly all of the members of the community, is attended by nearly every one who can possibly get there. The Christmas entertainment, held at the church, is an event that the children and grown-ups alike look forward to with great interest. Everyone in the surrounding district attends the annual fowl supper of the Women's Association. This is the occasion when hearty appetites enjoy large helpings of roast chicken, mashed potatoes and home-made pies.

The members of the community have definite ideas toward the progress of this community. There is talk of making Talbotville a Police village. Plans have been made and approved for street-lighting in the village. Last year an adequate drainage system was laid in order to take care of the drainage needs of the community. The community is very ambitious towards advancement, but it will be quite a while before there will be any noticeable change.

Conclusion

In the last seventy-five years there have been many changes in the community of Talbotville. In the years to come there will probably be more and greater changes. It has progressed from a little pioneer settlement to a thriving farming community. Sometime in the future it will probably become a suburb of the expanding industrial city of St. Thomas, but all of the residents of Talbotville hope that it will always remain the friendly, happy little community that it is now.



—Photos by Stollery.

A LARGE OIL-BRUSH PAINTING of Colonel Thomas Talbot, founder of the Talbot Settlement, adorned the Grand Central's new Colonel Talbot Room at the Chamber of Commerce dinner there Tuesday evening. The painting is the work of a local artist, Ray Eberts. It will have a permanent place in the new room.

May 21st. 1803 - landed at Port Talbot Ont.

Feb. 6th. 1853, - died. at London, Ont.

How Talbotville Got Its Name.

Talbotville is the only community in Elgin County which bears the family name of Colonel Thomas Talbot — and he gave it the name himself.

In the early days, it was known locally as "Five Stakes," — a name derived from the fact that five roads converge at this point.

In his frequent journeys, to and from London, Colonel Talbot usually stopped for the night, at an hotel in the little village. On one occasion, on his return from London, Ont., the thought came to him that this thriving, little community was deserving of a better name than "Five Stakes", so he renamed it. He used his family name, and called it "Talbotville Royal". This place still has the honour of bearing his name.

The first post-office was established in 1853, and given the official name of "Talbotville Royal Post Office" of Ontario. The first post-master was J. Cuthbertson, 1853.

Although one often hears the shorter name of Talbotville, the correct name is, in full, "Talbotville Royal."

Before the railway was built, it was an important village on the London and Port Stanley Gravel Road, for this road was the main thoroughfare to and from London.

To-day, it is a busy intersection of Highways Nos. 3 and 4. Through which thousands of tourist cars pass every year.

Perhaps, Colonel Talbot's high hopes for Talbotville Royal, on that far-away day when he named so honourably, have not been fully realized; the village was too close to the larger community, St Thomas, that bears his given name.

However, Talbotville Royal has maintained its own individuality and enjoyed much prosperity.

Talbotville Royal in 1837.

(then known as "Five Stakes.")

Mrs. Anna Brownell Jameson in her well-known book, "Winter Studies and Summer Rambles," makes reference to Talbotville, Ont.

On her journey, from London, Ont. to St. Thomas Ont. on way to visit Colonel Thomas Talbot at Port Talbot, she passed through Talbotville, then called Five Stakes, on a July day, 1837.

She says,

"We descended the Hill of Bears (south of London, Ont.) and proceeded through a beautiful plain, some times richly wooded, some times opening into clearings, and cultivated farms, till we came to place called "Five Stakes," where I found two or three tidy cottages, and procured some bread and milk."

(How we wish that Mrs. Jamieson had only told us a little more about Talbotville, on that long ago July day when she stopped so briefly to rest on her hard journey, by heavy waggon.!).

However, she continues,-

"The road here was no longer good, and we travelled slowly, and with difficulty for some miles. About five o'clock, we reached St. Thomas, one of the prettiest places I had ever seen. Here I found two or three inns, and at one of them, styled the "Mansion House Hotel," I ordered tea for myself, and then walked out. ----- The population of St. Thomas is, at present, rated at seven hundred, and it has doubled within two years. There are three churches and three taverns.

By the time my horses were refreshed, it was nearly seven o'clock. The distance to Port Talbot is about twelve miles, but hearing the road was good, I resolved to venture."

- "Winter Studies and Summer Rambles:"
by author, Mrs. Anna Brownell Jameson.

