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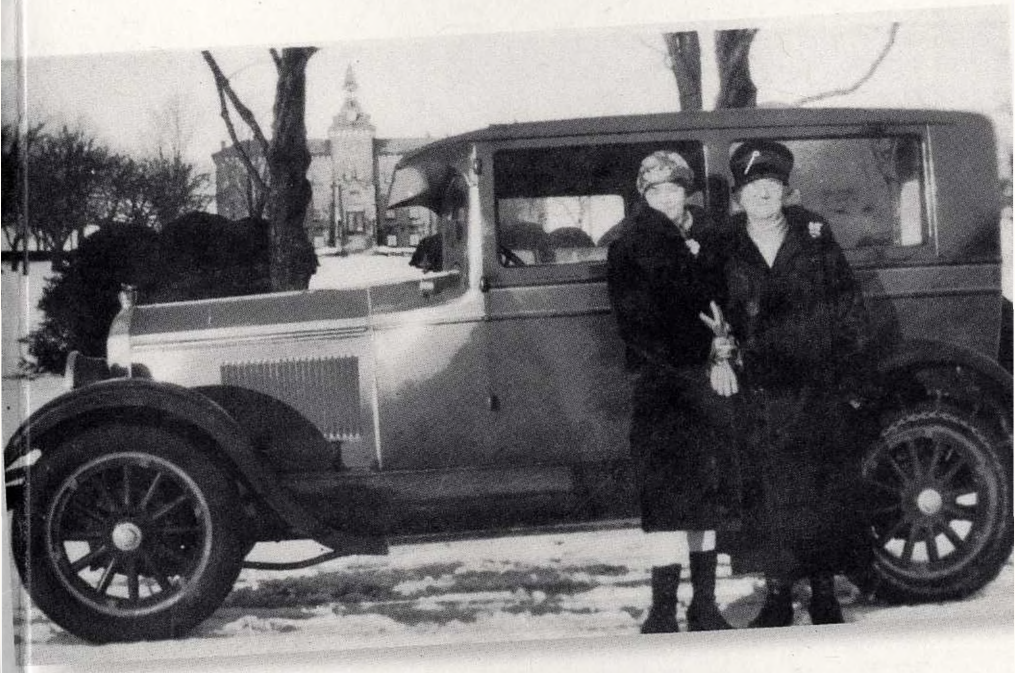
Wellington County History



- Introducing the car to Wellington County
- Automobile anecdotes and reminiscences
- A man and his Diamond T truck
- William A. Paterson • Teviotdale Speedway
- Guelph Suburban Road Commission
- Amazing doctors and their snow machines
- Elora to Guelph commuter bus

Volume 22 • 2009

PATRONS 2009

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John Carter, Fergus
Marjorie Durnford, Guelph
The late Eric Butler, Fergus
Dr. B.R. Christie, Stratford, PEI
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Janet Hassan, Guelph
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Since 1966

Husky Farm Equipment, Alma

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Established 1834

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In business since 1926

John Sutherland and Sons Limited, Guelph
Providing personal service since 1870

and the

CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Volume 22 **Wellington County History** 2009

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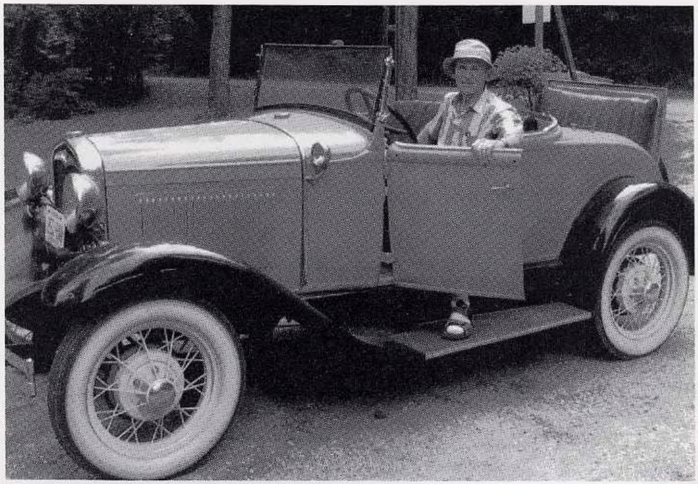


Top: Merv Conley with his restored 1930 Model A Ford with rumble seat - sometimes referred to as a sport coupe or roadster. Photo courtesy of Merv Conley.

Bottom: The 1960 Chev that took eight of the McDougall family west.
Photo courtesy of Peter McDougall.

Automobile Anecdotes

by Helen Goodall

In 1946 when the first set of tires wore out on his 1932 Chevrolet, Peter McDougall commented that he just "Wired on a second set of tires over the originals." Rubber was in short supply because of World War II, so this seemed to be the best solution.

Frances (Comfort) Temple, born in 1938, in the days before universal health-care, told me that her parents, Ralph and Margaret Comfort, had to sell their car to pay hospital expenses when she was born.

Cars have loomed large in the lives of Wellington County residents. Several of them have shared their automobile anecdotes and photos with me. Here are some of their amazing and humorous stories.

You may have seen Winnie and Merv Conley, residents of 15 sideroad in Centre Wellington Township, driving about in their restored 1930 Model A Ford, painted black and tan.

Passengers always want to sit in the rumble seat. "A rumble seat or a dicky (dickie, dickey) seat is an upholstered exterior seat which hinges or otherwise opens out from the rear deck of a pre World War 11 automobile and seats one or two passengers. In a carriage, a rumble (short for 'rumble-tumble') was a seat behind the body, used for servants ... Models equipped with a rumble seat were often referred to as a sport coupe or a sport roadster. In North America, this type of seating became largely obsolete in the mid-1930s when cars became too fast and streamlined for the comfort of passengers in such a seat."[1]

The day I went for a ride in the Model A, Winnie Conley gave careful instructions for entering the small rumble seat space. "Left foot up on the metal footstep on the bumper. Right foot on the fender. Then left foot up and over onto the leather seat. Then slide down."

This was Merv Conley's first car! Originally black and tan, he painted it dark blue by hand in 1951 when he worked in Tavistock. The brakes were unreliable, so Merv's friend, Jim Bleay, operated the hand brake when they needed to stop. Merv sold this car to a neighbour in 1955. He later bought it back, had it restored, and the Conleys take great pleasure in giving rides on fair days in their beautiful car.

Members of the Melvin McDougall family still live on the family farm on the sixth line of Eramosa township and in newer homes built nearby. I was their neighbour and was always in awe of their fancy dark blue 1946 DeSoto

McDougall's 1949 Dodge and 1941 Ford truck. Photo courtesy of Peter McDougall.

The McDougall's 1940 Dodge, stolen in Arthur, then found in a ditch.
Photo courtesy of Peter McDougall.

with the large, shiny, silver grille. Ernest, the youngest son, and his sisters, Ruth Garbutt and Glenys Baxter, shared memories of this automobile. Melvin McDougall bought it from Mr. Woods at Wellington Motors in Guelph. Ernie told a story of an early lesson about littering. One summer day they were out for a drive when someone in the back seat threw a wrapper out of the window. Their father saw it happen in the rearview mirror. The car came to a rapid stop and Mr. McDougall backed it up. The perpetrator retrieved the wrapper, and the trip continued, but, Ernie said, "The point had been made for life."

Ruth McDougall learned to drive in this car and remembered running out of gas. Luckily, she was at the top of a hill and there was a gas-station (now Hume's garage on Highway 124) at the bottom of the hill. She was able to coast there.

Glenys McDougall recalled trips to church in Guelph on Sunday mornings. All eight members of their family somehow fitted into the DeSoto. There were no seatbelts, then, but there was a lot of knee-sitting.

The McDougalls mentioned in the opening sentence, now a family of eight, embarked on a longer trip out West in their 1960 Chevrolet. Small Janice was on the floor in the front passenger's seat between the legs of her mother, Mary. One-year-old baby Lorri lay on the front seat between Mary and her father, Peter, the driver. Ed and Lil Miller, Mary's parents, entertained Jack and Doug (about nine and seven years old) in the back seat. Sometimes the boys played cards on their grandpa's lap. They counted trucks and rivers along the miles to prevent boredom. They heated the baby's bottle and food on the car's engine. Lorri's playpen doubled as her bed at night and upside-down as the family table at mealtime.

Peter McDougall with his 1926 Star.
Photo courtesy of Peter McDougall.

In 1949, the 1940 Dodge of Peter and Mary McDougall was stolen. They emerged from evening grocery-chopping in Arthur to discover an empty space where they had parked their car. The person parked behind it said someone had bumped into his vehicle and left. He thought this man had a patch over one eye.

The McDougalls reported the robbery and went home to bed. The next morning, the police called; they had a suspect. In Drayton, the man confessed his crime and took them to their car. He had opened the throttle going over a railroad track, and the car flew "smack into the ditch."

Peter, his brother Ivan, and two police-officers took the thief to jail in Guelph. Peter remembers the treat of having breakfast in a restaurant on the way home.

Farmers often owned a truck as well as their one car. Peter McDougall owned a 1941 Ford stock truck. He loaded it with flax and drove it to Toronto for Rutherfords. There, he shovelled on a load of gravel. After delivering the gravel, he was paid $5 enough to take Mary out on a date! Peter and Mary McDougall have a large framed picture of their various cars and trucks dating from the

Mary McDougall with the 1931 Chev. Photo courtesy of Peter McDougall.

1932 Chev through to their 1960 Chev which ferried them across Canada to Vancouver Island.

All contributors remembered their early autos with affection. These cars were a source of pride. They provided necessary transportation and enjoyment for the whole family in quite a different way from that of Wellington County residents today.

ENDNOTES:

1. http://en.wikipedia.org.wiki/rumble_seat

A Man and His Truck:

Edward Mitchell and his Diamond T remembered

by Ted Mitchell

The man: Edward Daniel Mitchell. The truck: his Diamond T.

This narrative is told by one of his sons who knew the events from the inside, by observation, though many of the specific details were cir- circumstances that father himself would not relate. In its time, (1937-1966) the truck was recognized by anyone in the Township of Guelph and beyond.

There were a few other Diamond Ts in the area, but only a very few, so we would be waved at by people working in the fields who recognized the truck. The livestock trucking business was in its infancy in the 1920s and father had bought a used GMC (1927) to see if there might be an effective demand for that service. The first truck had single rear tires (32x6) and a capacity load of about 2.5 tons. At that time, the main pork packing in Guelph was Wellington Packers on the York Road, about 400 yards east of' Victoria Road.

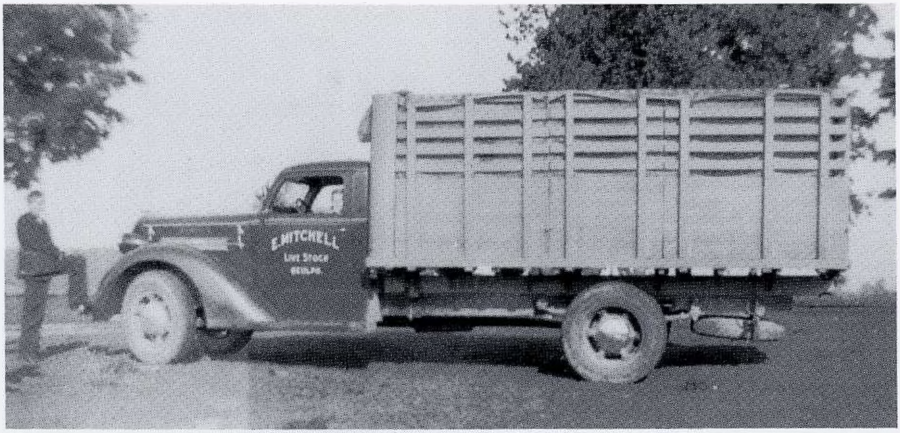
That location gave the company access to a siding of the Guelph Junction Railroad. Some of their product was exported. The Mitchell Brothers (Ed and Bert) were producing hogs and most neighbouring farmers produced some. One of the hazards of the hog business then, as now, was fluctuating prices. There was and is no quota system.

Father found that there was an effective demand for a trucking service.

Exactly how it was that the Diamond T dealer made a contact with father, I cannot recall. The closest dealership was in Hamilton, Main Street South, at Stoney Creek. In summer of 1937, two salesmen appeared at the Mitchell farm on Paisley Road with the cab and chassis. Father indicated some interest and shortly thereafter, a deal was made; Father had the Brantford Coach and Body (Guelph) build a platform and racks. Remember that depression conditions prevailed, so it should not be surprising that the finished truck cost about $3,800.

The shiny new Diamond T was much admired by the neighbours. The accompanying photo was taken by next door neighbour Greta Henderson. This was long before colour film.

The truck proved to be a reliable performer over the next 30 years. Though people at the time marvelled at the "big" truck, in reality, it was powered by a 6 cylinder motor - a Hercules flat head six which gave 12 to 15 miles per gallon. The truck was very low geared, did not have power brakes, but was capable of loads



The Diamond T, taken at the T. K. Henderson farm, 1937. John Mitchell with his foot on the bumper; 4-year old Ted Mitchell behind the steering wheel. Author's photo.

of 4 to 4.5 tons. It would eventually put about 150,000 miles on the speedometer. Its favoured speed was about 35 miles per hour, and if father were driving, it was more likely to be 30.

Father's honesty and reliability ensured that he had a large and loyal clientele. The heart of the trucking came from the Paisley Block itself. The term Paisley Block hearkens back to the earliest settler, John McCorkindale, but the term gradually spread to include that area west of the city of Guelph. Mitchells themselves were part of the founding families; their ancestors came from Suffolk in England in the 1830s.

In a very real sense, there was a good feeling among the residents. After all, they shared a common background and in many cases had known the families for three or four generations. People expected to be treated fairly.

Father developed a clientele that went far beyond the Paisley Block. I will reach in my memory to those who were regular customers. To the south was Albert Marcy, who lived about two miles south of Crieff; to the west was Leonard Burton in Waterloo County; and to the east Ralph Tait, on the Stone Church Road, west of Rockwood; in the 1940s, there was Noble Postle, who lived just south of Elora and later moved to Waterloo County.

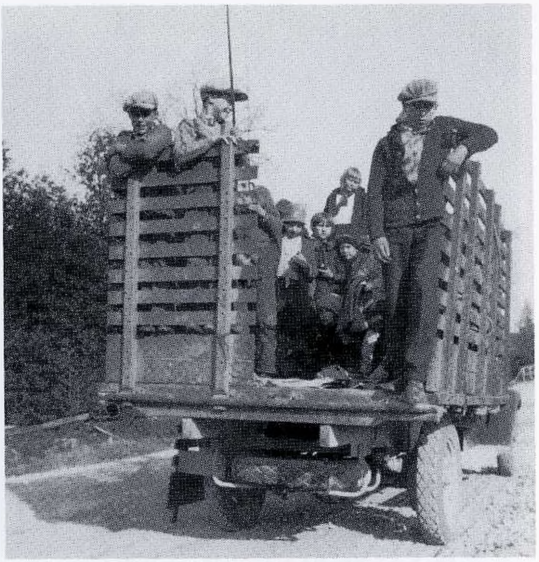
It was a very widespread base of customers. I cannot recall any among those customers who stopped dealing with father. It was a mark of the times that wherever we were at lunch, we would be asked to take a place at the kitchen table. Rural fellowship was a reality.

People who had hogs for market would phone during the week. Mother kept a note pad at the phone and took down names and numbers. Forty hogs constituted a full load for the truck.

Occasionally, there would have to be a second trip to complete the work. Some farmers weighed the hogs (200 pounds live weight was optimum); quality fetched a small premium in price. Others left it up to father to decide whether a

pig should be left for another week. Loading pigs was always a challenge, since you could correctly assume if you wanted it to go forward, the hog preferred to reverse. It involved a judicious use of racks and doors to manoeuvre them into a spot where forward was the only option.

My brother, John, was father's most consistent assistant but during school and later college vacations, the task fell to me. One learned to be useful.

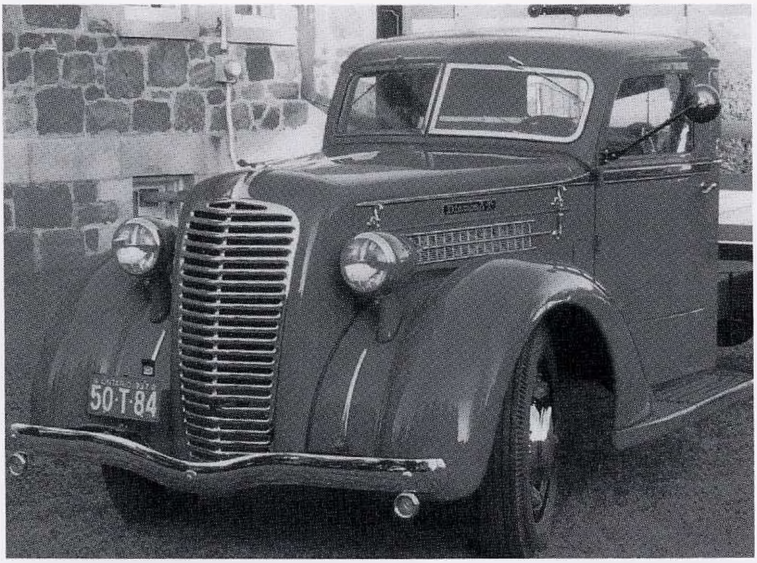


Ed Mitchell's 1927 GMC truck, purchased to try the market for livestock trucking. Photo: WCMA ph 30415.

I would not give the impression that the Diamond T was only a "hog hauler" - although that was about 60% of its commercial use. The transportation of cattle was not a huge part of its use - though if we had a choice parcel of baby beef - that is, cattle weighing not more than about 750 pounds, we might take them to the stockyards in West Toronto - after father had phoned his contact at the yards to ensure a good market for them.

By 1945, father had acquired 560 acres of farmland and the truck served an important role:

- On a weekly basis, there was grain to be taken to the feed mill to be chopped, at either Hattle's Mill, at Marden, or Doughty & McFarlane, at Allan's bridge, in Guelph;
- In the spring of the year, seed grain to be taken to the A.J. Shantz Mill, just west of Hespeler (Fisher Mill);
- Grass seed to be taken to Schweyer's Mill at Nelles' Corners, to be cleaned for sale;
- Clay tile to be picked up at Martin's tile yards at Wallenstein, when we were doing systematic tiling;
- Supplementary feed to be taken to the pasture farm in Waterloo County in late summer and early autumn; and
- Turnips to be marketed at the Hauser waxing plant at Speedvale and Woolwich.



The Diamond T restored; its portrait graced the cover of the 2008-2009 calendar, produced by the Mapleton Custom Rodders.

Author's photo.

Students at S.S. #6 remember the "outings" to ball games and picnics on the Diamond T. At a fairly recent social occasion, a lady whose maiden name was Ruby Fyfe, recalled father taking students in to see *Snow White* at the Royal Theatre on Macdonell Street in Guelph. On another occasion, the Diamond T served as the platform for the entertainers at a garden party at S.S.#6. Racks had to come off and the platform was scrubbed for such occasions. No charge was made for community occasions.

This is a truck with a story and when I returned to Guelph, I could not see allowing this piece of heritage to go the way that old vehicles usually do.

One day in 2003, I happened to meet Jack Mills. He inquired about the Diamond T. At one time, the Mills family operated an auto parts shop on Suffolk Street. He suggested that David Geddes, of Alma, would do a first rate job of restoration. He and his son own and operate a garage in Alma.

And so it came to pass that the restoration was completed. Its story with photos has already been written about in a U.S, periodical, *Vintage Trucks*, December issue, 2007. Thus the heritage of the Diamond T lives on.

The editors would like to thank the author and publisher for kind permission to reprint this essay which first appeared in the ***Wellington Advertiser****, Friday 29 Feb. 2008.*

Introducing the Automobile to Wellington County, 1901-1923

by Gerald Bloomfield

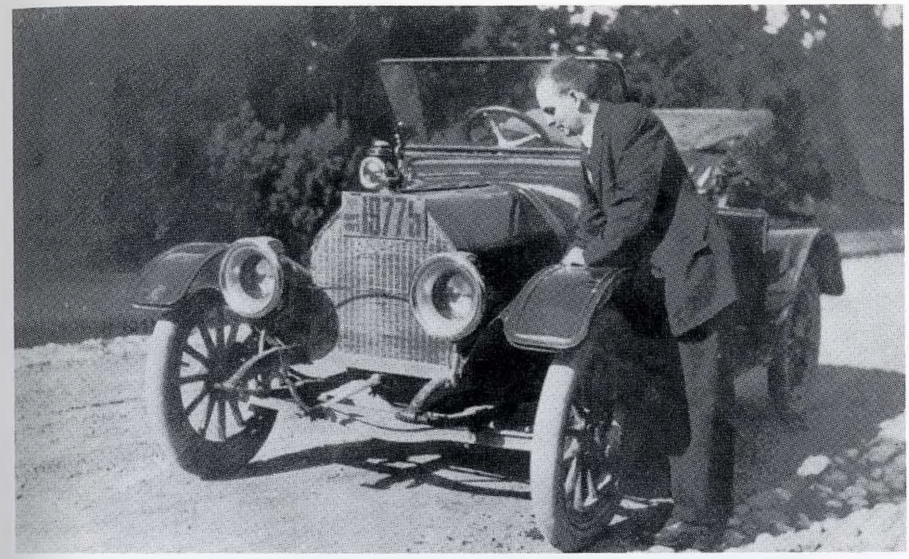
All the critical technical features of the motor vehicle had been developed by the mid-1880s, notably by Gottlieb Daimler and Karl Benz in Germany. Adoption of the gasoline-powered vehicle was slow for at least another decade, especially outside Europe. John McHardy seems to have owned the first automobile in Wellington County, buying his first car in 1901.[1] While Toronto became an early hub of motoring, growth in Guelph and Wellington County was slow until about 1913, when there was a dramatic take-off in numbers. Within a decade, the automobile was dominating the roads and making very substantial economic and social changes.

The transformation of road transport from horse-drawn to motorized or self-propelled vehicles has been regarded by scholars in sociology, economic history and the history of technology as a major paradigm shift. A paradigm may be defined as a complex of related characteristics and assumptions about technologies, best practices, ways of working and organizing production, as well as perceptions. The shift from one paradigm to another could be termed a revolution. Traditional objects such as horsewhips, blinkers and harness became redundant when the new types of vehicles were adopted. A new infrastructure was needed to support the new technology. Gasoline required very different supply lines from the horse-feed which it replaced. The automotive revolution, when examined in local detail, shows a hesitant evolutionary path with many hits and misses before the critical mass of change became impossible to resist.

Foundations for the new form of motorized road transportation were laid down by the earlier innovation of the bicycle and a revived interest in road improvements. Bicycles, especially the safety bicycle introduced in the early 1890s, offered a new mode of self-propelled personal movement for recreation, sport, travel to work, and light deliveries such as telegrams and parcels. The bicycle brought new experiences of mobility and introduced new technologies such as pneumatic tires. Some cycle enthusiasts became pioneer motorists. A small business sector of cycle dealers and repairers developed to support the new interest. Charles Moxley began in cycles before switching to autos in 1909, when he opened one of the first successful garages in Guelph. His establishment was listed in the early Ontario Motor League road guides as

The excitement of automobiles: car racing in Guelph's Exhibition Park, 1917. The vehicle was a modified McLaughlin driven by R. Beverly Robson (1891-1952), auto dealer and later mayor of Guelph from 1926 to 1931. Wallace Drew, the co-driver, was a mechanic at the Robson Motor Corporation.

Photo: Guelph Civic Museums: 2006.49.1.

