

Chapter 22

IN THE VALLEY

*"Virtue cannot live in solitude;
neighbours are sure to grow up around it." - Chinese Proverb*

Nestled at the crossroads of Highway 14 and Con. 10, lies the village of Springbrook. Stately elm trees line the highway as it enters the hamlet from the south. The village extends northerly to the eleventh concession and it encompasses much of the surrounding farmland.

In the late nineteenth century, Springbrook was a bustling village, full of community activity. With the coming of the automobile, the necessity of a large village in the township decreased. Locals still do business in Springbrook, although the centre is considerably smaller.

As the southern part of the township settled, families began to make their way farther north. Many families moved into the Springbrook area in the 1830's. Included in this early band of hearty pioneers were such names as McKenna, Green, Burkitt and Simpson. The village did not spring up immediately but a circle of friendship developed among the original settlers. Surveying of the village into lots did not occur until 1886.

In the 1850's a hotel operated in the northern end of Springbrook. In 1855, Wellington McWilliams applied for and was granted permission to operate a tavern on Lot 13, Con. 10. The building was situated across the road from Doug Andrew's house. The previous owner was James McKenna (possibly McKenna).



1901

THE FRONT STREET OF SPRINGBROOK

1910



The first family home, situated in the centre of Springbrook, was built by James McKenna. It was located on the west side of the highway, south of the intersection, and became known as the Forest House. Shanty men and river drivers used it as a place for accommodation, food, and drink. Township records reveal that the Forest House was licensed from 1862 to 1866 under the proprietorship of James McKenna. Then his wife, Marcia McKenna, operated the tavern.

The McKenna family relocated on the opposite side of the road. Some people claim that Marcia McKenna derived the name of the village from her new home. A spring was located nearby and the water ran down the hill in the form of a brook. Using her imagination, Marcia named the new centre Springbrook.

Many other citizens claim that the name for this hamlet did not originate on the present site. A cheese factory was located south-east of the village on what is now Lorne McInroy's farm, Lot 8, Con. 9. At that time, the site was known as Clement's Spring. Originally, a meeting was called to consider the advisability of building a cheese factory to operate on a co-operative basis. When the farmers decided to support the idea, the proposed factory had to be named. Mr. Allan McCabe moved that, as the factory would be built near a spring and a brook, it should be called Springbrook.

As well as controversy about the origin of the name, many heated debates have been held concerning the proper spelling. Some write the name as two words while others join it to form one word. Presently, the village post office is registered as Spring Brook.

Since the area was a farming community, the cheese factory was naturally the first industry. No exact erection date for the building is known, but the year 1873 has been mentioned. Factory records are available, although some books have been misplaced. The early patrons included S. Danford, Aaron Ketcheson, Robt. Vance, Tobias Forestall, T.J. Thompson, Allan McCabe and others. Friction could not be avoided in this new organization. The first dispute arose when farmers could not agree whether the factory should keep pigs. After much heated debate, it was agreed to build piggens near the factory. The patrons put their animals in these pens and supplied them with water and grain. Whey from the factory was divided equally among the pens by the cheesemaker. Before the turn of the century, no chemicals had been developed to destroy flies. Without pigs, flies develop in untold thousands around factories. One shudders to contemplate the situation when pigs were housed nearby.

In 1892, discussion at factory meetings began to centre around the idea of a new factory. The patrons realized that the time to expand was near. A move closer to the Marmora Gravel Road would make the factory more accessible. A formal application was made to William Meiklejohn, Justice of the Peace, by Levi Mason, Samuel Forestell, Geo. L. Burkitt, T.J. Thompson, and George D. Wiggins in October 1893, to form the Spring Brook Cheese Factory Company. In 1894, a staunch stone building was built by John Morgan, on the tenth concession, five hundred feet from the north-east corner of the intersection. The men, who approached the Justice of the Peace concerning the incorporation of the company, became the first trustees. Other original stockholders included Peter Welch, T.C. McConnell, Miles Mason, Robert Thompson, Joseph Bateman, David Mumby, Wilson Mosher, John A. Green, Phillip McConnel, Patrick Tobin, Fred Finn, Geo. Simpson, J. Sullivan, Patrick Boyle, J.W. Heagle, David Heath, and John McInroy. Levi Mason christened the factory as the first president. The first cheesemaker in the new building was Samuel McComb. Milton Wiggins was employed to distribute the whey equally, at ten cents per day.

After the completion of the new factory, the patrons gathered for a meeting in the fall. They decided to let contracts to haul the milk produced by several farmers. Wagons, fitted with large platforms holding twenty, thirty, or forty gallon milk cans, were used for transportation. This reduced the congestion that plagued the factory yard in the early mornings.



SPRINGBROOK CHEESE FACTORY
which operated until 1952

The cheesemaker had to be an early riser as milk began to arrive at six o'clock. Soon, the factory was the scene of many people and horses. Each patron's milk was weighed and recorded separately. Then, a windlass lifted the cans from the wagons. The milk emptied into a large weigh can. Since a great deal of time was required to unload the larger wagons, a friendly but keen rivalry, to get to the factory first, developed.

Originally, farmers were paid for hundred-weight of milk rather than by butterfat. This scheme encouraged farmers to add water to their milk to increase weight. On hot summer days the farmers added ice to their milk, keeping it cool. Others adulterated the milk by skimming the cream for table cream or butter. The only method of detecting these processes was poor quality cheese. In 1897, a Babcock tester was purchased and the practice of adding water to milk was deleted.

The company installed a refrigeration system in the form of an ice house in 1899. At this time the cheesemaker was a busy man. Each day, he laboured over two or three vats of milk, using wooden rakes to stir the milk and curd.

During the summer cheese boards were held in Stirling. The president travelled there each week to sell the factory's produce to out-of-town buyers. The president not only sold cheese; he also acted as chairman, treasurer, and secretary. Under Article Thirteen of the Company's By-Laws, it was stated that the president could hold the three positions, combined. Much of the early factory leadership was provided by Thomas J. Thompson, who was president forty-eight years, during his life. His terms varied between the 1880's and the 1930's.

Spring Brook Cheese Factory has been crowned with the title, The Home of Whey Butter. Early in the nineteenth century, Wesley Thompson was hired as cheesemaker. For years, he had been appalled that the whey, which still contained much butter fat, was fed to pigs. He felt that some good remained in it. Following his curiosity, he skimmed the cream from the whey and made a form of butter. Since no one was likely to buy something from pig feed, the butter was retailed in a disguised form. Forty pounds of butter were left with one dealer who wrapped it and sold it as dairy butter. The cost was fifteen cents per pound. The customers came back repeatedly to purchase that wonderful brand of butter. Thus, the first whey butter in Ontario, and possibly in Canada, was manufactured. Today, it is not disguised by a wrapper, but rather, identified by it.

