

OSHAWA'S GRAND OLD MAN PASSES TO HIS REWARD

Mr. Robert McLaughlin, founder of the McLaughlin Carriage Co. and Paved the Way for Canada's largest Motive Industry.

After a few days' illness, the only sickness he had during his long and eventful life, Mr. Robert McLaughlin, Oshawa's grand old man, passed away at his home 837 Simcoe street north, Wednesday afternoon, November 23, in his 86th year.

One of the pioneer manufacturers of Canada, Mr. McLaughlin long enjoyed the respect and confidence of his business associates, and his reputation as a successful business man is well known throughout the Dominion.

He was born near Springville, Cavan Durham County, on November 16th, 1835, moving with his father to Tyrone in 1841.

His liking for mechanical pursuits found early development. As a lad in his teens, after his day's work on his father's farm was done, he employed his spare moments in making whiffle-trees, neck-yokes and whipstocks, which he sold to the neighbors. But life on the farm never appealed to him, and in 1867 he set up business in Enniskillen, as a manufacturer of vehicles. The original staff consisted of one journeyman carriage builder, one blacksmith and one apprentice. He, himself, was designer, painter and manager. From this small beginning was developed the Dominion wide business of the McLaughlin Carriage Company which in turn was the predecessor of the vast Corporation now known as General Motors of Canada, Limited, which, including the Walkerville division, in normal times gives employment to thirty-five hundred citizens. In 1877 he moved to Oshawa where new buildings were erected and considerable additions made to the staff.

During the eighties his two sons, R. S. and G. W., joined the business, and in 1893 the McLaughlin Carriage Company was organized and the buildings enlarged.

Mr. McLaughlin was always particular that goods bearing his name should be of the highest quality only and exactly as represented, and about this time the firm adopted as their trade slogan "One Grade Only, and That the Best." Working under these principles success was rapid and permanent.

In 1899 their entire factory was consumed by fire, but before the ashes were cold it was decided to build a new and larger establishment. In the meantime a valuable chain of selling agencies had been established and in order to retain this organization intact, Mr. McLaughlin leased an empty factory in Gananoque where McLaughlin vehicles were built during the time of the erection of the new industry in Oshawa.

In about the year 1905 considerable national interest was awakened in connection with the new method of locomotion, namely, the motor car and the younger members of the staff were very anxious to try their luck in the new field. Mr. McLaughlin, senior, was not so sanguine about the permanency of the automobile in those early days, but after considering the matter for over a year, finally consented to try the venture, and in 1907 the McLaughlin Motor Car Company was formed with R. S. McLaughlin as President, G. W. McLaughlin as Vice-President, and O. Hezzelwood Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Robert McLaughlin retaining the Presidency of the Carriage Company.

Success also followed the new venture and the McLaughlin motor car became so popular that in 1915, foreseeing practically the end of the horse-drawn vehicle, the carriage business was sold in its entirety to Carriage Factories Limited, at Brockville.

That portion of the plant thus made vacant was equipped for the production of motor cars, and it was in this year that the Company added the Chevrolet line. As an illustration of the vigor and rapidity of the action which followed his every decision when made, it may be stated that it was in October 1915, that the conclusion was reached to sell the carriage plant, and on the 30th day of November, or in less than six weeks, the last carload of car-

He was a member of the University of Toronto, a generous supporter of the Presbyterian Church, and his structure was under attack he was quick to lay the cornerstone, and was interested in everything pertaining to the completion of the building, and later on in the erection of the manse adjoining.

The Muskoka Sanitarium received his sympathetic interest and he was a generous contributor to its funds. Quite recently, it will be remembered, that when the campaign was begun for funds to restore the structure destroyed by fire, his home was the headquarters for a demonstration in its interests, when leading men of Toronto and Central Ontario District took part in the ceremonies and committees were formed to carry on the campaign.

During his long residence in Oshawa, Mr. McLaughlin occupied positions at the Council Board, and served a term as Mayor, and was the first Chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners. He was a Director of the Western Bank up to the date that it was merged in to the Standard Bank.

He is survived by his widow, two sons, George W. and R. S., two daughters, Mrs. J. P. Owens and Mrs. J. McCulloch, Toronto, sixteen grand children and two great-grandchildren, one brother, Mr. John McLaughlin, Bowmanville, and one sister. His eldest son, John J., of J. J. McLaughlin, Limited, Sherbourne Street, Toronto, predeceased him ten years ago.

As an amateur painter in oils and water-colors he showed much ability, and though it was as a past-time, during the later years of his life he devoted much attention of which he was very fond.

A particularly sad feature of the veteran manufacturer's death is that his son, Mr. R. S. McLaughlin, President of the General Motors of Canada, was on his way home from England.

It was hoped he would arrive before his father's death, but he did not reach New York in time.

Oshawa's sorrow is a genuine sorrow; we have lost a good citizen, kind, tender-hearted and true to every trust reposed in him.

YOUNG LADIES' BIBLE CLASS

Spend Jolly Social Evening at Mrs. W. F. Dale's.

A merry social time was enjoyed by the members of the Y. L. B. C., of the Methodist Sunday School on Thursday evening at the home of Mrs. W. F. Dale, King-st. Over seventy members were present and enjoyed to the full the program of amusements furnished by the unmarried ladies while they enjoyed the excellent lunch so generously provided by the married members. Mr. and Mrs. Dale were most thoughtful and generous in providing for the comfort and pleasure of their guests, which was acknowledged in a hearty vote of thanks moved by Miss Addie Cawker, President, and seconded by Miss Edith Bennett and heartily endorsed by every member present. This is not the first time the members of Miss Haycraft's Bible Class have been privileged to enjoy a good time at this hospitable home and they fully appreciate the kindness shown them on this and former occasions.

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