

HISTORY
OF
KINSALE



By
VICTORIA A. MOWBRAY

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Victoria A. Mowbray, Brooklin, Ont., Aug., 1931.
(Formerly of Kinsale).

Kinsale is a small village about eight miles from Whitby, situated on the sixth concession line of Pickering Township in the County of Ontario. About one hundred years ago the first settler in Kinsale neighborhood, by the name of Wing Rogers, coming from Vermont to make a home for his family in the wilds of Canada, settled in the woods about a mile and a half west and north of Kinsale; cut down the bush, cleared a spot and set up the first dwelling in this vicinity. A couple of years later in 1833 Ralph Mowbray came from New York City with his family to hew out a home near the same place.

The land all around was owned by one Lord Emsley from England. Why he had possession of so much land I do not know. Surely it was not for its value for in one instance he gave a man fifty acres of land for chopping one sideroad one and one quarter miles long. Soon after the above families were settled in their homes, other settlers came in thick and fast, viz: McAvoy, Coultice, Dunn, Redman, Parkin, Sadler, Gibson, Adamson, Gee, Hyfield, Hortop, Salton, John Mackie, Lawton, Sylvester Mackey, Joseph Rogers, McBrien, Stevenson, Lawrence, Brignall, and others who all settled in and around Kinsale.

Among the early settlers not before mentioned was John Clerke who settled on the farm now owned by Victor Parkin. He hailed from Kinsale, Cork County, Ireland; and in all his journey did not find a name more suitable for our little village than that of his home town Kinsale which met with the approval of all concerned and still sounds good after the lapse of many years. The last member of Mr. Clerke's family, Elizabeth Clerke Mowbray, passed away a little over a year ago at the age of eighty-three years.

A few of the homes remain still in the family name but most of them have changed hands. Those remaining are A. Rogers, Sadler, Parkin, Dunn, H. Mowbray, McBrien, Lawton and Stevenson. All others have changed hands. The old Gibson and Mowbray homesteads are now owned by Carson; Hortop farm now owned by Harbron, Gold farm by Richardson, Redman by Wagg, Clerke by Victor Parkin, J. Mackie farm by H. Parkin, Sylvester Mackey by Charles Lidgett, and Joseph Rogers' farm by M. Gormley. Mr. Gormley's home has the distinction of being the only original log home in the vicinity, built when Joseph Rogers settled on the farm. It is still in use but so camouflaged by modern improvements that it can hardly be recognized. The farms on the corners have repeatedly changed hands. The farm on the east side is at present owned by Thomas Hirst, north west corner by Mr. Crews, and the south west corner is now occupied by Mr. W. Bell.

At one time Kinsale was quite a flourishing village. We had a Temperance Hall, harness shop, cheese factory, cider mill, general store and post office, blacksmith, carpenter, wagon shop, shoe store, church, quite a number of dwelling houses and a population of eighty.

The first church was built one mile west of the village, in 1849, at what is still known as Salem Corners. A community burying ground was there laid out. Wm. Gibson (F. W. Gibson's grandfather), I am told, was the first person to occupy a portion of that plot for his last resting place—"Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away." Since then a great host have rested there. The grounds have been twice enlarged to meet the demands of the Grim Reaper Death. This plot has been well cared for and is still for neatness and beauty a "joy to behold." The church still stands in fairly good condition and is used for funeral services and other occasions. I was once told an amusing incident, by one who was there at the time, which happened in this church a long time ago. A good old man noted for being just himself and nobody else, whose name I shall not mention, went, as was his custom, to prayer meeting on a cold winter night; was called upon by the minister to lead in prayer. In response he shouted "I cawn't, my feet's oo'er cau'd", plainly demonstrating that physical discomforts are not conducive to health of mind and heart. For a long time he has been peacefully resting in the old church yard. He lived to be a

very old man, away up in the nineties, and after he was unable to get about, his open Bible, on a little stand before him, was his constant companion until the last leaf of life was turned to be continued in the next. Later on in history the need was felt for a church at Kinsale which was duly erected in the year 1854 and was used by the Methodists until it was considered unsafe, the foundation having given away. In 1929 the residents decided to build a new one. This was made possible by the generosity of a former resident together with the generous contributions of the community. All worked together with a will and succeeded in erecting a very fine new church, its beautiful memorial windows a grand tribute to the energy and generosity of the present generation. We hope they will long live to enjoy its privileges and be greatly blessed by being faithful to their trust.

The first store was opened by John Fairless followed by Mr. Levi Mackey who carried on a successful business for a number of years then sold out to Mr. Willis, whose successor was Mr. Alvin Orvis. The latter sold out to Mr. John Rodd and later it became the firm of Rodd & Mowbray. Now it is showing up the colors of a chain store under the name of R. V. Mowbray.

The harness shop on N.W. corner was carried on by Joseph Sadler during his short life in Kinsale, then torn down. Thomas Brignal had a wagon shop just west of Mr. Sadler. Mr. B.