Spring Brook Cheese Factory was no small industry. Before its closing in 1952, it did a fifty thousand dollar business annu-

ally. Over two million, three hundred and seventy pounds of milk were made into two hundred thousand pounds of cheese. Seven thousand pounds of whey butterfat were sold. The factory no longer remains, but the names of the men who made it famous will remain forever in the minds of their descendants.

Immediately following the earliest settlement of the village, the need to provide children with an adequate education was recognized. Somewhere near the year 1850, the early settlers met at McWilliam's Hotel, and decided to build a log school house on the same property (Lot 12, Con. 10). This land was originally known as the Davidson property, and later it was owned by E. Ovens. There was much controversy over the method of raising the money, but it was finally agreed to tax the residents of the new section according to the number of children that each family sent to school.

The log schoolhouse was equipped with tables and benches, and served as a place of Sunday Worship. At this time, the road was situated at the back of the property, east of the school. The names of the early teachers in Springbrook include Messrs. Lewellyn, McKenna, Irwin, Ovens and Minchin.

About the year 1872 the schoolhouse was destroyed by fire. This was replaced by a one-room brick building. Approximately one hundred pupils attended. Desks were provided for the older pupils and seats were stationed around the walls for the younger ones. Very little attention was given by the teacher to the pupils below the second class; they received their instruction from the more advanced students.

In 1892, the lack of accommodation was clearly seen by all ratepayers of the section. The brick building was torn down and replaced by a two-room frame school. This building was well-lighted by eight windows — three along the east, three along the west, and one on each of the other two sides. Later, this system was improved by combining the three windows along the sides to form a continuous window with five sections.

Seating accommodation was provided by double seats in both rooms. In 1935, some of these were replaced with more modern single seats. The original boards were hypoclote blackboards. In 1930, slate boards were installed along the front of both rooms.

Agriculture has always been important to this area. In 1914 the school started school fair work. The grounds were the centre for all school fairs from 1919 until they became affiliated with Stirling Agricultural Society. Agriculture was added to

the school curriculum in 1929. A plot of ground was rented in 1935, to be used as a garden.

At this time many parents felt that the school was not well enough heated. Others complained that a new building should be built. In 1935, the school was stuccoed, adding to the appearance and the comfort of the pupils. This kept the section ratepayers happy.



SPRINGBROOK SCHOOL S.S. NO. 20 (1895)



Springbrook School showing wall dividing the girls' side from the boys' side of the school yard

In the spring of 1943 a new woodshed was built to the east of the school. The property to the south of the school yard was acquired from Robert McGuire. It was cleaned up, the buildings removed, and fenced in with the school grounds. The trustees and teacher launched an extensive campaign to beautify the school grounds in the spring of 1943.

In the 1880's, the attendance at S.S. No. 20 reached one hundred. In later years (1930) about fifty children attended the school. In 1965 an increased school population forced the trustees to rent the former drug store to accommodate two junior grades. In 1967 Springbrook School was closed although it was the largest school operating in the Township of Rawdon.

Thus far, only the origin of the village cheese factory and the school have been discussed. When the factory moved to Springbrook in 1894, it found itself in the midst of a thriving community. In the early days there was much railroad speculation and many settlers began to move to the area. Fine farmland attracted immigrants and soon the village began to grow. The area became quite populated and many small industries were organized.

The Forest House, owned by the McKenna family changed as the years evolved. Albert McWilliams operated it for two years. In 1873 he sold it to one of the original settlers, Joshua Green. Later, McWilliams obtained it for the second time.

By 1879 the village of Springbrook was becoming a beehive of activity. The prosperity of the town reflects through the following poem which appeared in the Stirling News Argus in 1879.

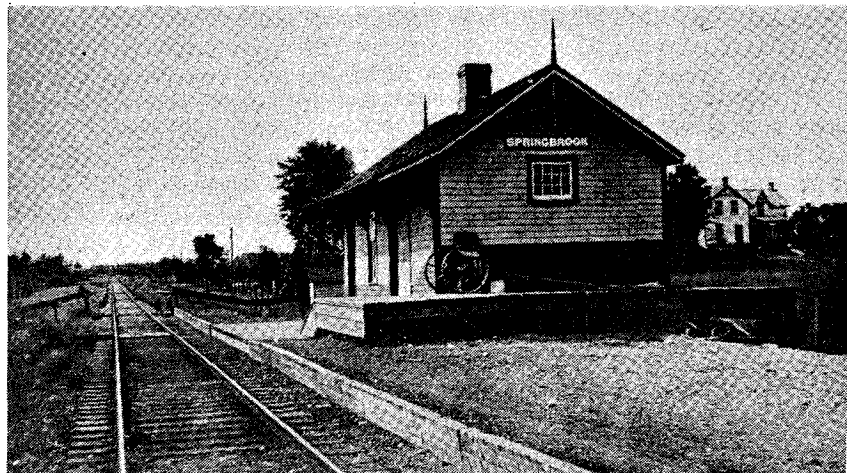
SPRINGBROOK

The village poet hands in the following entitled "A new way to make money, not hinted at by the promoters of the N.P."

In times like these, when money is so scarce,
 To make both ends meet is no easy task.
 Don't throw 'way your money in ev'ry corner and nook
 When you can save it by buying all you want in Springbrook.
 If you want a fine carriage, to ride at your "aise",
 You cannot do better than buy one of Gay's,
 If you've horses to shoe, and want it done well,
 Just come to Springbrook and try Forestell.
 If you want tea and sugar, and soap that will wash,
 Go up to J. Shaw's but not without cash
 For muslins, artificials, and other fine riggin'
 In addition to groceries, just step into Wiggins'.
 The next is T. Rupert, and at no loss is he
 To sell you a machine or insurance policy.
 Then there is Welch (most moral man of the whole,

And always at work for the good of your sole),
 Sells boots cheap for cash, and - somewhere I've read it -
 They give more satisfaction than boots sold on credit.
 And if you must drink, and all turn out villains,
 You'll find accommodation at Charley McWilliams';
 Now that the water in the well is so low,
 The wine in its strength from his bottles doth flow.

The year, 1882, was one of accomplishments for the villagers. A house of worship was erected. Also, the Central Ontario Railway was laid near the village outskirts, west of Springbrook. Meanwhile, the Canadian Pacific Railway was pushing west from Montreal. The lines were due to cross somewhere in the township and the race had begun. Incidentally, the Central Ontario Railway won, but not without much struggle. With the railway came a bonus, the station. It was located north of the tenth concession west, east of the tracks. Although Springbrook Station operated as a flag station, it always seemed busy. People would put out a red flag if they wanted the train to stop. One of the fondest memories of many elderly residents is the Sunday School picnics. Each year the group boarded the train in Springbrook and travelled to Twelve O'Clock Point, near Presquille. The train departed early in the morning with children, parents and neighbours. After an exciting day at the waterfront, the happy group departed and arrived home in time for chores. The station remained until the early 1950's when it was demolished. The farmers of the community were served well by the railway. A grain elevator was located close to the siding of the Central Ontario Railway on the east side of the tracks, about one hundred yards south of the tenth concession. Originally, it was operated by Robert Thompson. Later, his son, T.J. Thompson, managed the elevator.



