



The  
*Mill Reserve*



*A Part of Haliburton History*



Compiled by  
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# Beginnings

As beautiful as Haliburton is today, we can only imagine the grandeur of untouched wilderness and beauty that the first excited settlers to our village experienced as they arrived to Haliburton Village in 1864. As with most towns that were hewn out of the forest, the pioneers gravitated to an area in the new settlement where there was a good supply of water and a set of rapids that could be harnessed for waterpower. Such was the case in Haliburton. The same wise saying of “location, location, location” still rings true today! The original surveyors of Haliburton village laid out a town plot and it recognized this area as “*The Mill Reserve*”. Today, you will recognize it as the yard area of Emmerson Lumber Limited. In recognition of Emmerson Lumber’s 50th anniversary, I have compiled a history of “*The Mill Reserve*” using information from history books, newspaper articles, local people and the help of the good folks from the Haliburton Highlands Museum. The staff and management of Emmerson Lumber Limited hope that you enjoy reading this supplement.



Figure 1- Original town plot survey of Haliburton including the Mill Reserve – Map courtesy of Haliburton Highlands Museum

# *The Canadian Land and Emigration Company of London*

*This section was reproduced from Nila Reynolds book "In Quest of Yesterday" and is important to further your understanding of the events leading up to the first settlement.*

The stories of the Canadian Land and Emigration Company, Haliburton village and the Municipality of Dysart et al which includes 9 of Haliburton's 23 townships, are so integrally related that a Solomon could not treat them separately with justice. The Municipality takes its name from the first township settled, Dysart, while both village and county honour Canada's first outstanding humourist, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, who was the chairman of the Emigration Company from its inception in April of 1861 to his death in 1865.

The decision to offer Dysart, Dudley, Harcourt, Guilford, Harburn, Bruton, Havelock, Eyre, Clyde and Longford for sale en block at fifty cents an acre, owner to pay for the survey, was made by Philip M. Vankoughnet, the Commissioner of Crown Lands in January of 1859. Vankoughnet made his historic cast in spite of the widely varying opinions voiced by surveyors on the suitability of the land for agricultural settlement. Perhaps he had an inkling that a fish was waiting, for almost at once his bait was taken by John Beverley Robinson, a big wheel in the Family Compact and Chief Justice of Upper Canada, acting on behalf of a speculative firm, the Canada Agency Association, whose purpose was to channel English capital to Canada while promoting emigration. They had an English buyer already lined up.

October of 1860 found the deal at the point where the C. A. A. agent, Mr. A. N. Roche, was able to assure Vankoughnet that his purchasers would buy the 10 townships, surveyed in outline, with a down payment of 10% of the total price. He named the scheme's three major promoters, Sir Francis Bond Head of Croydon and Henry Kingscote and Hugh Edmondstone Montgomerie of London.

Actual payment of the 10%, \$19,200, made in November was promptly collected as their commission by the Canada Agency Association. Some event or information must have tipped off the ever shrewd Bond Head on the Company's profit potential. For reasons best known to himself, Sir Francis, up to this time a prime mover and proposed chairman of the board, withdrew. Hastily he was replaced by the Hon. Thomas Chandler Haliburton who in 1842 had abandoned his Nova Scotia career to take up residence in Britain where he became a member of parliament.

Destiny decreed that the actual signing on April 15, 1861, of the articles of association of the Canadian Land and Emigration Company whose capital of £250,000 was divided into 50,000 individual shares of £5, should be almost simultaneous with the opening guns of the American Civil War.

Never was an emigration project launched which could boast of more worthy motives! Its plans included the survey, improvement, clearance, cultivation and sale of company lands; loans for settlers, construction of schools and churches, the building and improvement of roads, railways and communications to facilitate settlement, plus the promotion of emigration from the British Isles and "Elsewhere."

Perhaps such glowing terms aimed at capturing the fancy of armchair Empire builders owed much to the inspired pen of Haliburton; at any rate

they tended to still the fears of investors lately bilked by some Canadian railway stock.

