

MEMORIES OF AN EADY RESIDENT
(Excerpted from Medonte, A Township Remembered, p81)

The late Bessie Wilson was born in Eady in November 1910 and died in 2000. She told many interesting stories of this area. Some of these were told to her by her father, George Wilson. Her great-grandfather, the first farmer of Eady, was Lieutenant George Wilson.

One special story she told was of the brief courtship of her grandparents, William and Greta Moon. The Postmaster of Moonstone at the time was Thomas Moon who had three eligible daughters. Late one evening, William Wilson decided that he no longer wanted his aunt, Jane March, to continue as his housekeeper. He went to the post office to speak to Mr. Moon and to request a bride, but arrived after the young ladies had retired upstairs for the night. However, Mr. Moon called to the eldest daughter to say that Mr. Wilson was visiting and wanted a wife! She refused without coming downstairs. Then the next daughter was called. She accepted his proposal without coming downstairs. They were married shortly afterward.

Bessie also remembered the "track kids", about 20 children, who each day walked from the station area down the railway track to the old Eady School. This was before 1925.

Another childhood memory was her fear of the "gypsies" who were said to be from Mexico. They set up camp, about 1917, along the 11th Line, just south of the old school. Here they traded horses, and sold lace, earrings, beads, etc. This was a "gentle hold-up for money". While they were in the area, there were always rumors of eggs and chickens disappearing from the hen houses, vegetables missing from the gardens, and even tales of children stolen from other areas. The teacher watched the children very closely while they were in the area.

Fun times included horse-drawn sleigh ride parties up and down the concession roads, followed by games, and hot food such as a big pot of beans at a neighborhood home. There was also a snowshoe club composed of members who traveled from the 10th Line to Grenard, and usually warmed themselves at Art Moffit's home.

Bessie remembered her father speaking of the wonderful patience Wilfred Walker had with one of his three sons. Although he could have directed the team of horses to back up a wagon load of animals onto the weigh scales in a matter of seconds, Mr. Walker let the young boy do it taking much longer, but providing invaluable experience.

Her school day memories at the "Old Eady School" (the second school) included the water pail and a big dipper in it for everyone to drink from, the wash basin which all the children shared, the two outside "air-conditioned" toilets, teachers boarding at nearby farms and several later marrying farm sons. Her first teacher was Edna Dudenhoffer from Orillia. Others were Mrs. Sibbald, Evenly Langman from Orillia, Nell Sprott from Collingwood (later Mrs. Grant Blaney), Miss Alma Walker from Coulson, and Miss Louise Turner from Elmvale.

Mrs. Isaac Day was the Public School Inspector, "a nice, white haired, friendly man who came around twice a year, driving his horse, and school got out early those days". Several meetings, discussions, votes, arguments and hard feelings took place regarding the dividing of SS# 14, the building of a new school, and the location of it. Then Mr. Day condemned the old school house. In the midst of this disturbance, in March 1925, the school burned down without explanation.