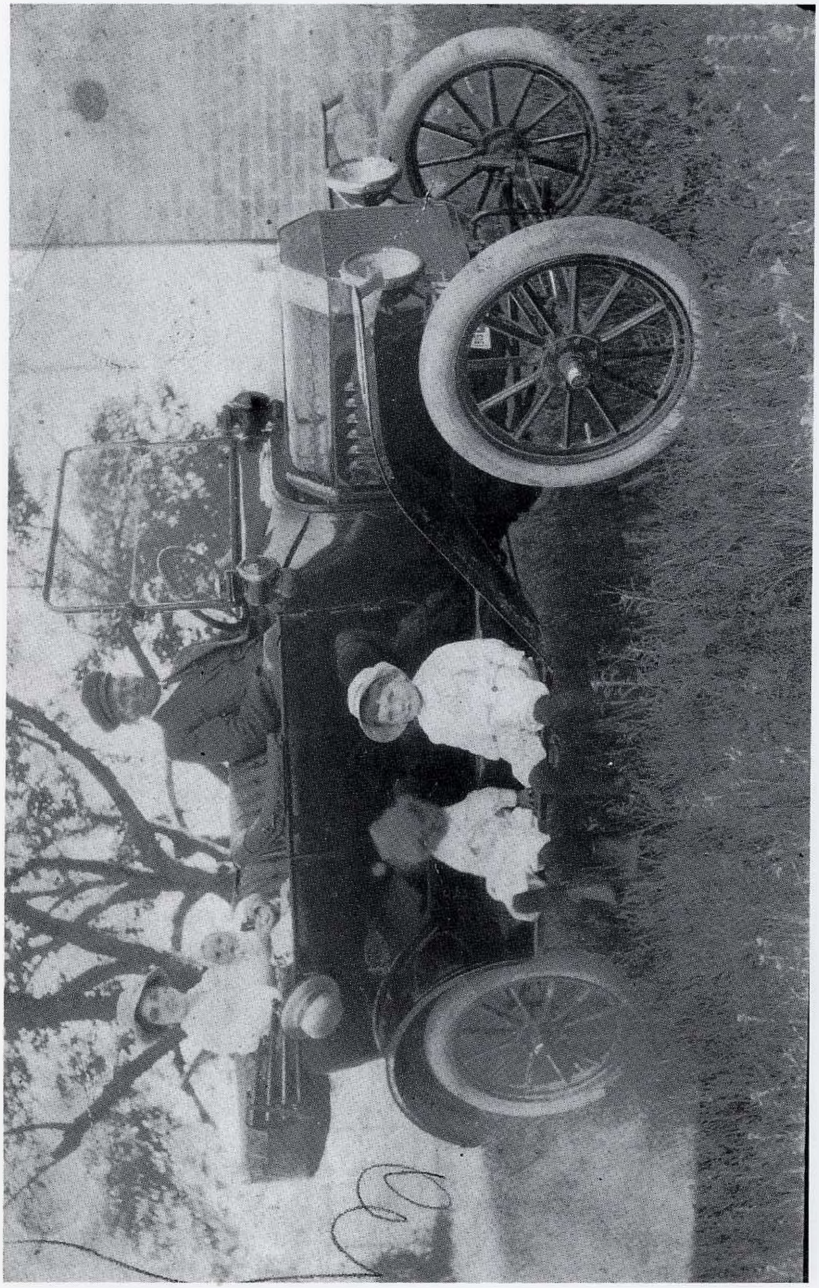


Young businessman as car owner: Russell Daly (1888-1967), newsagent and tobacconist in St George"s Square, Guelph, bought this Studebaker in 1913. Daly opened the Pioneer Bus Company in the early 1920s, operating services as far as Mount Forest. Photo: Guelph Public Library: F38-0-10-0-0-5.

one of the rare "refuges" for motorists seeking assistance.[2]

Cyclists, progressive farmers and other community groups supported the Good Roads movement which was working for improved roads. Travellers would obviously benefit, as would dairy farmers and other producers of perishable commodities needing reliable access to market towns and country railway stations. Road improvements, generally neglected from the 1870s when railways dominated longer-distance movements, would also help to modernize and revitalize many rural areas which were losing population.

Two representatives from Wellington County were among the group which formed the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) in February 1894.[3] James McEwing (Drayton) of the Wellington Farmers' Institute[4] was a leading supporter of road improvement and Professor Henry Dean (Ontario Agricultural College) was a very energetic promoter of modern dairying. Dean's diaries of his travels showing modern methods at local fairs note experience of Ontario's improved roads. One team of horses traveled over 2,000 miles in the 1892 season.[5] An early result of the lobbying of the OGRA was the appointment of a provincial instructor in road making, at first in the Department of Agriculture, later in Public Works. Archibald W. Campbell, previously city engineer of St Thomas, took this position and began a long career of road improvement. New legislation in the Highway Improvement Act of 1901 provided subsidies to county councils, with grants of one third of the cost on approved routes. Wellington County Council adopted the Act in 1903 and began rejuvenating the old trunk routes and building new bridges. Urban



Frank Reynolds was an early adopter in the farming community of Little Ireland, Minto Township. In this 1915 view, Mrs. Reynolds and son Ivan occupy the back seat, while sons Jim and Jack are seated on the running board. The Model T Ford was probably an early sale by the Ford agent in Harriston, W.H. McConnell.

Photo: WCMA Little Ireland Branch W.I. Tweedsmuir History, Vol.1, p.154.

street improvement also began at this time, Guelph purchasing its first steam road roller in 1902 and starting to lay asphalt pavements in the downtown area five years later.

Automobiles were officially recognized in Ontario from 1 September 1903, when the Act to Regulate the Speed and Operation of Motor Vehicles on Highways came into operation. All motorized vehicles using public streets and highways were required to register with the Provincial Secretary, carry a plainly visible numbered permit, and pay a fee of two dollars. Each vehicle had to be equipped with "a proper alarm bell, gong or horn" and carry a lighted lamp or lamps when in motion after dusk. Speeds were limited to 10 miles per hour (16 km/h) in any city, town or incorporated village, and a maximum 15 mph (24 km/h) elsewhere. Road racing was forbidden and all drivers were "to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the frightening of horses." Violations of the Act were to incur penalties of up to $25 for the first offence. Subsequent offences would incur fines of a similar amount or imprisonment of up to one month.[6]

Over the next two decades, new legislation or amendments increasingly regulated the operation of motor vehicles and their drivers. Significant changes included licensing of chauffeurs (1909), automobile insurance (1914), requirements for a muffler and mirrors on vehicles (1919), increased penalties for driving while intoxicated (1920), and licenses for dealers and garages (1921). Speed limits were raised to 20 mph (30 km/h) in cities and towns, and 25 mph (40km/h) elsewhere in 1919. All the motor legislation was codified in the Highway Traffic Act 1923 which came into operation at the end of that year.[7]

Further changes, with lasting effects on driving in Ontario, included the imposition of fuel charges of 3 cents per gallon in 1925 to pay for road improvements, compulsory requirements for drivers' licenses in 1926, and the raising of speed limits to 30 mph (50km/h) in urban areas and 50 mph (80 km/h) elsewhere in 1937.

Statistics gathered from the vehicle licensing procedures provide the basic data for all studies of motorization. In the early years only provincial summaries were published. From 1919, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, a branch of the Department of Public Highways, tabulated statistics for counties and cities (Table 1). Only two sets of manuscript records survive for 1903/4 and 1912/13 (see Appendix); all the other original licensing documents were destroyed in the 1930s.

Two phases of motorization in Wellington County are illustrated by the data in Table 1. Slow growth characterized the first phase from 1903/4 to 1912/13. Early automobiles were expensive and unreliable and the service infrastructure was rudimentary. Motoring was a big adventure, even in 1910, when the *Guelph Evening Mercury* noted the arrival of Mr T.J. Benor in his new 30 hp Regal car. "The 220-mile trip from Detroit was made in 10 hours actual running time, which is considered good in view of the wet weather and the consequent condition of the roads."[8] After 1913 numbers of motor vehicles

The well loaded Ford Model TT trucks of Luigi Bondi, wholesale fruit merchant in Mount Forest in 1920. Bondi had owned a Petrel vehicle in 1912/13.

Photo courtesy of Pauline Helferty and Campbell Cork.

grew fast, as vehicle prices came down, reliability increased, and a full service infrastructure was developed. While the absolute numbers show very substantial growth, the ownership levels are even more dramatic, rising from 2.8 per 1000 population in 1913 to 95.2/1000 ten years later. Wellington's ownership levels in 1923 were around the provincial average, but considerably lower than the US average of 134.8. Michigan at the time had 179 vehicles/1000 population. In 2005, the City of Guelph had 615 vehicles/1000 population while the Centre Wellington ownership ratio had reached 690.[9]

Wellington County in 1903/4 was on the fringes of motoring in Ontario. Toronto was the pre-eminent centre with 148 automobiles licensed, or 61 per cent of the provincial total of 243 vehicles.[10] Other large cities of the time had much smaller numbers: Hamilton 16, London and Ottawa six each. Berlin (later Kitchener) and Kingston did not have any licensed automobiles in this first year of registration. Guelph, with three vehicles in 1903 (Appendix 1), illustrated some of the challenges facing early owners. All the vehicles were still in an experimental stage of development; production runs were small (Cadillac, for example, built 1,698 vehicles in 1903); and spare parts and local service facilities were virtually non-existent. John McHardy's Autocar had been bought two years earlier, probably supplied directly from the factory at Ardmore, Pennsylvania, on the outskirts of Philadelphia. The company

concentrated on truck manufacturing after 1911. L.C. Wideman's Conrad was a steam-powered car built in Buffalo, an early "orphan make" when the manufacturer went out of business at the end of 1903.

By 1912/13 motor vehicles were more widely diffused throughout Ontario. About 9,000 vehicles were now registered in the province and, although Toronto was still the largest centre with 2,183 automobiles, there were now enough vehicles in smaller communities to support garages and other services.[11] Table 2 shows the locations of the 151 motor vehicles licensed in Wellington County. Guelph was clearly the largest centre but numbers elsewhere were significant. Elora had a surprisingly large number for a population that was less than one tenth the size of Guelph.

Unlike the later sources, the original records for 1912/13 provide details not only of the name of owner and permit number but also the make of vehicle and street address in the case of Guelph. These data can be used to make some generalizations about early ownership and the nature of the vehicles in use at the time.

Automobiles were expensive, most being priced between $1,000 and $1,500. Two-seater roadsters were less expensive than four- or five-seater touring cars. Most were suitable for use only in fine weather, as the carriage tops gave limited protection. Fully enclosed limousines could cost as much as $5,000. Ford Model T cars at $750 in 1913, plus $15 for delivery to Wellington County, were the cheapest available. Russells, made in Toronto, were among the most expensive vehicles used locally. Prices in 1913 started at $2,350.[12] As well as the high purchase price, vehicle ownership also involved major expenses in maintenance and shelter. Current property prices give a comparative sense of the cost of cars in 1913. A sample advertisement in Guelph noted a stone cottage at $1,200; a solid brick 6-roomed house with all modern conveniences near the High School at $2,800; and a handsome brick residence with 9 large rooms and spacious grounds at $5,000.[13]

The largest group of owners in 1912/13 was in business, especially retailers, merchants and manufacturers. C.W. Ewing (Ford, Studebaker) owned the large general store in Fergus, E.J. O'Neill (Cadillac) was a hide merchant in Guelph, and W. Fulton (EMF) operated the sawmill at Fultons Mills. Newspaper publishers with cars included J. McIntosh (Russell) of the *Guelph Mercury* and J.S. Wright (Ford) who owned the *Mount Forest Confederate.* Some of the business owners were entrepreneurs actively engaged in many private and public ventures. J.W. Lyon, a prominent figure in Guelph civic life, had two Hupmobiles at his Queen Street residence as well as a Mitchell car based at his real estate office in the Telephone Building, Douglas Street. R. Wightman (McLaughlin) in Clifford combined his work as the local Bell Telephone manager with promotion of the Wightman telephone service.[14] S.S. Scott (Overland) owned a pool room and tobacco store in Elora and later became a garage proprietor.

Professional men were also early adopters of automobiles. Thirteen physicians owned vehicles in the county. Dr N.C. Wallace (Hupmobile) served

Motoring in style: the Wheeler family on the road to Waterloo, probably in Pilkington Township circa 1920. The prominent spare tire is a reminder of the fragility of early casings and inner tubes. Photo: WCMA ph 7033.

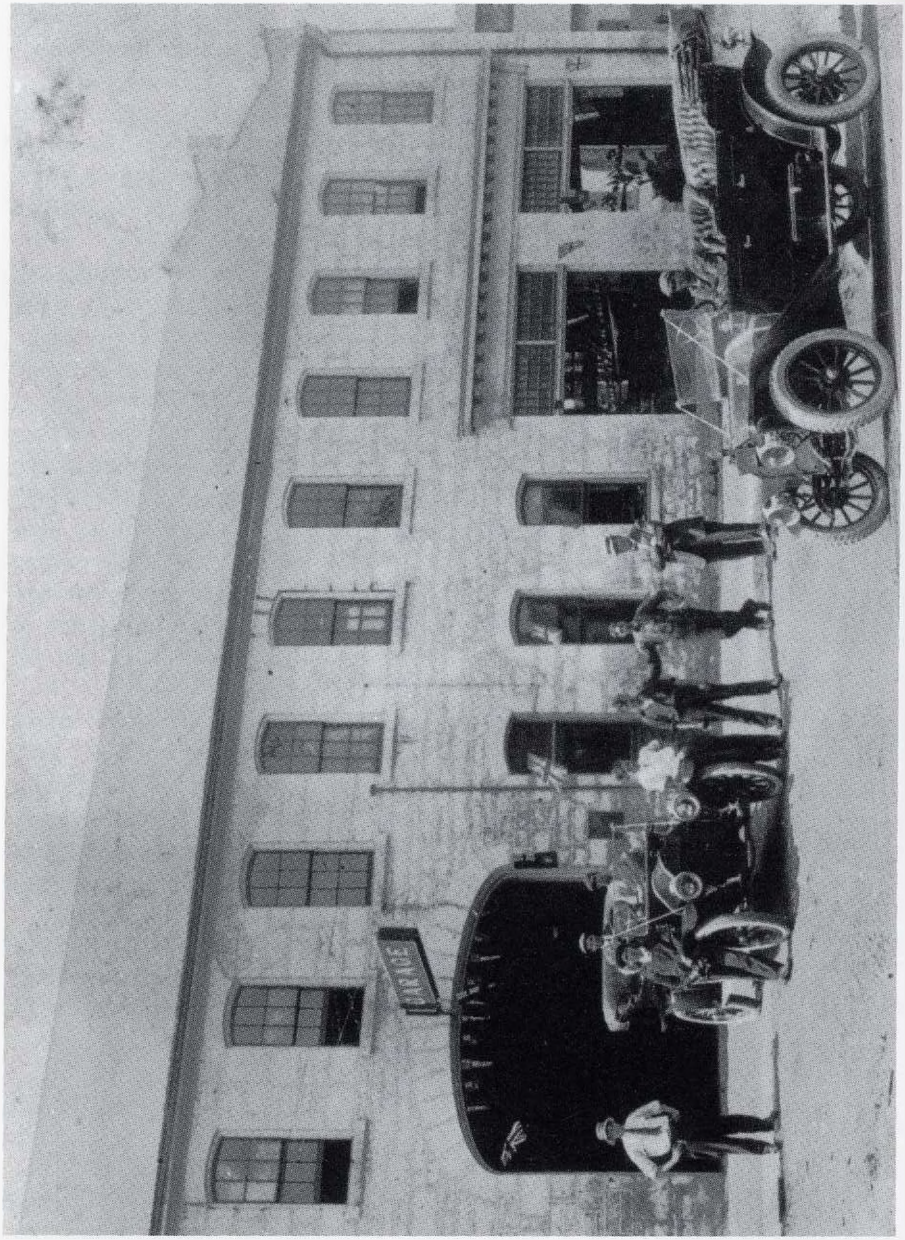
an extensive practice from his base in Alma. Veterinary surgeons in Arthur, Clifford, Fergus and Guelph owned automobiles and used them in professional service. W.H. Day and M. Pettit of the Ontario Agricultural College also used their Ford cars for their extension work in land drainage and apiculture. Other members of the professions included the Rev. W. Pearcy (Reo) in Harriston; Rev. R. Bell (Nyberg) of Dublin Street Methodist Church in Guelph; W.F. Colwill (Hupmobile) a prominent Guelph architect; and J.J. Drew (Russell) a senior lawyer in the city.

Virtually all the vehicles in 1912/13 were passenger cars, and mostly used for recreational motoring. Some livery stables were already offering cars for hire, complete with chauffeur. Ford cars were being used for this service by O. Henry in Mount Forest and G.S. Burns in Palmerston. W.H. Doughty operated an early taxi in Guelph, using a Ford Model T Town Car. The wider utility of the motor vehicle was beginning to emerge at this time, as owners experimented with using it for deliveries as a substitute for the horse-drawn vehicle. The Colonial Whitewear Co. (Studebaker), J.A. McRae & Sons (Ford) in Guelph, and Laing & Co (Buick) in Rockwood were apparently using their cars for commercial purposes. Realtors in Guelph and Mount Forest were using cars to show off properties to potential buyers. Several plumbing businesses, namely J.D. Brandon (Kennedy) and A. Malcolm (Hupmobile) in Guelph as well as T. Farley (McLaughlin) in Elora may well have used their cars for emergency service calls.

Purpose-built trucks were still rare at this early stage of motorization. Three Brantford 1-1½ ton trucks were registered in Guelph and used by G.S. Harding, a wine merchant; C.W. Kelly, a piano retailer; and the Guelph Motor Car Co. A. Robertson (Clinton) used his vehicle for soda water deliveries in Mount Forest. The proprietor of the Erin-Guelph stage introduced a rented auto truck for passengers and freight in May 1913, thus reducing the journey time from four hours to an hour and a half.[15]

Motor cycles were rare in Ontario at this time and there were only four in the county. Three Indian machines were owned by: T.R. Collins, a Guelph optician; W. Stuart, a cooper at James Goldie's flour mill in the city; and A.O. Hutchinson in Fergus. The Rex owned by J. Collison, a hardware merchant in Harriston, may have been a British-built motor cycle.

The list of makes in 1912/13 (Table 3) reflects the successes and failures of North American motor manufacturers. Only three names—Buick, Cadillac and Ford--have survived to the present day. Six makes were already "orphans" in 1913: Autocar, Clinton, EMF, Kennedy, Petrel and Tudhope. Three of these were built in Ontario. The Clinton (1912) was made in Huron County; the Kennedy (1909-10) in Preston, now part of Cambridge; and the Tudhope (1908-13) came from Orillia. Another eleven makes represented in Wellington County in 1913 had failed by 1923 and few others survived World War II. The dominance of Fords in the listing confirms the important role of the Model T (built from 1908 to 1927) in putting the continent on wheels. Nearly three-quarters of the vehicles licensed in Wellington County were built in Ontario by



The Russell was a prestige Canadian car, and the Guelph Motor Car Company advertised as a "Garage of Quality." Two vehicles are displayed circa 1912 at the premises in Norfolk Street, formerly part of Crowe's Iron Works.

Photo: WCMA ph 10931.

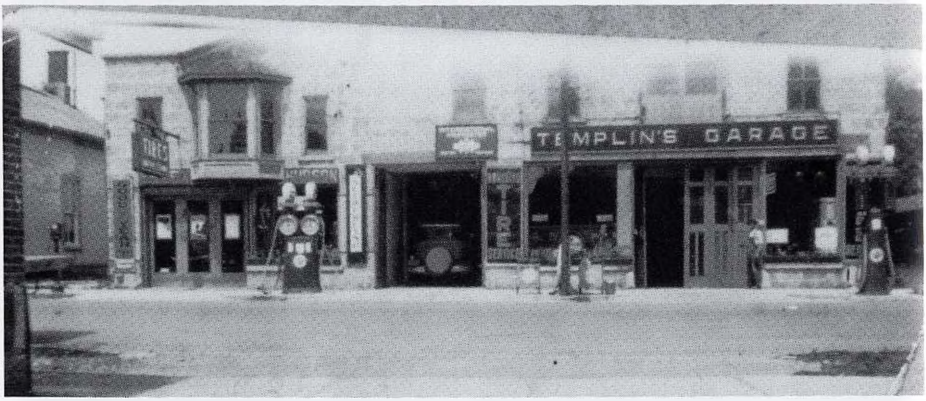
local firms such as McLaughlin in Oshawa and Russell in Toronto, or by branch manufacturers like Ford and Studebaker in Walkerville, Windsor, and Reo in St Catharines.

None of the vehicles was produced in Wellington County. The Jules Motor Car Co. began in Toronto and was floated as a company in Guelph during 1911, but failed to develop beyond three prototypes. One of these experimental vehicles showed some promise when tested for J.A. McRae & Sons. "The auto delivery car did splendid work... and delivered parcels to 387 residences from 9.30 in the morning to 6 o'clock, or about 700 parcels in all, thus doing the work of two horse deliveries. The vehicle managed to climb the Grange Street hill with ease and did not get stuck in the mud on the Gordon Street subway beneath the Grand Trunk Railway tracks."[16] Such productivity was an important part of the widening uses of the automobile. A later attempt by the Gilson Company in Guelph during the early 1920s, to diversify beyond stationary gasoline engines, was very limited, making only a few tractors and about three cars.

The growth of the automobile industry required promotion not only by the manufacturers but also by various organizations. Motor clubs were particularly important in overcoming the early indifference and even hostility to the automobile. Clubs had been formed in Hamilton and Toronto in 1903, and four years later the Toronto club was reorganized as the Ontario Motor League. This new organization of generally elite car owners served its members with social gatherings, club tours, travel guides and road signposts, as well as lobbying for improved roads and less restrictive legislation. A Guelph and Wellington Automobile Club was formed in 1914, with J.J. Drew as president. Many of the Guelph motorists noted in the Appendix became members. By 1916 the club had 54 members and there were short-lived clubs in Elora (18 members), Fergus (16) and Mount Forest (17).[17]

Auto manufacturers, which had previously advertised in national magazines and metropolitan newspapers, began more active promotion at the local level from about 1912. Technical qualities and specifications were emphasized in early local advertising, although Ford stressed "high price quality on a low price car" from the beginning.[18] As the market expanded faster, Ford developed what would later be called "lifestyle" promotion to extend the range of buyers. In a very long 1917 advertisement, the copywriter concluded: "Have a Ford. It makes things pleasant for the whole family and thereby the cost is fully repaid. Everybody likes a Ford. Have one as the Family Car."[19] Overland headed a 1919 advertisement: "His Office on Wheels... Model 90 is a business man's car—a time saver—a money maker. It has riding comfort, good looks and economy to brag about."[20] At this stage of promotion, there was no sense in the advertising that women could be car owners: motors and masculinity was the dominant theme.

Such promotions and the visible excitement of motorists on local roads helped to propel the huge growth of motor vehicle numbers in Wellington County from 151 in 1912/13 to nearly 3,000 in 1919 and over 5,000 in 1923



Upper: Templin's Carriage Works, St Andrew's Street, Fergus circa 1910. The main building was opened in 1878. Bicycle sales and repairs were added in 1902, and an Overland car agency began in 1920. Lower: Gas pumps on the sidewalk in 1933. A car dealership continued here until 1982 when the building was renovated as offices. Photo: WCMA ph 9646; ph 9643.

(Table 1). A substantial part of this growth was in the farming sector which had barely developed as a market before the war. W. Bell (Ford) near Drew was the only farmer clearly identified in the 1912/13 records and was listed as such in the Bell Telephone directory. Some of the names in the Appendix which lack occupational details may have been farmers, but no corroboration has been found.

While numbers are lacking for Wellington County, the general trends for Ontario show the dramatic growth of the farm market for automobiles. In 1913, only 5.5 per cent of the province's motor vehicles were registered to farmers. By 1919, however, the proportion had risen to 34.3 per cent of a much larger total number of licensed vehicles. The motorization of rural Ontario during World War I also showed in the 1921 Census results, when 29.4 per cent of farms in the province reported a motor vehicle. Over the next decade, the proportion increased to 60.3 per cent.

Many factors supported the boom in the farming sector for motor vehicles. Rising prices for crops and livestock allowed more discretionary spending by farmers. Car prices were falling while vehicle quality was improving. A 5-passenger McLaughlin touring car, which retailed at $1,450 in 1913, cost only $910 in 1917 when a smaller Chevrolet also made by McLaughlin in Oshawa sold for $675. Garages, for sales and service, which had once been confined to cities, became more widely diffused in smaller towns after 1913. Horse usage was affected by the diversion of animals for the war efforts, while the demand for more plowing increased the need to conserve animals and fodder for the most essential farm work.[21] The government purchase of 127 tractors in 1917 was prompted by the increased demands for field cultivation.[22]

As with the early moves to improve rural roads, the provincial Department of Agriculture was a leading agency, directly and indirectly, in widening the adoption of automobiles by farmers. It became the first government department to adopt the motor vehicle. F.C. Hart, based in Galt, was the first county Agricultural Representative to be supplied with a car, in 1913. The Ford auto greatly increased his productivity in travelling to farms and rural meetings. Wellington's first Ag Rep, R.H. Clemens, was appointed in 1917 and opened an office in Arthur.[23] A report on the Provincial Plowing Match, held at the Ontario Agricultural College on 5 November 1915, noted the first tractor demonstration, and added: "...the good roads gave the increasingly large number of automobile-owning farmers within driving distance a rare opportunity to witness this very instructive event."[24] Photographs of such events and the regular fall fairs from this time show more and more vehicles parked amongst the tents and displays.

