Westmeath - LaPasse

CENTENNIAL

COME HOME WEEK-END

RENEW OLD ACQUAINTANCES

ENTERTAINMENT AND A GOOD TIME FOR ALL

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

JULY 15th and 16th, 1967

PROGRAMME

Registration in Town Hall

Parade Saturday Morning

Free Afternoon Tea in Town Hall from 2.00 - 4.00 p.m.

Barbequed Chicken Supper in Park

Street Dancing — Saturday Evening

Inter-faith Church Service in Centennial Park
Sunday Afternoon, 3.00 p.m.

OUR ANCESTORS lived in this place, laboured for our common good and ended their days here. We are permanently indebted to them.

In 1967 we remember
Lest we forget.

In our centennial year a portion of our citizens come close to being centenarians. They are:

(A) 90 years of age and over:

Mrs. Alex Bromley, Mr. Joseph Davis, Mr. James Labine, Mr. Jack Mills, and Mrs. Fred Laporte.

(B) 80 to 90 years of age:

Mr. Joe Adams, Mr. Harry Bromley, Mrs. Eugene Boisvert, Mr. Ephriam Couturier, Mr. Jack Conners, Miss Jessie Goddard, Mrs. Eulyse Gervais, Mr. Eulyse Gervais, Mrs. Alex Laronde, Mr. Milburn McBride, Mrs. James McMullen, Mrs. George McMullen, Mrs. Jack Mills, Mrs. Fred Laderoute, Mrs. Charles Lacroix, Mr. Charles Lacroix, Mr. Delphis Pappin, Mr. Edward Wright, Mrs. W. B. Timm, Mr. Allan Wilcox, Mrs. William Snowden, Mrs. Arthur Hennessy and Mr. Archille Gervais.

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NEWS ROUNDUP

In 1867 the total population of the Westmeath-LaPasse school sections was 384, and the number of school age children was 115. The teacher received a salary of $375.00 per annum, $8.00 extra for attending to the heating and $5.00 for acting as secretary-treasurer.

The teacher was docked $1.50 per day for any lost time.

The price paid for wood for heating the school was 82½ cents per cord for hard maple and 47½ cents per cord for pine.

In 1967 the number of children attending Public and Separate schools in Lapasse and Westmeath is 186 and there are 75 going to Pembroke High Schools on buses.

Westmeath Centennial baby was born January 9th, 1967 — Daniel Jonathan son of Rev. and Mrs. Donald McEwen. He was given an engraved cup.

The Centennial baby at LaPasse, Nicole Ginette, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Lacroix received a silver cup with her name engraved on it.

On Sixth Line is Look-Out Park, a memorial to the late J. C. Wright. The site is unique for the viewer may turn his eyes in any direction and feast upon the magnificent panorama of the forests, fields, and streams of this Westmeath-LaPasse district.

Century farm signs have been erected by the Junior Farmers on farms that have been in the same name for 100 or more years.

They are: J. A. Dunn, Roger J. Amyotte, Basil A. Wright, Mrs. Herbert Fynn, Mrs. Elizabeth Snowden, Arthur G. Bromley, Milton E. Bromley, Aurley Gervais, John Paul Leblanc and John W. Anderson.

1967 Centennial Queens are: Nancy Grylls from Westmeath, and Ann Gervais from LaPasse.

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CHURCHES

Roman Catholic Churches:

This Parish was established as a mission in 1851 with Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in LaPasse and Our Lady of Grace Church in Westmeath.

The present LaPasse Church was erected in 1886 and enlarged in 1926.

In 1913 at Westmeath a brick church was erected near the present Public School site, but it burned. Services were held in the skating rink until the present church was built on Main Street 1929-1930.

Separate Catholic Schools have been established in both Westmeath and LaPasse.

Anglican Church:

St. Mary's Church, Westmeath, was built in 1898 and is a very picturesque stone edifice. The site was donated by Thomas Mansell and the stone from the farm of Joseph Malancon.

United Church:

In the early 1830's circuit riders from the Montreal Methodist Church came up the valley and formed a new church in Westmeath and used the School House as a meeting place.