By the time the calendar was turned to March of 1862, 21,000 shares subject to call, had been disposed of. Purchasers included most of the trades and professions with a high percentage of gentlemen, clergymen, spinsters and widows, army and navy personnel and merchants. Although the board of directors bulged with bankers and men of title, none invested heavily; in the light of ensuing events a significant fact.

Calls upon each share eventually totaled £3 12s 6d with a return of about 12s 6d, bringing the net price to £3 and providing a company capital of £298,200. Early in 1862 the Canadian agent advertised such lands of the company as were ready for settlement at a minimum of 7s 6d per acre, cash or credit. The only townships not named in such an ad in an 1862 Peterborough Examiner were Clyde and Eyre.

Among the advantages offered prospective buyers was that 10% of what the government received on the sale was to be spent on roads to intercept their colonization roads such as the Peterson, and on roads linking the various town plots which would be sold to private business men who would be sure to prosper.

The interests of the settlements about the various town plots could be supervised and promoted by the company which believed that such fertile soil and unsurpassed climate assured affluence for all.

Problems between English and Canadian agents were present from the first—dual representation of the company by Robinson and the Canadian Agency Association ended with Robinson's dismissal on the grounds that legal fees were too high. This did not sit well with Vankoughnet who made a

trip to England in 1862 to meet with the board and allay their fears about reports seeping back that a large percentage of the land was rocky. He felt Robinson had been treated unfairly.



The Provincial Land Surveyor, B.W. Gossage who had been working on surveys and exploration of company property since 1861 also ran into expense account difficulties and at one time was about ready to quit.

Haliburton himself made a flying trip to Canada in 1861 but there is no proof that he even attempted to set foot on the 25 mile square of virgin forest which his company had acquired; certainly never saw the village which was to bear his name.

*Figure 2- The Village of Haliburton and the Provincial County of Haliburton derived their names from the first Chairman of the Canadian Land and Emigration Company, the noted Canadian historian and humorist, who in 1842 himself emigrated to London from Nova Scotia where he served as Judge of the Supreme Court. In*

*1829 he published an historical and statistical account of Nova Scotia but he did not hit his literary stride until he created the whimsical Yankee Clockmaker "Sam Slick" through whom he expressed satire and pungent humour. "The Clockmaker or Sayings and Doing of Samuel Slick of Slickerville" was published in 1837. Haliburton spent the remainder of his life in England and never saw the Village or rugged highlands upon which he bequeathed his name. After his death in 1865 his widow, Mrs. Haliburton, endowed St. George's Anglican Church at Haliburton with an organ. Photo and caption from Ron Curry's book Haliburton Village 1864-1964, County 1874-1974 published by the Rotary Club of Haliburton.*

# The Lucas Family

*There are many well researched and interesting books about the history of Haliburton available for interested readers. The Haliburton Museum also has a large collection of Haliburton history memorabilia. As you can imagine, families gradually arrived to the area over the years and managed to endure the extreme hardship of early pioneer life . Many local families are descendents of these courageous and adventurous settlers. Capt. John Lucas and his family were one of the first group to arrive in 1864.His family accomplished many things and our first town hall was named in his honour. Here is a short excerpt from Nila Reynolds' book "In Quest of Yesterday" regarding the Lucas family:*

**A**nother Haliburton notable was Capt. John Lucas, elected Reeve by acclamation at the Municipality of Dysart's inception in 1867. This widely travelled officer had served in the Mercantile Marine and taken part in the Australian and California gold rushes. One writer of the time speaks of him as the most widely known man north of Bobcaygeon.

Although Lucas first took up land in Anson township, the opportunities offered by the C. L. & E. Co. made him decide to go into partnership with William Gainer of Minden and William Ritchie. They purchased the mill reserve on the Drag Lake creek and started a sawmill. Timbers for the dam and the mill foundation were laboriously prepared with a pit-saw. From the first the sandy banks and bottom gave difficulty; before it was completed the dam washed out and carried with it a huge chunk of the southern bank.