A Chevrolet advertisement in 1919 summarized, in very positive terms, the benefits of the automobile to a farmer:

> The automobile has modernized the farmer. He is a quicker, more alert, active man: in fact he is coming into his own and no longer behind the mark set by men in other lines of business. The

Blacksmith shop at Everton crossroads, Eramosa Township photographed in 1970. The McColl Frontenac (later Texaco) gas station had been added in 1935. Both buildings are still standing. (Author's collection).

> introduction of the use of the automobile on the farm marked the beginning of a more consistently profitable business and an easier and more enjoyable life for those living in the country.[25]

Public authorities were generally cautious in adopting motor vehicles. The Guelph Fire Department purchased a Model T car for the chief in 1917 and replaced the horse-drawn fire engine with a motorized unit in 1923. In 1918 the Guelph Board of Light and Heat Commissioners bought a Model T to help with outside line maintenance.[26] A motorcycle was acquired by the City Police in the early 1920s, about the same time as the Ontario Provincial Police began to be motorized.[27]

Automobiles needed a different range of skills from those learned for driving and servicing horses and their vehicles. Not only were road speeds much faster, but car drivers had to develop new eye-hand-foot co-ordination to steer, control the speed, and change gears—a special aptitude before synchronized transmissions became common in the 1930s. While horses needed care and attention, early automobiles were very sensitive machines and could be easily incapacitated by a few specks of dirt or drops of water. Especially sensitive components were the carburettor which atomized the fuel, the electrical ignition of spark plugs and magnetos, and the timing gear which operated the valves of multi-cylinder engines.

Garages were a vital but often overlooked part of the service infrastructure required for automobiles. They often undertook the task of showing prospective motorists how to drive; and they maintained the lubrication and radiators, and replaced and repaired pneumatic tires. When problems appeared, they had to diagnose the precise cause, and repair or replace the mechanical or electrical components. Garages also offered a safe and dry place to store vehicles when they were not in use.

While a very small number of motor enthusiasts were able to decipher the manufacturer's manual and took pride in being able to take apart and re-assemble the components, most car owners required the specialist knowledge and services of a mechanic in a garage. The diffusion of automobiles and the growth of motoring needed the parallel development of garages. Establishing a garage was a risky business. Special skills, often in short supply, were essential, as was working capital for basic tools and essential auto parts, as well as tires, oils and gasoline. Taking on a sales agency for a car manufacturer could enhance the profitability of a garage and, if successful, would enhance the flow of customers.

Samuel Laughlin opened the first garage in Guelph in early 1908. A young electrician, formerly with the Guelph Electrical Works, he rented premises in Norfolk Street and secured a Ford agency.[28] While establishing a niche in the service of autos, the business failed within a year. Its successor, the Royal City Garage, continued in the same location, but had only a short life. Charles Moxley, an established cycle dealer and repairer, added auto service in a workshop behind his home in Perth Street in 1909.[29] Supported by his son

William, he succeeded in the motor trade and was featured in the travel guides of the Ontario Motor League.

The difficulties of creating an interest in a motor agency may be illustrated by the case of Mr N.H. Good. Trying to attract investors to open a McLaughlin Buick car agency, he advertised he would "entertain any person who wishes to talk business at the Wellington Hotel on Wednesday of each week."[30] Good's efforts in 1911-12 were unsuccessful and a McLaughlin agency was not established until 1914. Two garages were opened in the city in early 1912. The Guelph Motor Car Co. took over part of the former Crowe ironworks on Norfolk Street and became agents for Hupmobile and Russell cars, promoting itself as "The Garage of Quality." J.H. Johnson opened a garage in St George's Square with a back entrance in Cork Street, offering a taxicab and livery service as well as repairs and gasoline. Both firms succeeded in developing the service foundations necessary for motorization on a larger scale.

Elora, second to Guelph in the number of licensed automobiles, had two garages by mid-1912. Farley's Garage and Auto Livery not only advertised new and secondhand cars but also offered bicycles and motorcycles as well as repairs to cream separators, sewing machines, umbrellas and parasols.[31] By 1915 there were 16 garages in Wellington County: seven in Guelph, three in Elora, two in Drayton, and one each in Arthur, Clifford, Harriston and Mount Forest.[32] The first advertised garage in Fergus did not open until the following year. An interest in automobiles brought people such as W.H. Richards, a Drayton restaurant owner, and Louis Kreuzer, a horse breeder in the Clifford area, into the motor trade. In Arthur, the well established hardware and general store of Brocklebanks Ltd expanded into auto service and gasoline sales.

Public concerns about probity and charging practices in the garage trade led to regulation. Section 7 of the Motor Vehicle Amendment Act 1921 stated that no one "shall store or deal in motor vehicles or conduct a garage business without a license to do so." By the end of that year, some 2,495 garage licenses had been issued in Ontario. Thirteen garages in Guelph and 36 in the rest of the county were licensed. Passenger car dealer licenses were also issued to 13 establishments in Guelph and 11 in the rest of the county during 1921.[33]

Much of the growth of the motor business between 1912 and 1923 owed a great deal to the policies and practices of the Ford Motor Company of Canada. Features of particular importance were the design of vehicles, methods of manufacturing, creation of sales agencies, and pricing policies. The Model T Ford, introduced in October 1908, was a very effective design for the time; it not only enjoyed early successes but remained in production until 1927 when some 758,000 had been built in Windsor.[34]

Ford production methods led the automotive business. When conveyor systems became part of its assembly process in 1913-14, they transformed manufacturing methods all over the world. While making very substantial profits, Ford reduced prices which opened the market to more buyers. In 1910 the Windsor price for a Model T Ford was $1,150. Two years later the price was down to $750, and by 1915 a two-seater runabout could be bought for $480. A

$15 freight charge was added to the Windsor price for transportation to destinations in Wellington County. The Ford system was described at this time as a "commercial serpent" which:

> ...is seen to have its tail in its mouth, making the circle complete and endless and, so far as can now be seen, impregnable. The Ford cars are bought by everybody because they are low cost, good and everywhere present; and they are low cost, good and everywhere present because the large sales enable the Ford company to produce cars cheaply, make them good and support thousands of selling agencies scattered over the entire habitable face of the world.[35]

The Ford Motor Company of Canada was established as an autonomous company in 1904 to assemble Detroit parts in Walkerville, Windsor. A Toronto branch was opened in 1907 and one in Hamilton during 1910. Some early local agents, such as the one in Guelph opened in March 1908, had a short lifespan. More efforts were made four years later, at a time when Ford output was beginning to expand. Sales (including exports) rose from 324 in 1908 to 2,805 in 1911, and reached a peak of 58,857 in 1917.[36] A Guelph Ford agency (Johnson's Garage) began advertising on 7 June 1912 and J.A. Capell in Elora offered Fords from 19 June. By spring 1916 the Ford network in Wellington County was complete with seven agencies, with new outlets in Fergus, Drayton, Harriston, Arthur and Mount Forest. Clifford was served by an agent in Ayton and Erin was covered from Orangeville. The company had an extensive network of 700 dealers across Canada by 1917 and the Walkerville main plant was supplemented by branch assembly in London, Toronto and other parts of the country. Ford provided some very effective advertising copy, often carefully focused on the local market. A bold announcement run in March 1917 announced that:

> ...the best people everywhere are buying Fords. The wealthy are not too proud to drive the low-priced but mechanically marvellous Ford. Dr Groves, of Fergus, who owns one of the most luxurious cars in the County of Wellington, purchased a Ford in the fall of 1916, which he operated many weeks after his big cars were carefully housed away for the winter.[37]

The Ford sales organization was very particular about its local agents, demanding good clean garages, efficient servicing, a well-stocked parts department, and energetic sales efforts. Its high performance standards may have been a factor in the high turnover of agents. Three different garages handled the Ford agency in Guelph between 1912 and 1916, when Heber Little began a long tenure of the Ford Sales and Service Station. In Fergus there were three agents from 1915 to the mid-1920s: O.W. Thompson, G.R. McAllister (who moved to Guelph), and the Hutchinson Brothers. William H. McConnell, who held the Ford agency in Harriston from the beginning, continued without interruption until his death in 1937.[38]

Ford's success in marketing vehicles attracted others into the auto trade in

the later years of the war. In Fergus, J.C. Chapman, an implements dealer on St Andrew's Street, began selling Chevrolet cars in spring 1917. Rogers Garage, next to the Public Library, opened later, and was soon offering Briscoe automobiles. C. Warren, previously engaged in repairs and welding, started selling the Chatham-built Gray-Dort car in early 1920. Finally, the old-established business of John Templin & Son gave up horse-drawn vehicles for the garage trade, and became an Overland agent in July 1920. By the early 1920s, there were a few sales outlets in Guelph specializing in second-hand vehicles, and sales on credit were being offered by the newly established General Motors Acceptance Corporation. Ford kept to its strictly sales for cash policy until 1959.

Finding motor fuel was a serious problem for early motorists. Gasoline was an explosive liquid and rarely available except in two-gallon cans sold by some hardware stores. Petroleum companies had to expand and modify their refining output and reorganize distribution systems, as the balance of products shifted from a dominance of kerosene (for lighting) to gasoline. Demand in the Arthur area was sufficient for Brocklebanks hardware store to advertise their bulk storage capacity of 8,000 gallons with the fuel imported "direct from the refinery in tank cars thus reducing the costs of barreling, freight and handling."[39] They were able to offer gasoline at 18 cents per gallon.

Gasoline was mostly dispensed by curbside pump. Johnson's Garage in Guelph was proud to offer filtered fuel, "From our Bowser Filling station, Government Inspected", at its downtown location by spring 1912.[40] The tall Bowser pumps, at first hand-operated and then electric-powered, became a very familiar part of the street furniture of towns and even hamlets. A large glass gauge provided an accurate and visible measure to the motorist. New types of gasoline service stations, named as such, began to appear in the early 1920s, in response to the regulations restricting or banning curbside refuelling. Corner sites were favoured by petroleum companies and new entrepreneurs. An extensive concrete forecourt had a central island of pumps often covered with a canopy. Fuel was drawn from tanks underground. A separate building housed an office and a small bay was provided for lubrication, tire changing and small repairs. Gas stations were among the first structures wholly designed for the automobile; most other buildings had been converted from earlier uses.

Auto service was rudimentary in 1913, with only a few garages in Guelph and Elora and with limited supplies of gasoline available outside these two centres. Ten years later, with the much wider ownership of motor vehicles, auto services were well established and widespread. In addition to the garages and service stations, there were specialized motor body builders, auto painters, and businesses offering tire services, vulcanizing, batteries, auto parts and accessories. Illuminated globes on the gas pumps, enameled signs on walls, and extensive auto-orientated billboards added new colour to the landscape.

Increased mobility was one of the most profound effects of the motorization which took place between 1913 and 1923. Car travel allowed much more flexible and faster movements across the county and beyond.

Deliveries of parcels and small consignments were faster and more productive. Mobility was reflected in busier streets in towns and villages. Comparative traffic surveys show clear evidence of the greater use of roads. On the main highway south of Guelph, for example, the daily volume of summer traffic increased almost sevenfold between 1914 and 1922, with maximum daily flows rising from 233 to 1,582 (Table 4). Horse-drawn vehicles, which accounted for 72 per cent of the volume in 1914, declined to only 4 per cent in 1922.

Although the Wellington County Council had adopted the 1901 highway improvement legislation in 1903, progress had been slow except for bridge building. By 1914, only one third of the designated 170 miles of county road had been improved. With two steam rollers and crushing equipment available, and the policy of "doing some work each year in every township...it is impossible to accomplish more than a series of patches in a season," commented the provincial highways engineer. While the general condition of the county roads was described as fair, "the unsuitable location of many of the present roads" and the limitations noted earlier meant that "public interest in the work has not been favourably stimulated".[41] The county road system was reorganized in 1915, but wartime labour shortages limited the amount of work on the much enlarged system of 330 miles.

By 1915, when only 20 of the 37 counties in southern Ontario had designated road systems, it was clear that devolution of road work to county councils was unable to cope with the rapid growth in motor vehicle registrations and road use. New legislation created a Department of Public Highways with a stronger mandate for the introduction of more subsidies and a more direct role in highway construction. The first provincial highway was designated in 1917. The United Farmers government, elected in 1919, not only had Ernest Drury as a motoring premier but also included the very energetic Frank Biggs as Minister of Public Highways.

The situation in 1922 illustrates the daunting task of highway improvement in Wellington County (Table 5). Provincial highways were at the top of the hierarchy of roads and accounted for much higher levels of expenditure than other classes of highway. The main highway (later numbered Highway 6) from Hamilton to Owen Sound, with a branch from Arthur to Kincardine, was designated in 1920, and the Sarnia-Brampton highway (later Highway 7) followed the next year. Most of these roads had previously been county roads. The Provincial County Roads (which also included the Guelph Suburban Road Commission established in 1917) had a higher subsidy than the ordinary county roads. Township roads which accounted for three-quarters of the total road mileage had the lowest expenditure and included a large proportion of earth roads. As the District Engineer of Municipal Roads noted in 1922: "The condition of the township roads varied from a first-rate gravel road to an almost impassable mud track, and while a certain amount of improvement is taking place, no decided benefits can be expected till the statute labour system is abolished."[42] Permanent all-weather surfaces, especially concrete, were

extended after 1922 in major paving efforts by the Department of Public Highways.

By the early 1920s, passenger travel between the towns and villages of Wellington County and neighbouring areas had become much easier, as people were no longer constrained by the inflexible and limited railway timetables. The steam railway network in the county reached its zenith in 1907 when the CPR line from Guelph to Goderich was opened. Electric interurban railways, in vogue at this time, were being actively promoted but only one was built. Surveying for the Toronto Suburban Railway began in 1911, but the line from Lambton Mills to Guelph did not open until April 1917. It was unprofitable from the start and closed in 1931.[43] Provincial highway's development and strong opposition by the Drury government ended the grandiose schemes of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission's electric railways.[44] Plans in 1916 showed Guelph as a hub for a network of lines to Toronto, Hamilton, Berlin, Orangeville and Collingwood/Owen Sound. Apart from Fergus, the proposed northern line avoided all centres of population en route to Proton Station where it bifurcated into branches to Collingwood and Owen Sound.[45]

For more than a decade, the auto co-existed with horse-drawn transport. In the middle of the war, H.J. Malone in Arthur, while proudly noting his new agency for Ford cars, still concluded his advertisement: "Don't forget the Horse Fair March 14th."[46] By 1920 the balance had tilted in favour of the motor vehicle. The big clearance sale for the Willoughby Livery in Guelph marked the end of the traditional livery stable. In the sale were 15 good city-broken horses, 18 buggies, 15 cutters, "surries" and cariole wagons.[47] The livery premises opposite the GTR station was turned into other uses, while the proprietor focused on the farm real estate business. The last horse bus, serving the CPR station in Arthur was withdrawn in 1929.[48] Horse-drawn wagons remained in haulage work into the 1920s but then were ousted by a new generation of motor trucks, the earlier vehicles having been built for war service. Milk delivery continued to depend on horse-wagons, even as late as the 1940s. Plowing by horse continued dominant until new cheap tractors of lighter weight became more widespread.

Many other changes followed the paradigm shift from horse power to motorized road transport. The new vehicles were no longer made locally but were supplied from Windsor, Toronto, Oshawa, or somewhere in the United States. Local wheelwrights or blacksmiths could not replace broken parts, but had to have replacements shipped from a distant factory. New fashions in vehicles were decided by corporations in Detroit. Fuel was no longer locally grown hay and milled feedstuffs, but came as refined gasoline from refineries in Sarnia, Petrolia and Toronto, mostly derived from American crude oil. Rules and regulations affecting the motor vehicle were shaped in the provincial capital. As traffic volumes increased, the motorcycle patrols of the Department of Public Highways tried to impose some discipline on the roads.[49] Local administration in Wellington County was subject to more scrutiny and supervision from the Department of Public Highways. Such influences created

a new uniformity of structures and activities in the landscape.

Unlike the massive structures of the railway age, most roadside features in this early phase of motorization were ephemeral and have been swept away in subsequent redevelopment. Few artifacts survive and the archival record is surprisingly limited. Ironically it is the old horse-era buildings which still stand. Some former blacksmith shops remain, although the smithy forge and late accretions of garage and gas pumps have gone. Several former livery stables have found other uses as retail outlets or offices.

The transformation of Wellington County by the automobile was well summarized in an advertisement by a Fergus motor dealer in 1918:

> Imagine, if you can, a country without motor cars, and you have a country whose commerce is severely crippled. The motor car is just as necessary in our daily life as the telephone, the telegraph, or the railway. It would have disappeared long ago, as most fads do, if it had no function higher than pleasure. Its permanent usefulness is recognized. The farmer found it saved time and money, broadened his life, and helped him keep his children contented at home. The merchant found it widened his field of business and speeded up his deliveries. The salesman found the car added to his working territory. Businessmen found they could accomplish more in a working day. The medical profession as a whole adopted the motor car.[50]

The drive for modernity, sought by many at the beginning of the twentieth century, had been accomplished by the mid-1920s in road transportation. "So rapid has been the change in social customs and ways of living that the end of Nineteenth Century is an era strange and remote," claimed Middleton and Landon in 1927. Foreshadowing some future perceptions, they added: "Instead of areas of 'unspoiled country', the whole Province has been transformed into a suburban district and the psychology of the people has been revolutionized."[51] The automotive age had arrived.

NOTES

1. *Guelph Mercury* 20 June 1921, p.6. A note published on the occasion of McHardy's demolition of his original 1901 garage at his house on Glasgow Street.
2. Ontario Motor League, *Official Automobile Road Guide of Canada 1912* (Toronto: Reprinted by Masson Book Co., Toronto, 1971). All travel routes via Guelph include the Moxley Motor Co.
3. Robert M. Stamp, *Turning 100 Together: Ontario Roads and Roadmakers, 1894-1994* (Toronto: Ontario Good Roads Association, 1994). The OGRA continues as a very active organization today.
4. There is a brief biography of James McEwing in *Historical Atlas of Wellington County* (Toronto, 1906, reprinted 1972), p.45.
5. Alexander M. Ross, *The College on the Hill: A History of the Ontario Agricultural College 1874-1974* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1974), p.42.
6. *Statutes of Ontario 1903*, Chapter 7, pp.546-548.
7. "History of the Motor Vehicle Branch of the Department of Highways." Manuscript 1934. Archives of Ontario, RG14, B-10-5, Vol.198.
8. *Guelph Mercury* 13 June 1910.
9. Calculated from *FP Markets, Canadian Demographics 2008* (Don Mills: Financial Post, 2008).
10. Compiled from Province of Ontario Motor Vehicle License Book No. 1,1903-04, Archives of Ontario RG14.
11. The 1912/13 detailed records may be regarded as a comprehensive sample. Newspapers and other records suggest additional vehicles not listed in the Appendix.
12. Early car prices and specifications for a range of makes and models are listed in H. Durnford and G. Baechler, *Cars of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973), pp.338-370.
13. Jones & Johnston Ltd, "Saturday Specials in Real Estate," *Guelph Mercury* 3 May 1913, p.2.
14. T. Grindlay, *A History of the Independent Telephone Industry in Ontario* (Ontario Telephone Service Commission, 1975), pp.241-244.
15. "Exit the stage coach," *Guelph Mercury* 2 May 1913, p.6.
16. "Demonstration car," *Guelph Mercury* 11 December 1911, p.1.
17. *Canadian Motorist* February 1917, p.60.
18. *Elora Express* 3 July 1912.
19. *Clifford Express* 2 May 1917.
20. *Fergus News-Record* 24 April 1919.
21. F.C. Gresnide, "Harness horses and the motor car," *The OAC Review* March 1909, pp.336-341. The author notes a shortage of good harness horses in New York City even before the automobile had begun to take over.
22. The tractors did contract work for farmers under the supervision of the Agricultural Representatives, organized in nine districts across Ontario. A competent mechanic was placed in charge of each district, supplied with a Ford car and tool kit, and was

expected to keep the machines in good repair and to instruct operators. Major repairs were carried out at the Military Hospitals in Kingston, Whitby, London and Guelph. Report of the Minister of Agriculture, 1918. *Sessional Papers*, No. 29, 1919, pp.81-83.

23. Linda Biesenthal, *Ontario's Ag Reps: The Story of Agricultural Extension in Ontario 1907-1982* (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Extension Branch, 1991).
24. D.M. McLennan, "The Ontario Provincial Plowing Match," *The OAC Review* December 1915, p.144.
25. *Fergus News-Record* 10 April 1919. D.C. Chapman was an implements dealer and local agent for Chevrolet.
26. Elizabeth Thomson, *The History of the Board of Light & Heat Commissioners of the City of Guelph* (Guelph: The Board, 2001), p.34.
27. Dahn D. Higley, *O.P.P.: The History of the Ontario Provincial Police Force* (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1984). The first cars were purchased in 1922 (p.108). The Department of Public Highways motor cycle patrol was merged in the OPP in March 1930 (p.214).
28. *Guelph Evening Mercury* 19 March 1908, p.1.
29. Most of the garage details were derived from *Vernon's City of Guelph Directories*.
30. *Guelph Evening Mercury* 15 July 1911. The advertisement ran until at least 20 January 1912.
31. *Elora Express* 15 May 1912.
32. *Vernon's Farmers' and Business Directory for the Counties of Dufferin, Halton, Peel, Waterloo and Wellington* (Hamilton, 1915). Copy in the Kitchener Public Library.
33. Department of Public Highways Annual Report 1921, p.91. *Sessional Papers* No 15, 1922.
34. Notes from Herman L. Smith, Historical Consultant, Ford Motor Company of Canada Ltd, Oakville, March 1980. About 36 per cent of the Canadian output was exported to British Empire countries. Some 15 million Model T vehicles were built worldwide.
35. H.L. Arnold and F.L. Faurote, *Ford Methods and Ford Shops* (1915), p.22.
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43. John F. Due, *The Intercity Electric Railway Industry of Canada* (Toronto: University of

Toronto Press, 1966), pp.85-87. See also the papers in *Wellington County History* Vol 4, 1991.

44. E.C. Drury, *Farmer Premier: The Memoirs of E.C. Drury* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1966), especially Chapters 13 and 14.
45. Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario Annual Report 1916, p.192.
46. *Arthur Enterprise-News* 20 April 1916.
47. *Fergus News-Record* 15 April 1920. The *Guelph Evening* Mercury carried a larger advertisement: reproduced in Steve Thorning's chapter in *Guelph: Perspectives on a Century of Change, 1900-2000* (Guelph: Guelph Historical Society, 2000), p.163.
48. P. O'Donnell and F.D. Coffey, *Portrait: A History of the Arthur Area* (1971), p.34.
49. D.D. Higley, *O.P.P.* (1984), p.214. The DPH motor cycle patrol was merged into the OPP in 1930.
50. *Fergus News-Record* 22 August 1918. G.R. McAllister, the local Ford agent also, unusually, held an agency for McLaughlin cars.
51. J.E. Middleton and F. Landon, *The Province of Ontario: A History* (Toronto: Dominion Publishing Co. Ltd, 1927): Vol. II, p.707, in a chapter on transportation.

Table 1

Motor Vehicle Registrations in Wellington County, 1903-1923

Year	Wellington County	City of Guelph	Total	Vehicles/ 1000 population
1903/4	-	3	3	
1912/13	91	60	151	2.8
1919	1,871	956	2,827	52.2
1920	2,470	931	3,401	62.8
1921	2,877	1,094	3,971	73.3
1922	3,275	1,288	4,563	84.2
1923	3,570	1,585	5,155	95.2

Sources: Province of Ontario Motor Vehicle License Book 1903-04, Archives of Ontario RG14; License record cards held in Archives of Ontario; Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Department of Public Highways Annual Reports in *Sessional Papers.*

Table 2
Wellington County:
Numbers of Registered Motor Vehicles by Place, 1912/13

Guelph	60	Drayton	4	Arkell	1
Elora	20	Hillsburgh	4	Drew	1
Harriston	14	Palmerston	4	Fulton's Mills	1
Mount Forest	11	Clifford	3	Hollen	1
Fergus	9	Glenallan	3	Kenilworth	1
Erin	5	Belwood	2	Rockwood	1
Arthur	4	Alma	1	Salem	1
				TOTAL	**151**

Source: See Appendix

Table 3
Wellington County:
Numbers of Registered Motor Vehicles by Make, 1912/13

Ford	66	Hupmobile	5	Buick	2
McLaughlin	14	Studebaker	5	Mitchell	2
Reo	11	Brantford	3	Nyberg	2
Russell	7	Cadillac	3	Others	20
Overland	6	Indian	3	Not known	2
				TOTAL	**151**

Note: Others include one each of Autocar, Brockville Atlas, Clinton, EMF, Hudson, "J—", Jackson, Kennedy, Metz, "Model", Norwalk, Oakland, Packard, Paige, Petrel, Pope, RCH, Republic, Rex, Tudhope.

