

Historical ...

Something of Dutton Past and Present ...

HERE is probably no one now in Dutton who has a more intimate knowledge of the early settlement and subsequent development of the village than Mr. A. J. Leitch, postmaster. Mr. Leitch was born in Dunwich township, and his memory carries him back to a quarter of a century ago, when the site of the now thriving little village was yet to be located in the heart of the wilderness. It would seem that what "is to be will be," since, when the first settlement was made, the land immediately surrounding the location was low and swampy, and not calculated to be the most favorable point for the building of a future town. However the people came and settled, and under the improved conditions of the soil these disadvantages have been largely overcome.

Mr. Leitch was one of the first to survey the land into lots, and was among the first to attest his faith in the future of the village by building one of the best business blocks ever put up in the place, costing \$22,000, but which was some years ago destroyed by fire, and on which there was little or no insurance, and which materially crippled the resources of its owner.

The first store erected in the village was put up by Griffin & Graham, a small frame affair, on the site now occupied by the Presbyterian manse. Angus McIntyre built the frame store which is now occupied by Blue & Smith, proprietors of the Advance, and Dr. Ruthven. Peter McCallum moved an empty store from Wallace town, which Angus McIntyre occupied until he built one for himself on the east side of Main street. This is the property which was destroyed by fire last year, and which was occupied at the time by A. D. Griffin. It was the presence of this array of commercial prosperity and the further fact that it was a central and convenient point for shipping, that imposed upon the railway the necessity of building a depot. Thereafter Dutton commenced to grow rapidly, and one building after another went up until the population had swelled to over a thousand.

The first brick store was built by H. Lane, of Watford, C. Turpin put in a general stock goods, which was managed by T. Hockin. The latter, with James Pool, afterwards bought the stock, Mr. Hockin finally purchasing Mr. Pool's interest. This building was destroyed by fire and was the second of a series which did much to retard the growth of the village. It is estimated that more than \$100,000 worth of property has gone up in smoke since Dutton was first settled.

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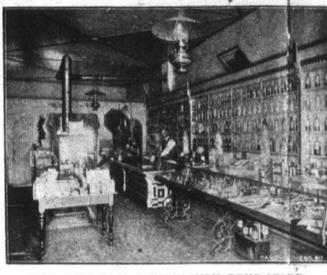
in 1877. They built a frame church, which they still continue to use. Their first minister was Rev. L. M. Randall. After the erection of this church, the other denominations, which were the Presbyterian and Methodist, used in which to hold services. Previous to this they had utilized the village school house. The second denomination to establish itself in the village was the Methodist, who soon after built for themselves a frame church on the east side of Main street. Goods were taken on and off at the roadside, and no shelter whatever was provided for them or the few passengers who had occasion to use the road from time to time. After a while a small platform was built, which sufficed until the growing population and business interests of the town demanded that something more substantial should be put up. Some two or three frame stores had been built in the meantime, and since the storekeepers received more or less goods by way of the railroad, the corporation and the railway came together, and it was agreed that if the village would supply a site and clear the land the company would build a depot. A location was taken up and enough subscribed to buy the site on which the present M. C. R. depot stands, some of those villagers most interested hewing down the trees. This was on the farm of Neil Paterson. A dense forest growth has long since been changed into a handsome street, along which are erected many fine brick and frame residences.

C. R. track, on the west side of Main street, and which was known as the Dutton House. A. McMillan built the Dominion House, afterwards renamed the Nelson House, now known as the McIntyre House, but which has been greatly improved, and is referred to elsewhere. The Britannia was moved from Wallace town to Dutton by R. Jordan, which, with the Dutton House, afterwards went up in a smoke. About this time the Wallace town Carriage Company built on the corner of Main and Catherine streets, and upon its failure was converted into the Commercial Hotel. Mr. Curtis bought this property, and after it was burned down built the present Queen's Hotel on the site.

A High School was established here in 1860, its first principal being Mr. Rothwell, now school inspector at Regina, N. W. T. The building is a two-story one, with four class rooms, two down stairs and two up. Mr. Rothwell was followed by Messrs. Gunn, Skinner and the present principal, J. C. Payne.

three groceries, three furniture stores, three boots and shoe stores, one drug store, two hotels, two undertakers, two butchers, five doctors, two bakers, five blacksmiths and carriage shops, three private banks, five agricultural machinery agencies, two liverys, two jewelers, two restaurants, two harness makers, two barbers, two gent's furnishings, one book store, one fancy goods store, one photograph gallery, two boiler shops, two tinners, two cooper shops and four public halls. The village has G. N. W. telegraph office, American express agency, seven passenger trains and four daily mails. It is one of the most important points on the M. C. R. for the shipment of cattle, sheep hogs and grain, having three grain warehouses. The principal shippers of these products are Wm. McLandress, Hugh McMillan, Alex. and Archie McWilliams, Wm. McElae, Colin C. Campbell, Thompson & Cobble. Dutton is looked upon as one of the best passenger and freight depots on the M. C. R. between St. Thomas and Windsor.

are Donald Graham, John Graham, Elder McArthur, James Johnston, Anthony Fulton, Neil Patterson, James Clark, Israel Randall, Robert Clark. Some old residents still living are James Black, John Blue, Archie McIntyre, Alex. McNell, Neil McArthur, Wm. Clark and H. McTherson. The land on which the village was built was formerly owned by Duncan McGillivray. Before the date of the M. C. R. the grain and produce of the section were taken to Tyrone and shipped to the markets by way of the lake. John Patton and J. McArthur were the first settlers, and still live in the village. C. Sutton came from Southwell, and was one of the first to log and clear the land with a yoke of oxen. Strange enough, the nearest sawmill was Black's, four miles from the village, until last year the village bought the site for one more convenient.



