

CARLOW TOWNSHIP

P. 14

MATERIAL CONTRIBUTED BY MRS. MARION  
La VOY AS COMPILED FOR CARLOW W. I.  
IN 1947.

In 1863 the Wilson Brothers, James and Robert left Springtown in Bagot Township in Renfrew County at the head of the long rapids on the Madawaska River and with provisions for a month made their way up the Madawaska River. After some thirteen portages they reached Niki's Lake where some Indians told them of a stand of big hardwood bush. This they would reach by continuing south until they came to the junction of two streams. They were to take the left fork and proceed upstream until, after passing two rapids, they would come to a dead pine standing on a rock. Here they were to land and walk westward. The Wilson brothers followed the directions as given them by the Indians. The "left fork" was the Little Mississippi River. After the rapids they found a beautiful valley and straight west from the dead pine and on a height of land was the stand of big hardwoods. James and Robert tossed a coin to decide which land each should take. Time remained for each to "chop" two acres. Then the brothers returned to Springtown to help with haying and harvest.

In late summer the brothers, accompanied by Sam Mallard and by George Bartlett, again returned along the water trail to the dead pine. This spot later became known as Haryett's Landing. On this trip James Wilson's log shack was built and land cleared for fallows. In the fall the group returned to Springtown. When the spring breakup was over the lads returned to their new farms. A horse was taken with them and work progressed more quickly. A new settler, Joe Stringer, moved in from Renfrew County and took land next to the Wilsons.

Lumbering became the first basic industry. Virgin pine covered the North-West portion of the Township and hardwoods were abundant in the South-East portion. The Hilliard & Dixon Lumber Company operated on what is now the Hass farm. Later the Conroy Company took over the limit which was made up of what is now the Lavoy farm, the Taylor farm, and the Clifford Stewart farm. A depot was established on the present Lavoy farm in the Havergal Settlement. This Depot was a little settlement comprising a store, a post-office, a boarding-house, a blacksmith shop and other log buildings.

The chief product of early lumbering was "squared" pine. A "stick" consisted of a tree felled and trimmed "square". Since this had to be done by hand, considerable skill was needed. The "sticks" were then transported to the river and floated in rafts to their destination. Dams were built at strategic spots to provide high water as needed. River accidents were numerous during the drives. A grave on the high bank east of Conroy Rapids can still be seen. The name "Andrew Duncan" and the date 1872 as carved on a slab by one of his companions is still discernible.

Trapping also helped some of the settlers through the winter months. Fur prices were not high by our standards but the raw furs provided something for barter. Deer hides were often home tanned and used for moccasins, mitts, etc.

Some of the early settlers were Bartletts, Grahams, Hallidays, Hynes, Kellys, Kennedys, Mallards, McAllisters, McLeans, Parkhursts, Stewarts, Stories, Stringers, Tait, Telfords and Towns. Jim Barber and John Long settled on what became the "ninth line". In 1896 the Whytes settled behind Fraser Lake and about 1875 the McWhirters settled near them. In 1873 the Youngs settled on the "Blank Line" near Boulter.

The Township was surveyed into lots and roads by C. F. Aylsworth in 1865. The survey shows the Township to consist of 15,181 acres in farm lots, 1,285 acres in road allowances, and 1,842 acres in water. One "settlers road" is shown as "the Carlow Road" beginning at Combermere and cutting across Carlow Township from Lot 26, Concession IX to run along behind Fraser Lake and eventually reaching the Monk Road in Mayo Township. (See map of early roads appended.) A railway allowance marking the "Toronto, Kingston, and Pembroke Railway" is shown across the northern end of the Township. This railway was never constructed. At that time Carlow and Mayo were united for purposes of government.

The early settlers took their grain to York River (now Bancroft) to be made into flour. This was usually done in winter so that sleighs could be used for transportation. Small quantities were handled by being carried on men's backs. Most clothing was homespun. Money was scarce, barter being the principal means of exchange.

The first school in Carlow Township was built in 1873 about 200 yards east of the present Boulter store. The first teacher was Miss Agnes Carswell who had some 30 pupils when the school opened. The school served also as a church until 1875 when a log church was built. Another school, the Fort Stewart School, was built later on the same grounds as used for this purpose up to 1952. The Havergal school was built in 1885 about a mile from the Conroy farm. This school was replaced in 1916 by the "Tin School".

The first Post Office in Carlow Township was called "Boulter". It was opened in 1869 on what is now the Lorne White farm. Mail was carried in from L'Amable. In 1879 the Conroy's Farm Post Office was opened. It was closed in 1882, reopened in 1883, burned in 1886 and a new office set up at Havergal. This office closed in 1929. New Carlow Post Office was opened in 1882. The Fort Stewart Post Office was opened in 1891 by Eli Lumb.

The first Township Council was organized in 1870 for the united townships of Carlow and Mayo. James Wilson was elected first Reeve. The Townships were separated in . In 1888 a road between concessions 4 and 5, across lots 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 was opened. For this purpose the Council voted \$20.00 (Twenty Dollars).

The early church in Carlow Township was of the Presbyterian persuasion. Before a clergyman came in and until a church was built, Mrs. James Wilson organized and taught Sunday School in her own home. In 1868 Rev. Archibald Lees was sent by the Presbytery of Kingston to have charge of settlers north of Tudor. After 1870 students from Knox College helped. James Wilson and Robert Grant were ordained elders in 1868. The latter left the community and was succeeded by Sylvanus Gemmel in 1875. James Wilson was precentor in the first church built in 1875 on Lot 20, Concession 5. Later, singing was led by John Bremmer and, still later, by a choir. An organ was installed in 1898. A Methodist Church was erected in 1898. This church closed in 1914. In 1902 a Gospel Hall was built east of Boulter.

Mrs. Marion Taylor in her 90th year recalls many of the events of life in the early settlements. Some of her stories are told below.

"Early days in Carlow began for me in March 1867 when I was six years old. My mother brought her sister, her mother, and six of us children and came up the ice from Barnstown.--- My mother hoed up three acres of land and planted wheat. When it was grown, she reaped it, and fanned it by hand, and then it was taken to Renfrew by canoe, to be made into flour.---- My father went by canoe to the store once a year with his furs. He would bring back the footwear in bags.---- My mother and her sister worked many days on the road down below Boulter, cutting it out.---- When I was married in 1879, I moved to a house of my own in Raglan Township. Before my first baby was born, it was a struggle to get clothes. One day when I had walked up to my mothers, she told me wolves had killed some sheep. I picked all the scattered wool and carried it home in bags. I washed it, carded it, and went up to Mrs. Hoover's to spin it. Then I knit six pairs of socks and went down to Combermere in a boat and sold them for 35 cents a pair. With this I bought cloth, and sewed it by hand for my baby's clothes. I could tell many more of the happenings in the old days. The hard work, sickness and sorrow too. But we always had plenty to eat and wear and I thank God for sparing many of us to see this Carlow Township growing into a community like it is now."