Source: See Appendix.

Table 4
Road Traffic Changes
Hamilton-Guelph Road[1]: Average Daily Traffic

	1914	1922
Horse-drawn		
1-horse vehicles	68.6	28.7
1-horse vehicles	35.3	13.7
Sub-total	103.9	42.4
Motorized		
Passenger autos	37.3	872.4
Light motor trucks	2.3	49.5
Heavy motor trucks	-	10.0
Motor buses	-	15.9
Sub-total	39.6	947.8
TOTAL	143.5	990.2

Notes: 1. Survey point at north side of Arkell Road/Brock Road, Puslinch Township. Designated as Provincial Highway No 6 in 1920

Source: Department of Public Highways Annual Report 1922, p.104.

Table 5

Wellington County: Road Mileage 1922

Type of Road	Miles	Expenditure per mile $	Provincial grant per cent
Provincial Highways	86.0	3,921	80
Provincial County Roads[1]	64.6	598	60
County Roads	282.8	526	40
Township Roads	1.349.6	74	20
TOTAL	1,783.0		

Road Surface in miles

Concrete	6.5
Bituminous	6.0
Stone	14.7
Gravel	966.8
Earth	789.0
TOTAL	1,783.0

Notes: 1. Includes about 30 miles of road under Guelph Suburban Roads Commission, which had its own 12-ton steam roller for exclusive work.

Source: Compiled and calculated from Department of Public Highways annual reports.

Appendix 1

WELLINGTON COUNTY: MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS 1903/4
(all Guelph)

Name	Make	License No.	Address	Occupation
Geo. Williams	Cadillac runabout	121	107 Wyndham	Baker
Jon McHardy	Autocar (4 seats)	144	96 Glasgow	Butcher
L.C. Wideman	Conrad[1] (4-seats)	177	16 Arthur	Architect

Note: 1. A rare make made in Buffalo by the Conrad Motor Carriage Co.
Source: Archives of Ontario, Motor Vehicle License Book No. 1, 1903-04, RG14.

Appendix 2

WELLINGTON COUNTY: MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS
1912/13

Note on the Source:

The data for 1912/13 were created from 11 boxes of 5 x 3-inch index cards made by the Provincial Secretary's Department. The cards were discovered by the Archives of Ontario in storage at 999 Queen Street, Toronto, during 1980. All the details were transcribed from the original 9,000 records and made machine-readable. I am grateful to David Hoselton and Peter McCaskell for their work which was part of a research project for the Historical Atlas of Canada.

With the addition of occupations and some missing street addresses in Guelph, all the original information is presented in this Appendix.

Owners outside Guelph are listed alphabetically by their location first, then those in Guelph.

Name	Make	License No.	Occupation
ALMA			
N.C. Wallace	Hupmobile	17978	Physician
ARKELL			
N.A.	Auto Car	20212	
ARTHUR			
T. Jackson	Ford	13019	
J. Kennedy	Ford	16812	Hay Merchant
Dr J. McFadzean	Ford	21027	Vet Surgeon
Dr J. Morrow	Reo	20266	Physician
BELWOOD			
W.K.Hutchison	Ford	14938	Jeweller
R. McClanahan	Ford	15440	Hardware
CLIFFORD			
A.M. Perdue	Ford	9964	Vet Surgeon
H. Smith	N.A.	20241	
R. Wightman	McLaughlin	16171	Telephone Service
DRAYTON			
R.A. Doyle	Reo	13413	
W. Richards	Ford	23427	
W.H. Richards	Ford	23586	Restaurant
W.H. Richards	Ford	23796	Restaurant
DREW			
W. Bell	Ford	22007	Farmer
ELORA			
D.H. Bell	Ford	18289	

Name	Make	License No.	Occupation
ELORA continued			
Bell Bros	Russell	18667	General Store
T. Biggar	Ford	20889	Commercial Hotel
T.E. Bissell	Ford	20634	Agric. Implements
T.E. Bissell	Ford	18547	Agric. Implements
R.M. Boswell	Ford	13659	
J.A. Capell	Ford	9886	Garage
S.R. Cullum	Ford	16627	
H. Farley	Russell	16755	Garage
T. Farley	McLaughlin	21812	Plumbing & Repairs
W.R. Harper	Overland	16827	
Dr W. Kerr	Ford	18696	Physician
J.A. Mundell	Ford	18101	Furniture Mfr
J.C. Mundell	Republic	21505	Furniture Mfr
W. Nicholson	Ford	19862	
W. Nicholson	Ford	18191	Grain Merchant
S.S. Scott	Overland	15360	Pool & Tobacco
J. Thomas	Ford	13660	
C.H. Thompson	Overland	16828	Baker
H. Wheeler	Ford	22893	
ERIN			
R. Bell	Ford	22781	Jeweller
J.P. Bush	Norwalk	23926	Hardware
J.H. Gibson	Ford	13100	
J. Murray	Ford	21849	Tailor
J. Murray	Ford	23295	Tailor
FERGUS			
J. Brown	Ford	22800	
C.S. Ewing	Ford	16688	General Store
C.S. Ewing	Studebaker	20692	General Store
J.E. Garland	McLaughlin	23501	
A.O. Hutchinson	Indian (m/c)	1731	
Dr A. McFadzean	Overland	13558	Vet Surgeon
C.K. McGregor	Reo	18310	
G. Rogers	Packard	21034	
J. Russell	McLaughlin	22645	Department Store
FULTON'S MILLS			
W. Fulton	EMF	20934	Sawmill
GLENALLAN			
P.J. McKinnon	Ford	18886	Physician
W. Quickfall	Ford	19679	Saw & Grist Mill

Name	Make	License No.	Occupation
GLENALLAN continued			
J.B. Walter	J [?]	18872	
HARRISTON			
W.H. Black	Ford	20013	
J. Collison	Rex [m/c?]	17494	Hardware
P. Dryden	Reo	16570	Grist Mill
C. Edgar	Brockville-Atlas	17423	Pianos
C. Edgar	RCH	18283	Pianos
W.A. Glenny	Reo	17422	
Dr T. Henry	Ford	18036	Physician
J.E. Merriam & Son	Ford	20014	Woodenware
W. McConnell	Ford	18034	Grocer
J. Meiklejohn	Studebaker	21158	Hardware
W. Montgomery	N.A.	20188	Tailor
G. Morrell	Ford	18383	
Rev. W. Pearcy	Reo	17730	Minister
J.A. Wilkie	Ford	18384	
HILLSBURGH			
Dr A. Gibson	Ford	19619	Physician
A. Nodwell	McLaughlin	17870	Hardware
F.W. Royce	Oakland	17869	Coal & Grain
M.J. Russell	McLaughlin	17868	
HOLLEN			
Albert Smith	Ford	13028	
KENILWORTH			
C.F. McArthur	Ford	17209	
MOUNT FOREST			
L. Bondi	Petrel	18082	Fruit Merchant
J. Cook	Ford	23283	Insurance
W. Ellis	McLaughlin	18172	Druggist
W.S. Ellis	McLaughlin	17441	Druggist
O. Henry	Ford	23841	Livery
W. McMullen	Cadillac	19414	Real Estate
R.A. Perry	Ford	17156	Physician
A.J. Reynolds	Ford	23177	Physician
A. Robertson	Clinton	18555	Soda Water
N. Wagner	Pope	18608	
J.S. Wright	Ford	23178	Newspaper Publisher
PALMERSTON			
G.S. Burns	Ford	18778	Livery
J. Comb	Russell	15292	Confectioner

Name	Make	License No.	Occupation
PALMERSTON continued			
J. Wilson	Ford	19154	
F.H. Wooldridge	Overland	9893	
ROCKWOOD			
Laing & Co.	Buick	19419	General Store
SALEM			
R.A. Watt	McLaughlin	17733	

CITY OF GUELPH: MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS, 1912/13

Name	Make	License No.	Address	Occupation
F. Adams	Cadillac	22768	46 Yorkshire	Hardware Mcht
J.H. Anson	Ford	17917		
R. Bell	Nyberg	19992	82 Suffolk	Methodist Pastor
Beresford Kan Horan	Jackson	4995		
J.D. Brandon	Kennedy	21356	48 Paisley	Plumber
Colonial Whitewear	Studebaker	19156	40 Northumberland	Manufacturer
T.R. Collins	Indian [m/c]	1622	568 Woolwich	Optician
W.F. Colwill	Hupmobile	18641	86 Liverpool	Architect
W. Colwill	McLaughlin	21778	20 Durham	Manufacturer
R. Daly	Studebaker	19775	72 Wyndham	News Dealer
Harry Dawson	Ford	13203	135 King Street	
W.H. Day	Ford	19424	College Heights	Professor OAC
J.R. Dixon	Russell	13669	Paisley Road	
W.T. Doughty	Ford	9981	Market Square	Merchant
W.S. Doughty	Ford	23444	Royal City Garage	Taxi
J.J. Drew [KC]	Russell	20821	409 Woolwich	Lawyer
D.F. Drummond	Ford	17618		
T.H. Gemmell	Paige	17674	36 Wyndham	Dyers & Cleaners
Guelph Motor Car Co	Buick	20173	Norfolk	Garage
Guelph Motor Car Co	Brantford	13302	Norfolk	Garage
E. Hales	Reo	16708	Dundas Rd	Butcher
J. Halliday	Reo	20927	18 Grove	Merchant
G.S. Harding	Brantford	20171	9 Grange	Wine Merchant
J. & A. Hoskin	McLaughlin	20653	15 Cork E	Taylor & Forbes
M. Humphries	Model (Ford?)	19147	15 Fergus	Tea Merchant

Name	Make	License No.	Address	Occupation
A. Hyndman	Ford	19488	59 Omar	Carpenter
F.H. Irving	Nyberg	21661	Victoria Hotel	
J.H. Johnson	Ford	17918	St George's Square	Garage
J.H. Johnson	Ford	17951	St George's Square	Garage
C.W. Kelly	Brantford	21353	Upper Wyndham	Pianos
J. Kennedy	Russell	17675	45 Mont	Std White Lime
Dr E. Lyon	McLaughlin	21792		
J.W. Lyon	Hupmobile	18636	161 Queen St	
J.W. Lyon	Hupmobile	19442	161 Queen St	
J.W. Lyon	Mitchell	13234	Telephone Bldg	Real Estate
K. Mackinnon	Ford	16523	109 Norfolk	Physician
A. Malcolm	Hupmobile	18611	116 Wyndham	Plumbing
J.A. McRae & Sons	Ford Model R	18568	8 Wyndham	Grocer
J. McIntosh	Russell	20926	Delhi	Newspaper pubr
L. Mathews	Overland	16758	150 Cambridge	
C.E. Moxley	Studebaker	17550	18 Perth	Garage
L. O'Keefe	Ford	21473	60 Macdonell	Photographer
E.J. O'Neill	Cadillac	19103	59 Farquhar	Hide Merchant
Dr T. Orton	Reo	20172	18 Essex	Physician
J. Pequegnat	Ford	19173	St George's Square	Jeweller
M. Pettit	Ford	23534	22 Devonshire	Lecturer OAC
G.D. Pringle	Ford	15312	116 Queen E	Jeweller
Dr H. Reid	Reo	18603	173 Woolwich	Vet Surgeon
G. Reinhart	Reo	16709	48-52 Macdonell	Commercial Hotl
G.A. Savage	Tudhope	21161	21 Wyndham	Jeweller
J.J. Small	Ford	22074		
J. Steele	McLaughlin	24003	73 McTague	Steele's WireWks
Dr P. Stewart	McLaughlin	17430	176 Woolwich	Physician
W. Stuart	Indian [m/c]	1621	54 Strange	Cooper Js Goldie
H. Stull	Ford	23197	Macdonell	Hide Wool Mcht
A. Summers	Mitchell	23955	62 Glasgow	E.B. Grinyer Co
G.H. Sunley	Metz	19705	48 George	Wks Raymonds
H. Walker & Sons	Ford	23198	Huskisson	Wholesale fruit
Dr Walsh	Hudson	16710	1 Cork E	Physician
E.P. Worthington	Ford	20817	26 Douglas	Livery Stable

Don MacKenzie, 1940. Author's photo.

Cars I Have Known

by Lois Beams MacKenzie

There has been an array of old cars that have made up my life through many seasons from vibrant youth to the days of stiff joints, eye problems and heart disease.

When I turned sixteen and met Don he had just bought his first car after he came over to work at Beatty's in Fergus in 1939. It was a little Model A Ford with a rumble seat. Don sure was proud of that little car.

Then came the winter of 1940, when Don and I were dating, after my mother had died and I was living at grandma's. Don asked me if I wanted to go to Alliston with him to bring his two sisters back to work in Beatty's as Don' s mom and pop were having a hard time making ends meet.

They refused to come back to Fergus with us because they had heavy dates with soldiers from Camp Borden. They were fighting over whose turn it was to wear the brassiere. That was the first time that I had ever met Don' s family.

We didn't stay there long because it was getting dark and a menacing storm was forming. The storm caught us just outside of Orangeville. The fierce howling wind and snow blizzard hit us head-on battering the little car. Don struggled to keep the Ford on the road and I was trying to keep warm with blankets piled around me as Don limped the car into Arthur and found an old church driving shed to park in.

We leaned into the wind as we plowed our way through the snow to a rundown old hotel and found ourselves sitting around a pot bellied stove for the rest of the night with a bunch of old Arthur cronies, as all of the rooms were full. We were snow-stayed in Arthur for three days. A friend that I knew from work took us to her aunt and uncle, the Goldings, who were kind enough to take us in.

In 1941, Don sold his wee car to buy furniture for an apartment because we were getting married. If I'd had my say we would have kept the car and bought less furniture. That was one of those times when Don said in a snarky tone of voice "You're a dreamer."

That was the last car we had for the next five or six years. Don was in the army and I, of course, went with him.

When we came home in 1945 we couldn't afford a car for a year or so.

Don's brother Hec had a Model A Ford since before the war. After the war Hec put that car back on the road for our trips to Alliston from Fergus.

We would pile about ten people in with lots of blankets in winter as there was no heater in the car and off we would go the eighty some miles to Alliston, across the Orangeville road which hadn't been paved yet and some times we would get stuck in mud on the road. On more than one occasion we had to get a farmer to pull us out with his tractor. Hec swore that that old bugger plowed the road so people would get stuck so he could make some money.

Some time in 1946, Don and I bought a big old 1929 Chev. There was lots of room in that car but we were still packed in like sardines what with Murray, Don's teen-age brother, and his cronies riding back and forth with us and two big dogs in a box on the running board.

If we went by way of the Hockley Valley, there were several hills that the car couldn't make it up. Someone would have to jump out and put a stone behind the wheel so it wouldn't run back and then every one had to get out and shove the car up the hill.

Then there were the trips to Wasaga Beach from Alliston. Don's Mom would make a huge lunch with several pies and lots of sandwiches, and off we would go the thirty or forty miles to the beach with so many people going that there wasn't room to cram any more in, so Murray and a friend or two would ride on the running board hanging on for dear life.

Sometimes on the way home Murray would walk in front of the car telling Don where the edge of the road was as we crawled along in the pea soup fog.

There was the time that we were very late leaving Fergus to go to Alliston, maybe about two in the morning and Don fell asleep going down the steep church hill and we found ourselves bouncing through the ditch.

Another time as we were on our way home with a big car load of people and were going quite fast just out of Alliston, when something that we thought was a dog passed us on the road. Suddenly the rear end of the car fell down spewing sparks and then we knew it was the wheel.

The next car we bought was a little grey Willys Knight.

One time when we were coming to Fergus from Alliston with a car load of people to attend a lacrosse game the old Willys car started smoking and the engine burst into flames just outside of Fergus. We all quickly piled out and started throwing gravel on the fire. Of course then the old car wouldn't start, so we ditched it and hitched a ride to Elora with Don taking the license plate from the Willys to put it on our old 1929 Chevy that had been sitting idle in the yard for several months. We all piled into the old Chevy and headed for Alliston with walnuts that the squirrels had stashed in the ceiling falling on our heads and we were laughing all the way.

Don always fixed the cars himself. We couldn't afford to take them to the garage so you can understand Don's consternation when the kids were making a lot of noise in the back seat. He was trying to listen to the motor to see if it was running on all four cylinders. "If those kids don't shut their mouths" he would roar, and then there would be total silence.

There was the time that one of the cars had a short in the horn and started blowing one winter's night from the barn up the road a few yards: "Darooga

Darooga." Don had to run out to the barn through the snow to shut it off before the battery went dead.

Another time, Don was under the car trying to fix something and he was in a terrible mood. Along comes fifteen year old Garry: "Maybe it's the hen weigh." "What in hell's the hen weigh?" "Oh about five pounds!" "He he he" laughed Don in his 'precious pup' laugh, as the boys called it, making him in better humour.

The great old blue Chevy that I remember was the one that took Don, Murray, Betty and I west in the early sixties. We travelled ten thousand miles to Vancouver and Victoria, and home through Montana, land of the big sky, where the brutal heat and scorching wind caused the big car to boil over. We had to stop at a small oasis where there was a small patch of green grass for us to roll in and some water for the car. Yellowstone Park in Montana was where we set our tent over a geyser, one night near Mammoth Springs, and wondered why it was so hot and steamy in our tent.

Next came the luxurious, useless big green Chrysler. It was the car that I got my license in when I was forty two.

In about 1963, Brian, my teen-age son, went with me to Orangeville to try for my license. There were two flirty young police officers doing the testing. One of them went with me for the test, and I didn't get my license that time. He said "You are a very good driver but you didn't stop long enough at the stops." "I did stop at the stop signs" I complained. "Look you're not supposed to argue with a police officer" he said with a hint of a flirty smile.

A couple of weeks later Brian and I went to Mount Forest for me to try again. I wanted to avoid those two flirts but low and behold there they were in Mount Forest. "Well here she is again" one of them remarked. This time the other one took me out. This time I passed. They laughed and teased me. Now watch that big Chrysler tearing all over the country picking up boyfriends.

Shortly after that we bought a 1957 Chevy. A little beauty with great power and pick up.

One time when I was leaving Guelph with sons Garry and Brian, who were in their teens at the time, I was waiting at a stop for the light to change, and this young man was beside me in a souped up car and I knew by his actions that he intended to beat me from the stop, "Beat him Maw." The second the light changed I was off like a bullet and left him behind. He was so angry that he waited his chance and went roaring by me, but that didn't bother me. I had already beaten him. And then on the way home to Elora we caught up to a bunch of teens that Garry and Brian knew. They were, just starting up one of the steep hills in their old car. "Take 'em Maw." I stepped on the gas of the '57 and left them in the dust, as Garry and Brian cheered and waved at them. When daughter Janet heard about it she remarked "How immature."

In the years when I drove the '57, I drove at top speed. I didn't look at much scenery then like I do now. The kids teased me about going so many places. They said that everywhere they went I was there. I loved driving.

One of my boys once remarked "If I was walking on the streets of New

York and I saw Maw driving by I wouldn't be surprised. I would just say 'Oh hi Maw.'"

As a matter of fact Don and I did drive through New York in the Chevy. We were on holidays in New York State and accidentally found ourselves driving through the centre of the huge steamy, hot, noisy city of New York. I saw the statue of Liberty, and Central Park off in the distance as we tried to find our way out of the city. Don was driving and I was in my bathing suit.

The next car was the long-as-a-wet- week red Pontiac convertible from the sixties. We went up to Wasaga Beach in the days that cars were allowed on the beach and we drove up and down with the top down and the radio playing full blast to see what it was like to be a teenager. Riding in the convertible with the top down on a nice evening in July was lovely. We could smell the sweet scent of new mown hay. We loved that car.

What a downfall it was when the convertible conked out and we bought a little red Vega. It seemed so small in comparison to the other cars that we had owned.

I was going to Conestoga College at that time in the 1970s. I drove the Vega to school and on the way to Guelph one day I was going down a hill on the University road out of Elora and I spied a large herd of cattle on the road with a big thick-necked red bull much bigger than my car among them. When he saw the tiny car he tried to run along side, and when I speeded up trying to pass him he would run across the road in front of me back and forth. Finally I got by him and thanked my lucky stars.

In the seventies Don and I wanted to travel so we started buying Volkswagen campers.

The first one was a yellow one that the kids named the Banana Wagon. Don and I had a ball in that camper but we didn't go any long distances. Mostly we went to camp sites in the north such as Killbear or Killarney, and then in the autumn we went to Point Pelee or Wheatley.

Then came the orange camper which was named Orange Crate. Don and I went all the way to Kimberly in BC to visit one of Don's old army cronies in the orange van. We slept in the upper bunk and when I looked down at night I could see a mouse coming out of my purse on the floor. We found out later that it had built a nest of grass in the heater of the van.

By this time I was doing most of the driving, and I didn't mind. Some days I drove more than five hundred miles. Don didn't like driving much then.

In 1987 we sold one of the lots off our back property for twenty five thousand dollars and bought a brand new gorgeous white Volkswagen camper with the money. Don said "A fellow doesn't know how much time he has left and should enjoy himself." I agreed.

We headed for the East coast and stayed for a month, taking in Peggy's Cove, a fall fair at Bridgewater where there were ninety teams of oxen, and then on to Prince Edward Island, and Anne of Green Gables country, and then home.

We went a few more places over the next three years but Don was

beginning to have health problems.

Don died in January 1999, leaving me with the van and his wee black truck. Some fool woman ran into me a couple of years later and smashed up the wee truck.

Janet, my daughter, and I had a great time with the van. We went to Newfoundland twice, we went to Prince Edward Island across the Confederation Bridge and we travelled around the Gaspé, and up and down the streets of old Quebec. By this time Janet was doing most of the driving.

And then one winter tragedy struck. In an ice storm, a tree fell on the van and demolished it.

Next came the Jeep. The first four wheel drive I had ever had. I liked the Jeep but it couldn't take the place of the van for travelling.

Janet and I did go to Vancouver Island in the Jeep but it wasn't very comfortable to sleep in. We just made do and slept in it in the parks to save money. We had lots of fun and saw many things including a grizzly bear crossing the road in front of us.

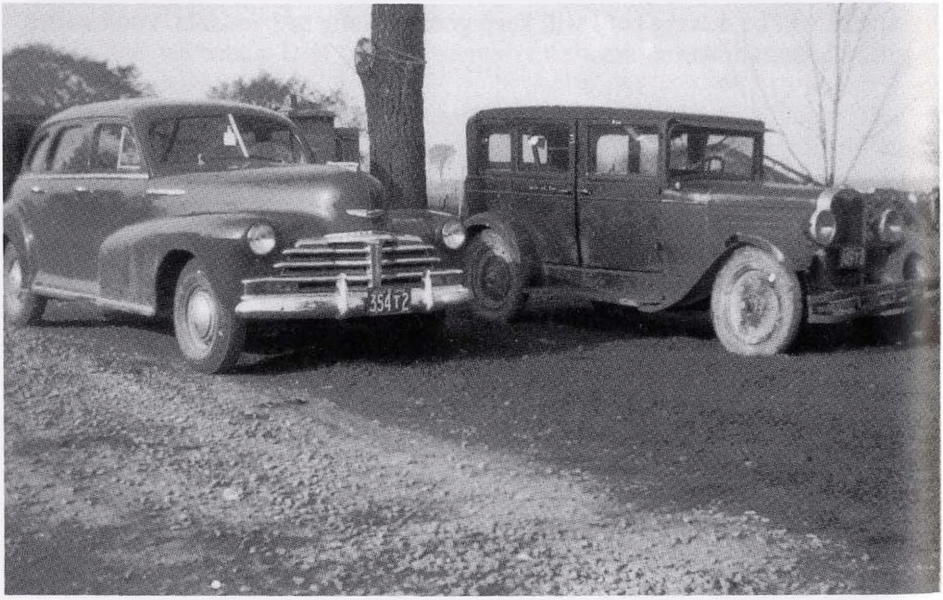
We travelled so long in the mountains that Janet remarked "If I never see another mountain in ten years it will be too soon".

I put an awful lot of miles on the Jeep. It had even been stolen right out of my yard and some things wrecked on it that couldn't be fixed, so I sold it.

And then I bought a red SUV Chevy Blazer.

The vagaries of time have taken their toll on me. I don't know how much longer I will be driving but I will keep going as long as I am able. You can bet you're bottom dollar on that.

Betty Lambert with cat and 1928 Susie. Author's photo.



Betty Lambert's 1948 Chev, next to 1928 Susie. Author's photo.