A new church building was built in 1844 in front of the cemetery now in the Village and was called the Wesley Methodist Church.

The present church was built in 1893, partially destroyed by fire, and re-opened in 1898.

In 1925 it became part of the United Church of Canada, the congregation of the Presbyterian Church joining it. Since then it has been known as St. Andrew's United Church.

Pentecostal Tabernacle:

In 1925 the Elim Pentecostal Church purchased the Presbyterian Church. The first pastor was Rev. D. E. Adams.

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PIONEER DAYS IN WESTMEATH and LaPASSE

From Valliant's hill there is spread before one as fine a scene of pastoral beauty as could be desired. The Ottawa River, Allumette Island, and Morrison's Island where Champlain camped in 1613 with his men, the distant mountains and forests, the farms, fertile fields and valleys stretching for miles and miles.

Westmeath Village is one of the oldest sites on the Upper Ottawa. In pioneer days it was called Front Westmeath to distinguish it from the name of the township.

A large portion of Westmeath Township forms a peninsula around which sweeps the Ottawa River from the expanse of Allumette Lake on the West, Coulonge Lake on the North and wide channels west of Calumet Island on the East. A ferry operated at LaPasse "the pass" or crossing, on this easterly side of the peninsula or "boot."

Originally LaPasse was called Gower Point. Shortly after 1851 records bear the name La-Passe so called because wild geese in their flights in the spring and autumn landed in the cleared land and the marshes. Hence the name "La passe des outardes."

The whole country was wooded with pine and spruce, when up the Ottawa came those first stout-hearted men and women — the early pioneers, some coming from the Old Country, having spent weeks on the Atlantic crossing in sailing vessels. Others were United Empire Loyalists from the Eastern States. Such was George Washington Tucker whose parents came from England, settled in the States and who left there after the war in 1776 rather than deny allegiance to their Motherland. Finally he and his family made the hazardous journey up the Ottawa portaging the rapids and camping on the wooded shores until he came to that locality where the Village of Westmeath is now situated. He built a log cabin on the banks of the river as did the other settlers, the river being the only avenue of travel. He owned all the land

on which the Village is now built. He gave the lot, above what is known as the First Orchard, between his farm and that owned by Ira Mason, on which the first school was built. In this little log building the first teacher was Rachel Stone. She boarded at the Tucker home and afterwards became the bride of the eldest son, George Rex Tucker.

A new school was built in 1844 at what is known as the Gore Line Corner. To this little log schoolhouse built by the settlers at the Gore Line Corner in 1844 came children along the river front and from homes in the woods farther inland.

Lumbering was the chief industry. The pines were hewed, squared and made into rafts to be floated down the river, which was a hive of industry in the spring when rafts of timber were brought down from Pembroke and points above. All floated down the river through numerous rapids, to Quebec, to be shipped to Great Britain. George Rex Tucker built a sawmill on the creek running through his farm. This was a great accommodation to the early settlers. This mill was the means of the formation of the village.

Bears seemed to be a menace to peace and prosperity.

Mrs. A. Smith tells of a Sunday School picnic she attended about 1867. A platform was built in "The Pines," seats erected, music provided. There was a program of recitations, songs, dialogues and sports. Visitors from other areas were present. When the enjoyable time was at its height, an animal was noticed swimming in the river towards shore. Imagine the terror among the children when Bruin came ashore. Somewhere a muzzle-loading gun was procured but there was no ammunition. A small boy came to the rescue with two marbles and Ezra Cook shot the bear.

The first Post Office was kept by M. Drew, who also kept a tannery and shoe store, above Goddards Corner. A carpenter and blacksmith shop was located directly across from it. Mail came in about twice a week and letters had postage to be paid on delivery.

All wagons and carts were made locally. Two wheeled carts were used in the 60's as the roads were too rough for any means of travel except horseback. Oxen were commonly used.

In 1857 when the Tates came to Westmeath there were only six houses in the Village. The Tuckers, Adams, Goddards, Frasers, Achesons, and Samuel Adams were some of the earliest settlers.

For light in their homes at night they used a saucer filled with grease and burned a twisted rag in it. Later they used candles.