SPRINGBROOK STATION

Outwardly, the grain elevator resembled the elevators that mark prairie towns, but the mechanics differed greatly. The most striking difference was that grain was hauled to the elevator in bags. Then, it was emptied into a hopper which was fitted onto the scales. The weights were not marked in pounds, but in bushels. Since the scales were made for measuring wheat the standard was sixty pounds. For other cereal grains, bushels had to be changed to pounds and then converted again. Originally, the elevator was used for export purposes. At the turn of the century, carloads of wheat, oats, barley, and rye were shipped out each season. Only a short time later, the process was reversed. Twenty to thirty carloads of mill feed were often sold locally, in one season.

Spring Brook Elevator.

The Spring Brook Elevator will be open for the purchase of grain on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week until further notice, commencing on Saturday, Oct. 30. Highest market prices paid.

T. J. THOMPSON.

1879

The grain was elevated by horse power. A horse was hitched to a long lever and plodded around in an endless circle, operating the machinery. Often the farmers placed their small children on the lever behind the horse. The child thought that he was doing the driving. Eventually, the child would realize that this task had been given to him to keep him from the area of danger. In approximately 1912, the operation of the elevator was removed and the lumber was used to construct the Springbrook sidewalks. Thus, a prominent landmark was gone forever.

Although the early settlers had come to a wilderness land, they remained a very cultured people. Their previous experiences had taught them to worship daily. Originally, families met and held services. The father usually read the Scripture and all children took an active part in the ceremony. In the early 1850's and 60's, Methodist preachers worked their way through the wilds to Springbrook. The villagers rejoiced at the sight of that man on horseback.

In 1869, Springbrook became known as the Tenth Line Appointment on the Marmora circuit. These steadfast Wesleyan Methodists held their meetings in the log school house (present school site) under the Christian guidance of Rev. Archelaws Doree. Some evidence indicates that Rev. John D. Dowler held services prior to Rev. Doree's coming.

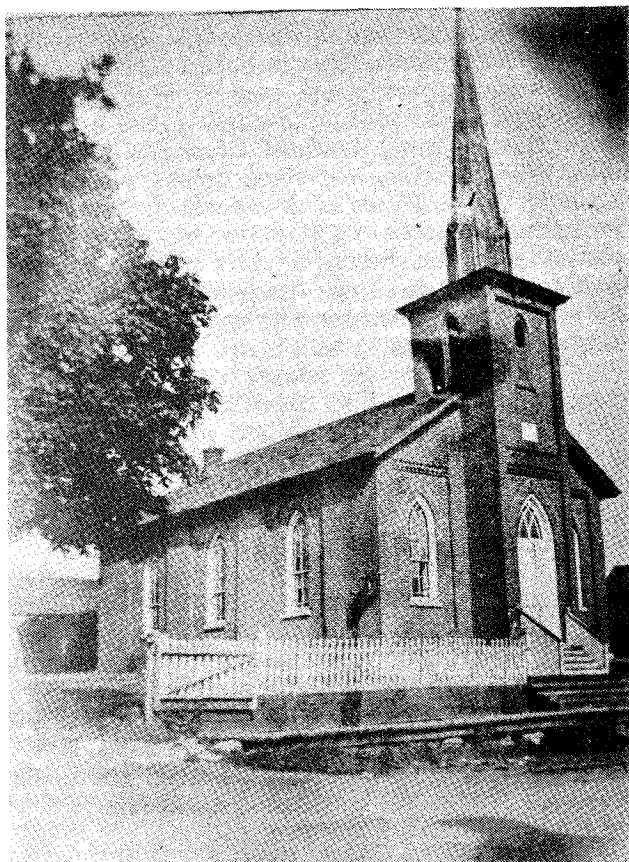
According to early Methodist custom, class meetings were held regularly. The community honoured Samuel Danford with the position of exhorter and class leader. Peter Welch was the first congregational secretary. Included in the original trustees were George D. Wiggins, Nathan Clark, Miles Mason, Levi Mason, and William Minchim. George D. Wiggins was complemented with the position of treasurer. Rev. W.H. Peake arrived in Springbrook in 1876. He found a small Sunday School operating in the home of Mrs. John McKenna. He urged the community to organize a religious body for their children. The first superintendent was Geo. D. Wiggins with Mrs. McKenna continuing to teach.

The old log schoolhouse had been replaced with a new brick structure, but the accommodation did not suffice the flood of members. Rev. S.S. McCauley (1879-1882) suggested that the congregation build a church. George D. Wiggins, George L. Burkitt, Samuel Danford and Robert Thompson comprised the original building committee.

The biggest decision confronting the congregation was the choice of location. At first, many of the Methodist people were undecided. Some favoured a site at Harold, while others advocated the twelfth concession. Some supported a site known as Danford's Grove (Lot 12, Con. 11). The majority encouraged construction of the new church in Springbrook, and Mr. and Mrs. George D. Wiggins generously donated a lot. The design for the new church was copied from the Marsh Hill Methodist Church, located a few miles south of Stirling.

The tenders for the structure were set. Two men of the community answered. Since John T. McConnell was a young man, the committee accepted W.H. Garrison, an older and more experienced man, as contractor. The contract price agreed upon was five hundred and eighty-one dollars. Most of the materials were purchased, but much volunteer labour was contributed by residents. The lumber was secured at Marmora and Mr. D. Heath hauled the brick from Stirling.

The erection of the church was to be no easy task. Some die-hard advocates of the Danford site had the first load of building materials dumped there. Early the next morning, all the supplies had been transported to the Springbrook location. Originally, the church was to be built on the south side of the lot. Therefore, materials were delivered to the north sides. Then the committee changed their plans and re-located the church on the north side of the lot. All equipment had to be moved to the opposite side. Howard D. Minchin was given the job and he claims that he handled every brick and shingle in the present church.



SPRINGBROOK WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

The women of the church had a big part in financing the enterprise. The Orangemen of the county gathered in Springbrook that year to hold their July 12th celebration. The Methodist women undertook to provide the large crowd with dinner and supper. The celebration took place in George Wiggin's Grove, now Mount Nebo Cemetery. The women slaved all day, raising six hundred and seventy dollars. In the evening, they proceeded to James Forestell's carriage shop and sold whatever food was left, in the form of lunches.