*Figure 3-  
John Albert Lucas  
(1860-1945)  
eldest son of  
Capt. John Lucas.*

Meanwhile, Lucas had constructed a cabin on the north side of the river and his wife Eliza and their children, Alice, Mary Agnes, John Albert, Ellen Jane and Margaret Victoria took up residence. The late Gilbert Windsor, for so many years clerk of the Municipality of Dysart, took great pride in the excellent photo of the Lucas cabin and its environs which hangs in the office of the Municipal building. Here, on March 9, 1865, was born Haliburton village's first white child, William Evans Lucas. Lucas was the founder of the Grand Central hotel on the main street of the village which his oldest son, John Albert Lucas, also operated.



*Figure 4- This photo shows the first home of Capt. John Lucas. The location of the photo is described on the town plot survey as the "Mill Reserve". This area is at the back end of the present day Emmerson Lumber yard. The bridge in the photo was located approximately where the present day concrete dam is. The building on the left is a grist mill, built in 1865 and behind that, you can barely see the roof of a saw mill, officially opened on December 18th of the first year, 1864. Over the years, many mills evolved on that same location.*

# *The First Saw Mill and Grist Mill*

*The following history is reproduced from the book "Early Days in Haliburton" written by H.R. Cummings and it gives readers an insight into the lifestyle and dreams for the future of the village:*

**B**uilding houses without sawn lumber, or with lumber brought up from the Minden mill, involved heroic exertion. By an agreement dated August 9, 1864, and on easy terms, the company sold the mill-reserve in the town plot of Haliburton to John Lucas and William Gainer who were joined in the undertaking by William Ritchie. The timbers for the dam and the under parts of the mill were sawn by hand by two men with what is known as a pit-saw. The undertaking was a considerable one and the opening of the saw mill was a momentous event in the community. It was treated as such, as will be seen from the account of the affair printed in the Peterborough Review. The date is December 8, 1864.

“On Tuesday, the 8th instant, the settlers in the townships of the English Company in the north of our County, kept high holiday. The occasion was the opening of the mills at Haliburton. The mill has been for some time under construction, and at first met with numerous difficulties, the dam breaking away and carrying with it a large portion of the southern bank. The difficulties were, however, successfully overcome and the spirited proprietors--Messrs. Lucas and Ritchie--were enabled to formally open the mill on the day named. The mill is a substantial structure; has a fall of fourteen feet with an unfailing supply of water; runs at present only one saw that will cut about 3,000 feet of lumber per day, and is built with a view to the erection of a grist mill during the next summer.

The opening of the mill was celebrated by a dinner provided by the joint liberality of the company and the mill proprietors, and the whole of the company's settlers were invited to be present. The day was stormy and somewhat inclement, but between twelve and one o'clock about seventy settlers had assembled. The water was then turned on, the saw set going, and amidst the cheers of those present, several boards were sawn off a log. The Union Jack was then run to the top of a prodigiously long flag staff, and the company adjourned to the residence of Mr. Lucas, and sat down to a table amply provided with the best fare that can be procured in the back townships.

After dinner, Mr. Lucas was called to the chair—the wives of the settlers got the tea-tackle into operation, and the meeting sat down to have a chat over the prospects of the settlement—to drink a friendly cup of tea together and to smoke the pipe of peace.

Mr. Lucas having made a few introductory remarks, E. M. Miles, Esq., the surveyor of the English Company, rose to address the meeting. He congratulated the settlers on the great progress made by the settlement during the past few months, and on the bright prospect that was before them. The first difficulties of a new country had now been fairly overcome, and the settlement, he felt sure, would speedily become one of the most prosperous and thriving in the province. [He goes on to speak of the roads which he has built.] During the past year and three months, therefore, he had completed fourteen miles of road in the company's territory, and had improved fourteen more through Minden and Snowdon.

This was what he had done. He should now speak of what he proposed to do. He should, with the approval of his directors, open up at least two concession lines, as feeders of the main line of road, and a road would be built from Haliburton towards the north-east corner of Dysart, in order to give the settlers in neighbouring townships the opportunity of coming to

Haliburton, which, in a very short time would become the metropolis of all the adjacent country. Various short lines of road would also be constructed during the winter; and he could now state to the settlers, that wherever they wished to open a road, and were prepared to give their personal assistance, his company would contribute towards the construction of that road with a liberal hand.

