

LOOKING BACK OVER THE CENTURY

Records indicate an era of prosperity across southern Ontario in the period of about a century ago, and Bradford shared in this prosperity. The village was flourishing when that great fire of 1871 wiped out almost the entire Holland Street on both sides.

From the ruins of that fire a new Bradford was built, and a number of those buildings of 1872 today form a part of the business section of the town. There was money, and there were materials with which to build well.

An old copy of the South Simcoe News, through its advertisements, tells the story of the village, following the fire.

Among the departed industries and lines of business were two tanneries, a sawmill, a foundry, flour mills, marble works, morocco manufacturer and tanner, harness maker, grain dealer, tailor, wagon maker, well digger, pump maker, moulder, saw mills, sewing machine agent, Primitive Methodist minister, a merchant tailor, carriage and wagon maker, cabinet maker, dressmaking establishment, shoemaker, milliner and saddler. The advertisements also included a list of hotels, attorneys, general merchants, druggists, bakers, butchers, etc., with the village's population recorded as 2,000 in 1872.

That population of nearly a century ago was depleted to little more than 800 fifty years later, reminding that there is no such thing as standing still. There must be progress, else there will be back sliding.

Bradford Witness

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Pg 1

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