Early in the fall, the hard-working members were rewarded for their efforts. The church was completed. Before the scaffolding was removed, a strong wind blew down the newly-erected steeple. This was replaced a few weeks later; the church was dedicated to the Glory of God and the service of man amidst much rejoicing. The expense of an organ was too great for this congregation. Nathan Clark, acting as precentor,

led the singing and full tone of the pioneers' voices rang throughout the hallowed halls. The late T.J. Thompson presented the original pulpit Bible.

Two years later, the Wesleyan Methodists, Episcopal Methodists, and the Bible Christian Methodists united to form the Methodist Church of Canada. The Methodist tradition was strong in this community and soon the church became the strongest appointment on the Marmora circuit. In 1885, a resolution, proposing the formation of a separate charge including the Spry Settlement, Springbrook and parts of the Stirling circuit, was presented to the District Meeting. No action was taken at that time.

In 1912 the officials of the Springbrook Methodist Church bought a piece of land for a cemetery as a service to the community. The cemetery was known as Mount Nebo Cemetery, and is marked by a lovely, tall gate sign overlooking the hill. The grounds have been expanded since the original parcel was purchased. Now, former community members rest in peace in the seclusion of these beautiful grounds.

Prior to the establishment of Mount Nebo Cemetery, pioneers were buried in family plots located on nearby farms. Many ancestors of the Burkitt family are buried in a small cemetery situated on the Chris Burkitt farm, now owned by Frank McCormack. Members of the McConnell family rest in peace in a grove of trees on the north-west corner of the intersection of Highway 14 and Con. 9. Many of the grave markers have been buried and trees have overtaken the area. A very interesting burial ground is located north of Springbrook on the Danford homestead, now owned by L. Jeanne Williams. A grove of lilac trees hide the vault. Until a few years ago, the bodies of the family were kept here. The vault, built of stones neatly arranged, was established when the mother lost her son. She did not want to see him buried in the cold ground; thus, the vault was built. For several years, the family used it. Now, it is a child's paradise with its fascinating stone work.

On June 10, 1925, Springbrook Wesleyan Methodist Church joined the United Church of Canada. After church union, it became part of the Pastoral Charge with Rylstone and Stanwood. Rev. P.F. Gardiner was the first minister in this new circuit. Since there was no parsonage, he and his family rented a house. Meanwhile, the Official Board tried desperately to secure the present parsonage, south of the church, then owned by James Sutherland. Reaching no satisfactory agreement, they decided to erect a house and a garage, but this was never done, for in June 1926, the Official Board managed to obtain the Sutherland property for \$2400.00.

In 1930 the church and parsonage were wired for electricity. The steeple, a long-time landmark in the area had to be removed. During the pastorate of Rev. W. Harding, part of the basement was excavated and a furnace was installed. In 1956, the trustees decided that the entire basement should be excavated. Jovial work parties under the leadership of Mr. Geo. Thompson set to work. Soon, the basement was finished and the Ladies' Aid decorated it.

The church has accepted many items, some as gifts and others as memoriams. George E. Thompson presented the Pulpit Bible and it was dedicated in 1946. In 1951, at an Orange Lodge service, Dr. Lloyd placed staunch oak doors on the church in loving memory of his mother. A communion table in memory of George Thompson and essentials in memory of Mr. and Mrs. G.A. Bailey were donated by their families. The side tables were dedicated in loving memory of Miss Margaret McKeown by her family. A painting of the church was dedicated by Mrs. Carol Anne Killian in loving memory of her grandfather, Hugh Patrick. Bibles and hymn books have also been dedicated.

Many groups for folks young and old alike have been formed within the church. In early years, small children attended the Mission Band. The older boys and girls attended such groups as Canadian Girls in Training and Trail Rangers, later Sigma-C and Tyros. The Adults of the church also took part in many church groups.

In 1968, Rylstone and Stanwood Churches were closed. Springbrook United became part of the Rawdon Pastoral Charge. The minister lived in Stirling so the Springbrook parsonage was used by the Sunday School. The cross from Rylstone United Church was brought to Springbrook. In 1973, an electric organ was purchased, adding to the facilities. The life of the Church continues to flourish with the support of its many dedicated members.

In the early 1900's, a small group of villagers felt that the Wesleyan Methodist Church could not fulfil their spiritual needs. They organized and built the Springbrook Free Methodist Church in 1919, under the guidance of John Potter. This building was a large block structure, now inhabited by Stewart Brownson. Some local residents attended Sunday School in the Free Methodist Church, but others disagreed with their ways. Services were subject to frequent "Hallelujahs" and "Amens". The church closed in 1936 due to the small attendance.

The building was bought by Emerson Reid in 1943 and con-

verted into a store. In one corner of the shop, stood a barber's chair where many villagers received their Saturday night cut. Prior to the opening of the store, Mr. Reid cut hair in a small building nearby.

A beehive of activity was located around the intersection. Near the turn of the century, Springbrook boasted two hotels, Orange Hall, Forester's Hall, carriage shop, blacksmith shop, three general stores, doctor's office, harness shop, barber shop, butcher shop, bake shop, drug store, hardware store, a full-time bank, cider mill and a combined saw mill, grist mill, shingle mill and cheese box factory.

Much of the village action evolved around the three general stores. The largest store was located on the west side of the hill, travelling south of Springbrook, and was owned by Peter Welch. This dry goods store contained an exciting variety of merchandise. Mr. Welch repaired the villagers' shoes and boots in his shop. The post office was located in Welch's store from 1877-1901, and perhaps considerably earlier. It is known that Joshua Green operated the first post office. The first telephone in Springbrook took up residence in Welch's store. It was installed by the Central Ontario Railway to improve communications between headquarters and the railway men.

ANOTHER SLUMP

- IN -

Patent - Medicines!

13 cents to 15 cents for all

25-CENT LINES.

—:o:—

Don't forget that we keep the very best

25-CENT TEA.

—:o:—

Don't forget that

CASH

enables us to undersell all competitors, or give a better article for the same price.

P. WELCH & CO.

Springbrook.

NOTICE.

All parties having notes or accounts or past due will please call and settle the same at once, or they will be placed in Court for collection without further notice, as I am obliged to collect my accounts in order to pay my bills.

Please give this your immediate attention and it will save costs and trouble.

D. NERRIE.

Spring Brook, Nov. 10, 1897.

The present store in Springbrook has been operated by many men. From the days of the pioneers until today, merchants have continued to serve villagers. Among the earliest owners were George D. Wiggins and Wm. T. Bateman. Near the turn of the century Duncan Nerrie conducted the business. Later John Murray and Melville Fitzgerald operated this store. Fitzgerald remodelled it and added an ice-cream parlour which was located on the south side. On Saturday night, folks spent a lively evening, visiting friends in the parlour, and enjoying ten-cent sundaes. Originally, Fitzgerald made his own ice-cream. Later, it was brought by stage coach from Belleville every Saturday afternoon. In peak years, five girls waited on the customers. This store contained another interesting attraction. A feed counter was located in the back of the building. Fitzgerald's Store was truly a general store, providing for all needs.



