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OLD-TIME STUFF

REMINISCENCES OF THE OTTAWA OF EARLIER DAYS.
Personages, Scenes and Incidents Recalled for Evening Citizen Readers

ANECDOTES OF BYTOWN – PRESCOTT RAILWAY; SECRET TRIP OF WHALEN TO TORONTO IN 1868; EMPLOYES OFTEN GIVEN PAY IN I. O. U. FORM

Road Was Often Hard Up, But the Working Staff "Stuck It Out." Little Stories About the Men Who Stood the Hardships of the Early Days. Interesting Incidents of History of Ottawa's First Railroad. A Fast Run.

Here is a budget of bright anecdotes and facts about the early days of the Bytown and Prescott Railway and of the men who made it famous.

* * *

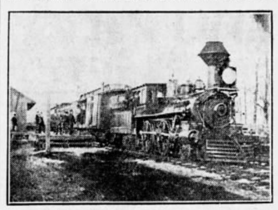
When the Bytown and Prescott Railway started operations in 1854, Ottawa's progress received an impetus second only to the effect of the selection of the city as the Capital of Canada.

Today the Bytown and Prescott Railway is merely the Prescott-Ottawa branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway and plays only a small part in either the business or travel of the city. The old road is only a sort of a side issue now, but it should be kept in kindly memory by the people of Ottawa for the part it played in the fifties and sixties in putting Ottawa in touch with the outside world.

Mr. J. E. Dolman, C.P.R. conductor and an enthusiastic O.T.S. reader, sends the Old Time Stuff a photograph of the first coal-burning engine used on the St. Lawrence and Ottawa (Bytown-Prescott) Railway and accompanies it with a letter full of interesting stories about the early days which will no doubt be read with great pleasure, not only by [illegible]

[illegible]

FIRST COAL BURNING ENGINE ON ST. L. AND O. RY.



First step toward the modern locomotive was taken in the seventies. From picture taken at Kemptville station.

[illegible]

... 29, 1880, and in 1852 the road passed over to the C.P.R. In 1882 the C.P.R. received a shipment of Scotch engines from the Dub Works, Glasgow. They were set up in the C.P.R. shops at Prescott by the St. L. & O. Ry. to work on construction of the C.P.R.

Some of the St. L. & O. Ry. enginemen went with these engines on the C.P.R. One of them, George Rosebrook, is now about, if not the oldest passenger engineer on the C.P.R.

GEORGE H. WILSON

SIXTY YEARS AGO LETTERS DID NOT HAVE TO BE PREPAID

Some interesting facts about postal rates 60 years ago have been taken from a copy of The Citizen of December 6th, 1865, sent in by a reader of the O. T. S. The facts are taken from an advertisement issued by Mr. G. P. Baker, the then postmaster.

In these days of cheap postage, and when all letters have to be prepaid, it is interesting to know that sixty years ago it cost five cents to send a letter anywhere within the then narrow confines of Canada, if prepaid, and seven cents if not prepaid, (or rather it cost the receiver seven cents), which draws attention to the fact that at that time one could send a letter without prepaying postage.

Letters to U. S.

The postage rate to the United States was 10c if prepaid. The advertisement did not say what the rate was if not prepaid, but the presumption must be that if the postage was not prepaid the U. S. postal authorities could make such charge as they chose. The advertisement, however, stated that it was optional with the sender whether he prepaid postage.

About British Columbia.

In the next paragraph with reference to British Columbia is a reminder of the time when British Columbia was not a part of Canada, but a separate British colony, separated by vast stretches of forest and of prairie land on which the great herds of buffalo still roamed.

That British Columbia was not a part of Canada is shown by the following paragraph from the advertisement:

"Letters for British Columbia, Germany (now note this) and foreign countries generally, must be prepaid."

Far Away Then.

Verily British Columbia was far away in those days. At that time people who wanted to go from Canada to British Columbia usually went by vessel around Cape Horn. There was no C.P.R. trans-continental then. Even up to as recently as twenty years ago much of the freight from England to British Columbia went by steamer via Cape Horn. Even twenty years ago the original settlers of British Columbia knew little or nothing about this part of Confederation, and referred to easterners as "Canadians" and to themselves as "British Columbians."

British Mails.

The rate of postage to the British Isles was seventeen cents.

In the advertisement there was no reference to rate per ounce. The rate would seem to have applied to a letter of whatever size.

