

this is all changed now. The multitude of polling places prevents a crowd of excited men from collecting together. Voters have but a short distance to go, and the whole thing is accomplished with ease in a day. Our representation is now based upon population, both for the Dominion and Provincial Governments, and the older and more densely populated counties are divided into ridings, so that the forty-eight counties and some cities and towns return to the Ontario Government eighty-eight members, six of whom form the Executive Council, and the Speaker.

Fifty years ago, the Post Office Department was under the control of the British Government, and Thomas A. Stayner was Deputy Postmaster-General of British North America. Whatever else the Deputy may have had to complain of, he certainly could not grumble at the extent of territory under his jurisdiction. The gross receipts of the Department were £8,029 2s. 6d.,* there were ninety-one post offices in Upper Canada. On the main line between York and Montreal the mails were carried by a public stage, and in spring and fall, owing to the bad roads, and even in winter, with its storms and snow-drifts, its progress was slow and often difficult. There are many still living who remember well many a weary hour and trying adventure between these points, often almost perishing with cold or famished with hunger, forced to trudge through mud and slush up to their knees because the jaded horses could barely pull the empty vehicle through the mire or up the weary hill; requiring frequently to alight and grope around in impenetrable darkness and beating storm for rails from a neighbouring fence, with which to pry the wheels out of a mud-hole into which they had, to all appearance, hopelessly sunk, or to

dig themselves out of snow-banks in which both horses and stage were firmly wedged. If they were so fortunate as to escape these mishaps, the deep ruts and corduroy bridges tried their powers of endurance to the utmost, and made the old coach creak and groan under the strain. Sometimes it toppled over with a crash, leaving the worried passengers to find shelter, if they could, in the nearest farm house until the damage was repaired. But with good roads and no breakdowns they were enabled to spank along at the rate of seventy-five miles in a day, which was considered rapid travelling. Four-and-a-half days were required, and often more, to reach Montreal from York. A merchant posting a letter from the latter place, under the most favourable circumstances, could not get a reply from Montreal in less than ten days, or sometimes fifteen; and from Quebec, from three weeks to a month. The English mails were brought by sailing vessels. Everything moved in those days with slow and uneven pace. The other parts of the Province were served by couriers on horseback, who announced their approach with blast of tin horn. That the offices were widely separated in most cases may be judged from their number. I came across recently an entry made by my father in an old account book against his father's estate, 'To one day going to the Post Office, 3s. 9d.' The charge, looked at, in the light of these days, certainly is not large, but the idea of taking a day to go to and from a post office, struck me as a good illustration of the conveniences enjoyed in those days. The correspondent at that time had never been blessed with a vision of the coming envelope, but carefully folded his sheet of paper into the desired shape, pushed one end of the fold into the other and secured it with a wafer or sealing-wax. Envelopes, now universally used, were not introduced until about 1845-50, and even blotting-paper, that indispensable re-

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