Page 100.

Contributed: June 1st, 1955.

Early St. Thomas Days Recalled

Thurs. Nov. 16 - 1930

Lt.-Col. I. D. Cameron Gives Illustrated Talk at Talbotville W. I.

TALBOTVILLE, Nov. 21. — The members of Talbotville Women's Institute and other residents of the community spent an interesting evening recently in the church hall when Lieut.-Col. I. D. Cameron, St. Thomas, gave an illustrated talk on "Early Days in St. Thomas and District."

The speaker prefaced his talk with several pictures of Col. Thomas Talbot and his early residences at Pt. Talbot, and spoke of Col. Talbot's early interest in this community for which he is said to have chosen the name "Talbotville Royal," which it still retains.

Mr. Cameron took his listeners on an imaginary trip with pictures, from Talbotville to St. Thomas, in the early days passing through the old toll-gate at the foot of sandymount Hill, stopping at foot of Blackwood's Hill to view the early settlement there, and then on up the hill as the struggling pioneer village gradually climbed upward and eastward. Stops were made to visit the various stores, shops, the market-place, and even the photograph gallery where the latest styles of that day were observed.

The trip then progressed eastward, down Talbot street and around the young, growing town, as the years passed on, and new business blocks, churches, and schools were rapidly appearing. The progress made by St. Thomas at that time was very rapid, in comparison with the slower growth up the hill at an earlier date. The first horse-drawn street cars, then the first electric cars were shown, and listeners were even taken on an imaginary trip around the city on a belt-line car, with the band entertaining with music on the way.

Later, the journey continued down the hill and out home again to Talbotville on an old "Traction Line" car, which played such a part in the life of this community, until 1918, when it ceased to operate.

The evening was much enjoyed by all, especially the older residents, who re-called many scenes remembered from childhood days. The speaker was introduced by Rev. A. R. Taylor, who later had charge of the lantern, and assisted in the success of the evening.

The program was arranged by Mrs. John McCormick, of St. Thomas, historical research convener, who later thanked the speaker. Musical numbers by Mrs. George Clinton, Mrs. F. Helkaa and Mrs. Ralph Auckland were much enjoyed.

In a short business session, the W. I. president, Mrs. A. E. Thomas reported that the overseas Christmas boxes had been mailed recently to the sister Institute at Bloxworth, Dorset, England, also that Christmas baskets would be distributed to all sick and shut-ins of the community.

Roll call was answered by mentioning an historical place visited, and also a display of antiques. An interesting collection of china, glass and other objects was on display.

Lunch was later served by Mrs. R. Turner, hostess of the evening, and her assistants, Mrs. E. Gunning, Mrs. L. Gunning, Mrs. Donald Stuart, Mrs. H. Clarke, Mrs. Donald McLellan, Miss Dorothy Waite, Mrs. F. Auckland, Mrs. H. Humphries, Mrs. A. E. Thomas.

The Christmas meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. F. Helkaa, Highway 3 and 4, on Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 20, with program in charge of Mrs. V. Martyn, and Mrs. A. W. Auckland. There will be an exchange of Christmas gifts and roll call, "A Christmas custom in our home."

Road Made Talbotville

TALBOTVILLE is the only community in Elgin County which bears the family name of Colonel Thomas Talbot—he gave it the name himself.

But the colonel's high hopes for Talbotville were not to be realized—the village was too close to the larger community that bears his given name, St. Thomas. Just a few miles down the road, across the flat and up the other side are the railway lines of the Michigan Central, the New York Central and the L. & P.S., and the population gathered there spelt the doom of Talbot's hope for a larger centre at Talbotville.

Despite this handicap, however, Talbotville has maintained its own individuality. At one time, situated where five roads met, it was called Five Stakes. Before the railway was built it was an important village on the London and Port Stanley gravel road, for this road was the main thoroughfare to and from London. The railway diverted all heavy traffic.

The years after the L. & P.S. was built were not kind to Talbotville, but the village is today making the most of its strategic location where busy No. 3 and No. 4 highways meet.

Here thousands of tourist cars pass every year, and modern service stations have sprung up to serve the travelers as they reach the junction. And with the still increasing use of highways, Talbotville is looking forward to at least a partial return of the prosperity it knew in the days before the railway was built.