If You Knew Susie...

by Betty Lambert

I once had a car named Susie. She served me very well considering her age and world events. Her name was inspired by the song:

> "If you knew Susie like I know Susie
> Oh, oh, oh what a girl!
> There's none so classy
> As this fair lassie, oh, oh
> Oh my goodness, what a chassis! " [1]

She was a 1928 blue Chevrolet four-door sedan with blue corduroy upholstery. She had a four cylinder engine and a standard three-forward-speed transmission. There were no trunks in cars in those days. If I had to bring home a bag of chop, I draped it over the front fender.

Susie had no heater. She had numerous drafts. To drive in cold weather, I put one mittened hand inside the front of my coat for awhile and then gave the other hand the same treatment. The starter gave trouble but I learned how to use the crank and how to hold it to avoid getting my wrist broken.

The wooden frames inside the doors were rotting. This meant that the doors did not open and close properly. My father replaced some parts with new wood. Eventually only the right passenger and right rear doors closed in a reasonably good manner. The other doors could be opened but it took a lot of work to close them again. The front passenger door sometimes came open while the car was being driven. This was remedied by installing a screen door hook.

In later years the exhaust system rusted until only the exhaust pipe straight down from the manifold was left. Does this sound like an automobile that today's inspector would order off the road, if he didn't faint first from surprise? In those days it was not unusual.

This was war time. Mechanization was focussed on such vehicles as jeeps and tanks. Gas was rationed. You had to produce your coupons if gas was available. This limited the amount of distance you could travel. It wasn't the price that limited you but the availability. Gas had been 25¢ per gallon. At a gas station, you pulled up by the pump and watched the level of gas in the cylinder at the top of the pump go down as the operator released it.

Some other items not available were tires. There just weren't any to be had. If you had a flat tire, you took it off, removed the tube from the tire and patched whatever hole or holes you could find. It was usually patch over patches. To try to prevent further harm from a damaged tire, you would insert a partial liner called a "boot" into the tire before replacing the tube in it. While the airmen were singing:

"What a show, what a fight, boys
We really hit our target for tonight
How we sing as we limp through the air
Look below, there's our field over there
With just one motor gone
We can still carry on
Comin' in on a wing and a prayer."

I was singing:

"And with two tires gone
We can still carry on
Comin' in on a rim and a spare." [2]

I never knew when Susie's condition would make itself known. One night as I was driving home from a dance, I saw the right front wheel pass me and roll along the ditch. On examining the wheel, I found a length of axle attached to it. She spent the night there until I got assistance the next morning.

I was teaching at one room country schools and had to board in the community and go home on weekends. One Monday morning Susie couldn't quite make it. I had to walk the last mile. At noon, one of the senior boys gave me a ride back to her on his bicycle. She was ready to finish the trip then. How do you get a ball team over to a neighbouring school for a little competition? Susie said, "Pile them in." The boys were quite flexible and managed to fit in. I don't remember how many games we won or lost but no one was injured.

One Friday night I was coming home from near Leamington where I was teaching. As I drove along Highway No.2 between Chatham and Thamesville, I felt the car going faster. A transport truck had come up behind and was pushing my car. Then it eased back and passed me. A while later I saw the truck at a truck stop. I pulled in behind it, got out and demanded to know what the driver thought he was doing. He apologized profusely, explaining he thought it was a friend's car. It seems there were other cars in Susie's condition on the roads.

For several years, I attended summer school at the University of Western Ontario in London. I shared accommodation with two or three other girls, usually renting a house vacant for the summer. Susie took us to classes. One year I shared a chicken house moved into Tent City near the football facilities with Pauline and Frances Buchanan.

Susie was a great asset to our social life. On Saturday night she took three or four of us girls out to Wonderland where there was an outdoor dance hall with lovely surroundings. We met some of the international airmen who had come up for the evening from the Air Force Base at Aylmer. They were quite willing to pay ten cents per dance to find partners.

Susie's major problem was her brakes. They did not work well. I remember rolling through a red light on Richmond Street in London when I was heading downtown. One summer my friends Pauline and Frances and I were determined to take a little trip. The destination was Niagara Falls. Their parents did not approve of our using Susie because her brakes were not reliable. Our solution was to borrow my father's car, a 1927 Star, a product of Durant Motors. Her brakes were good. She was a tall heavy vehicle with a thick wooden steering wheel. We took off across Wellington County, stopping in Rockwood to visit Aunt Ida and Uncle Arthur Thomas, and then stopped in Acton to visit Aunt Win and Uncle Hilton Elliott. We headed south and then west around the end of Lake Ontario. This was before the Burlington Skyway Bridge was built. We meandered through the streets of Burlington and made our way to Niagara. We found a place where we could stay overnight. We had been doing some shopping and since we couldn't lock the car and there was no trunk, we had to lug parcels, some of good size, into the house with us. We returned home without incident. The Star had served us well.

The war was over. I was able to order a new car. I waited and waited for over a year. Finally in September 1948, I received notice that there was a car ready for me in Inwood. I headed home on the weekend along No.2 Highway. This time it was a police officer who stopped me and began to talk about Susie's condition. I informed him that everything was all right. I had a new car waiting for me. He rejoiced with me.

This car was a 1948 Chevrolet, a blue four-door sedan. Prices had changed. I had paid $30 for Susie. For this one I wrote a cheque for $1,481.20, but what a difference in performance! This car took me to visit in Detroit and other places in Michigan. She took me and my mother to visit in Ithaca, New York. She took me to Guelph in 1949 to attend college, and back and forth to London one semester. She could be quite frisky. One day I drove a fellow student home to just east of Guelph. On the way back while driving down Eramosa Hill, I got a speeding ticket. It didn't appear to be city traffic. That area was not built up and it seemed like countryside to me. While I had a job at a nursery, she had a break. I had to take a driver's test to drive a commercial vehicle. It was a bit stricter than when I had taken my first driver's test on a Model T Ford in 1941.

I drove that car through my college years and while I was working at the Ontario Veterinary College. When we got married in 1955, my husband sold his car to help pay for a home for us. We both drove my car until she became inoperable. After that, I drove whatever car my husband had, even the farm truck taking pigs to market.

When I became the only car driver in the household in 1998, I bought a new car, a Chevrolet of course. It is a Malibu model and since it was December

it is a 1999. It still serves me well. The significant years in my car ownership are 1928, 1948 and 1998.

What happened to Susie? I couldn't part with my faithful automobile. She was parked in the yard down at my home farm for awhile. When my father's 1927 Star, called Leaping Lena, was in the repair shop, he and my brother John Drage drove her again. I appreciate receiving some details for this story from my brother. Eventually, Susie was sold but she had contributed much to our lives, and her memory lives on.

ENDNOTES

1. If You Knew Susie (Like I Knew Susie) - from the Broadway musical "Big Boy" (1926) , by Buddy G. DeSylva and Joseph Meyer.
2. Comin' in on a Wing and a Prayer, by Jimmy McHugh and Harold Adamson (1943).

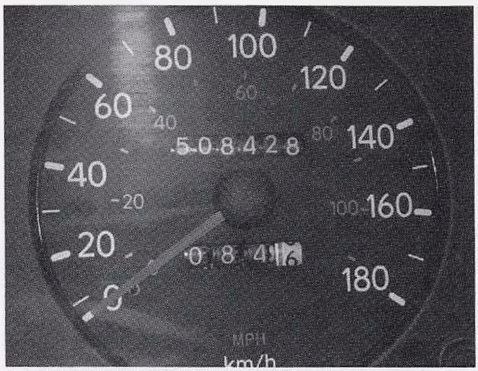
The 500,000 km Toyota

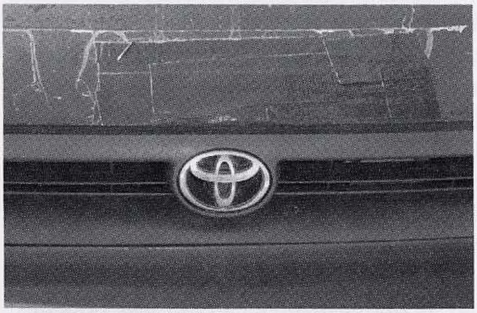
by Judith M. Dowling

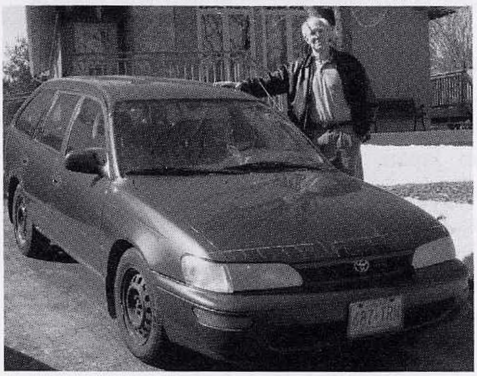
At the moment we have four cars standing on our drive, ranging from the brand new to one that is ready to be driven to the nearest auto wreckers' yard, assuming that its engine will hold out for a few more kilometres. To the passerby, the latter car, a Toyota Corolla Wagon, looks like a pile of scrap iron held together with black duct tape. It is true that duct tape does cover the many perforations in the car's rusting bodywork but beneath these somewhat clumsy repair jobs lies a Japanese internal combustion engine whose pistons have cycled their way through 506,000 kilometres or almost fifteen times around the earth's equator.

The Toyota, which is fifteen years old, is my husband's car and was bought brand new for $23,856.70, a large sum then. John nearly didn't buy it. In November 1993, he had just about decided to buy a Corolla Sedan but changed his mind at the last minute when he discovered that the sedan's cargo space was smaller than that of my Volkswagen Golf! So he ordered the Corolla Wagon which, because it was manufactured in Japan, did not arrive at the Toyota dealership until January 1994. Apart from being made in Japan, there was nothing unusual about the vehicle though at the time of purchase we thought it very luxurious. It had a 2 litre, 115 HP, four cylinder engine and ran on regular unleaded gas, in fact rather puny compared with the high powered engines that go into most cars these days. Even the extras seem very primitive now, consisting of air conditioning, dual front air bags, anti- lock brakes, cruise control, remote unlocking for the trunk and gas cover, and a radio with a tape deck.

John has always maintained that his car was extremely reliable and never needed any major repairs but that was not quite true. At 150,000 kilometres, the cylinders were discovered to be faulty and had to be replaced. Fortunately, John had bought an extended warranty and this covered the $2000 repair cost. Then the radio died after a few years. The replacement came with a clock but it is so complicated to use that we have to consult the manual every time we need to set the clock forward or backwards an hour. A really memorable breakdown occurred when a front tie rod fractured on our way up to the cottage. The car was packed to the roof with supplies and camping gear, and wedged firmly amongst the pillows and boxes was the cat in her cage. The only good thing about the breakdown was that it happened as we were driving out of a Tim Horton's parking lot. At least we had somewhere to sit while we waited for the tow truck.







The 500,000 km Toyota. Author's photos.

And then patches of rust started to appear on the Toyota's bodywork. John went out and bought patching compound and grinding equipment and repaired the damage before it developed into holes. But then he got busy and didn't have time to keep up with the metal repairs. About two years ago, around Christmas time, when a hole appeared by the hood ornament, he made a temporary repair with a square of red duct tape. The patch looked quite seasonal against the car's green paint! The red patch adhered for a long time. John was so impressed by the durability of his stop gap repair that he started using duct tape to cover up all the rust holes on his car. About once or twice a year John would lovingly replace frayed and worn tape with precisely cut rectangles of fresh black duct tape.

So how did the this car accumulate so many kilometres on its odometer? Commuting between Fergus and Waterloo accounts for well over half of the 500,000 kilometres. Frequent business trips to Toronto, London, Kingston, Ottawa and Montreal probably account for another 100,000 kilometres. But the Toyota was not just a commuter car. It was the vehicle of choice for family trips to all parts of Ontario, Quebec and the northern US states, including Boston, Warsaw (Indiana) and New York State. The Toyota has taken us east to Newfoundland and back, the return journey including a side trip across the Confederation Bridge to P.E.I. That journey was undertaken when the car was nine years old. Two years later, we headed out west

to see if we could reach Alberta. The Toyota fulfilled all our wishes: It took us to the West Edmonton Mall so our daughter could go shopping; to Drumheller so I could see the Badlands; and up to Fort McMurray to visit John's sister. To complete the trip, we drove up into the Rockies and over the Alberta border into B.C. so that our daughter could claim she had set foot in every province in Canada. The Toyota could also make the same claim.

Having done the Canadian west and east trips (and all the provinces), the Toyota had only the Territories to explore. The Yukon was our next goal. Unfortunately the Toyota won't make it there. Three weeks ago, during a routine check up, one of the engine valves was found to be failing with no hope of repair. It was at that point that the trusty Toyota seemed to decline rapidly as a few days later the window wipers seized up and wouldn't work. Then a small crack appeared in the windscreen and spread rapidly before our eyes. Sadly it is time for the Toyota to go to the scrap yard. So the next fine, dry and warm day (the engine is hard to start on cold days), John will drive his much loved Toyota to the nearest auto wreckers' yard and sell it for whatever he can get for it. A few final photos of him with his Corolla and we will drive home in either his or my new car.

But part of the Toyota will come home with us, namely its four new all season tyres that were bought this Fall. They, their rims and hub caps will go on my old Volkswagen Golf which my daughter now drives. So look out for an old blue Golf with Toyota tyres. You will be able to spot the Golf quite easily as the rust holes in the bodywork have been repaired with black duct tape.

Some sad news for a footnote, 14March 2009: John's trusty and rusty Toyota made its last road trip to day to the Auto Recyclers on Wellington County Road 29 and not a moment too soon, judging from the exhaust fumes and smoke resulting from incomplete combustion.. Prior to the start of the car's final journey, the odometer reading was 508,428 kilometers. John will receive $300 for his car under a recently instituted government scheme to encourage owners to get rid of their old vehicles. The Toyota is apparently destined for the crusher. As part of the deal we were not allowed to remove the Toyota's wheels but John took off the hub caps as souvenirs. My old blue Golf now sports one Toyota hub cap (to replace a lost one) and three VW ones. My daughter Jennifer, who now drives the blue VW, won't let us replace the remaining three with Toyota hub caps.

Paterson Carriage, made by W.A. Paterson Co., Flint, Michigan. Author's photo.

Paterson Model 30, 1910. Author's photo.

If Fergus Had A Henry Ford: William A. Paterson

by Greg Oakes

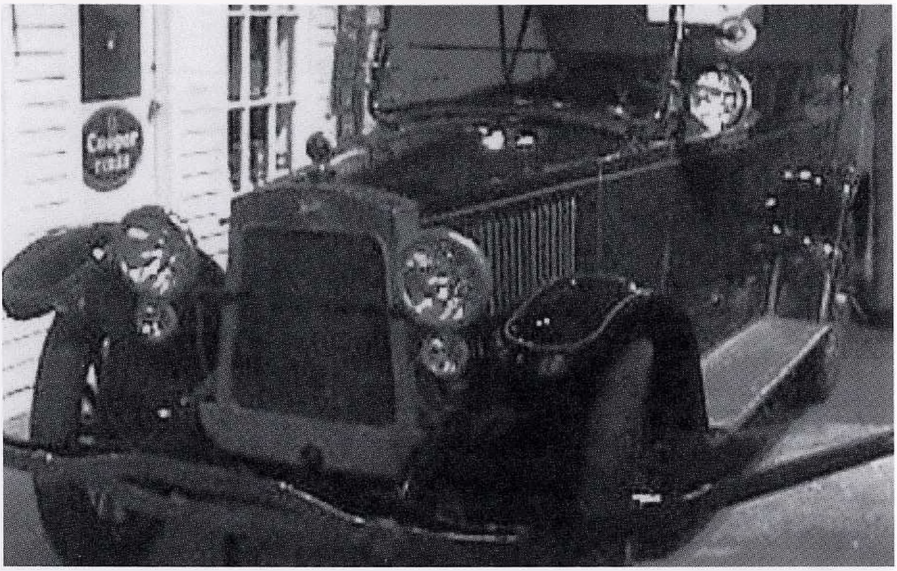
"Wellington County, Ontario, produced William Paterson and James J. Hill the same autumn – pretty fair for old Wellington, especially with the panic of 1937 going full blast. Both men were of that sturdy Scotch stock which live on and work hard." [1]

One of the most successful early American automotive manufacturing pioneers was Fergus-born William A. Paterson. His sole proprietor blacksmith and buggy repair shop grew to become the largest owner-operated carriage making firm in the United States. Adapting to the motor age he founded his own private automobile company. William A. Paterson rose from the stark poverty of his early days at the Fergus settlement in Upper Canada to industrial fortune and prominence as a major manufacturer in Flint, Michigan.

William Paterson was born on his parent's farm in Nichol Township on Concession 3 just south of Fergus near the trail that is now Highway 6 on October 12, 1838. [2] His parents Archibald and Jane (Inglis) Paterson were early pioneers at the Ferguson-Webster settlement. [3] Archie, who had emigrated from Oban, Argyllshire, Scotland, farmed and was employed by Mr. Webster to square timbers for building construction. [4] A competent carpenter, he was a leading craftsman in his community. His wife, Jane was a daughter of John and Margaret (Lakey) Inglis of the Paisley Block of Guelph Township. They were natives and weavers from that historic Scottish textile centre of the same name. [5] Archie and Jane married in Guelph in 1830.

During the winter of 1836-37 the mill in Fergus burned down. On the evening of the 15th of January 1837, the drowsy locals were roused to the cry of fire. The local farm economy was shattered as their produce was consumed. Paterson lost his whole oat crop. Ingeniously, Paterson converted timbers from a granary frame into use for a mill so by the next autumn the mill wheels were moving again. It took years for Paterson to overcome the losses he suffered in that fire.

Jane Paterson died tragically 22 August 1848, leaving seven children. "Wee Wullie" had been attending the log school house in Fergus under the tutelage of James McQueen. Now at age nine he was bound to a nine year apprenticeship in the carriage trade. His father signed articles with R.D. Scott



Paterson Model 6-45 touring car, ca.1919, in the Sloan Museum. Author's photo.

of the firm of Scott and Watson in Guelph. [6] Young William would reside with the Scotts and be reared as one of the family. His master would ensure he received a good Christian education and training as a carriage smith. In addition to clothes and lodging William would receive a small annual stipend rising to ten pounds in the final year.

William's typical day began at five a.m. He swept the shop floor, filled the water tanks and started the fires. Once the men arrived at six he was on call, fetching wood, water and materials. After a while he was trusted with errands. Following a term of merely turning the grindstone, he was shown how to sharpen tools. With each new skill came more responsibility. Eventually he got a turn on one of the big saws down in the saw pit. He was tutored in wood lore: how to season wood and which type of wood was best for each part of the carriage. He learned how to heat and shape and temper all types of metals.

While standing by to blow the bellows he could observe the blacksmith form the hot shape, test it for heat, pound it against the anvil, thrust it in the water then tap it again. Soon wee Wullie the watcher became the student and eventually got his first chance to shape a pin. Sixty years later, Paterson would wax nostalgic, recalling the workers singing hymns as they worked pounding their benches and anvils keeping time with their leather aproned choir:

> "Men don't get as much fun out of their work these days as we used to. For one thing the big boss isn't right there as R.D. was; for another we weren't handicapped by having machinery to watch and feed every minute. When one did a job extra well, the rest would step over for a look at it. When a rig stood out on the floor as

Patterson Building, downtown Flint, Michigan. Author's photo.

> finished, we had time to look it up and down, tell each other its good points, figure out how to make the next one better. We gloried in the work of our hands." [7]

The apprenticeship provided plenty of hard work in the diverse skills of the carriage artisan. Along with basic literacy and religious upbringing, the contract allowed free time and materials for Paterson to fashion his own set of tools. The final test was for Paterson to use these tools to singlehandedly build a complete carriage. Upon successfully completing the apprenticeship Paterson became a journeyman, proficient in his trade but lacking experience. Having received his back wages, a certificate of competence, tools, and references for his character, he ventured to the United States. Even then, there were more opportunities there.

He laboured in various carriage manufacturing establishments in America. Though he left Guelph on horseback, the young smith was quite a skilled barterer; by New York he had two horses, and by the time he reached Vermont, a horse and buggy. Working and trading, he had a team and wagon once he got to New Hampshire. [8] Presumably he was a shrewd assessor of repair and improvement costs for wheeled vehicles. He worked in Center Harbor, New Hampshire for a master builder. Then in 1858, aged 20, he moved to Concord, home of Concord light wagons and Wells Fargo stage coaches. As a journeyman he worked in southern New York, eastern Pennsylvania, eventually reaching Baltimore, Maryland. He was ambitious, seeking a better salary and more responsibility.

Upon the urging of his brothers, John and James, Paterson returned to

Ontario and they established the Bruce County Carriage Works in Kincardine. He lost his savings when the business slumped during the post civil war recession. Paterson lamented that he wasted five of the best years of his life in a dead town. The Paterson boys were good workers but inexperienced businessmen. Paterson had built himself a home in Kincardine but sold it and left the business to his brothers.

His earlier mentor, R.D. Scott, had left Guelph and had set up shop in Pontiac, Michigan. Scott had sold his Guelph operation to J.B. Armstrong and Co. In 1869, Paterson left Kincardine for Flint, Michigan. Scott had advised him to set up shop 35 miles north of him on the Saginaw trail. After a few months working in Pontiac, Paterson opened a little shop for buggy repairs in the lumber town of Flint at 611 Saginaw Street.

Business began to grow. Little by little, Patterson was able to progress. He eventually hired an employee to help. Paterson was a large boned, brawny armed blacksmith who loved his trade. It was common to see him in his leather apron leaving the railroad yard with a large piece of iron on his broad shoulders. After prospering he was able to purchase his shop for five hundred dollars. Later he began to manufacture carts and carriages expanding his trade. Flint was a lumber boom town and when the forests declined the sawmills moved north. With a steady wood supply vehicle manufacturing supplanted the lumber industry. Paterson was one of the first and most successful.

Paterson always sold the buggies he and a few employees made by hand. When money was scarce during periodic declines, he would travel across the state trading for wood or meat or produce as down payments. Paterson always found a way to pay his employees. Sometimes he had farmers delivering foodstuffs to him all winter for a carriage purchased the previous summer.

Paterson's business expanded gradually in scope and importance; by the 1880s he was Flint's largest horse drawn vehicle manufacturer. By then the great pine forests were ravaged and the lumber era was dying. The lumber barons had big tracts of land but needed new outlets for their capital. Labour was abundant. They made the difficult transition from raw material's acquisition to manufacturing. Most attempts failed but wagon making succeeded. The largest employer in Flint was the Crapo Lumber Company. A grandson of the founder, Billy Crapo Durant, had just started working there and he hated it. Piling lumber for 75 cents a day did not interest him. Sales interested him. He was a talented salesman and he plied the public with patent medicine, cigars and then insurance. Soon the young entrepreneur would turn his talents to selling road carts.

With J. Dallas Dort, a young hardware salesman, as a partner, the Durant-Dort Carriage Company was founded in 1886. Though several Flint lumber businesses had evolved into horse drawn vehicle factories, Paterson was contracted to build their vehicles.

W.A. Paterson was setting the pace for his competitors by producing more vehicles than any of them. His success encouraged others. Flint became a vehicle production centre influencing a constantly widening area. Wages were

high and living expenses were comparatively cheap. Workers from other carriage-making centres moved to Flint, increasing corporate knowledge. Local capital combined with technical expertise to ensure prosperity. Eventually vehicle manufacturing replaced the boom and bust lumber economy. The lumberjacks were migratory but the carriage workers were less so, and began to accumulate wealth. There was less wear and tear on the tavern floors and more interest in ecclesiastical and educational pursuits. [9]

By the mid-1880s, Paterson had the best equipped factory in town. He invested his capital in his community constructing three buildings: the original one on Saginaw and two on East Third Street. Twelve employees were producing two vehicles per day ranging in price from $100 to $250 per unit depending on the make and design.

