

THE HISTORY OF NOBLETON.

Mentioned in history is the route used by the Indian Tribes from Lake Ontario following high ground along the Humber River to arrive at a fording place on its east branch, near what is now known as Nobleton. The path then struck off north to climb the ridges of King Township and end where canoes could be launched on the west branch of the Holland River. This twenty-eight mile Indian foot-path was to prove of more than trivial importance in the history and development of York County. The traffic over it was to record the wars and changes of the next one hundred and fifty years. In this part of the country, the first white settlers arrived near what is now Nobleton sometime before 1790. This was during the time of Governor Simcoe.

In the year 1800, the Township of King was laid out by Surveyor Stegman. At first slowly, then more rapidly, immigrants from the British Isles settled in the Township. In 1812, there were only forty families in the whole township, but in 1850, the population had increased to over five thousand; and several villages including Nobleton had begun their history.

In attempting to write an account of the history of this Village and District, the lack of written records is a serious handicap to any factual history. It is difficult to determine the exact year that Nobleton had its beginning. From deeds of property, we find that this district was settled between the years 1812 and 1837. The burying ground must have been started sometime prior to 1837----a stone marking a grave is dated the year 1837.

The village of Nobleton was named after a Joseph Noble who was one of the very early settlers on the corner of the Ninth Concession and the King side-road in the Township of King. He bought the land from a John Rovinson, whom, I understand, got it directly from the Crown. In 1837, Rev. Wm. Aitken was settled in Maple where he served for about fifteen years. Mr. Aitken married a Nobleton girl, Jane Noble, the daughter of the store-keeper after whom the village was named. Their illustrious son, William Maxwell, is now Lord Beaverbrook, one of the most influential statesmen in the British Empire.

Nobleton Post Office was opened on May 6th, 1851. The first postmaster was Thos. Noble, a brother of Joseph Noble, and he resided where William Hawman lives today. The mail came tri-weekly from Toronto by stage via the Vaughan Plank Road.

One hundred years ago at Bells Lake, as we know it, there was a place called Kingsville. It was a fair sized village, bigger than Nobleton was then, and consisted of a store, a lumber mill, a reaping machine shop, and an Inn. And Linton was also a small village with the usual Inn, etc. In those days when travelling was so difficult and slow, "The Inn", as it was called then, served a very useful and necessary purpose. And apparently Inns were as plentiful in those days as service stations are today.

Down through the years with transportation facilities increasing some of these larger villages disappeared and a few of the smaller ones seemed to come to the fore. Nobleton was one of these places left standing and grew with a steady progress from then on. Some of the old family names of that time you will easily recognize are the Wellars, Sniders, Pringles, Archibalds, Kennedys, Wilkies, Cherrys, Sheardowns, Chamberlains, Breedons, Hamblys, Hawmans, and McCutcheons. Another old landmark of that time was a harness shop where Mr. Butler now lives.

Around fifty years ago, Nobleton consisted of a Methodist Church, (the present United Church); and an Anglican Church where they stand at present. There was a two room frame school house. On the corner where Mr. Witherspoon now has his service station was a hotel and hostlery. They had a plank sidewalk then and a weigh scales was situated in about the place where Percy Hill lives now. We are quite proud of our present Arena. But over forty years ago the "skating rink" a covered building, was the centre for recreation in winter. The hockey team at that time was famous too and some of the players were: Walter and Roderick McCutcheon, Harold Pringle, Albert Hill, Jack and Joe Boak, and George Fry. This skating rink was situated on the Wellar farm and had gas lighting. Now, of course, we have our present Arena, built in 1947, with everything quite modern and our very fine hockey teams too.

At that time there were about forty residences and places of business and the most of them are still standing. The chopping mill has been built and re-built and the Community Hall was re-built in 1936. Today we have about fifty-five new houses and Nobleton is still growing. We think we have our school problems today, but in a photo taken in 1899 of the two room frame school house, there were sixty-eight pupils in attendance. And today, I understand, there are around sixty-two children in Nobleton school. And in this connection there is something of a record too. There has been the same Secretary-Treasurer for almost forty years---Mr. R.J. Mactaggart---which in itself is indeed a record. This school was replaced with a one room brick school in 1936 and another room was added in 1953.

(Mrs.) Madeline Chapman.

1953.