Weatherall started a cheese factory which was quite active for a few years then proved a failure. Mr. George Salton operated a cider mill and turning lathe. The shoe store was successfully carried on by Mr. Richard Brignal who kept a good supply of footwear and had a thriving business until he was called to his reward. He was succeeded by his own son Mark, but the competition of large firms and machinery finished his business, so our shoe store was closed. Mr. John Lawrence our genial carpenter, who was ever ready to give a hand in any kind of building or woodwork, was always faithful to his trust until he received the summons to lay down his tools. His son Edward faithfully kept up his father's work until he too was called away. The first blacksmith of my recollection was Mr. John Hortop, then Mr. James Foley who was succeeded by a Mr. Allen for a short time. Mr. Allen was followed by Mr. Ben Wagner, a faithful worker and a man of genius, who held the post for many years until his health gave out. During his regime the shop and house were destroyed by fire. By the kindness and sympathy of the surrounding neighborhood a new home and shop were soon erected which afforded better accommodation than the old buildings.

Our village has been five times visited by fire and there are three unsightly gaps still showing where new buildings will probably not be erected. Mr. Wagner did a good business here until failing health made it necessary for him to give up. The smithy and home were then bought by Mr.

James Pengelly who carried on for several years until he found a more lucrative position in the village of Brooklin. Since he left there has not been much done in that line owing to the use of cars, tractors, and other machinery which do not seem to require so many trips to the shop.

The Sons of Temperance flourished for a time in the sixties, then dwindled and their hall standing on the southeast corner was bought by the church officials and moved to where it now stands. It was once destroyed by fire then rebuilt and has done duty for Sunday School and other community activities for some time.

Before we had a regular mail the residents had to go to Hamer's Corners, east of Whitby, for their mail; afterwards to Whitby. In a few years time we had a mail delivery from Whitby to Kinsale and across to Brougham every day. The post office was in connection with the store, although for a time Mr. Weatherall had charge of it in his house. It reverted to the store and was there looked after until 1908 when the system was changed and we had rural mail delivery at our doors where every swain or business man could get his expected letters at first hand instead of taking a long tramp for them at night after a hard day's work. Our route is called Route 1, Brooklin. So Kinsale as a postal center is done.

The first school house was built at Salem Corners on the Hyfield place. Joseph Gillespie and Geo. Gamble are names of two of the teachers.

In 1852 the Union School Section No. 2 was formed and a frame school house was built on Mr. Lawton's farm. Mr. Tilley was the first teacher, then a Mr. Ganton in 1855. Up to this time parents paid an amount agreed upon for the tuition of each child. The school system was then changed to what was called free school. The residents were taxed to pay the expenses of the school and every child could go. Later on in the twentieth century it was made compulsory for each child to attend school until fourteen years old. In 1860 a brick school was built on the same site, which still stands as one of the best equipped rural schools in the County. Many of the boys and girls who received their early training there are taking their places in the higher ranks of life both socially and commercially.

The old oxcart and waggon trails, old log bridges of the past have been supplanted by fine iron and cement bridges which add to the beauty of our country; and paved roads so widened that they are perilously near some of our dwellings. Hills have been cut down, and everything possible has been done for the tourists who now frequent the roads, to make travelling by motor a joy and comfort; and woe betide the oxcart, waggon or carriage, which in these times would dare obstruct its path. Our Kinsale Highway is scheduled Highway No. 7.

One change I am pleased to record is the abolition of public grog shops, which in early times

were dotted along the roads about two miles apart, where the weary traveller could rest and slake his thirst to his hearts content with "real good whiskey", and would often loose sight of the fact that he had had enough. This improvement is not as satisfactory as it might be when we take into consideration the present speed of travelling which still brings those places objectionably near. We hope for still better conditions in the future for the rising generation. Mrs. Richardson's corner had the honor of catering to the inhabitants in the vicinity of Kinsale, a Mr. Snell being the proprietor.

Only two of the former residents of Kinsale aspired to municipal honors: Sylvester Mackey and R. R. Mowbray. Latterly two respective sons of their worthy sires are following in their footsteps: Charles Mackey as Reeve of Whitby Township and R. E. Mowbray as Councillor in Pickering Township.

Our women too have not been behind in doing their part towards the advancement of community welfare. Over thirty years ago in 1897 a young woman married a farmer at Stoney Creek, and being entirely ignorant of the requirements of a farmer's wife, conceived the idea of starting a society to help those who were in a similar situation. It was duly organized and named Women's Institute. Kinsale Branch was the next one organized the same year. Charter Members: Mrs. Royal Rogers, Mrs. Clarkson

Rogers, Mrs. John Seldon, Mrs. Joseph Harbron, Mrs. Ralph R. Mowbray, Mrs. Lovell Harrison, Miss F. Pearce. It is still going strong and has been a great help to us all in our homes and in social work. The movement is now world wide. Our women are also actively interested in church and other community activities.