So much then with regards to local roads which, when completed, would make Dysart a township better supplied with roads than any other in the back country. He would now speak of the two proposed leading roads to the front. First, with regard to the Buckhorn Road. This road, he was happy to say, was already in progress, and that portion which the town and county of Peterborough had undertaken to construct would, he believed, be finished by November 1st, 1865. The government would, he also believed, at once commence their portion of the road; and as soon as that was finally decided upon, the company he represented would survey their portion and carry the road from the boundary of Dysart through the whole of the block they had purchased. The road to Lindsay was also in a fair way. It had been surveyed.... These roads would all centre at Haliburton and there would be nothing to prevent Haliburton from becoming a great and important town, possessing within itself all the resources necessary to give it a first place among the leading towns in Canada. [Cheers]

Mr. C. R. Stewart, the company's agent, next addressed the meeting. He said that meetings like the present were, beyond a doubt, calculated to be of great benefit to a settlement, for they brought the settlers together, and made them acquainted with one another—giving them a warmer interest in the common prosperity, and drawing closer the bonds that united the settlement in a friendly community. He was happy to be able to say that the progress of the settlement during the six months had been extremely rapid—the sales of land having far exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

“The sale of land, however, was not the only indication of progress. There were other evidences that met the eye on every side. In the first place there was the mill which supplied a want that had materially impeded the settlement of the townships. After roads, next came as a necessity in a new settlement—a saw mill. The mill they had opened that day in so successful a manner would speedily supply the settlers with lumber, and the immediate effect would be seen in houses springing up in Haliburton with a wonderful celerity, and in the rapid improvement of the settlers’ houses and barns.”

They had likewise built a church which he was enabled to inform the meeting would be opened for service on Christmas Day. The service on that occasion would be performed by a clergyman from Toronto, and early in the year he hoped and believed they would have a resident clergyman among them, and if the settlement prospered in nine years more the remaining nine townships belonging to the company would also be settled. ....”

Mr. Stewart then commented on other matters, and just as he was taking his seat the mail carrier entered the room and brought the first mail carried by the Government. Heretofore the mail had been carried at the company’s expense, but the Government undertook the duty from the 6th of December. The Government mail carrier was therefore hailed with loud cheers as he handed the first mail bag to Mr. Stewart who is the Haliburton Post Master.

Mr. Erskine, various settlers, and Mr. Eastman and other friends then addressed the meeting, and the evening was spent with much conviviality and jollity. It is worthy of note that no intoxicating drinks were consumed on the occasion. The meeting was very pleasant, and passed off most agreeably.”

## *And Regarding the Grist Mill:*

The grist mill, promised to the settlers by the company's spokesmen, was contracted for on October 27, 1865. By this agreement, John Lucas and William Ritchie, millers and builders, agreed to sell back to the company as much of the mill-reserve as lay south and west of Drag Creek "together with so much of the dam and water privilege with head and flow of water as is necessary for the complete enjoyment and efficient working of the grist and flouring mill." The contractors agreed within three months to completely finish the grist mill and put it in working order for the sum of \$2,000, giving securities for performance. They further agreed that they, themselves, would then rent the mill from the company for a period of eight years at a rental of \$60 per year for the first five years and \$120 per year for the next three years. The contractors were also granted the privilege of purchasing the mill for the sum of \$2,000 should they so desire.

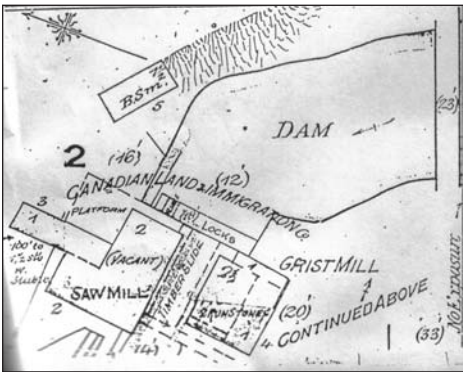
The mill was completed approximately on schedule, the raising having taken place on September 30, 1865. On January 26, 1866, Mr. Stewart attended a committee meeting to arrange for the Grist Mill Festival. The committee met again at Mr. Stewart's on February 2nd and took tea there. Mrs. Stewart remarked good-naturedly that they "eat as if they had been starved for a month." On the following day, the Stewarts went to the grist mill and saw their own grain ground and, on the 5th, Mr. Stewart "spent all morning with West at the mill making benches and tables" for the grand opening. The dinner at the mill was on February 6, 1866, and some did not get home from dancing until 6 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Blomfield was present and there were many speeches and hopeful prognostications for the future.