ROLLINS STORE

The other store in Springbrook was located on the south-west corner of the intersection. From 1890 to 1944 it operated as the Bateman General Store. The Post Office was located in the store from 1918 to 1944. The Postmasters included Wm. T. Bateman, W.F. Bateman, Lorne and Harry Bateman, and W.F. Bateman's daughter, Hazel Mumby.

Prior to 1908, an ice-cream parlour was operated in conjunction with the Bateman Store. The ice-cream was made by the Bateman family and sold. Villagers gathered from far and near to join together for an evening of socializing, as well as delicious homemade ice-cream, in the tent.

In 1944, the Hi and Hazel Mumby family sold the Bateman Store and moved across the road to Fitzgerald's store. The new franchise was operated as Mumby's General Store.

The Post Office was moved to this site when the owner vacated the older store. Rural mail delivery began with the first deliverer being Jeremiah Wilson. It should be noted that Mrs. Hazel Mumby has been related with the Post Office for fifty-two years. From 1925-1933 she acted as assistant. She worked as Postmistress for thirty-nine years and presently operates the mail route. In 1972, the Mumby's daughter, Muriel and her husband, Paul Rollins took over the business.



Probably the original telephone in Peter Welch's store, Springbrook

A group of bankers organized a co-operative store in Springbrook, near McKeown's garage. Shortly, the business folded. Then, Danis Robblin sold separators in the building. Two small hardware stores were operated here. Included in the proprietors were Arthur H. Reid and Thomas McKeown. Later, Walter Heath operated the store. His merchandise consisted of coal oil, bread, a few other groceries and some small hardware. The store changed hands three times. The Flavelle family were the next owners. The final merchant, before the store's closing, was Elwood Johnson. In subsequent years, he sold Raleigh products from the store.

The village also contained specialty food shops including a cider mill, two bake shops and two butcher shops. The cider mill was operated by a kindly old gentleman, Jeremiah Wilson, commonly known as Mira. It was located north of the present church. On hot afternoons, many school children quenched their thirst at Wilson's Mill.

During the apple picking season, apples that were unfit for market, found their way to the mill. To extract the juice, the apples were put into a press, and the lid was gradually screwed down. The energy was provided by a horse which was hitched to the long arm of a lever, similar to the one in the grain elevator. As the horse went around in a circle, the machinery was operated to put pressure on the apples and squeeze out the juice. The cider produced in this mill later became the vinegar supply for nearly everyone in the community. Later, Mr. Wilson bought a gas engine to operate the press. Finally, in 1946, the press was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Orrie Barton. In the fall, they made cider for local residents. In the early 70's, the cider mill was donated to Lang Pioneer Village, north of Keene.

The original bake shop was situated on the same site as the cider mill. Jeremiah Wilson baked there until the turn of the century and then, Nathan Mason operated the business. Two other bake shops were located in Springbrook at different times. Both stood on the north-west side of the present highway. Nathan Mason continued his business in a building north of the hotel, which later burned. The baking took place in the back of his premises. A small store was located in the front of his shop and groceries as well as baked items were sold there. His family lived in the upper storey of the building.

Between 1908 and 1909, Walter Wright baked bread in Springbrook. A brick oven was built in the back of the house on the property now owned by Malcolm Mason. At the mere age of nineteen, Walter Wright rose every morning with the sun, to mix the dough by hand. If bread had to be delivered,

then the alarm clock was moved ahead a few hours. Soon, the strain of this job exhausted Wright and he left Springbrook.



Walter Wright baking his first loaf of bread
in Springbrook (1908)

Later, Jetty Thompson arrived in Springbrook. He baked bread in presumably the same bakery, prior to 1915. Baking was not required to a great extent, because many women made their own bread.

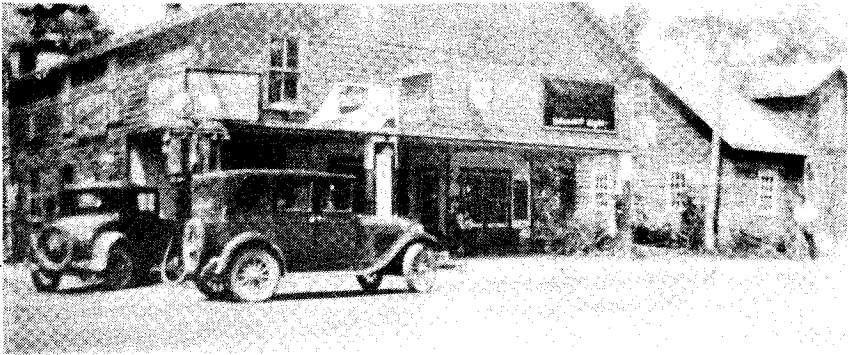
Another specialty shop located in the village was the butcher shop. It was situated in the south-east corner of the intersection. Clinton Gay started his shop in 1924. He tired of this business and decided to open a service station and garage, renting the butcher shop to Murney Fleming from 1932-33. Soon, Gay decided to return to the meat business. Fleming then opened his own business and operated it until 1941. Originally, there was no electricity and consequently, no refrigeration. It was both difficult and expensive to use ice to preserve meat. When the hydro came to Springbrook, there

was much rejoicing. Mrs. Murney Fleming bought an electric washing machine and had it installed in the shop. She then did her washing and ironing in the comfort of electricity.

In the very early days, the villagers had to depend upon midwives and medicine men for medical services. Around the turn of the century, doctors began to make their way to this village. The doctor's office was located in the building later known as the parsonage and now used as a Christian Education Building. A barn stood on the north side of the property and was used as a stable for the doctor's horses. Doctor Sargent, the first family doctor, was an excellent practitioner who made his rounds with horse and buggy. In 1902, he opened the first drug store in Springbrook. It was located across the road in the building now owned by Mrs. Myrtle Cassidy. Dr. Sargent built a flourishing business, dispensing not only drugs, but also coal oil. Both American and Canadian coal oil was sold. Most people were determined to purchase American coal oil because it was lighter, but often they bought Canadian oil without recognizing the difference. The Doctor gained many chuckles when the village folk exclaimed how thankful they were that his drug store never ran out of American oil. Dr. Sargent sold the drug store and a pharmacist operated it. C.A. Lloyd was the first druggist. He worked in close affiliation with the doctor. Later, Robert Stewart was the druggist. The availability of drugs was an advantage for the local residents. After the drug store closed, the people had to travel to Stirling or Marmora for medical supplies.

