

LONDON OLD BOYS' REMINISCENCES—CONTINUED.

LONDON.

"A noble city with a name
That's ever dear to me."

Grand Patriotic Song, written and composed especially for the commemoration of the Semi-Centennial of the City of London, Ont., in 1925 by Wilfred Charles Traher. [Copyrighted.]

For fifty years in this dear land,
The land that gave us birth,
Fair London City takes its stand,
The sweetest spot on earth;
Her gallant sons of yore and now
Are proud to bear her name,
And oft return, with hearts that yearn,
To celebrate her fame.

REFRAIN—

For fifty years fair London's fame
Has spread o'er land and sea,
A noble city with a name
That's ever dear to me.

And may her future, as the past,
Be free from every stain,
A noble city to the last,
A home we're proud to claim;
And when her gallant sons return,
As in the days of yore,
They'll feel home-land not alone,
But welcome at her door.

So let us all most thankful be
To God, Who reigns on high,
And praise Him ever faithfully,
And if we're called to die,
And if we hold the Golden Rule,
And love our brothers here,
We'll e'er be best with peace and rest,
In London, our home so dear.

JUHN COVINGS, Cincinnati, Ohio: I was born soon after the fall of man—1 mites of '48—contaminous with the Grimian war and Tom Alexander. My memory recalls my native city, in whose streets daily and hourly, at that time, was a constant coming and going of relocated soldiers. Later came soldiers in the blue of Uncle Sam's "skunkdaddlers," "hoopstumpers," and others alike, just then, thought Canada a well more congenial than their own. I remember the visit to London of the Prince of Wales, now, on the throne of the Britian, glorious mother, on the visit of the "Empire" to the city ever had—Francis Cornish, Esq. I remember how Jack Gillian could hold two men out in one "over." I remember that Charley Hyman generally "carried his hat," I remember an epidemic of fires passed, some said, by the rewards offered to prevent fires.

FRED J. GLASS, Buffalo, N.Y.: One of the quaintest things that I recall very clearly was the old town-crier, old Mr. Williams. I think his name was who walked through the streets of London East ringing his bell and calling attention to lost articles, auction sales, etc., which primitive custom has given way to modern newspapers of a very high order.

MR. E. PLUMMER, New York City: When thinking of my old home in the Forest City, I like to revert to the happy, and sometimes other times, I enjoy, the remembrance of Central school. For a start, I used to make up livelier boys stand on one foot in the corner of the schoolroom as a punishment, but this did not mar the general appreciation of the faithfulness of the teachers, who were unwavering in their devotion. Our old friend whom we delight to honor, N. Wilson, was especially active in the writing and arithmetic classes, and the drilling we got in mental arithmetic has been especially useful through my life. I wonder if any of the boys ever slid down Barko's Hill or Deviney's Hill when they were kids. I almost wish I could repeat some of my youth's experiences. But the remembrance of the London Old Boys compenrate for many things, and I look forward with pleasant anticipations to August 7th.

HARRY GORMAN, Sarafia, Ont.: My recollection of London runs back to 1863, but only such events as the great fire that swept the town, but even that date and what have left any impression on my memory during those three years. I remember the first election for mayor that was held at the beginning of 1863. The candidates were H. C. R. Becher and Simon Merritt—the former a leading lawyer and the latter a tailor.

The first telegraph wires were brought into town about that time. The first public school, the old Union, opened at New Years, also, without doubt, bringing to town on wagons of the old chime of bells for St. Paul's Cathedral, and the first Phoenix fire engine; also the entrance of the first locomotive engine and the first telephone, the latter being in 1867.

L. WATERMAN, President of the Rochester (N.Y.) London Old Boys Association: As I look at the picture of Richmond Street in 1868, which was not changed in 1866 on my first arrival in London from Germany, it reminds me of the good old days in London when I was occasionally invited by my brother Isaac to take a meal at the Freeman's house; and had a seat beside him at the "backshop" table. No doubt some of the London "Very Old Boys" will recollect how sweet the waitress for that special table was dressed and how she was the envy of all the rest of the waitresses, especially Old Billy, as they used to call him. On the opposite corner of the picture, behold the old Messie H. B. and the office of the Atlantic Petroleum works, and by Herman & Isaac Waterman, where I was allowed to carry messages from the store to the restaurant on Hamilton Island. Upstairs was the theatre. What a treat it is for me if the price was not lacking, yet I got enough for the London "Banks for the first time" my first minstrel performance with Cook Burgess at the head, and also "The Streets of New York." Further up I notice John Law's bed, founded, I also see Johnny Hunter's tinsmith, where a policeman was trying to poison my dog Fan, for not wanting to be made but the dog had no appetite that day, and so the poor policeman had to pick up the meat and try it on some other dog.