Durant was an early practitioner of mass marketing. Durant and Dort contracted with Paterson for an economically priced rudimentary two-wheeled cart. Paterson was paid $8 per cart and the Durant-Dort pair sold them for $12.50.[10] Durant's hypnotic salesmanship brought hundreds of cash orders for carts before Paterson could even build them. They sold 4,000 carts the first year. Soon they were selling 1,000 carts per month and shipping them by rail throughout the midwest United States. More manufactures moved to Flint to capitalize on its reputation as "Vehicle City." With the big orders from Durant and Dort, Paterson borrowed more money to expand his business. He also produced his own cart model to rival Durant. Durant was upset that the independent- minded Paterson would compete against him but there was glory enough for all. When Durant expanded into cheaply priced lightweight four wheel buggies he again contracted Paterson for an initial order of 200 buggies. Once Durant lined up a big contract in Chicago for the buggies only to discover Paterson chanced upon the same buyer and undercut him for factory direct pricing. This time Durant opened his own vehicle factory dispensing with Paterson. Paterson was not a team player and ran his own business.[11]

The production increases initiated by the Durant-Dort contracts had expanded Paterson's productions. In 1878 he had built a factory at the corner of Third and Saginaw that burned down in 1891 at a loss of $25,000. [12] He immediately rebuilt an enlarged three storey factory dubbed the Paterson Block. By then he had organized his workers in an assembly line fashion to maximize the output. He kept many salesmen on the road. By 1895 his industrial complex was one of the largest owner- operated carriage factories in the United States. By then Paterson had traded in his sledge for a chair in the front office. His factory was the nucleus for success as the steel arches on downtown Saginaw Street proclaimed Flint "The Vehicle City". Paterson incorporated his firm in 1896 with $100,000 in capital. By 1901 the company had $200,000 in capital, employed 350 people and carried a weekly payroll of $3,500. Paterson also kept a sales office in New York City on Broadway. [13]

In 1902 Durant, by then a millionaire, discussed with Paterson and others the possibility of a huge $50,000,000 consolidation of the major carriage companies. His efforts came to nothing but it foreshadowed his success

creating General Motors six years later. Throughout the 1890s the Paterson factories grew until they occupied an entire city block. Earlier structures were razed until the entire north side of east Third Street between Brush and Harrison streets was occupied with a three storey brick factory. In 1897 a four story section was added along Harrison Street. In 1905, a four storey factory was built on the opposite side of east Third Street.

Paterson invested his profits from the carriage industry into Flint. Blocks from his factory, he erected commercial office buildings: the Paterson Block, the Dryden building, and next to city hall, the Inglis Block. He built a dozen handsome residences, large brick mansions for himself and various family members. He also built several warehouses and the Chevrolet garage across from the courthouse.

One of his largest ventures was the Dresden Hotel, a six storey monolith with all the latest conveniences. On 23 June 1902, Paterson and several partners bought the downtown lot on the southeast corner of Third and Saginaw Street for $28,500. At the time it was Flint's most expensive land transaction. The new hotel opened 30 January 1907 and was the finest in the city until it was surpassed by the Durant Hotel in the 1920s. The Dresden Hotel had state of the art office machinery and 103 rooms. The structure cost $175,000 and soon became a magnet for Michigan social conventions. It hosted major political conventions. Durant held all of the early General Motors meetings there. Sadly, the hotel was destroyed in a fatal fire in 1963. [14]

Paterson felt great civic pride in Flint. He was a Republican and was elected mayor of Flint in 1890. He ably defeated his opponent, Josiah Begnole, a former governor of Michigan. Conscious of his lack of higher education, he made few memorable speeches but he completed one term in a quiet fiscally-conservative fashion.

He was serenaded in the grand manner with bands and a torchlight procession after his victorious campaign for Mayor against Governor Begnole in 1890. One term as Mayor was enough for Mr. Paterson, who disapproved of politics thereafter. There is a family tradition that Mr. Paterson's friends, unbeknownst to him, circulated a quantity of bright new half-dollars in the vicinity of the polls; this largesse affronted the Paterson sense of thrift. [15]

The growth of the vehicle industry required stable financial assistance. In 1893 a group of local businessmen, including Paterson, chartered the Union Industrial Trust and Savings Bank. [16] It was at this time Paterson had added the A. to his name to differentiate himself from a local banker who had absconded with the deposits. Frontier banking was volatile. The original stock subscription was for 2000 shares and Paterson held 30. Paterson would remain on the board of directors until his death. Paterson also managed the Flint Vehicle Fabricators Mutual Benefits Association, an organization formed for the employees of the local carriage workers.

By the turn of the century speculators were risking capital on the automobile. Like this century's dot-com bubble, many lost where few succeeded. Flint was still a town of 14,000 inhabitants but it was the "Vehicle

City". Assembly methods improved as competition increased.

In 1903, the Buick motor works was enticed to move to Flint. The company was in serious financial difficulties. The Union Trust Bank loaned them $10,000 on the endorsement of several prominent local citizens. Larger banks were more cautious. David Buick had built two automobiles in three years of trying. His technology, the valve-in-head engine, was superior to all others but it still burned money faster than gasoline. With the valves directly over the pistons it was more efficient and eventually became the industry standard. Most people were losing money invested in automobiles in 1903 but Flint had everything at stake in vehicles. Buick made 16 cars its first year. Paterson was an original Buick stockholder and served on the board of directors until 1905, when he sold his interests and resigned. [17]

Paterson was an independent spirit. Though 70 years old in 1908, he formed the W.A. Paterson Co. to manufacture the Paterson automobile. In 1908 Buick made 8,487 cars, occupied the largest automobile plant in the world and had a net worth of $3,417,142. [18] That same year General Motors was founded absorbing Buick and enticing Louis Chevrolet to set up shop in Flint.

Paterson and his employees had built a prototype auto-buggy in 1907. It had an air cooled twin cylinder engine, solid tires and a chain drive. [19] The courage of ignorance, optimism, and a vague assumption that making and selling cars was similar to carriages sustained Paterson. He retooled his factory for automobile production. He wanted to keep his employees employed. His chief engineer, Alfred Sturt, a descendant of seven generations of wheel wrights had served in the carriage trade for decades. He would later design some of Chevrolet's most popular models. Paterson only produced 200 cars the first year. Dubbed, "Model 14", the early car evidenced his carriage making background. In 1910, the company introduced a shaft driven 30 horsepower four cylinder touring model, the "Paterson 30" retailing for $1400. Carriage production ceased that year.[20] Car production increased to an average of 400 per year to a high of 2000 in 1920.

In due course, Paterson realized the auto business required higher standards of precision far beyond the carriage trade, and much more capital. Still, the optimistic octogenarian persevered. He had at least one dealer in each of the 48 states and enjoyed some export sales. From 1910 to 1914 the company produced four cylinder cars with four separate model ranges including 40 and 45 horsepower engines. The 1911 product had six different open body styles. In 1915 two six cylinder models were added, the Continental engined 6-32 and 6-46. Four cylinder types were discontinued in 1916. From then on the firm became one of the better known "assembled" car firms. There was a standard chassis with three styles. A sedan was introduced in 1918. There was nothing unique or remarkable about the Paterson, but it had a good reputation. A Dutch catalogue released in 1919 described it as "the Rolls Royce of American cars," in the only English sentence in the brochure.

For the 1922 season, in the fall of 1921 Paterson advertised "Your Idea of a Beautiful Car" in three body styles, a tourer, a sedan and a coupe priced from

$1500 to $2500. The car called the "Paterson Six" was the mainstay of the line and was advertised as a distinguished car for people of discriminating tastes. Paterson announced plans for greater expansion.

Paterson owned his car company privately, and maintained an active role in its management. He also maintained large real estate holdings. When domestic demand for all automobiles slowed briefly in 1920, he got out on the hustings and hawked them himself. Despite his age, his spirit and health remained unchallenged until his sudden death at 83 in September of 1921.

William A. Paterson did his best pushing the Paterson automobile to attain a reputation for worth and reliability equal to his carriages in the earlier days. His only son, William H. Paterson, at age 41, inherited the business and continued as president. He had worked for his father all his life. Competition from larger car producers was too much for many of the small auto makers. Young Paterson was not as ambitious as his father and sold the business in July of 1923 to Dallas Winslow, a Dodge dealer. Winslow continued to make Paterson cars briefly until the end of 1923. The south factory complex was sold to Dallas Brownson in 1927. The Brownson family still own it and the structure survives. It has received state and national historical designations and the wood floors and open beam ceilings remain. The north complex was demolished in 1947 for a department store.

Paterson was a community advocate. He was an active member of the Presbyterian church and served as elder for 25 years. He was a charter member of the Knights of Pythias Lodge 23 in Flint, and a member of Flint Lodge 222 Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. He was a 32nd degree Mason affiliated with the Detroit consistory of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite.

W.A. Paterson was also a dedicated family man. He returned to visit Eramosa many times and he married Mary Dryden on 23 December 1874 in Guelph. They had five children, three of which survived infancy. Maude Paterson, the oldest daughter, married W.R. Hubbard of Flint who was a director of several Flint banks and was treasurer at the Paterson firm. Mary Madelon Paterson married Arthur Pound, a journalist and published automotive historian. Their only son, William Scott Inglis Paterson, sold the family business, retired to Los Angeles and left no heirs. Local Wellington County nieces and nephews of W.A. Paterson recall his death because they each received $100 when he died. [21]

Though William A. Paterson left many monuments in brick and stone very few of them survived. Ironically, Flint, the boomtown that survived the loss of the forest by adapting to the carriage trade and then embracing automobiles, was decimated in the 1980s. It did not anticipate the decline of domestic automobiles. Forty thousand of eighty thousand General Motors employees, reared on the big paychecks of the 1960s and `70s lost their jobs. Flint succumbed to an industrial decline unparalleled by any other United States city. The vehicle city is now reviled as an industrial wasteland. Paterson is remembered as the grandfather of Flint industry. Once he was established, few years passed in which he did not erect some type of building in Flint; he was

one of the most potent individual factors in its development. [22] His early environs, the harsh pioneering, paid dividends in his later years. Lack of opportunity in Ontario forced him south of the border. Armed with a rugged constitution from a sturdy Scottish background he conquered the Michigan frontier and brought wealth and influence to himself and his peers. He achieved great success in his chosen trade and adapted to revolutionary change.

Today on e-Bay you can find a Paterson carriage for $6,000. Someone in the Netherlands is asking $47,000 for a 1913 Paterson motor car.

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Cars of Wellington County

by Amy Dunlop

A woman behind the wheel of a Ford Model T touring car with a female passenger in the backseat, circa 1909-1913. The straight fenders and the radiator cap on the front identified the automobile as a Model T. By 1912 the electric starter began to replace the hand crank which was dangerous and physically demanding on many women drivers. Photo: WCMA ph 3953.

One of the earliest cars in Harriston, this Ford Model T was purchased by Dr. Tom Henry, 1909-1915. His father, Dr. Sam Henry, a well-known professional in Harriston, accepted a ride in the back of the car. Cars allowed doctors and nurses to travel long distances to meet the needs of the growing rural communities.

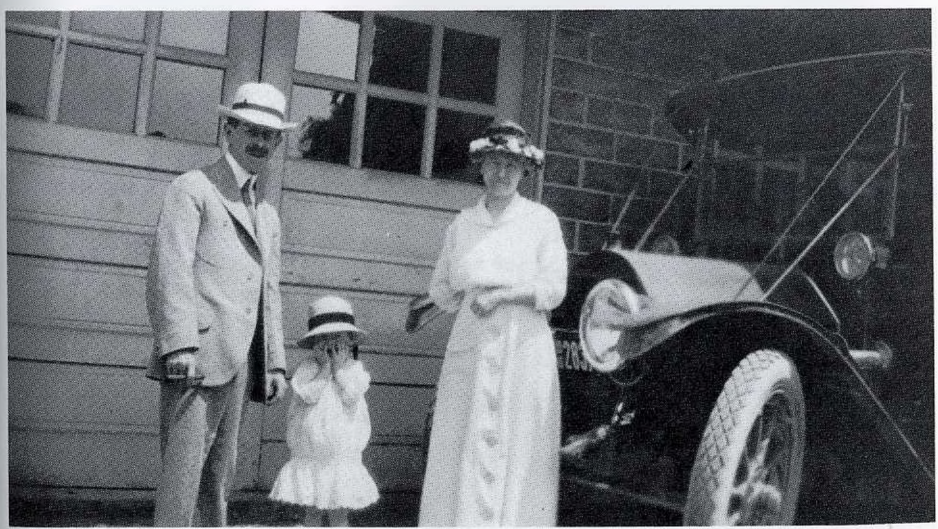
Photo: WCMA ph 4502.

Parked on the main street of Alma in Peel Twp., this automobile has neither a windshield nor doors. It does have a license plate number on the front. By 1903, Ontario drivers were ordered to paint and display their license number on their car.

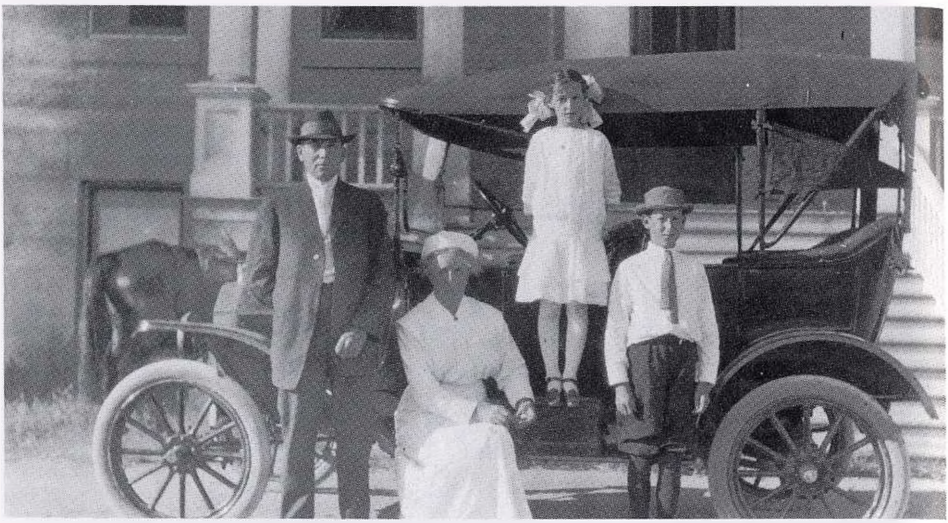
Photo: WCMA ph 2796.

The long straight skirt of Mrs. Yeoman of Mount Forest might have posed a problem for stepping up on the running board. Between 1910 and 1930, there were 50 different makes of Canadian cars produced in dozens of cities and towns.

Photo: WCMA ph 1549.



The Yeoman family of Mount Forest, dressed in their Sunday best, prepare for a family outing. The family poses in front of a car that has non-skid tire treads (dated after 1910). Tires had to be replaced regularly since they were often punctured by stones or horseshoe nails on the road. By 1912, a set of tires cost $50 and had to be replaced every 3000 miles (4800 kilometres). Photo: WCMA ph 1647.



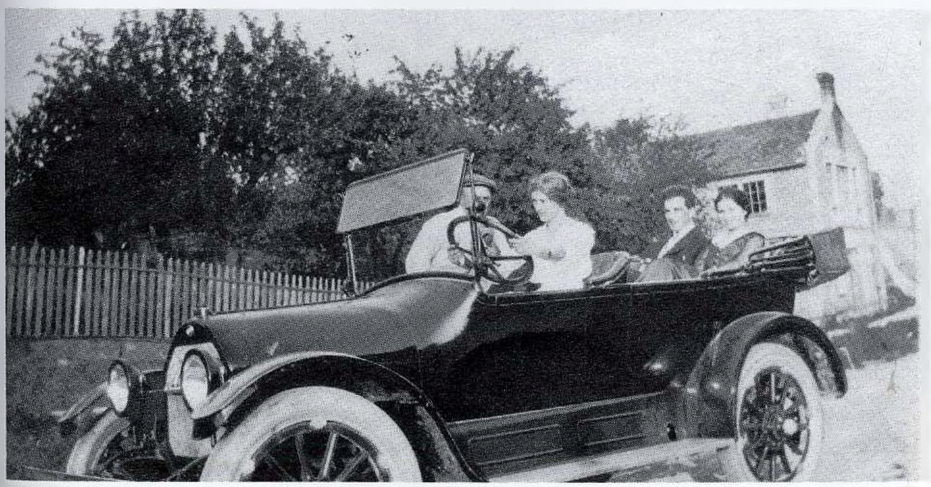
In front of a hospital, Al MacLeod, Nurse Adcock and two children pose in front of a car, circa 1916. Unlike some early one-seater vehicles, this Ford Model T had plenty of room to transport doctors and nurses with supplies to their patients' homes.

Photo: WCMA ph 5574.

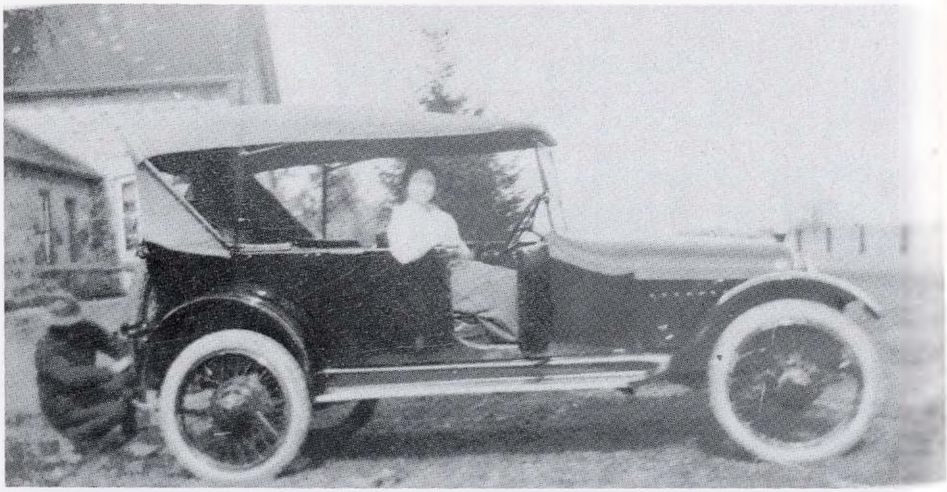
Left to right: Gladys (Fasken) Bard, Hazel (Fasken) Aitchison, Aggie (Cunningham) Orr ?, Eliza (Cunningham) Fasken. A news article from the *Elora Express* of May 8, 1918 announced, "The following have recently become possessors of new autos around here: Harley and Edwin Wallace, R. Cunningham, W. J. Fasken, Johnnie Smith and W. H. Howse. There may be others. Robert G. Fasken, of Elora, is the agent who has been doing such a rush of business among the farmers." Bob Fasken was a farm machinery/implement dealer, possibly Massey-Ferguson, and arranged for the autos as an 'agent'. The women pictured are the daughters, wife and sister-in-law of W.J. Fasken, owner of the new auto.

Photo: WCMA ph 19492; ph 20736.

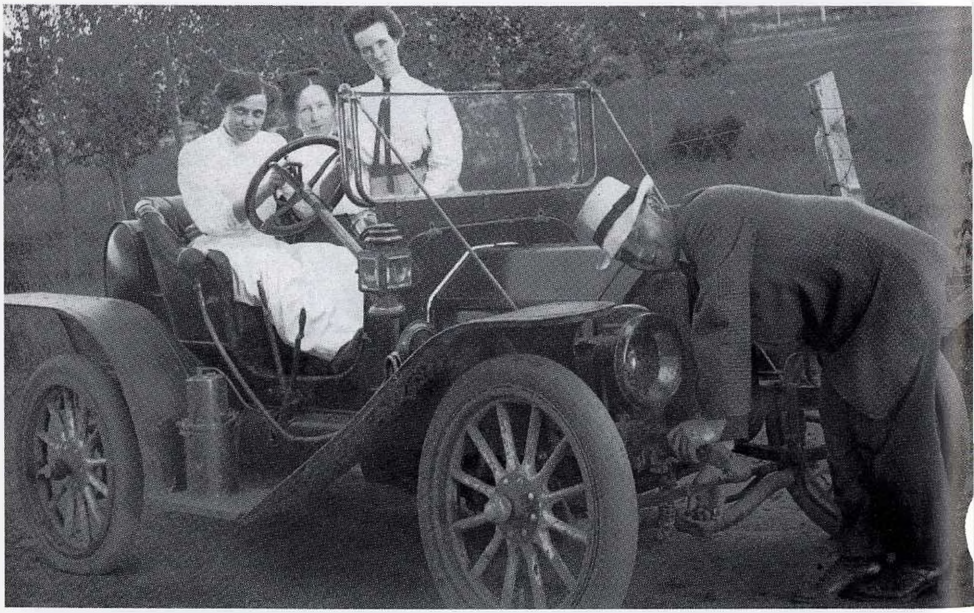
In 1914, the Ford Model T was an affordable car for an average family to purchase, costing $490. The high body frame of the vehicle was ideal for the ruts in rural roads. Men, women, and children from Erin Twp. pose in front of a Ford Model T (right) and a half-ton truck (left) circa 1918. (Left to right): Margaret Black, Jack Pearson, Ross Pearson, Mr. Pearson Sr., R.M. Pearson, John Stewart, Marie Pearson, Erret Currie, Nettie Abbot, Ada Currie, Mrs. William Pearson, Mrs. David McMillan. Photo: WCMA ph 856.



Two couples of the Fischer family of Elora were photographed in an Overland automobile. By 1920, 10% of Canadians were driving motor vehicles and 172,065 vehicles were registered in Ontario that year. Photo: WCMA ph 3621



Ella Stickney from Peel Twp. at the steering wheel of a 1920s McLaughlin vehicle. The car is identified by the diagonal slits on the hood of the vehicle which let out hot air from the motor. The McLaughlin Motor Car Co. was the most successful and biggest Canadian automobile manufacturer. By 1918, it turned out 125 cars a week. Photo: WCMA ph 7031.



Cranking the engine as three women pose at the wheel of this 'runabout' touring car, circa 1920-1927. Sightseeing became a growing pastime in the 1920s for the middle-class, spurred by the increase in road-building projects and the spread of paid vacations. By 1919, there were 1600 kilometres of pavement in Ontario, which increased to 13,000 by 1930. Photo: WCMA ph 3955.

James and Elise Edward of Moorefield pose with their son Bob in front of a new Ford Model A in 1928. The Model A was a huge improvement over its predecessor the Model T. Given a good road it was possible to reach 65 mph.

In 1930, over 1,290 Canadians were killed in car accidents; by 1940, the speed limits were reduced to 50 mph (80 km/hr) in an attempt to reduce accidents and deaths due to speeding. Photo: WCMA ph 9190.

Suitcases, skates and young women hang from this car in Harriston, circa 1930. Travelling in the automobile was an important event. Transportation in motor vehicles provided opportunities for families and friends to socialize more easily.

Photo: WCMA ph 4351.

If anyone knows the names of the women in this photograph please contact Wellington County Museum & Archives (519.846.0916, www.wcm.on.ca).

Employees and members of the Ransom family from West Garafraxa gathered around a truck from the Tweddle Chick Hatcheries Ltd. of Fergus, circa 1946. After hatching, chicks were placed in special boxes in trucks and shipped to destinations around North America. The company provided opportunities before and after World War II for women to enter the workforce. Photo: WCMA ph 5534.

This photo-essay was prepared by Amy Dunlop for use at Wellington County Museum and Archives, in an exhibit entitled "A New Found Freedom: Photographs of Antique Cars" in 2004. It has been adapted for use in this journal.

Teviotdale Speedway Opened 50 Years Ago

by Stephen Thorning

In October of 2003, this column, in a two-part look at the hamlet of Teviotdale, contained a few paragraphs about the Speedway there that featured stock car races in the 1950s and 1960s.

This week [April 30 2004], on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the track, it is fitting to have a closer look at that once famous attraction.

More than a few people shook their heads in the fall of 1953 when they learned about the construction activity at Teviotdale. A racetrack for automobiles would soon be in operation on the Minto side of Highway 23.

The man behind the project knew what he was doing. Charles Greenley had been a pioneer in the management and promotion of speedways during the late 1940s, when stock car racing enjoyed a boom in popularity across North America. Greenley constructed the Pinecrest Park Speedway north of Toronto, at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7. It opened in July 1948 as a crude, half-mile track. Greenley made many improvements before selling out in 1951.

He then headed west to Calgary, and built a speedway there. Two years later he returned home. Charlie Greenley was a Harriston native, and he wanted to build his next track closer to home.

During his years of management and promotion of stock car racing, Greenley had learned much, and he applied his knowledge to the construction of the Teviotdale Speedway. He knew that the sport had a great potential in farm and rural communities. The location he selected at Teviotdale, at the junction of major highways, was a convenient one for drawing people from all directions.

Greenley built a quarter mile paved track. He planned to operate in the evenings, so he installed floodlights, on poles resting on concrete bases. For the audience he built a large wooden grandstand with a seating capacity of about 2,000. Underneath it was a lunch counter. A second, smaller hot dog stand went up across the track. A high wooden fence surrounded the facility. There were acres of parking in the field beside the new track.

Work on the track and facilities went into high gear in April 1954. Greenley wanted to have a full season in 1954, and wanted to be open before the beginning of May. He met his objective, scheduling the opening for April 30, a Friday.

In the weeks before the opening, Greenley employed his promotional skills,

sending photographs to daily and weekly newspapers in a 50-mile radius of Teviotdale, providing news stories to CKNX radio in Wingham, and chatting up editors whenever he could. That work paid off with a great deal of free publicity.