We now find settlers coming in. Among these was George Leach who built a blacksmith shop. Alex Fraser enlarged his store and supplied the lumber industry. These settlers owned

large limits on the Quebec side of the river. To these each fall herds of cattle were driven on foot. The farmers got sale for their produce. In these days little but the bare necessities were obtainable.

Joseph Howard built a carriage shop on the creek. Olaf Carlson owned the house now owned by E. O. Gervais and ran a tailor shop. The Carlsons moved to Fort Coulonge after building the property now owned by Archie Blackwell. Joseph Davis opened a grocery store on the premises.

In the early days Joseph Kilgore opened a harness shop where he did a thriving business. In 1894 Joseph Shannon built a barber shop and carried on the harness business. William Thompson, an early pioneer had a shoe shop opposite the Fraser Store.

The first hotel was built and run by Archibald Acheson.

The Reid brothers built a brick store about 1884 at the end of the Village. They had a large general store and did a big business with the farmers.

In 1872 our first Doctor, Dr. Walton came to the Village and lived where Mr. Valliant now lives.

Telephone lines were built in 1910. In 1934 the hydro was installed in the Village and a few years later throughout the country.

In 1880 the Town Hall was built by the Baseball team.

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TO OUR ANCESTORS

O'er seas they came in days of old,
To face stern tasks with courage bold,
They carved their homes from forests grim,
The flame they lit will ne'er grow dim.

We greet them now with tender sigh,
And hold their names in honour high,
Their sons and daughters dear are we,
Though scattered far from sea to sea.

In days to come from coast to coast
Their virtues still will be our boast,
To gain their height will be the aim
Of all who proudly bear their name.

YESTERDAY and TODAY

My mother had a spinning wheel
And in the afternoon
To spin a hand of stocking yarn
Paced up and down the room

My mother had an old box churn
Equipped with rod and dash
And then for hours she'd turn and turn
Till butter milk would splash.

My mother had a scrubbing brush
To clean a rough board floor
Down on her knees she had to rush
From front to the back door.

My mother had an old wash tub,
And washing board to match
And then the clothes she'd rub and rub
And make the soap suds splash.

My mother ran a leach of lye
To make the seasons soap
She also had a pot of dye
To give worn raiment hope.

But mother had a lot of time
To help a little child
To help a neighbor who was ill
With confidence and smile.

She taught a class in Sunday School
She helped the Ladies' Aid
And for the children of the poor
Some useful clothing made

She sang the alto in the church
The golden rule she lived
Her hopeful voice was ever near
To comfort the bereaved.

TO-DAY

Now I have not a spinning wheel
My yarn is factory made
If I by chance may choose to knit
The articles all fade.

I haven't got a churn at all
The cream man at the door
Hands out my butter, takes the cream
To factory make some more.

I do not use a scrubbing brush
Upon my hardwood floors,
My Electrolux will soon take up
The mud from out of doors.

A leach of lye I never made
My duties I can shirk
In many new designs of soap
The powders do the work.

But I have not a lot of time
For doing things worthwhile
No time to help my neighbour out
With willing hands or smile.

If a lady I will be
My garments must fit right
My nose must never, ever shine
My lips and nails be bright.

But I am missing lots of fun
My mother must have had
In giving all a helping hand
And making people glad.

WESTMEATH CENTENNIAL RE-UNION

A PRAYER

1967

We Thank Thee Lord, for granting us this day,
To join with friends from far away and near,
To clasp their hands with great sincerity
And with them celebrate Centennial Year.

We Thank Thee Father, for the health and strength,
For many — how the years have passed us by,
But how we've loved to live here in Westmeath,
And know that we can stay here 'til we die.

To think we are a part of this great land,
That stretches far — to parts we've never seen,
Beyond the river and the mountain peaks,
Beyond our northland forests — tall and green.

But here today, O Lord, we've all come back,
To once again old memories renew,
And look into the faces we all love,
Although for some of us, they are so few.

How soon will pass these few short happy days,
Our friends departed — we once more alone,
But we will not forget this happy time,
These memories in our minds will be etched in stone.