INTERIOR OF R. A. KIRKLAND'S DRUG STORE.



ADVANCE PRINTING AND DR. RUTHVEN'S OFFICES.



MR. B. J. SCHULTZ.

During its earlier development Mr. Leitch was identified with many of the village's commercial ventures and contributed his money and energy to many enterprises that have since become successful.



DUTTON HIGH SCHOOL.

A curious incident in connection with the early history of the settlement was the manner in which the village came to be known as Dutton, and had not the railroad company and the Government settled the point there is no telling what name it would now be known by.

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MISS MAY LEITCH.



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MISS PEARL LEITCH.



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MISS KATHLEEN FLETCHER.



MISS WILLEY.



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GROUP OF YOUNG DANCERS.

PHOTOS BY J. FERGUSON.

A village was incorporated in 1861, with a population of 100. Mr. A. J. Leitch was the first mayor, and associated with him around the year 1861 were Messrs. D. McPherson, R. March, R. McMillan and Wm. H. Miller. Mr. A. J. Leitch was the clerk, and Mr. A. Kirkland the treasurer. The following year D. McPherson occupied the chair, and Mr. C. Leitch sat during the year 1862. Mr. Leitch was re-elected to the office in 1863, and still represents the village. The most important business which has come forward that body was disposed of a few weeks ago, when a by-law was passed and carried, authorizing the expenditure of \$2000 for the erection of a municipal hall, and for the purpose of having water, both for fire and drinking purposes.

Dr. Hazel was the first to practice medicine in the village, although, it is thought, he was not a licensed practitioner. He finally went to Port Barwell, where he graduated physician to prescribe for the physical ailments of the people. The village is centrally located, being in the centre of the township, and surrounded by a fine agricultural country. Its only drawback has been its many disastrous fires.

The first industry established within the corporation was a stove factory, built by a man who was not a licensed practitioner. The factory is centrally located, south of the M. C. R. track. Jacob Morse was president of the company. The factory was burned down. The first sawmill was built by Campbell & McEachran, which was destroyed by fire, and Mr. Fitchett's sawmill is now on the same site. L. J. Wilson & Co. operated the mill, and they do one of the largest trades in Ontario, having paid in duties alone during the past year nearly \$50,000. The village possesses two hardware stores, five dry goods and general merchandises,

of patients. He came to Dutton in 1841, where he continued to enjoy a large practice. In 1879 he was elected to the Provincial Parliament on the Reform ticket, and was returned at the general election of 1883, defeating in the first election T. W. Crothers, barrister, of St. Thomas, and at the subsequent election was defeated by W. A. R. B. of St. Thomas, and at the time he was elected to Parliament he was secretary of the West Elgin Provincial Reform Association, acting in a similar capacity for many years for the West Elgin Dominion Reform Association.

Mr. Peck was born in Essex county, N. Y., in 1834. He settled in Elgin when he was fourteen years of age, removing into East Elgin, and finally to Dutton fifteen years ago. He was one of the first employes of the Canadian Southern Railway, having been employed in its construction for fourteen years. For six years past he has carried on a dray, coal and wood business, in which he does a good trade. Last year he handled 150 tons of coal and over 300 cords of wood.

Dr. Cassaden is probably one of the best known residents of Elgin, having lived in the county most of his life, during which time he has been more or less identified with the public life. No one would doubt the fact, but while the doctor is a North of Ireland man, and a D'negal man at that. A half hour spent in his genial presence, listening to his characteristic Irish wit, would naturally suggest the fact that Ireland was responsible for his birth. Born in 1810, at the age of eleven years he found himself on the high seas, accompanying his parents to Canada. They settled near London, where young Cassaden attended the union school, and afterwards at Sparta. His father was a merchant in Ireland, but followed farming in this country. While pursuing his studies, the junior Cassaden was preparing himself for the medical profession. For four years he taught school in Southwell and Port Stanley, while equipping himself for his after career. In 1833 he graduated from the Toronto University, following up his studies in England and Scotland, where he became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, London, and a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Edinburgh, while being associated with the leading colleges of surgery in Canada. He finished his education in the St. Thomas Hospital, London, becoming house surgeon for the same in 1837. Returning to Canada, he entered upon his practice at London, where he enjoyed the confidence of a large number of patients. He came to Dutton in 1841, where he continued to enjoy a large practice. In 1879 he was elected to the Provincial Parliament on the Reform ticket, and was returned at the general election of 1883, defeating in the first election T. W. Crothers, barrister, of St. Thomas, and at the subsequent election was defeated by W. A. R. B. of St. Thomas, and at the time he was elected to Parliament he was secretary of the West Elgin Provincial Reform Association, acting in a similar capacity for many years for the West Elgin Dominion Reform Association.

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