*A further documentation of the opening of the Grist Mill can be found in the book "Fragments of a Dream"- Pioneering in Dysart Township and Haliburton Village by Leopolda z L Dobrzensky:*

The day of the formal opening of the grist mill in Haliburton on February 6, 1866 was declared a holiday throughout the Township because of its considerable importance to the settlement and was celebrated by a dinner for 150 people at the mill. All of the Company's settlers, as well

as members of the Municipal Council of Minden and several guests from Peterborough and Lakefield, were present. The water was turned on about twelve o'clock, and several bushels of wheat were ground to the satisfaction of the whole assembly. The Land Company undertook to build the mill with Messrs. Lucas and Ritchey as contractors. The millwright was a Mr. Davis of Port Hope and the miller a Mr. Bustard of Peterborough. Dinner was served at half past one in the large room forming the third storey of the mill and consisted of roast beef, pork and plum pudding. After dinner, a meeting of the Dysart

Agricultural Society was held, and officers of the society for the current year were appointed. At the conclusion of this meeting the entire company sat down to drink a cup of tea, smoke a "deliberative" pipe and discuss the position and prospects of the settlement. Speeches were given by the president of the Agricultural Society, Daniel McFarlane; by the secretary of the Land Company, Charles Blomfield and by Charles Stewart, resident agent of the Company in the settlement. Blomfield regretted that so limited a number of new settlers had moved into the township during the year. He attributed this almost entirely to the enormous migration of Canadians toward the United States, attracted by the unprecedentedly high wages which had temporarily prevailed there.



*Figure 5- A later survey, drawn in 1885 shows the Grist Mill and the Saw Mill and notes that the Sawmill was vacant by that time. Map courtesy Haliburton Museum*

It was however satisfying to know, said Blomfield, that Dysart had received more settlers during the year than any of the settlements it was competing with, and as long as Dysart was first on the list, they must not complain.

*Figure 6- In 1870 the site of the first sawmill was sold back to the Company and they ran a sawmill in the 1870's. Immediately they began improvements which included a new water wheel, circular saws and other new equipment. Some of the Company's limits, including the mill site and the Drag Lake area, later lumbered by Lakings, was logged earlier by Mossom Boyd and Boyd and Irwin during the era of the square timber and big pine. However, the mill burned down in 1892 after standing idle for some time.*



*This section was also reproduced from the book by H.R. Cummings "Early Days in Haliburton"*

At the beginning of 1870, for reasons best known to the recently-visiting proprietors, the rights & property of Lucas & Ritchey in the grist and saw mills at Haliburton were acquired by the company at the price of \$4,000. The saw mill evidently operated with a slow-moving type of up-and-down saw, and improvements in the machinery were undertaken. In April, 1870, we find that [Alexander] Niven considered it likely that they would put in a circular saw. It required all his ingenuity and the assistance of the indomitable Mossom Boyd to hasten the delivery of the new water wheel and accessory parts which had been shipped from Paxton, Tate & Co. of Port Perry. Niven wrote to Boyd on October 15, 1870, to "please have it forwarded to Lake Kushog as soon as it arrives as the millwrights will be here to put it in on Tuesday evening. It will probably have to be taken to pieces to get over the Bobcaygeon Road".

## *A New Mill begins 1870-1892*

This was not the only occasion on which Niven turned to the omniscient Boyd in matters which taxed his powers. In January, 1873, after having been sharply and shrilly, and perhaps unjustly, reprimanded by the board of the C. L. & E. Co. for the bursting of the Haliburton mill dam and consequent smashing of the flume to the tune of £228 damage, he again sought Boyd's help. To appease the directors, he wished from Boyd's great experience a statement upon the building and maintaining of mill dams, generally, and more particularly when there was nothing but sand banks and sand bottom.