Many people considered stock car racing a disreputable activity. Greenley tried to counter that accusation by making his track a family-oriented one. Young children could visit the track free, though the adult admission, a $1, was comparatively high for 1954. Most other entertainment attractions charged 50 or 75 cents. He stressed the safety precautions he had taken and stressed that he had ample liability insurance for spectators and competitors.

The novelty of stock car racing in North Wellington, combined with Greenley's promotional skills, paid off on opening night. Perhaps, for the first time ever, Teviotdale witnessed a full-scale traffic jam. Congestion plugged the intersection of Highways 9 and 23, and to the west, a line of vehicles stretched for more than a mile, waiting to pass through the gate. Constables from the OPP struggled to keep traffic moving.

The crowd exceeded Greenley's optimistic predictions. When he tallied the gate, 4,200 people had paid admissions. That made the opening night crowd at the speedway the largest ever to attend a paid event in North Wellington.

The opening ceremonies on April 30 were brief. First to step to the microphone was Arnold Darroch, who had been a political figure in Minto for years, and the MP for Wellington North from 1949 to 1953. He was also related to Greenley. His brief comments offered congratulations to Greenley for his enterprise in building the facility. Minto Reeve Elmer McEachern took even less time, thanking Greenley for selecting Minto for the speedway and pointing out the high quality of the construction. Then it was on to the races. A faint blue haze of exhaust fumes and the acrid smell of burning rubber soon permeated the speedway.

Greenley wanted to encourage local competitors. He knew that they often had loyal fans who would turn out to see them. He divided the races into two classes. The semi-professional racers, who travelled from track to track, raced against each other in Class A. Locals raced in Class B.

The Teviotdale Speedway needed 17 employees to operate. There were parking attendants, ticket sellers, lunch counter workers. The best known were Ivan Burk of Palmerston, the flagman who started the races, and Bill Bell, of Harriston, who entertained the crowd with his amusing patter before races, made announcements, and played records over the sound system between races.

There were no accidents that first night, but, nevertheless, Greenley had arranged for an ambulance from Tanner and Pearson, of Mount Forest, to be on hand. Several times, Bill Bell announced, "Would the ambulance driver please report back to his ambulance - he must be there at all times." The driver wanted to watch the action with everyone else.

Opening night attracted about 20 local cars. Most of the drivers had no experience in stock car racing. Many cars enjoyed the sponsorship of a garage in the area, and carried advertising messages on their sides.

Two entries came from Palmerston. Ralph Welsh, of Welsh Shell Service, sponsored one of them, with Urban Doerr at the wheel. The other bore the name

of Carl Shoemaker's Wrecking Service. Lyle Schmidt had rebuilt the car and was the driver. Doerr did well for a novice, placing second in two races.

A Clifford entry did exceedingly well. The car had been put together in five days by Demerling's garage, with mechanics working late into the night to get it ready in time. They named it *The Cannonball*, and Archie Holtom drove it to victory in the first heat. Another Clifford entry, sponsored by Eldon Nesbitt, of Clifford Machine and Welding and driven by Eldon Nesbitt, suffered mechanical trouble all night.

Other cars came from Orangeville, Guelph, Kitchener, Hanover, Brussels, Paisley, Listowel and Wingham. Fifty years ago, Listowel already had a name for car dealers. Harvey Krotz sponsored an entry, and Jackson Motors brought some if its inventory and drove the cars around the track between the A and B class races.

Before the feature race, Greenley brought out his daughter, Norma, who drew numbers for the special prizes. The programs had draw numbers printed on them. Mrs. Parks of Clifford, won a clock radio. Bob McComb of Cotswold secured a steak dinner at Clifford's Four Aces Grill, and Charles Shaw of Brussels, won a carton of motor oil.

The only sour note came after the races. The field used for parking was still muddy after the spring thaw, and quite a few cars became mired in the mud. Fortunately, several tow trucks were on hand, and their drivers gladly helped motorists get their vehicles onto solid ground.

Greenley scheduled races every Friday evening for the rest of the summer. The relatively late starting time, at 8:30 pm gave farmers time to complete evening chores, and those from a distance time to drive to Teviotdale.

A couple of days before the opening, Greenley offered an option on part of the property to a local group. They planned to develop a park that would include picnic tables, playground equipment, and a ball diamond with lights. Teviotdale's community centre committee undertook a canvas in May and June to raise money for the park.

Later in 1954, Greenley added a fried chicken dinner to the speedway's attractions. At the races on Dominion Day and Labour Day, the prizes included television sets.

The Teviotdale Speedway ranked as a top entertainment attraction in North Wellington through the 1950s, and remained a fixture in the hamlet for more than a quarter of a century. It is remembered as part of the era when the automobile was at the centre of everyday life.

Surprisingly, few photographs of the speedway or the cars and drivers who raced there seem to have survived. Some must be hidden away in old boxes and attics. Copies of them should be at the county museum so that the Teviotdale Speedway, once an important entertainment facility, is not forgotten by future generations.

The editors would like to thank the author and publisher for kind permission to reprint this essay which first appeared in the ***Wellington Advertiser****, Friday 20 April 2004.*

The Guelph Suburban Road Commission 1918-1996

by Ross W. Irwin

John Galt founded the town of Guelph April 23, 1827. He was aware of the importance of providing access to the town for the sale of land and the export of goods. So, within the year he began to chop roads to York, Eramosa, Woolwich, Garafraxa, Dundas and to Waterloo.

Road construction and maintenance were originally the responsibility of the people living on the road. Guelph became established as a market town and the roads leading to the town became the responsibility of the District Council of the District of Wellington. The District Council upgraded these roads.

By 1842 the Eramosa road was open to Erin and the Garafraxa road from Marden to Fergus, The Saugeen road passed through Elora. However, local merchants wanted a direct route to markets. The Guelph and Dundas Road Company, in 1847, built a macadamized road from Guelph to the Waterloo-Dundas road following the Brock Road.[1]

Wellington County Council purchased the Guelph-Arthur Road from the road company in 1864, that is, the section from Card's Corner to Fergus and from Card's Corner to the Guelph town line. Card's Corner was the intersection of Highway 6 and Victoria Road. The Eramosa Road from Guelph to the Four Corner Inn was assumed in 1865. The Dundas Road was also assumed at this time. So, by 1865 the leading roads into Guelph were being upgraded, improved and maintained by County Council.

Lesser roads were maintained through statute labour - a requirement that those on the township assessment rolls should perform work on the roads which they used. As the system of barter was gradually replaced by cash, this obligation could be commuted - fulfilled by payment of money. The funds created through commuting it were never enough to maintain the roads. Statute labour was abolished by Guelph and Eramosa townships in 1902. It had previously been commuted at 50 cents a day.

In 1902, Guelph Township, typical of other townships at the time, had 110 miles of road, of which only 13 miles were improved stone, 50 miles were gravel and 47 miles were still classed as graded earth. Five miles of road were under what was termed the County System.

The Ontario Good Roads Association was organized in 1894. It had a

Provincial Instructor in Road Making appointed in the Department of Agriculture to advise municipalities on road improvement. In 1901 the Highway Improvement Act was passed for the improvement of public highways and provided a 1/3 subsidy to encourage counties to improve their roads.

Wellington County established a County Road System, January 29, 1903. [2] The County Roads designated, and their length (miles), were:

Brock Road	12	Guelph - Erin	15
Erin - Esquesing	12	Guelph - Mount Forest	40
Guelph - Saugeen	42	Fergus - Belwood	10
Glen Allan	10	Arthur - Luther	5

Total - 144 miles

A Public Roads and Highways Commission [3] was appointed in 1913. Their report formed the solid base upon which the present road system of the province is founded. An important recommendation in the report was the creation of a Minister and Department responsible for roads. The Department of Highways dates from this time, as does the Ontario Highway Act. The Act came into effect in January 1916. Two years later legislation permitted the Department to take over, maintain, and construct leading roads throughout the province as Provincial highways. These were named King's Highways in 1930.

The rural economy was dominated by the village store which supplied goods and services on credit, used township roads to pick up eggs and butter on a weekly basis, and delivered pre-ordered goods on the next trip. A trend of small manufacturers leaving the small towns and villages, and moving to the county town was well underway. Rural people were of the opinion that larger towns were taking unfair advantage of the rural economy

With the newly arrived automobile, people drove to church and took short pleasure trips. The bulk of local summer commerce was still carried by horses, buggies and wagons. Distances travelled were short. Inter-urban travel was almost exclusively by train.

The Ontario Highway Act, 1915 [4], affirmed the principle that cities should contribute to the construction and maintenance of leading market roads adjacent to that city.

The Act created Suburban Road Commissions for towns and cities exceeding a population of 10,000 and set up a procedure for appointing commissioners.

The first duty of the Suburban Roads Commission [5] was to determine the roads, and the length of each adjacent to that city, to which the city would contribute. It was then the duty of the Commission to determine the work to be undertaken each year, and to estimate the amounts required for construction and maintenance. The County Council would first approve or amend this estimate and authorize the expenditure. County Council was to then notify the

city of the amount required. Originally, the province contributed 40 % and the county and city 30% each for construction. For maintenance the Province contributed 20% and the balance was divided equally between the county and city.

The Act stated the section of County Road designated as 'suburban' remained a County Road for which the county was responsible. Any work was carried out under the county road superintendent, but subject to the instructions of the Commission.

The Public Roads and Highways Commission dealt at length with the reasons why cities should share in the cost of suburban roads.[6]

The object of a city's contribution would not be to relieve the county of the expenditure which they were then making, but rather to improve the standard of roads radiating from the city, and to permit them to be maintained in a condition suited to the increased traffic over them. Traffic accumulated to a considerable density on the main roads immediately adjacent to a city, and it became an unfair charge upon rural districts to construct and maintain roads suited to such accumulated traffic.

Definitions of Roads based on Purpose:

Township Roads, for the most part, led into main-travelled or market highways. Township roads generally carried traffic which originated on the road itself. City side streets were considered a parallel to township roads in function.

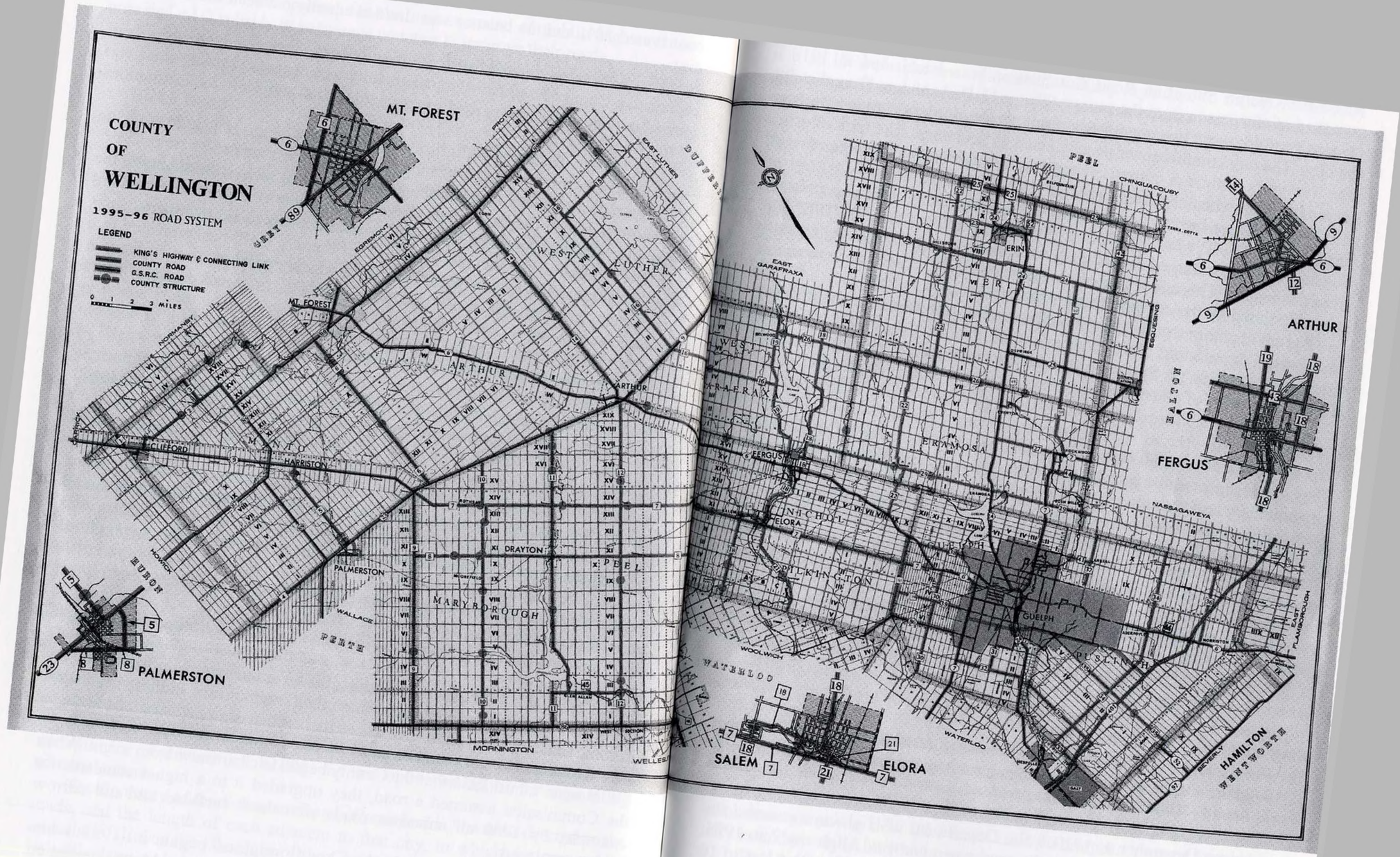
Rural Market Roads were main-travelled roads used by farmers on their way to centres where they bought and sold. The roads were used by many whose properties do not border them. It was the function of these roads to lace together the various township and rural communities. These were the County Roads. The Commission dealt at length with this class of road. Market roads radiated from market towns and shipping points, and carried the accumulated traffic of the district.

Inter-urban Roads were main-travelled roads between centres of population and were used by many other than farmers.

Suburban Roads were close to cities, and had to bear the heaviest traffic of any rural highway; partly because some of them were used for inter-urban traffic, and partly because of the traffic created in the belt about the city by the demands of the urban population. Often the farmers living in these belts were in some sense citizens of the city whose market they supplied, and whose shops they frequented

It wasn't until 1936 that the County began to clear snow from roads. When the Commission assumed a road, they upgraded it to a higher standard: for example, by 1960 all suburban roads were hard surfaced and old narrow bridges replaced.

The decline of the suburban road program began in 1953 when Metropolitan Toronto was created. It should be noted the Metro legislation stated that all roads in York County were termed suburban roads. That is, Metro Toronto continued to contribute to rural roads.


COUNTY
OF
WELLINGTON
1995–96 ROAD SYSTEM
LEGEND
KING'S HIGHWAY & CONNECTING LINK
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G.S.R.C. ROAD
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MT. FOREST
ARTHUR
WEST LUTHER
EAST LUTHER
MAPLETON
HARRISTON
CLIFFORD
PALMERSTON
DRAYTON
PEEL
MARYBOROUGH
MORNINGTON
WELLESLEY
NORTH DUMFRIES
PUSLINCH
GUELPH
ERAMOSA
EAST GARAFRAXA
WEST GARAFRAXA
ERIN
FERGUS
ELORA
SALEM
ARTHUR
HALTON
HAMILTON
WENTWORTH
WATERLOO
WOOLWICH
WILMOT
WALLACE
HOWICK
NASSAGAWEYA
CHINGUACOUSY
PEEL

Guelph Suburban Road Commission:

When the Guelph Suburban Road Commission was established in 1918 it consisted of one person from the county, George H. Dickson, one from the city, George Penfold; these two appointed a third person, John L. Carter, also from the city. The city commissioner usually acted as Secretary. The term of office was five years, although commissioners were often reappointed. Carter had served 25 years when he died in 1941.

The Highway Improvement Act provided that cities with a population exceeding 50,000 were entitled to two commissioners. In 1965 the Commission was enlarged to include two appointments from the city and two from the county. Those four then chose a fifth member. Commission members were appointed by the city and county through By-laws.

Agitation within the Ontario Good Roads Association caused the Province to disband Commissions in the Savings and Restructuring Act, 1995. The final meeting of the Guelph Suburban Road Commission was February 22, 1996. The development of planning committees put roads onto a broader footing.

Finances:

Financing suburban roads was a continuing problem for Guelph City Council. They never accepted the premise of responsibility for expenditures outside the city boundary and the value of the Commission. City Council was reluctant to financially support construction and maintenance of suburban roads.

After 1920, the city's share of expenditures were not to exceed ½ mil of the Provincial Equalized Rateable Assessment. In special circumstances the amount could be extended to 2 mils. In 1925 the Provincial subsidy was increased to 50%.

The city share for suburban roads in 1920 was $5,000 on a budget of $9,245. Due to the growth of the City, this amount had risen to $415,650 on a budget of $1,425,074 when the suburban road program ended in 1996. The County paid the same amount.

King's Highway System:

The Provincial County Road System was inaugurated in 1917. On December 1, 1919, the Department of Highways assumed the road from Hamilton to Owen Sound. This included suburban roads in Puslinch, Guelph and Nichol townships. In 1925 this road was numbered Highway 6.

Also on December 1, 1919 [7], the Department of Highways assumed the road from Guelph to Kitchener; the road was numbered Highway 7 in 1925. The highway was extended to Brampton December 31, 1922, with a loss of 10 miles of suburban road in Guelph and Eramosa townships.

On June 3, 1925, Suburban Road 21 was assumed as an extension of Highway 24 from Guelph to Galt. An equal length (4.7 miles) of a road on Paisley Road was taken into the suburban system.

In 1930, the County asked that the Eramosa Road from Guelph to Erin be

assumed as a provincial highway; this was done March 31, 1937. The road was numbered Highway 24. Highway 86 was also assumed March 31, 1937.

In 1986 the province downloaded many highways to county jurisdiction. Highways 24 and 86 were decommissioned and returned to Wellington County and numbered County Roads 124 and 186.

The Guelph Suburban Road System:

In 1918 the Guelph Suburban Road Commission was formed and chose certain county roads as suburban roads. [8] These were the seven principal roads leading into Guelph: namely Waterloo Road, Eramosa Road, York Road, Puslinch Road, Elora Road, Brock Road and Berlin Road, a total of 31 miles. These roads were immediately upgraded with improved cross-sections and surfaces.

The Department of Highways assumed their first "Provincial County Road" and the Commission lost roads they had recently upgraded. By 1927 the length of suburban roads had decreased to 13 miles, including 2 miles on the Elora Road to the Nichol Township boundary in 1926. This part of Elora Road was paved in 1928.

The length of the suburban road system was dependent upon the money available for construction and maintenance from the city and county: for example, when the Department of Highways assumed Eramosa Road as part of Highway 24 in 1937, the Commission extended their system and assumed 16.5 miles of county road.[9]

Of note: a sink hole developed on Suburban Road 68 at Puslinch Lake which took 10,000 cubic yards of gravel to repair in 1939. The hole continued to be a problem area over the years.

The Barrie Hill road was added and Road 50 was extended. Nine miles were added to the system in 1947 making it 32.5 miles.

Suburban Road 68 was extended in 1954 from Highway 24 to Highway 7 as well as a short section of Paisley Road from the city boundary to Suburban Road 68. The length assumed was 6 miles.

The Commission lost 2.5 miles of road when the City of Galt extended its boundary in 1960 but added 2.5 miles to Suburban Road 50. A short length (1.5 miles) was added near Elora in 1963 to balance the loss.

In 1964 Victoria Road South was extended 4 miles, however, in 1966 the City of Guelph annexed a large portion of Guelph and Puslinch townships. The Commission lost parts of Suburban Roads 31, 35, and 37 plus the Edinburgh Road and Silvercreek Road extensions, and part of Victoria Road North. The suburban system was now 26.8 miles and two bridges. Victoria Road from the city boundary to Arkell Road was assumed in 1967.

The Roads Needs Study and Urban Transportation Study of 1967 [10], proposed a reduction to the suburban road system to 12.9 miles from 26.8 miles. The new system consisted of County Roads 31, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41. However, in 1973 new legislation increased road funding over five years and based on the 1974 Roads Needs Study the suburban system was increased by 21.0 miles to 33.9 miles. Effective January 1, 1977, a new system was adopted

for 39.1 miles of suburban road.

The Joint Fringe Area Study of 1983 [11] established criteria for naming suburban roads:

- all Suburban Roads were originally county roads
- the Suburban Road system size was to suit funds available
- Suburban Roads form a natural system of, and extension of, arterial city streets
- roads generating traffic to the city. The system expanded to 44.3 miles.

In 1993 the City of Guelph annexed large portions of Puslinch and Guelph townships which included high quality Suburban Roads, including County Roads 6 and 46.

The Guelph Suburban Road Commission was disbanded in January 1996 and all roads reverted to the County. The Commission budget during its last three years was about $1,553,000 with about half spent on construction and resurfacing.

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Appendix

The County Road Superintendent (County Engineer) implemented Commission decisions. Incumbents were:

John M. Young	1918 - 1934
William H. Keith	1935 - 1965
Allan R. Holmes	1965 - 1991
Gordon Ough	1991 - 1995

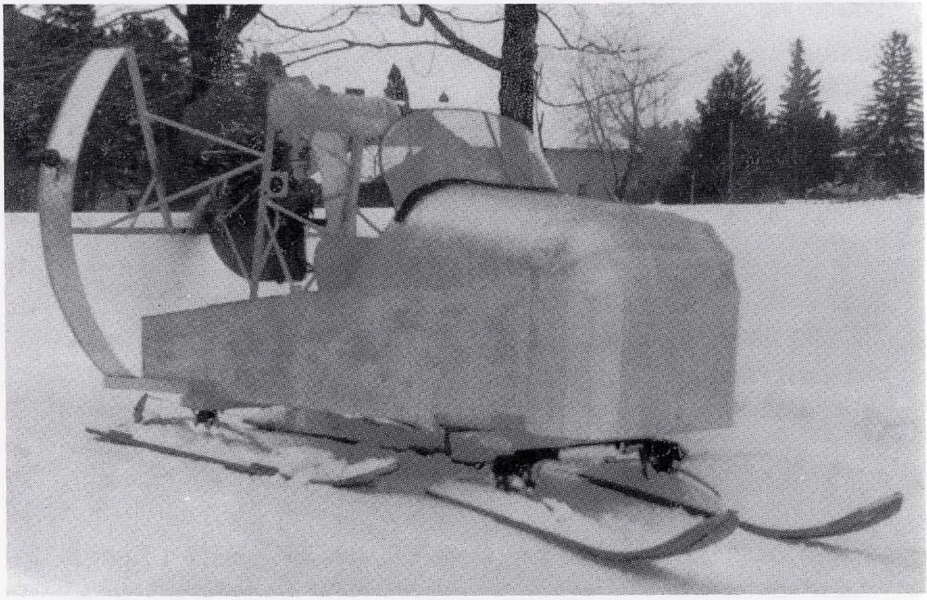
The Suburban Road System when it reverted to the County in January 1996

Road Name	Number	Length	Road Name	Number	Length
Elora Rd	7	13.6	Marden Rd	30	4.6
Paisley Rd	31	1.9	Lake Rd (south end)	32	11.0
Townline Rd	33	1.3	County Rd 34	34	9.1
Downey Rd	35	3.0	Arkell Rd	37	1.8
Victoria Rd	38	4.0	Silvercreek extension	39	5.5
Watson Rd	41	4.1	Brock Rd	46	5.4
Guelph/Nichol Bdry	51	6.9	Elmira Rd, within city	86	7.9
				Total 78	miles

Plus:

Swan Creek bridge - Rd 7
Blatchford bridge - Rd 32
Watson Rd bridge - Rd 41
Blyth bridge - Rd 7
Monkey bridge - Rd 38

A track-driven Bombardier snowmobile used in Mount Forest by Dr. Henry Argue.
Photo courtesy of Campbell Cork.



The third snow car made by Dr. Tom Russell of Fergus to travel to meet his patients in the 1930s.

Amazing doctors and their snow machines

by Amy Dunlop

Unlike today's recreational snowmobiles, Ontario doctors used snow cars during the 1920s to the 1940s, as functional vehicles. Officially invented in Quebec, Wellington County doctors began to develop their own unique versions.

In the early twentieth century, most towns and villages relied on house calls from their local doctors. Poor road conditions, heavy snowfall and travelling over long distances in the winter were the realities of practicing medicine in rural Ontario. The snow car provided a solution to the demands of winter travel for community doctors.

