

Temperanceville Store

There have been two buildings on the store site, the lot just west of the Presbyterian Church one. The first store was a frame building, once owned and operated by a Mr. Bruce who sold it to David Johnston about 1873. This Mr. Johnston had four children by his first wife who died when Janet and Agnes, the youngest were small. He married Janet Rannie, a sister of Mrs. James Stewart in 1860. When David Johnston moved from Kieghorn to the store, his wife and two daughters helped in the store. (The daughters later married and lived at Temperanceville). After he sold the store in 1885 the family moved to Aurora.

There may have been other owners between Mr. Johnston and Mel Nelson who owned it at the time it was destroyed by fire soon after the turn of the century.

The second store was built by Harry Teasdale and was of brick construction. He operated it till 1905 when he sold it to Thomas Legge. Milton Legge operated the store for a few years for his father before taking the business over for himself. He and his wife Jennie (the former Magdalen Jane Parton whom he married on March 27, 1907) operated the business till he sold it to Parker Smith of White Rose and he took over on April 1, 1920. Mr. Smith, incidentally had thought Mel's job of delivering groceries etc. looked easier than farming, so decided to try it but he soon changed his mind.

Mr. Smith sold the business to a Hinona couple, Mr. & Mrs. John Cullingham who took over on March 1, 1921 and Mr. Smith returned to farming.

Later the Cullinghams sold to Mr. S. Fare who carried the business on with his son, Fred, helping him. After he retired, Fred carried on till he closed it in 1967. The building was torn down in 1971 for highway construction.

Reminiscences on Life at Temperanceville Store
in the Period of 1912 to 1920.

The sign over the store verandah in World War I years read, "E. M. Legge, General Merchant, Temperanceville". Truly it was a general store, a department store in miniature. On the west side there were groceries mainly and dry goods on the east. But there were places in the store and storerooms for hardware, paints, and wall paper, boots and shoes, men's work clothes, garden and small farm tools, linoleum, seeds (including clover etc.), coal oil and gasoline, stove pipes and fencing, and many other things including fruits in season for which orders for quantities were taken. At Christmas time there was room made for a special section for toys, dishes, games, and other gift items and also special candies, fruits, and nuts. The store was always crowded but at Christmas time there was hardly room to move around. At no time could all these types of merchandise be accommodated in the store or storeroom behind it. Bulky hardware was kept in one room over the house. Another room was equipped as a display room for the wall paper. Oil and gasoline were kept in a shed at the barn until a coal oil tank was installed in the basement and a gasoline tank in a small addition at the end of the verandah.

In those days the store was illuminated by coal oil lamps and then a Coleman lamp. The only heat came from a coal feeder (with mica windows). Since it was in the centre of the store, it was quite cold behind the counters and in the storeroom. Perishable things, such as eggs, which were kept in the storeroom were carried to the kitchen on very cold nights.

The store hours were from about seven in the morning in summer (or maybe about eight

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in the winter) till 10:30 or 11:00 at night. Around Christmas time it was open even later. On December 24, it couldn't be closed till after the last minute purchases were made - maybe at midnight. When early closing at 6:30 or 7:00 was tried near the end of World War I, the customers didn't like it so the only way to carry it out was lock up and go away at once.

The men, especially the younger ones, used the store as a meeting place every night. In the summer they sat on the veranda but the rest of the year they gathered in the store which was like a social centre. Euchre games were the favourite pastime. Anyone who could play a mouth organ was a favourite. Those in the house could identify the men present by the laughter etc. Because of these gatherings, early closing hours were unpopular.

Those were not "Cash and Carry" days as in the Super Markets of to-day. Much purchasing was still done by trade and some barter, especially with butter and eggs. Many families "ran a bill", paying periodically. Orders for merchandise were taken by phone as much as possible but Milt obtained many by calling along the routes.

Milt delivered with a covered van drawn by a horse or with a sleigh in winter. In 1917 he bought a second-hand Model T Ford which would not carry as much as the van but he could make two trips instead. He still had to use the horse and sleigh in winter. He had regular routes to cover. They were;

Tuesday - across to Concession 3, up to Eversley, down to the townline, across it, and up the second. (This was where so much butter and eggs were taken in trade.)

Reminiscences on Life at Temperanceville Store (1912-1926)

Wednesdays - A few deliveries were made around Oak Ridges and orders taken for Thursday and Friday deliveries.

Thursdays - Deliveries were made out to and around Lake Wilcox, and up as far as White Rose church.

Fridays - The route was along Yonge St. to Bond Lake, up to C.F.R. B. sideroad, across and down Concession 2 of King.

Saturdays - Extra-deliveries were made around Schomberg Junction and in summer around Lake Wilcox.

Elsie remembers accompanying her father around Lake Wilcox the last summer he used the van so she could stay on it while he and his helper made deliveries to the camps and cottages thus preventing pilfering of fresh fruits and other extra articles he carried. After the car was used, she used to help by taking the extra fruit, bread, butter, etc. which the summer people found they needed when the orders were delivered. On the Tuesday route she used to go along to pack the eggs ^{in crates} and open and shut gates to save time. She was very happy with an ice cream cone as a reward (on the lake route).

On the way back from delivering around Yonge Street or the lakes, Milt used to pick up his freight, brought from Toronto by the Metropolitan Radial to either the shed by the main track (at the corner by the hotel barn) or the one by the Schomberg Junction radial station. (Most of the merchandise came by radial but some came by train to King station.)

Bread was delivered to the store on Monday and Thursday evenings by Stone's Bakery at King

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On Thursdays in order to get the bread to put in the orders, a trip had to be made to the bake shop just after noon usually. For those customers who preferred Aurora bread, Scanlon's Bakery delivered bread to Malloy's hotel at Oak Ridges about twice a week and Milt picked it up there.

Early Phones.

The first King telephone lines were one between Thomas Legge's farm home and the store and the other between the blacksmith shop and the owner's home on the second. (the second house on the east side south of the corner). The switchboard was in the store. As time went on these lines became a part of the King Telephone Company's system. The store was then on a party line serving the second mostly. Number 3303 was the one for the store. Every one on the line recognized Milt's and Jennie's rings and many made a practice of listening in to see if they could find out what prices were quoted, especially on butter and eggs. So there was much rivalry over them.

At one time the store was the only place around there on the Bell line also. The people on either line sometimes requested those at the store to relay messages from one line to the other.

Temperanceville Post Office

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The Post Office was located in the general store. It was established there early in the 1870's with Mr. Bruce being the first post master and Mr. David Johnston the second. The various owners of the store business were post masters until the office was closed when rural mail delivery became general throughout the region.

At one time Leonard Legge, eldest son of James Legge of Temperanceville, carried the mail between Temperanceville and King City post offices each day. When rural mail delivery began, Temperanceville mail was brought by Mr. Andy Cadden who lived on the Townline south of King Station. Mr. Cadden's greeting was much the same for everyone, "How are you, Chawlie?" He gave up when unable to stand the trip.

The mail on R.R. 3, King City was taken over ^{from him} shortly after the end of World War I by Mr. Frank Gambill of King City who carried it for many years ^{even} after the two post offices on the route, Temperanceville and Everley, were closed because they were no longer needed.