A great many changes have taken place during the past century. Commodious barns and comfortable dwelling houses of metal, brick, lumber or cement have taken the places of the log barns and cabins of earlier times. Homespun yarn, home woven clothing and tallow candles are unknown to the present generation. Electric lights take the place of candles. Automobiles, trucks and areoplanes supplant the carts, waggons and carriages of former times, while tractors supply the horse power for much of the farm work. We are living in a new world. The time is past when maidens walked through the bush to Oshawa to buy a new bonnet, carrying their shoes and stockings until near their destination in order that they might have them looking well on their arrival in town. They walked back the same day with their purchases which did duty much longer than they do now. When men would shoulder a bag of wheat and carry it many miles to have it ground, then would carry the flour home in the same way. Those times are past, and we are glad that they have changed, but we can scarcely realize how much we owe our forefathers, the pioneers of our race, for their powers of endur-

ance and sterling qualities; and it behooves us to be worthy sons and daughters of such worthy sires and mothers.

I cannot close without alluding to cherished memories of the old church at Kinsale which was not lacking for leaders in prayer and song. I think I can still hear Mr. and Mrs. Hortop, Mrs. Mackey, Mr. Dennis, Mr. Brignall, Mr. Brown, and others. Also Nathan Richardson's clarion voice singing "Sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem, Washed in the blood of the Lamb." Whether or not it was best for the younger ones, who always looked for the elders to take the lead, we do not know. In later years we are glad that the younger people are taking a more active part in church work, and hope that the coming generation will be still more diligent in the Master's service, in making this world better fitted for the Kingdom of our God.

ADDENDUM

Ministers of Kinsale:

At first there were six appointments, called Greenwood Circuit viz: Greenwood, Kinsale, Brougham, Audley, Mt. Zion and Glen Major, with two ministers and some local preachers.

The following officiated on this circuit:

G. Reid 1864	J. McDonald
T. Stobbs 1867	D. Williams
G. Cornish 1870	(Women's Missionary Auxiliary organized with Mrs. Williams, President).
G. T. Richardson 1874	J. Robeson
G. Dingman	E. A. Tonkin
W. W. Leach	Ladies Aid organized, Mrs. C. J. Stevenson, President).
W. Washington	S. Tucker
T. Potter. (died)	S. Tink
C. Langford, supply.	J. Totten
F. C. Keam 1884	J. Bunner
W. Hall	M. Leigh
J. Harris	J. Barnes
W. Hewitt	J. Smart 1930
G. R. Clare 1897	
J. McFarlane (died 1901)	

Colleagues until about 1888:

A. C. Wilson, Hill, Walsh, Deacon, Ross, Madden, Elliott, Dove, Coffee, Strongman, Bunner, Real, Crux, Latter, Wilkinson, Bartley, Langford, Reynolds, Hassard, Woodger, W. Norman (died), Daniel Norman.

In 1888 two appointments were dropped, Glen Major and Audley; and we had one minister with local help.

Local Preachers:

B. Bunting	W. Jackson
E. Jackson	G. West

About the year 1884 we had union of Wesleyan, Episcopal, and Primitive Methodists with Canadian Wesleyan Methodists and Bible Christians under the name of Canada Methodist Church. Latter a second union in 1925 when Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists joined to form the United Church of the present time.

In the early eighties The Epworth League of Christian Endeavor, a society for young people, was organized. This has continued under various names and is still a great influence for good among the young people of the community.

When Mr. S. Tucker was pastor he organized the "Young Men's Brotherhood" which greatly interested the boys and young men and kept them in touch with church work.

In 1918 the "Maple Leaf Mission Band" was started by Miss Gladys Mowbray and is still flourishing under the able leadership of Mrs. V. Parkin. It has done a noble work among the children.

Teachers of Kinsale School

Mr. Tilley 1852	Byron Jones 1887
Mr. Ganton 1855	S. H. Jeffery 1888
D. Frost 1856	Walter Thom 1889
O. Reilly 1857	W. H. Greenwood 1890-2
J. Palmer 1858	Frank Chapman and Walter Thom 1893
Miss McLean 1859	G. E. Pegg 1894
Geo. Barclay 1860	J. McCullough 1895
Chas. Clerke 1861	A. Holliday 1897
Wm. Dundas 1862	Miss Pearce 1901
W. Law 1863	Miss Annan 1903
W. L. Black 1866	Miss Sharrard 1905
Geo. Bengough	Miss L. Rogers 1906
Levi Mackey 1868	Miss Francis 1907
Miss L. Palmer 1870	Miss Black 1909
Alex. McMurray 1871	Mr. Kidd 1910
James Balfour 1872	Miss A. Johnson 1911
S. F. Johnson 1873	Miss White 1912
G. H. Hopper 1874	Miss Hervey 1913
S. M. Brown 1875	Miss P. Miller 1915
Mr. Bain 1876	Miss McKay 1916
Miss Susan Betts 1877	Miss Whitehead 1918
S. F. Johnston 1878	Miss Fleet 1924
D. Selden	Miss Carson 1926
A. L. Brown 1879	Miss Nesbitt 1927
J. A. Youmans 1880	Miss Thomas 1929
E. O. Graham 1881	Miss Munroe and Miss Draper 1931
R. J. Nidderly 1883	
S. H. Jeffery 1885	