

LOOKING BACK OVER THE CENTURY

A tiny "Extra," under date of May 25, 1871, tells an almost unbelievable story of destruction in the prosperous village. On May 23, 1871, a scene of comfort and well-being became a raging inferno as a fire which originated in Edmanson's bake house (located about where the former Webb's meat market stands) spread to the Edmanson store and home, from where, fanned by a west wind, it travelled east-ward enveloping both sides of Holland Street. It reached the town hall before being brought under control, and in its wake it left one hundred and thirty homes and places of business in ashes. That little South Simcoe News "Extra" lists the losses which (in 1871) totalled more than half a million dollars. Many of the fire losers lost both their places of business and their homes and were left with nothing but the clothes they wore. There was neither shop nor grocery from which to buy either clothing or food.

From this disaster a new Bradford was built. A directory of 1872-73 reports the rebuilding of the burnt section (the buildings being mostly brick), and lists the business and professional people and their line of business and profession. While several of the early business people's names are to be found in that 1872-73 directory, there are also many new names and they provide interesting reading: Abbott Bros., steam tannery; Ed. W. Bingham, tannery; T. Smith and Son, saw-mills; L. Butterfield, foundry; W. B. Cockerline, flour mills; J. and A. Borrowman, marble works; Robt. Algeo, prop., Masonic Arms; Benj. Barnard, general merchant and Insurance Agent; J. W. Barry, morocco manufacturer and tanner; Wm. Belfry, teacher; John Bingham, butcher; Robt. Bingham, Bingham's Hotel; Robt. Blackwood, harness maker; John Boddy, general merchant; H. S. Broughton, editor and proprietor, South Simcoe News; Rev. W. M. Cameron, Presbyterian minister;

Alex. Campbell, general merchant; William Campbell, grain dealer; Dr. Lewis Clement, M.D.; Joseph Clinkerbroomer, tailor; Gibson Cook, groceries; grain, agent Edinburgh Life and Vickers' Ex. Cos.; P. Crowder, wagon maker; Paul Currier, well digger and pump maker; Joseph Deacon, druggist; Thos. Dewson, grain dealer; James Decker, moulder; J. K. Stevenson, agent, Dominion Telegraph Co.; Mrs. Ann Douglas, post-mistress; Dowler and Sparling, general merchants; T. Driffield and Sons, hardware, books, etc.; James Durham, saw mill manager; Rev. J. Dyke, Primitive

Methodist minister; Wm. Ellis, sewing machine agent; Dr. Wm. Forrest, M.D.; Edmund Garrett, compositor, Simcoe News; Good Bros., general merchants; Robert Green, salesman; Rev.

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Hay, Wesleyan minister; Rev. J.J. Havlock, Primitive minister; Thos. Herrick, merchant tailor; J. H. Hockridge, carriage and wagon maker; Wm. Innis, hotel keeper; Thos. Kilkenny, cabinet maker; Robt. McCartney, prop. Western Hotel; Murdock McLeod, druggist; Robt. Maconchy, clerk and division court; Miss E. J. Magee, dress-maker; H. W. Manning, bailiff and issuer of marriage licenses; Dr. George D. Morton, M.D.; Murphy, John and Bro., general merchants; Andrew Ormsby, shoemaker; James Overton, photographer; W. H. Porter, L.D.S., surgeon dentist; J. Rosamond, hotel keeper; Rev. Chas. Ruttan, Church of England; Mark Scanlon, barrister, etc.; Scott and Graham, saddlers; Stevenson, John McL., attorney; Stevenson Bros., hardware; Robt. Stewart, grocer; James Strong, general merchant; Wm. Strong, boots and shoes; Dr. W. H. Taylor, M.D.; Robt. Walker, undertaker; John Stibbs, baker and confectioner, established 1860; and J. W. H. Wilson, attorney-at-law. The directory of 1872-73 estimates the population of this flourishing village as 2,000, and the councillors at that time were J. McL. Stevenson (reeve), J. G. Abbot, John Boddy, M. B. Cockerline and Mark Scanlon.

Bradford Witness
May 31, 1967,
Vol. 102, No. 22
Pg 1 & 4
Microfilm Reel # 83