Doctor Sargent was followed by Doctor Towell who will be better remembered for his car than for his skill as a medical practitioner. The car was the first to be owned in the community. It had high wheels like a buggy, was steered by a tiller, and had a chain drive. The good doctor and his car were familiar to nearly everyone. When the doctor first bought his car, he drove it into his garage and yelled "Whoa!". Unfortunately the car did not understand horse language. When the car stalled, as it frequently did, a crowd would soon gather round and give the doctor, who was in no sense a mechanic, advice on how to get it started. Usually, the outcome of these incidents was that someone with a horse and buggy would go for the operator of a local steam threshing outfit. For some unaccountable reason, he soon had the car started, and the doctor went on his merry way. Among the succeeding doctors were Totton, Wellman, Simmons, Snell Wellman and Helliwell. These men all lived and practised in the village. They travelled in all kinds of weather — wind, snow, sleet, and hail. Never once did they desert the villagers. They brought new life into the community, nursed others back to health and sat by many death beds.

The farmers of the community travelled to Springbrook often. They made use of the excellent resources available. They could market their produce locally or ship it on the train. The village had the industries to suffice their agricultural needs. Many farmers depended on the harness shop on the east side of the Marmora gravel about seventy-five yards south of the main intersection. In it, harness was made, repaired and sold. Interference pads, buggy whips, curry combs and brushes, horse liniment and other articles needed by the farmer, were offered for sale. Among the proprietors were the names, Boardman, Bud Kemp, and Thomas Rupert. Around the turn of the century, the harness maker turned barber every Saturday night and did a thriving business giving shaves and hair cuts. In 1933, the shop disappeared.



Springbrook Garage under ownership of Robt. Scarlett,
now operating as McKeown's Motor Sales

As early as 1879, carriages and wagons were being sold in Springbrook. The carriage shop was located on the north-west corner of the intersection where McKeown's garage now sits. From early records, it can be concluded that William Gay owned the first carriage shop. Charles Ford succeeded Gay around the turn of the Twentieth century. He sold carriages and machinery including Frost and Wood binders. His skill as a wagonmaker outshines his other accomplishments. Other proprietors included Forestell, Dingman, Orr, and Hiram Reddick. Merchandise included buggies, cutters, and cream separators. On Saturday nights, hair cuts and shaves were given in the shop. Later, Ab Reid lived in the shop. When buggies became obsolete and the car took its place, the first garage in Springbrook was opened by Robert Redcliffe. It was located in the carriage shop. He also operated a grist mill on the same premises. In the twenties, Bob Scarlett purchased the garage. In 1933, Reginald McKeown bought the garage and began to build a flourishing business, including a car dealership. The building was enlarged in 1939. Today, the business operates under the franchise, McKeown Motor Sales.



SPRINGBROOK BLACKSMITH SHOP

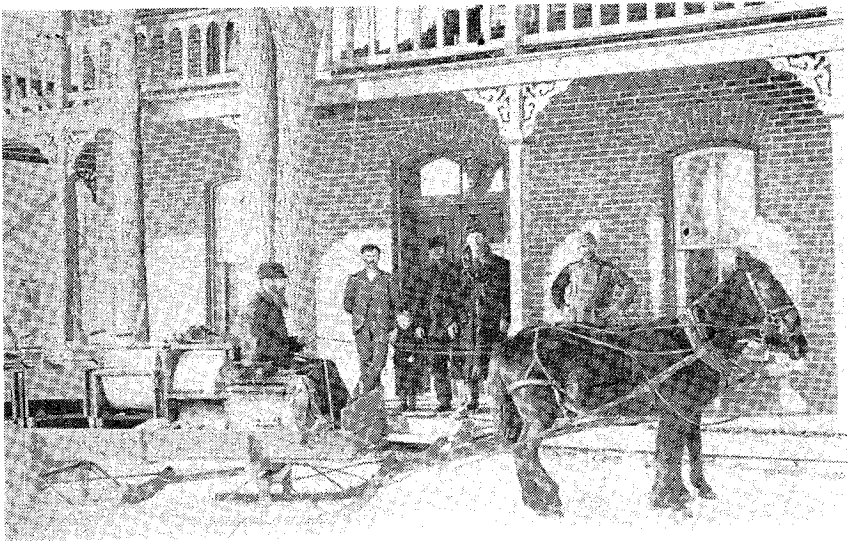
Back: , Albert Bird, Tom Quackenbush, Wm. Reid
 Front: Willoughby Mack, Sidney Mason, C.B. Crosby, Sam Mumby, Wm. F. Bateman, , Stan Cooper

Before the era of the automobile, the blacksmith was priceless in a farming community. For many years, two blacksmith shops operated full scale in the village. The better-known shop was a red building located north of the carriage shop. James Forestell blacksmithed there before the twentieth century. He was assisted by Charles Forestell. Then Sam Mumby purchased the franchise, and he slaved for many hours over the forge, shoeing horses and setting tires. In 1910, while Jackson Moore was blacksmith, the shop burned. Soon afterwards it was rebuilt. Early blacksmiths included Anthony May, Billy McGill, Harry Dingman, Charles Bowman, and Bruce Cassidy. Many of these smiths worked in conjunction with the carriage shop proprietors. The last blacksmith to locate in Springbrook was Dan Lemmon.

A smaller blacksmith shop was located on the west side of the hill, south of the village intersection. For many years, Alty Emerson blacksmithed in this shop.

Many farmers made it a habit to visit the local taverns while their horses were being shod. They met strangers who were passing through and exchanged gossip. The Forest House was used prior to the large migration of settlement to the village. During the 1880's, it was replaced by the Bird House which

was owned and operated by Mr. Thomas Bird. This was a frame building with a veranda on the east side located on the west side of the hill, near the blacksmith shop. After prohibition in 1897, the Bird family became proprietors of the hotel. Many legends concerning the "wet" age have been passed through generations. Once such story tells how Lady Bird would wander through the tavern with a bucket, calmly stating, "Careful boys, don't spill the vinegar!". Those boys never told what the vinegar tasted like, but many villagers made educated guesses. The hotel was torn down by Mr. Tom Morgan, Martha Bird's husband. A livery stable was located across the road from the hotel. Many horsetraders gathered here to boast about the strength, speed and endurance of their horses.