ALEX. H. HOGG, San Francisco, Cal.: I started to be an Old Boy about 1867, when I was first caught playing "hooker" from the corner of Dundas and Adelaide that night and was housed (and put away by Jimmy Dunbar) in a shed for the night, and was fed on the premises to me by Jimmy. Furthermore, I was about zero—and no sleep for me. Next morning I fired my school books and filled my school bag with money, and escaped from the Dundas household at daybreak being my march out of London, heading for Detroit. I only reached the first railway bridge, when I was captured by Sergt. Baskerville, who pulled my ears and took me home, where I was duly lashed before being brought in front of Barney McKeown's court, where the fact that London was not a bad place to stay.

"Where'er I roam, wherever realms to see,
My heart untrammelled fondly turns to thee."

The Forest City, gem of Ontario West, political storm center of the Province—yet, still London, dear old historic spot of sad and happy memory. And there is but one in the length and breadth of Canada, though the "land of the maple," is nearly as large as the whole of Europe. Vancouver, with its Burrard Inlet in place of the Thames, is perhaps the nearest like it—but it is only *like* it. It could never be London, though you will find "Old Boys" even there. Nor could any other city in the world take the place of this home of our youth. You will not find any of the "Old Boys" anxious that any city should. It is only when you return after a long absence, that one realizes how dear and dear is that little old New London really is. To use the words of Missworthy:

"A spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest."

A. E. G.

W. E. ERLING, Toledo, Ohio: The most interesting incident that I recall the first one I can remember, was when, in company with my father and, in fact, the whole population of London, I went to the locality known as the rear of the Nicholas Wilson monument (the Union School) to see the advent of the first train into the west western town. I do not recollect the year, but was on the Great Western branch near the railway. What so vividly impressed this event on my mind was that when the locomotive whistled as it approached, the crowd I scared me with fell to the ground. Another incident I well remember was the explosion of the boiler in Murray Anderson's foundry, opposite St. Paul's Cathedral, where seven or eight persons lost their lives.

FRANK W. LILLEY, Columbus, Ohio: I remember quite well in the summer of '68 when Murray Anderson's foundry in the corner of Dundas and Adelaide went skyward, and had I remained on the corner five minutes longer, I would have gone with it. My father and I had just driven away from the foundry corner and reached Mainland Street, going west, when we heard a terrific report like a Japanese bombardment and looking back, saw the air full of smoke and debris. But your Uncle Dudley was then two blocks away, and lives to tell the tale.

ALEX. McDONALD, San Francisco, Cal.: In the days of the baseball fever, when the Atlantics of London were the champions of the city, I was a playing member of the Atlantics. We once were playing a game at Byron—Eli Griffith was at bat, the bases were filled, and two men were out when Eli hit the ball, which might have been going yet but it was not for the fact that it was caught by your little servant far out in the city field, as usual when the ball, the fire from all of Byron was, "Go it, Eli!" That started the old gag, which was heard many a time after, of "Go to, Eli."

E. T. PAUL, Chicago: I was born in London early Sunday morning, January 29, 1842, in the old Western Hotel afterwards burned down, on the northwest corner of Ridout and Dundas Streets, directly across from and very convenient to the old jail; and an Old Nick Wilson the next day, Monday, commenced his career as a teacher in the public school just a block or two distant, I have therefore always considered myself a pupil of his from the beginning.

The old residents will remember how we all used to go outdoors every Sunday morning to hear those beautiful strains of the sacred music that was wafted down from the old Barracks grounds all over the city by that elegant military band that came over with the British troops during the American war, and I can now never hear that tune, "The Lord is my Shepherd," without almost imagining myself back again leaning on the gate in front of the old household, listening till every note had away. I have heard a great deal of the music since, but in estimating their worth I never could help comparing them in my mind to that music that always came to me as a perfume.

It is the recollection of such pleasant incidents as these that tend so greatly to soften up a person and carry him back to the congenial and surroundings of his youth, and make him look forward to the reunions of the Old Boys as one of the relieving features of the old struggle.

I do not think the reminiscences of the "old times" would be complete without an allusion to the great games of cricket we used to have on the old Barracks grounds. The Evening Club undoubtedly was a corker, with Johnny Cruckshank as wicket keeper and Dick Meredith as postman while Jack Dixon and were regular round-arm bowlers, and Frank Strong with his left-arm balls, whom we used to ring in on home straight, to obtain the wickets, though Dick was dislodged by Jack Dixon or myself, and he never failed to bring them to time in short order.

We not only had everything in line in cricket, but when we started the old Tecumseh Baseball Club, and I was made its first pitcher, we kept up the reputation of London as a city of sportsmen, towns, till finally after I left London the Tecumsehs went down to New York State, with Goldsmith as pitcher, and created the amateur championship of America from the Stars of Syracuse, and when at that time everybody out here in Chicago was talking about the Tecumsehs, you can rest assured that it was just about proud enough to lose no opportunity to let them know that I was one of the organizers of that club and was its first pitcher.