TRANSHIPPING ON THE UPPER OTTAWA

About traffic between Ottawa and Pembroke via the Ottawa river, prior to the railroads, Mr. W. H. Cluff says:

"The Upper Ottawa Navigation Company's teams, I think there were at least 12 of them, heavy draft, splendid horses with their very large wagons all painted blue, made at least one trip each day from the basin to the wharf at Aylmer with goods for Aylmer and points above. The road to Aylmer was the first stone road in this part of Canada and remained the only one for a long time. The loads they hauled were at times very heavy so that they had often to double up the long hill just beyond Hull. Arriving at Aylmer wharf the goods would be put on the steamer, which arrived there about 4 p.m., for the run to Quyon, where they were again transhipped to an elevated tramway on which they were hauled by horses four miles to overcome the Chats falls and rapids, and again loaded on another steamer and the same thing at every rapid or fall in the river to Fort William, about twelve miles above Pembroke."

CHAUDIERE WAS BEGUN AS A SEPARATE TOWN

Called "Sherwood Town" and the Property Was Put on Market Under That Name.

It may come as news to many readers of the O. T. S. that the [illegible]

A FULL PAGE "AD" FORTY YEARS AGO

[illegible]

ANDREW BERRY MADE FIRST LOCAL GARDEN

Tried to Beautify the Rocky Point at Richmond Landing. Had Been Gardener.

The first gardener in Ottawa was one Andrew Berry, a retired Royal Artilleryman, who in 1821, while conducting a tavern, or stopping place, at Point Nepean, at the Chaudier, tried his hand at beautifying the place. It might be thought that Mr. Berry started a truck garden, but the fact that he refers to himself as a gardener (Old Country), it is more likely that he wanted to beautify the rocky surroundings of his "stopping place." In January, 1820, Mr. Berry wrote to Robert Randall, the absentee owner, the following interesting letter:

Willing To Try.

"Point Nepean, 8th Jan., 1820.

"Honored Sir.—Having wrote you on the 27th of October last and not receiving an answer, I again take the liberty of troubling you on the same head.

"Having been here ever since July last and had every opportunity of seeing the [illegible]

[illegible] of being acquainted with your character. I have every reason to hope for a favorable answer, or should not have gone thus far without hearing from you. I hope therefore, Sir, you will not think it too much trouble to send me an answer the first opportunity.

"As to my character, I can no doubt fully satisfy you on that point; in compliance with the above you will much oblige,

Your obedient servant,
ANDREW BERRY."

ECHOES FROM THE YEAR 1865.

A reader of the O.T.S. sends a carefully kept copy of The Citizen of Dec. 6, 1865. The copy is rather discolored and has been patched in many spots to reinforce it. It must be admitted that in December, 1865, The Citizen was not particularly newsy. That particular issue, however, contains facts of interest.

* * *

At that time Horne and Hope, booksellers, had just dissolved partnership and Mr. Hope was continuing the business.

* * *

The people of Ottawa were advised to read a book on the "Great American Conflict," by Horace Greeley, the great New York journalist. It was Greeley who coined the long popular phrase, "Go west, young man, go west."

* * *

Dickens' works were having a great run in 1865.

* * *

Nothing new under the sun! Soap powders were in use even in '65. Ottawa stores were urging Ottawa housewives to make washday easy by using "Harper Glycerine Soap Powder."

* * *

In December, 1865, an act was before the legislature to incorporate the Ottawa City Passenger Railway (horse cars).

* * *

Theodore Friedrich had a brass foundry on William street.

* * *

M. K. Dickenson was a candidate for re-election to the mayoralty. A requisition signed by several hundred well-known citizens was published in an advertisement which occupied two full columns.

CHEAP FARE TO KEMPTVILLE

From Monday, Sept. 20, 1875, till Thursday, Sept. 23, the people of Ottawa had cheap trips to Kemptville via the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Railway. The trains were run to the Kemptville Fair. The return tickets cost only 50 cents. There was a bit of a joker in the pack, however, as the people could only start for Kemptville at 2.15 p.m. or 7 p.m. and had to stay overnight, which of course was good for the Kemptville hotels.

EARL DALHOUSIE TO MR. LE BRETON, PURCHASE FLATS

Governor Refused to Accept the Captain's Explanation and Continued His Wrathful Attitude in the Matter.

CLAIMED LE BRETON ACTED IN BAD FAITH

Stated Captain Was at a Dinner at Richmond and Overheard Intentions of Imperial Govt.

Here is the reply of Earl Dalhousie to Capt. LeBreton's defence against charges of bad faith re the purchase of the Flats.

A couple of weeks ago the O.T.S. told the story of the LeBreton purchase of the flats at a court auction sale in Brockville in 1820 and published in a letter written by LeBreton to Earl Dalhousie, then Governor General, in an effort to get the Governor to reverse a bad opinion which he (the Governor) had formed of the transaction.

Those who read LeBreton's letter mostly came to the conclusion that LeBreton had put up a pretty good case.

The Earl's Side.