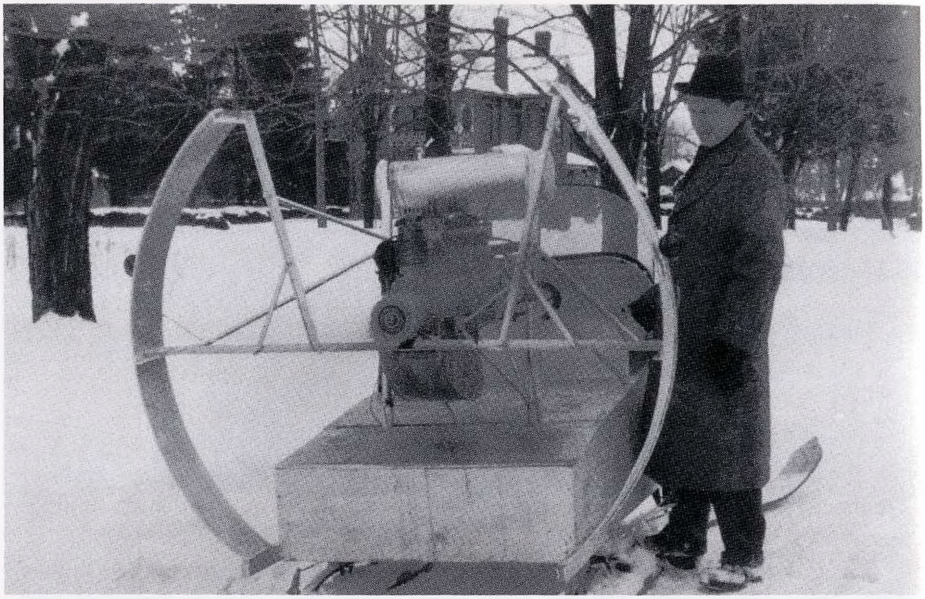
In the past, everything did not grind to a halt if you could not use your car. Even if you owned an automobile, driving in the winter was not always an option. During the big storm in Fergus, in March of 1947, horse-drawn sleighs and cutters were used instead of automobiles. A road grader operated by a team of horses cleared the town's main streets.

Early cars were hard to start in cold weather and would have to be cranked by hand. It was even common for the vehicle to be stored over the winter season: jacked on blocks with both the wheels and battery stored separately until the spring. But if driving was necessary, some early automobiles had chains wrapped around the rear tires to give the vehicle traction on ice and snow.

Snow cars attempted to solve winter travel problems. Many were unique and hand made. Some models were enclosed in tank-like machines that lumbered along on tracks, like Quebec's Bombardier model, owned in Wellington County by Dr. Henry Argue of Mount Forest.

Other machines had an open or closed cab supported on large skis and powered by a large rear propellor. Fergus doctor, Tom Russell, had a snow car that was driven by a four-cylinder 25-horse power Henderson airplane motor. It could reach speeds of 40 to 45 miles per hour. Constructed out of lightweight Sitka spruce, this vehicle was one of the first such cars developed in Wellington County.

Dr. Russell was one of six doctors in Fergus during the 1930s. Opening a practice in 1932, he encompassed an eight-mile radius around town reaching



Dr. Russell is seen here with his snow car. "I built it so it was very strong. It only weighed 65 pounds".

southward toward the City of Guelph. His snow car helped facilitate winter travel to rural homes.

Ian Easterbrook interviewed Dr. Russell in August 1995, and asked Tom about his experience in operating his snow car. [1]

"How did you get the idea of the snow car?"

"Have you any idea what its like to drive in a cutter when it's 10 below zero? At that time you spent about half your day out in the country, and it wasn't so bad when you could drive your car, but at that time people expected house calls....It was very time consuming, and there were times (with the horse and cutter), when you got to the town limits and I was frozen...."

"When I started to practise here in 1932, that was the first year, the road to Guelph was opened. At that time, it wasn't a cement surface highway, it was just a gravel road. And there were a number of very bad cuts where they'd gone through and they hadn't widened them of course, and once they were filled it was just about impossible to get them punched out. The next year after that, the road to Arthur was opened up, sometimes."

"When I came here the population was about 2300. But you spent most of your time in the country....We all did our surgery (except for one or two) ...We were left out on our own, and you had to sink or swim. When you struck a problem, you took the book out and started to read."

"Out West they had snowmobiles that were propellor driven, but they were different, they had three legs, two runners in the back and one in the front steering. The runners in the back and in the front steering were very far apart, and the motors sitting high so that they didn't turn over...Then I heard there was

The machine shop operated by Dr. Jerome Hergott's family in Mildmay designed and manufactured this gas driven snow machine in the 1940s.

Photo courtesy of Campbell Cork.

a Doctor in Moorefield who had a propellor driven snowmobile...It was a big affair and had a V8 Ford motor...I decided that...I'd have to have a much smaller machine that was really just big enough for me..."

"I made my first version in 34 or 35...I started thinking about it after I got in practice...It was like everything else...but by the time I got out of the army the country roads were all open and it was a necessity no longer..."

"How did you know about using Sitka spruce?"

"It goes back to my younger days. I used to go to the library where I used to avidly read *Popular Mechanics* and *Popular Science*. And every so often, they would show how to build a light plane- and that was my great idea at that time, to build my own plane. That's how I knew about using gussets and Sitka spruce. It is very, very light and very, very strong and the whole thing is glued together with copper nails that were clinched."

"What about the skis?"

"I never waxed the skis as they were made from ash. A friend of mine bent the wood for me. There was also a strip of steel in the middle, so that you could steer the machine. The front end steers [and is made from] an old Ford Model T. I cut the end off the axle and welded the plate on, and bolted it to the bottom of the frame. I took the wheel and knocked all the spokes out of it...It steered very well."

"What was the biggest problem with the snow car?"

"One problem was that sometimes there was snow in one spot and none in another especially on bridges. If you had enough power you could get over it. In my case, I occasionally would have to get off the machine, open the throttle

wide and just push it a little bit to get it over a long bare spot."

"Were you the only person who knew how to service the vehicle?"

"It was an old Henderson motorcycle engine...Fred Hobson did all the altering on it...There was no exhaust system as you had on a car. The exhaust was directed through a short pipe. Of course, that's what made all the noise....It was great advertising. When you went out at night, the whole town knew it."

Other Fergus inventors tried their hand at beating the snow with similar versions of the snow car. Constructed with an iron frame, Bob Gow's machine had a seat in the front and skis for maneuvering. A small Briggs and Stratton gasoline engine powered it; normally it was used to power Beatty Bros. Limited washing machines.[2]

The 1999 article in *Fergus News Express* described Hugh Cameron's machine with "two large skis at the back [which] supported tubular steel stilts that held an-air cooled motorcycle engine. Attached directly to it was a large wooden propellor. A safety screen surrounded it. There was a seat in the middle, open to the elements, with room enough for two people."[3]

Automobiles were the models for many versions of the snow car. Built from scratch, Al Langdon of Mount Forest describes his version of the snowmobile.

"We had to cut the axles to bring them into the sleigh track. You started with a car chassis, but built your own frame. We didn't have the light metals like you have today to build stuff, so we had to use parts from everything. The first one I had was on tracks. It was a Chevy with a 1927 or 1928 motor. You just narrowed it down and used the ordinary transmission. It was just like a bulldozer track with big skis on the front. It had car steering [and] it had a windshield."[4]

Colonel Marks of Listowel had a similar but different design, as explained by Carol Gilmore of Gowanstown in 1998.[5]

"It was made from a Model T Ford. It had two speeds. Originally he made the tracks but later purchased tracks. The first runners were made from 3" U-channel iron. Later replaced with 'Model A' runners welded together.

He started out with two seats and a flat rack but later closed the back in so he could take his family and produce. He trucked groceries to the store, delivered bread, and repaired phone lines. He delivered fuel from City Service in Listowel. He transported people to and from the station. Before Dr. Wildfang of Moorefield got a snow car [Colonel Marks] drove him to see patients and also deliver medications."

Dr. Jerome Hergott designed a snowmobile in the 1940s. Practicing medicine primarily in Grey County, he was also known to travel to see patients in the northern outskirts of Mount Forest. As recalled by Earl and Ruth Hunt, Dr. Hergott is remembered as driving his enclosed, propeller-driven machine in the winter as fast as any car. "Noisy! You could hear him a mile away," Ruth stated. "But, I'll tell you, sick people when they heard him coming, started feeling better. It was wonderful." "You'd see those big lights just like a train slinging along on the snow," stated Earl in an interview in 1994. [6]

Like automobiles, snow cars were not always safe and reliable. Dr. E.J. Wildfang of Moorefield created a sensation in January 1940, when he went skimming through the snowdrifts with his "Bluebird" snowmobile. This winter vehicle had a set of four skis and was driven by a 1939 Dodge motor with a triple-blade propeller on the back. The machine was manufactured at the Fred Striker Garage in Moorefield, and Fred Clark of Fergus did the paint job. [7]

A snow car was not always able to go at top speeds but like an automobile it was dangerous. Earl and Ruth Hunt recalled helping Dr. McPherson of Mount Forest one night when his snowmobile was stuck.

"There was little grade up the road and it was a wet night. The belt to the propeller was slipping....He wondered if I could hitch on with the horse and draw him out. I said, 'Yes.' There was another hill about a kilometer further down the road, and once you got over that it was level going to Mount Forest. The snowmobile would go on the level, but not on the hill."[8]

In 1995, Dr. Tom Russell recalled a scary experience on his contraption.

"Once I did get stranded, I think I ran out of gas. It used a lot of gas. I think it was the fault of the motor....If it was reasonably cool weather and the sleighing was good...I could go through loose piles of snow, it took an awful lot of power....I had one hairy experience. A chap called me, his wife was having a baby. He lived out on the Belwood road...There had been a terrific storm a couple of days beforehand and the roads were solid full of snow and I had tried to get out in the afternoon and could not. He said, the CPR line goes right behind my house and the snowplow had just gone through and back out again. He said if you can get out to the first line, you can go by the CPR tracks...so off I started. Just as sure, the snowplow had cut a smooth path...I got about five miles and suddenly I realized there was nothing on either side of me, there was no landscape and I was on a trestle bridge. So I slowed down and suddenly the machine stopped. There was no way I could get out of the machine....I opened it wide and luckily there was only a bit of ice and snow on the top so that I could continue on my way...But, that was a hairy experience."[9]

Many doctors in Wellington County had contributed in major ways to their communities; owning a snow car helped during the winter season.

Dr. George McQuibban of Alma practised medicine with his elder brother, James, in 1913. Well-known for his skills, hobbies and politics, George managed to continue to service the area of Peel, Nichol and Pilkington Townships until the 1930s. With the demands of an expanding practice by 1927, the McQuibban brothers bought the first snowmobile in Alma. This saved time and energy, allowing them to visit patients at all times of the day. [10]

These flying snow machines provided an essential means of travel during the winter months. Many were uniquely engineered by hand but all met the needs of a growing population in Wellington County, travelling across fields, in ditches and over snow-drifted fences, allowing doctors to continue to provide medical care to their patients when roadways were too treacherous to travel.

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Elora to Guelph Commuter Bus ...

by Athol Gow

[Note: the following article was written in 1996 to mark the twentieth year of operation of the Fergus-Elora commuter bus.]

The Cumming Bus Service school bus which takes Elora and Fergus residents to and from the University of Guelph and to all points in between, is celebrating its 20th year of operation.

"We have appreciated the people taking the bus as a real community," said Brian Cumming, the current owner and operator of Cumming Bus Service, in a recent interview. "We can see that a lot of people who use the bus service do not have any other means of transportation to Guelph," Cumming added.

From Monday to Friday, the bus leaves from the Elora Post Office at 7:25 a.m. It picks up more riders in Fergus at the corner of St. Andrew and St. David Streets, as well as the Highland Plaza, and arrives at the University at 8 a.m., having dropped people off in downtown Guelph along the way. The bus leaves the University at 5 p.m. (4:35 p.m. during the summer), and returns along the same route. Riders pay under $4.50 for a round trip.

While the old yellow school bus does not possess the luxurious interior and smooth ride of a Cadillac, its record for reliability is unsurpassed. "We are proud of the fact that with the exception of the recent blizzard on March 20, we have not missed a day in the last 20 years," Cumming said.

Questionable future

However, commuters presently using the bus may not be able to rely on the service in the future. Cumming said that his company at best only breaks even in offering bus service to Guelph. "It is extremely marginal as to whether the bus is worth running, and prices may have to go up in order to keep it going," he said.

According to Cumming, the bus company is not planning on dropping the service "right away," and he is hopeful that the decline in Gray Coach service between Elora, Fergus and Guelph could result in more commuters using the Cumming bus. "We want to continue the service," he added, "It is a sort of tradition for some people."

Bus born over a beer

Retired University of Guelph professor and local resident Donal McKeown was the first to conceive of establishing a bus service for citizens of Elora and Fergus working in Guelph, and especially at the University. Not long after he returned to the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) to teach, McKeown mentioned the idea to local Veterinarian Douglas Miller at a social gathering. Miller put McKeown in touch with Wallace Cumming, at that time the operator of Cumming Bus Service, and the wheels were set in motion.

"Socializing over a beer brought it all together," McKeown added. Cumming was in favour of the idea, so he applied to the Highway Transportation Board for a charter for the proposed bus route. A petition was circulated amongst local residents to show there was a need for the bus service in the community, and a decision on granting the charter was made in a Ministry of Transportation hearing.

McKeown was one of a half-dozen people who went to the hearing in Toronto in order to testify regarding the need for such a service. Cumming was granted the charter for the new route, and the bus service began operation in September of 1976. At that time, the route was very cost effective for the busline because a Cumming bus was already going to and from Guelph in order to pick up students attending private school in Elora. "For many years, the price of a ticket stayed very reasonable," McKeown said.

Besides being reliable, safe and economical, McKeown said that the bus service also had social benefits: lasting friendships with individuals who ordinarily would have never crossed paths. "We got to know people from other departments in the University very well," he said, "People who otherwise do not have a chance to interact at the University." McKeown said that he was the longest riding bus passenger until his retirement a couple of years ago. "I miss the social interaction, if not the bus ride," he added, referring to the rather unforgiving suspension of the commuter bus.

Drive relieves stress

Elora resident Gerry Finley has been driving the bus for the last eight years. Finley, who is the Animal Housing Administrator at OVC, says that each morning he has to be at the Cumming bus yard on County Road 7, at 7:10 a.m., in order to begin picking up riders at the Elora Post Office at 7:25.

"I have to drive down to the Veterinary College everyday anyway," said Finley, explaining in a recent interview why he drives the bus. In addition, Finley said that he enjoys meeting the riders, and likes the drive to and from Elora. "It relieves stress on the way home," he said, "And it also gets me out of here at 5 o'clock." Since Finley drives the bus to the University, where it stays for the day, Cumming Bus Service is able to save money on fuel costs and driver's wages. Finley said that there have been a couple of memorable trips in his eight years of driving the bus; once, three years ago, the bus radiator broke and riders had to walk the last quarter mile to the University.

During another cold winter two years ago, the bus's propane fuel tanks

froze, and passengers were stranded in sub-zero weather north of Marden for 30 minutes before a back up bus arrived. "Cumming is good about having back-up buses available," he said.

"It is a good service for the community," Finley added, pointing out that it saves University of Guelph students who live in Elora and Fergus from having to buy a car.

Circled the earth 8 times

A handful of passengers has continued to use the bus service since its inception close to 20 years ago. One such rider calculated that after two decades of commuting to Guelph on the bus, he had made the equivalent of eight trips around the earth. Other veteran bus riders calculate that, collectively, they have logged enough kilometers on the bus to have almost completed a trip to the moon and back.

These veteran riders are mostly men and sit almost exclusively at the back of the bus with others of their own gender. Interestingly, the front of the bus is almost entirely dominated by women, while the middle of the bus consists of an uneasy mixture of both sexes.

When asked why this division exists, the men claimed that they sit at the rear of the bus for purely practical reasons: maximum crumple zone provision. The women cited the superior ride and better conversation at the front of the bus as the reasons for their choice of seat. One women added that during her school days, only the incorrigibly bad kids sat at the back of the bus.

Bus talk

Over the years, the Cumming bus has developed its own lively and unique social life. Conversations run the gamut from the frivolous to the serious, and frequently stray into the territory of the bizarre and downright esoteric. Riders switch with alarming ease from a discussion of the previous night's sitcoms or the defamation of local and national politicians, to a debate over the scientific evidence for a world-wide die-off of amphibians.

The bus is a hotbed of gossip, in which riders freely exchange municipal or university scuttlebutt, secure in the knowledge that their co-commuters are bound by the time-honoured principle of "back of the bus confidentiality".

Since the rider can access information on a wide variety of subjects from the assembled professionals and university academics who use the service, the bus also functions as a crude, but effective reference tool - a diesel-powered organic computer on wheels.

Finally, to ride the bus is also to be a party to practical jokes and betting pools. Riders will bet on the outcome of elections, or even on the date upon which a certain snowbank along the bus route will melt away into oblivion during the spring thaw.

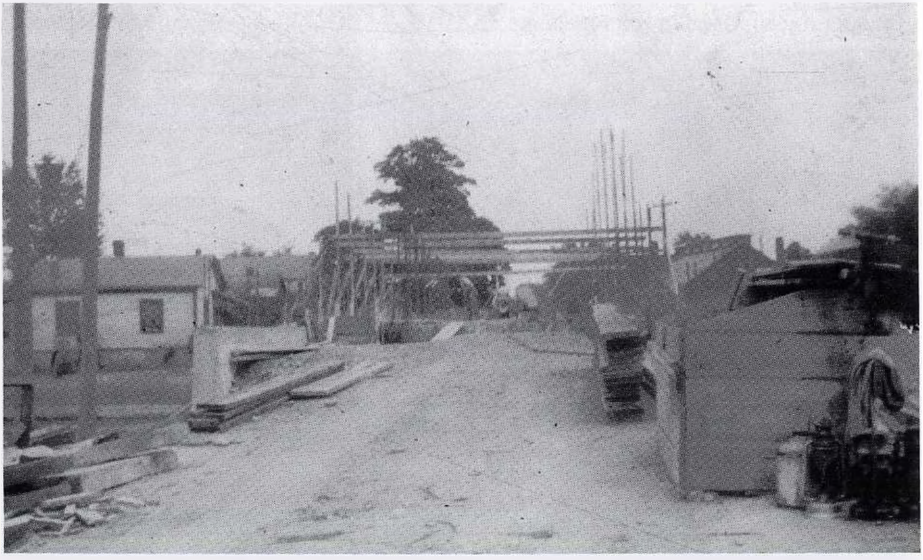
The editors would like to thank the author and publisher for kind permission to reprint this essay which first appeared in the ***Fergus-Elora News Express****, Wednesday 15 May 1996. George Wallace Cumming died in his 94th year, 30 March 2009. The commuter bus service continues to this day despite Elliott Coach Lines' purchase of Cumming Bus Service roughly five years ago. Elliott's has since been sold to Student Transportation of Canada. Gerry Finley left the University of Guelph in 2005 but has continued to drive the bus. The bus riders, along with their unique customs and manners, remain largely unchanged.*

Road Construction in Wellington County

Boulder mover, used in road building, ca.1915. Photo: WCMA ph 2886.

Steam roller and water wagon, ca.1915. Photo: WCMA ph 2887.

Grader and early gas tractor, ca.1915. Photo: WCMA ph 2888.

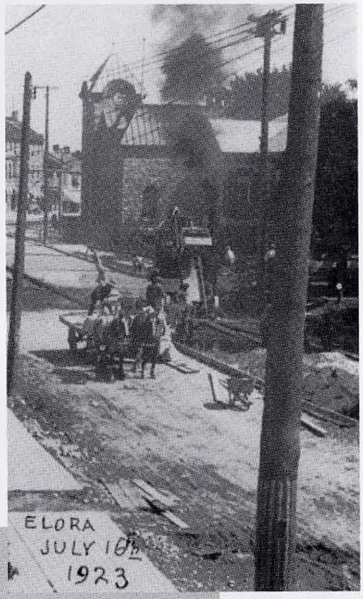


A bridge in North Wellington (Drayton?) Being constructed by Charles Mattaini, ca.1920. Photo: WCMA ph 3039.

Paving equipment, view down the hill towards the bridge, junction of Mill and Metcalfe Streets, Elora, 1923. Photo: WCMA ph 28069.

Men paving Elora Street in Harriston pose with their tools, 1925-1926. The *History of Harriston* reports their work was said to be the best piece of cement roadway in the Province of Ontario. Photo: WCMA ph 4364.

Top: Road construction on St. Andrew's St., Fergus, with aid of steam-driven equipment; a team of horses at left; note signs for J. Thomson & Son Undertaking and McHardy's Hardware. Photo: WCMA ph 12766.



Left: First street paving underway, Geddes St., Elora, 16 July 1923.
Photo: WCMA Elora LACAC Vol.12, p.64.

Below: Dump truck and front-end loader removing asphalt from St. Andrew St., Fergus, ca.1960. Photo by Hugh Templin, WCMA ph 12694.

Our Contributors

Dr. Gerald Bloomfield has studied the world automotive industry for most of his adult life. He inherited his interest from his long-lived English father who owned and serviced a series of at least 25 vehicles, including Buick, Chrysler, Oldsmobile and Ford, as well as most European makes.

Judith Dowling: Jude is an incomer to both Fergus and Canada. She is descended from a long line of ancestors who, if not upwardly mobile, have certainly moved laterally to seek places new or just to keep one jump ahead of the bailiffs. Her relatives, close and distant, are scattered all over the world but she is the first member of her family to settle in Canada.

Amy Dunlop is Curatorial Assistant at Wellington County Museum and Archives and a member of Wellington County Historical Society's Publication Committee. She loves history and feels very fortunate to work and live in a community that values heritage.

Helen Goodall and her husband, Ron, live on a small farm near Belwood in Centre Wellington. She is happy to be a member of the publication committee of *Wellington County History*.

Athol Gow is a resident of Elora and currently works at the University of Guelph's McLaughlin Library. In 1996, he was a freelance reporter covering Elora Municipal Council news for the *News Express*. It was widely acknowledged during Gow's time at the paper that no-one could write an article about a proposed 4-way stop (or other, related traffic calming issues) quite like he could.

Ross Irwin has contributed to these pages in the past and has a diverse interest in most things historical. Ross is an engineer and was appointed to the Guelph Suburban Road Commission as one of the two City representatives. Their mandate was to oversee the construction and maintenance of major roads leading to Guelph. Travellers were always aware where the suburban road ended and the city street started.

Betty Lambert has been a long-time member of West End Women's Institute. She taught school for 7 years, then took her diploma in Horticulture form the Ontario Agricultural College. She and her husband were known throughout the area as horticultural judges. She returned as a mature student to the University of Guelph and received her B.A. in 1974.

Lois MacKenzie writes "now that I have reached the senior years, and have a large flower garden, my model has become 'man who begins mountains begins with small stones'. She is about to publish *Allies Kids* - memories of her childhood during the depression.

Ted Mitchell is a retired educator. He is grateful to have been raised in the Paisley Block (Guelph Township). He learned to drive in the Diamond T.

Greg Oakes is a successful lawyer with years of experience. [Editor's note: Greg has written many times previously for the journal - short pithy articles and longer ones as well; the subject is usually marginally but interestingly connected to Wellington County]..

Best known locally for his long-running "Valuing Our History" column in *The Wellington Advertiser*, **Dr. Stephen Thorning** of Elora is a professional historian with a special interest in business and transportation history.

Again, our gratitude to those who have read the manuscript at its later stages to catch typographic mistakes and egregious errors. Credits for the illustrations appear in the captions; for example [Wellington County Museum and Archives] *WCMA ph 1234*. Digital scanning courtesy of Karen Wagner, Archivist, Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Cover illustration shows Vivetta[?] and Elisabeth Wood, posed in front of Coonie Wood's new Graham-Paige car at Aboyne, ca.1927. The Wellington County House of Industry can be seen in the background. WCMA ph 24160.

Rear cover illustration from the *Drayton Advocate*, 22 April 1954. Printing: Ampersand, Guelph.

WELLINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EXECUTIVE 2008-2009

The editors welcome for publication articles relating to all aspects of the history of Wellington County

nday night Jesus went
thany to his friends. Tuesday he
ent teaching in the Temple and
as challenged by the Sanheedrau.
he Sadduccees and Pharisees
ried to entangle him and that

who pas
April 17, 1949.
Dear God, please take a message
To my loved one up above,

PROCLAMATION !

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Will start in Drayton at 2 a. m on

Sunday, April 25th

and continue until 2 a. m. Sunday, September 26th.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

A. E. Andrews, Reeve.

"God's Time"
oorefield resi-
Eastern Day-

HANKS.
ends who pre-
esterfield suite
we would like
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hank you to
for

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MRS. GOO
Moorefield
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