

UNCLE DUDLEY'S COLUMN

THE PETERSON TRAIL

Having noted the report of the opening of the Peterson Road from the Bobcaygeon Road to Highway 11 — and the name "Peterson" did not appear at all — and before a few of our "old timers" are called to another clime, I feel I have some duty to record some events over the last century more relative to this area.

The records show this road which was put through about 1847, was a colonization road — which fact I am not disputing but I hasten to point out the concern of an invasion of Upper Canada was a possibility. A few wild Irishmen south of the border were doing a good deal of sabre rattling; in fact one or two actual raids into Upper Canada were made. The work was then undertaken with some degree of alarm, and this was a possible avenue of transport from Ottawa to the Georgian Bay country in case the lakeshore roads might be closed by enemy action.

Coming down through the Township of Harburn, it follows the boundary of Guilford - Dysart and Stanhope - Anson, Hindon & Minden to the junction of the Bobcaygeon Road, which was also an early colonization road. I believe, from Port Hope north,

You will note I use both the words trail and road in this article. Actually, none of the avenues of transport deserved the title of road; they were rough passages, and the part of the Peterson from the West Guilford and Haliburton road north of Hurricane Lake is the toughest piece of trail I ever drove a team and vehicle over.

During the years 1907 to 1912 when we purchased our first truck I brought many a ton of merchandise over this part of the road. I often had, on the driver's seat at the top of the "Devil's Elbow", fervently wished I was at the bottom; although a vile bit of trail starting off with eight to ten feet of bald sloping rock, I never had an accident of any extent occur.

About 150 yards north from our home is where the old grade intersided the old Carnarvon - Hall's Lake Road, and also on Lot 12, Concession 1, Stanhope there is a small swamp and the water was held in by a ridge of rock running about 125 yards

Phonex.

The opening of this road will mean a good deal to both the Bracebridge and Haliburton area people. Many permanent homes will be erected in this area during the next quarter century.

In closing I wish to thank all who have aided me in the preparation of this article, particularly Walter Noice and Lawrence Pritchard who have good knowledge of the area.

O. J. TAXI

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BARRY'S PLACE

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About 150 yards north from our home is where the old grade intersided the old Carnarvon Hall's Lake Road, and also on Lot 12, Concession 1, Stanhope there is a small swamp and the water was held in by a ridge of rock running about 125 yards north and south. In this part of the trail there is about 150 feet of corduroy (cedar) poles about 3'5" in diameter, and these poles (although moss covered) are still sound, having been submerged in the mud over the last 125 years or more.

A good many settlers came in as far as the junction, and at one time a sizeable colony lived here before there was any development at Minden on the Gull River waters.

At one time, I am informed, a licenced hotel stood in each of the Townships of Anson, Hindon & Minden and Stanhope. Even in my day as a boy, the "Caygeon" Road was a supply line for the northern camps.

At this time of year droves of cattle were headed north, 25 to 40 head in a drove, and these were sorted out three or four to each camp and dressed out and hung up — what the birds did not get, the men were fed. The crew taking part in this work was A. Mason of Boskung, Joseph Hewitt and his neighbour Tom Prentice from Minden Township. Mr. Hewitt told me, that on finishing their work at Hollow Lake they took the hides to Dorset, tagged them for Huntsville Tannery, and then walked home.

The late James Austin summed up this period as the time a man wore out one pair of shoe-peaks looking up a job to make enough money to buy another. These pioneer men were a great breed — none better — and would shame many of today's generation, in the daily tally of their labours.

The Petersen west of the junction along the boundary of Anson and Hindon Townships never attracted many settlers in the early days. At one time I believe some of the early Prentice family were there and possibly the early pioneers of the Trumbull clan. However, quite early in the settlement of the area, quite a colony existed about Brady's Lake — John Boyd, the Austins (James and Bert), and Paul