MASON HOUSE, SPRINGBROOK

Chas. Baragar (St. Ola), selling washing machines, Wesley and Sidney Mason on the porch with two others

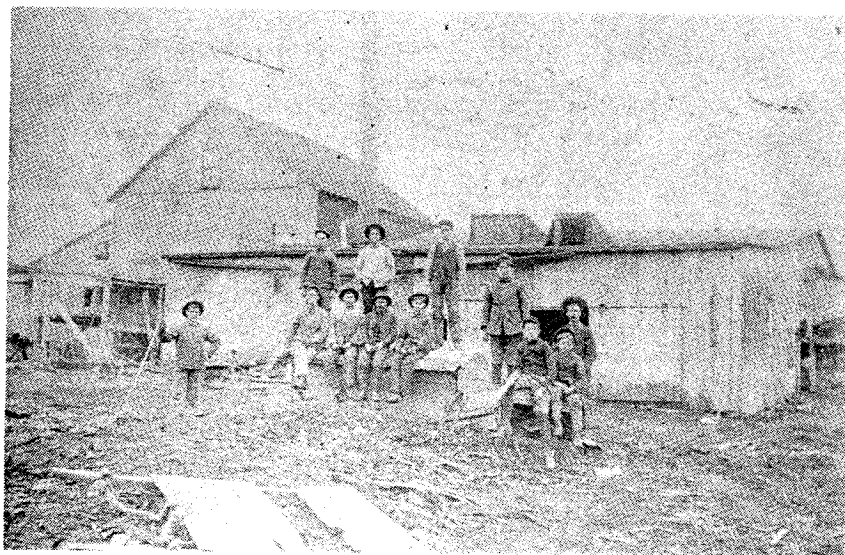
The Mason House also dispensed freely of spirituous refreshments. It was a large brick building located on the north-east corner of the main intersection. The south and west side of the building were lined with decorative verandas. A livery stable was located at the rear of the hotel and today, the well and watering trough remain. The name for the building was derived from one of its many proprietors, Wesley Mason. Other well-remembered proprietors included Tom Reid and Hiram Cooper. In 1914, the hotel was destroyed in a fire, and with it, many interesting stories were lost. John and Tom Quackenbush, owners at the time, tried desperately to save the building, but this task was impossible. A fire engine pulled by

horses from Stirling travelled to Springbrook, but the building was demolished before it arrived.

Drunkenness was common and fist-fights occurred almost regularly. Many small disputes arose among the farmers concerning land rights and ownership. Cases over these petty affairs were held in Peter Welch's store. Magistrates in the village included William Meiklejohn, T.J. Thompson, and Peter Welch.

During their visits to Springbrook, the farmers often visited the combined saw mill, grist mill, and cheese box factory. The mill was located south of the village on the property now owned by Grant Reid and was operated by John Morgan and Sons. The mill was a great asset to the community, employing fifteen to twenty men and providing excellent services for local folk. In 1920, the mill was closed due to decreased population.

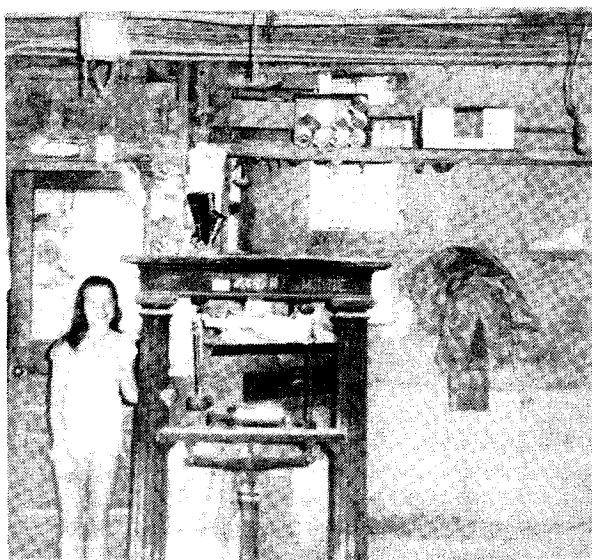
During the winter, farmers of the surrounding countryside cut and hauled logs of elm, maple, birch, basswood, pine, spruce and other species to the mill. The logs were sawn into rough lumber according to the instructions left by their owners. After being cut, it was piled outside until the owners hauled it home. The grist mill was a noisy, dusty, busy place where farmers brought oats and barley to be ground to make better feed for their livestock. Slabwood was burned to produce the steam necessary to operate all parts of the mill.



SPRINGBROOK SAW MILL

Possibly the most interesting part of the mill was the cheese box factory. Elm logs were cut the right length to make the sides of the boxes. After the bark was removed the logs were put into a tank and steamed until they reached a condition that would enable them to be cut to form veneer. To do this, the logs were clamped into position and then turned against the long stationary blade. This cut the veneer so that it was about one-eighth of an inch in thickness. The veneer was cut into widths equal to the height of a cheese box. During the summer, three to six men were kept busy making the boxes. One man, driving a team of horses hitched to a wagon fitted with a large rack, delivered the boxes, several hundred at a time, to cheese factories within a radius of fifteen or twenty miles.

Across the road from the mill was a watering trough. As part of it was in the adjacent field and part on the roadway, it served a double purpose by supplying water to cattle and horses in the fields, as well as to travellers and their thirsty horses. The trough was supplied by water from a spring farther up the hill on the east side of the road. The water entered the trough through a half-inch pipe that passed under the road, then came up over the top of the trough and terminated with a short horizontal section of the pipe. Inserted into the end of the pipe, there was a wooden plug, but it had a hole about the size of a lead pencil through it. The pressure forced the water through this small opening day and night. Hundreds of travellers drank the water as it flowed through this small opening.



SCALES FROM SPRINGBROOK ELEVATOR
Presently used in Grist Mill owned by Delbert Fleming

After Morgan's Mill closed, the need for a grist mill was imperative. In 1927, Bob Fleming built Fleming's Mills, known here today. The scales in the mill were one of a set of the original scales used in the Springbrook Elevator. In 1942, Bob Fleming sold the mill to Delbert Fleming (no relation). Elevators were added in 1951. This year, 1977, the mill celebrates fifty years of existence in Springbrook.



SPRINGBROOK GRIST MILL
Owned by Delbert Fleming

The people of Springbrook were a hard-working band, but always ready to take a few hours from their busy schedule to join some fun. Although most of the villagers were Methodists, they enjoyed a lively party, but dancing was frowned upon by the Church. Most social functions were held in the Forester's Hall, or the Orange Hall. Christmas concerts, oyster suppers, church dinners, lectures, political speeches and medicine shows were among the functions held in the hall. The Forester's Hall was located directly across the road from the parsonage. The annual tea meeting was the most notable annual event held in the Forester's Hall. This was really the annual church dinner, staged by the ladies of the church on the night following the anniversary church service. The price of admission was twenty-five cents, including a dinner of excellent food and an impromptu programme, featuring many local entertainers.