Since that letter was published the O.T.S. has found the reply which the Governor made to LeBreton's appeal. A perusal of the Earl's letter shows that LeBreton's appeal made absolutely no impression upon him. The Earl was evidently a man of strong views and strong likes and dislikes.

The public can now judge between Earl Dalhousie and LeBreton. Here is the Earl's reply transmitted through his military secretary:

GOVERNOR'S REPLY.

"Military Secretary's Office,
Quebec, 9th May, 1827.

[illegible]

OTTAWA'S PIONEER HOTEL OF 1820 ADVERTISED IN FLOWERY LANGUAGE

Spoke in Perth Paper of the "Romantic and Highly Picturesque Situation" of the Union Hotel at Richmond Landing. Delightful Retreat "Either to the Delicate Invalid or Scientific Tourist." Accommodation of a Superior Kind.

As far back at 1820 Ottawa boasted hotel accommodation. In that year Andrew Berry, an ex-soldier (Royal Artillery) came here from "somewhere," and started a stopping place at Richmond Landing or Point Nepean. About the same time Firth also opened a hotel at the Landing. O.T.S. readers will remember that, as told in the O.T.S. about six months ago, it was at Firth's Hotel that the first wedding celebrated on this side of the river took place in 1820.

Firth and Berry would appear to have joined forces, for in 1828 they advertised in the Perth paper Firth and Berry's "Union Hotel." This is the first record of an advertisement in connection with a hotel in these parts.

As all of the houses in the small Richmond Landing settlement were very small, the Union Hotel (doubtless named for the Firth and Berry amalgamation of forces) must have been a very third rate hostelry. Yet Firth and Berry advertised very grandiloquently. The Chateau Laurier could not today put on a bigger front. Read this, particularly about the tourists and invalids:

"Firth and Berry beg to make their most grateful acknowledgment for the very liberal patronage and support they have received from their friends and the public for the long period of nine years of which it will be their earnest study to merit a continuation by contributing to the utmost of their means and power to the comfort and accommodation of those who favor them with their countenance and support.

"The romantic and highly picturesque situation of the Union Hotel, which commands a most interesting view of the mountains and scenery in the vicinity of Hull, the islands and banks of the noble Ottawa, the magnificent Falls of the Chaudiere, over which bridges are now being completed, and the works and improvements in Upper By Town will render this place a delightful retreat either to the delicate invalid, or scientific tourist.

"The accommodations will be of a superior kind; the table will be furnished with the choicest viands that the season and the situation of the country will afford, and the wines and liquors will be of the best quality that can be procured either at Bytown or from the most respectable dealers in Montreal.

"Bytown, 1st September, 1828."

G.H.W.

THEOLOGIANS QUARREL WITH CONVERT

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

The International Sunday School Lesson for December 7 is, "The Man Born Blind."—John 9:1-41.

One of the great eastern dailies has a woman for assistant managing editor; and from her vantage point of observation she rendered a whimsical judgment the other day, in private conversation, that lends point to this interesting old Lesson story: "Facts and common sense seem to have gone from the world. People are crazy after everything but old-fashioned, ordinary common sense. It's so in politics, it's so in religion, and it's so in the whole life of the day. What the world needs more than anything else is a return to plain common sense."

This duel between common sense and theological and ecclesiastical astuteness, which is the central theme of the day's Lesson, strongly visualizes the world's present religious condition. As then, so now, plain, sensible loyalty to the facts of personal experience, overcome the preconceptions and partisanship of the Pharisees with their rigid formulas and their closed minds. As the healed blind man triumphed by his simple and unshakable testimony to what he actually knew, so Chrisianity in our day may have its greatest victories by the old-fashioned method of witness-bearing by disciples.

A Sensation in Old Jerusalem.

Before ever the controversy arose between the doctors of the law and the man who had been blind, there was a somewhat similar discussion between Jesus and his own disciples. In the manner of all specialists in religion, the Twelve were keen for speculations and quibbles, and the sight of the abject blind beggar by the roadside set them to discussing, quite like modern highbrows and "experts," the theories [illegible]

[illegible] verts. We recall the 'untouchables' of India, whose very shadow was pollution to a Brahmin, now made into self-respecting men and women by the Gospel.

Standing up straight and speaking out loud, the ex-beggar, now a free man, sure that he had been saved, began to talk back to the Pharisees, and even to mock in irony at their inconsistent reasoning! Such presumption and "bad manners" as they must have deemed it! In fearless freedom and self-respect, the man who had been blind, affirmed unshakably, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." From that rock of testimony he could not be budged. The new manhood and sound sense of this once servile beggar is almost as great a miracle as the gift of sight. Of course, the outraged Pharisees, with unrestrained reviling, cast the man out of the circles [illegible]

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