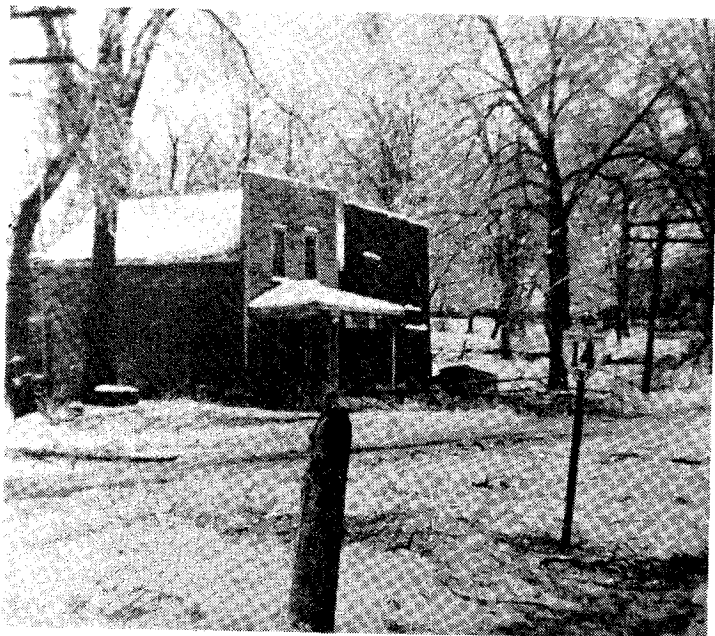
In later years, the Orange Hall, east of Springbrook on the tenth concession, was the setting for such social events. Many children, young and old, have travelled to the hall in sleighs, buggies, and even cars to be entertained. Often, the community held receptions for newlyweds in the Orange Hall. Murney Bateman, with his guitar, was a featured entertainer in the community. Lodge meetings were held in both halls. As the community decreased in size, these lodges were moved to bigger centres. Concentrated histories can be found elsewhere.

Recognizing the prosperity of the early twentieth century town, two banks located in Springbrook. The United Empire Bank was located in the Forester's Hall. At its peak period, the bank employed four or five workers. This bank began visiting the village bi-weekly, then weekly, and finally, it closed.

The Union Bank was located in a structure directly south of Rollin's Store. The building was constructed with a shooting hole in the upper story, in case of robbery. The hole was tiered outwards from the top. Business was not sufficient for a full-time bank. Soon, the bank sent representatives out four times each week. Finally, the representatives were visiting Springbrook once a week. The Union Bank merged with the Royal Bank to form the Royal Bank of Canada. The new management realized that Springbrook branch was not economically feasible and soon it closed.

Newton White bought the bank building and operated an assorted business. He sold furniture and operated a small hardware. Local sportsmen obtained their hunting and fishing licenses here. His biggest enterprise was undertaking. Being a very organized man, he capably conducted the funerals of many villagers. Mrs. White also operated a small business, adding variety to her husband's shop. She acted as a milliner and sold hats. Of all the variety stores of today, none could capture the mixture that Newton White sold.

Many anecdotes have been told about Mr. White and his variety of enterprises. When a villager was nearing death, Mr. White would, in preparation, lay out his dark pin-wheel suit and tall silk hat each night before going to bed. One night a knock came to the door. White yelled, "I'll be there in a minute," and he hastily put on his funeral outfit. He hurried down the stairs only to be greeted by a stranger. The man said in a slow drawl, "Just wondered if I could buy a fishing license?" Villagers chuckled about this incident for many days. Even so, White remained close to their hearts. His funeral directing ability was surpassed by no one. In times of need, Newton White was always there to help and bring comforting words.



HARDWARE & TINSMITH SHOP IN SPRINGBROOK



THE BANK
Occupied by Newton White's Furniture Store

Many other small businesses were located in the town, but these operated for only a few years. Nick Fleming had a tin-smith shop beside the butcher shop for some years. He patched pipes and sold eavetroughs.

After the coming of the automobile, the need for garages was clearly seen. Morley Mason operated a garage near the blacksmith shop. Another garage was built near the Mason House, west of Jack Reid's house. It was operated by Harry Brown, only for a short time. The larger, more established, businesses won the battle. In later years, Melville Fitzgerald stored grain in the garage.

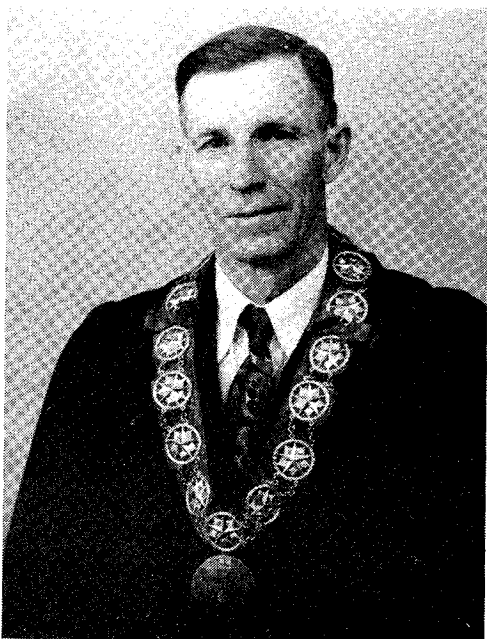
A cabinet shop was located in Springbrook before the turn of the century. Very little information can be found concerning this business. The names, Peter and William Milton, have been mentioned in the 1890's. The furniture in many nineteenth century homes could have been made by these men.

In the early twentieth century, it was customary for people to hire dressmakers. Usually these seamstresses were young, unmarried girls. At the turn of the century, a small shop was operated in Mr. Rupert's house, beside the bank, by the milliners. The girls were familiar with the town folk and if they stepped out of the shop with a tapeline around their neck, someone would surely pull it. Included among the girls who worked in the shop at various times were Mary Green, Florence Rupert (McKeown), Miss Forestell, Susie Stephens (Thompson), and Jennie Stephens (Sutherland). Many fine toddlers' suits, elegant lace wedding gowns, babies' rompers and ladies' dresses were the result of endless hours of labour in the shop. Sometimes, the girls travelled from home to home making clothes for the entire family.

In recent years, Roy Solmes has operated a bowling alley in Springbrook. Since 1962, cars have filled the parking lot nearby, and inside, the action never has ceased. The sights and sounds of rolling balls and falling pins were everywhere. Children, young and old, have been entertained here. Today, the alley continues to operate with a new proprietor, Donald Dunkly. Roy Solmes is not known for his bowling alley alone. As a mason, he employs many local residents and is known throughout the area for his stone work. One cannot pass his home without turning an eye to glance towards his collection of antique cars. Solmes transformed his garage into an antique car shop. He is known throughout eastern North America for his unique hobby.

Life in Springbrook continues day by day. To outsiders the lazy little hamlet seems to slumber in the hollow. Inside, ac-

tivities never cease. Farmers meet in the garage and grist mill for friendly conversation while their wives visit in the store. The Rawdon Recreation Centre attracts the younger folk. For those wishing to worship, Church and Sunday School are provided in the Springbrook United Church. In fifty years, one can only hope that the status of the village will not have declined.



GEORGE E. THOMPSON
Warden of Hastings County, 1939