## *The William Laking Company* *1905-1928*



*Figure 6- Wm. Laking. In addition to running his mill, he was Reeve of Dysart from 1910 to 1912*

### **An important piece of commerce for the town develops.**

*The next evolution of sawmills on the Mill Reserve came when William Laking started with a new mill. Since 1878, the Victoria Railway was servicing Haliburton and could deliver equipment to the area. Mr Laking operated the sawmill to mill forest products, not just from other companies but also from his extensive limits. The Haliburton area was dependent upon not just the Mill and its employment, but with the related employment of bush jobs, jobbers, fellers, cooks, suppliers, teamsters, drovers, drivers and blacksmiths. The location of the mill on the Drag River was in a strategic position to service the limits of William Laking which were basically located in upstream positions to the Mill site as you will read below.*

*The title of the following article, is "Lumbering in Haliburton County" by H.H.S.S. students. Please note that Holland's Lake mentioned is named after trapper James Holland 1821-1896.*

*Figure 7- The first Laking Mill 1905.  
This photo taken 1907 or early 1908.  
Gorrie Collection – Haliburton Museum*



William Laking made an agreement with the Land Company in 1903 and rebuilt the dam and erected a mill on the site of the Company's old mill.

His limits from 1905 to 1928, the length of time the mill ran in Haliburton, were in Eastern Dysart and in Dudley Townships. Lakings had numerous camps scattered around Eastern Dysart and in Dudley Townships: Number one camp- Mud or Spruce Lake; Number two camp- Drag Lake towards Mrs. Jones cottages; Number three camp- Delphise Lake; Number four camp- East Lake; Number five camp- near Holland's Creek; Number six camp- near camp number seven marsh- past where Camp Kennabi is now situated at the slide built by Jack Bell; Number six and-a-half- a driving camp at the foot of number seven marsh, the last dam out of number seven; and Number seven camp- 22 miles East of Haliburton near the boundary of Harcourt and Dudley Townships where the Toronto Boy Scouts territory is now situated.

It was Arthur McColl, one of the earlier foremen at Lakings who built a majority of the camps as well as the dams, except for the number six dam, which was built by Jack Bell. Arthur McColl was employed at Lakings from 1913 to 1917 and took the log drives out of East Lake and built the dams and cleaned the creeks and made repairs from Drag Lake and beyond that up to camp number seven. At the same time Tom Madill of Gooderham ran camp number seven. Jack Kirkpatrick, Tommy Madill, Albert Madill, Leonard Riel, Jim and Dave Duff as well as Ed Robertson, the foreman, were on the drive out of camp number seven. The log drives from camp number seven came down Holland's Creek on East Bay. Moreover, there were nine dams coming from East Bay and there was a 200 foot chute on



*Figure 8- Downstream from Lakings' first Mill – Photo Haliburton Museum*

one of the dams where at the end of it there was not much water. There was also one slide 900 feet long; however, one could not see it from the dam as it only ran out about 200 feet. Consequently, a flag man, who had to get up at 4 a.m., was placed on the dam. However, in the spring of the year the sound of the water would put the flagman to sleep. A number of men were tired on the job but all fell asleep even during log jams.



*Figure 9- The Lakings' first Mill burns down in 1908 – Photo taken approximately from the United Church area. Compliments Haliburton Museum. Hoxie Collection.*

On the drive out of East Bay you had to roll the logs back and forth across the rapids to get them down the river as there was not very much water. In the late spring the water would even dry up. It should be noted here that in the marsh area, and particularly in Holland's Creek and the camp number seven marsh area, a horse capsule (capstan) was used. Swift water and rapids were to be found the rest of the way down. There was one chute below camp six and-a-half called the sheet pin where logs went over the chute and over the dam which was located just below the chute. Moreover, there had to be a flood of water in this area on account of the landscape being so rocky. In addition, at camp six-and-a-half there was a wire from the dam to the bottom of the slide so that when a large log was stuck in the rocky bottom a bell would ring signifying that no more logs were to be sent down.

Ed Robertson was a foreman for the William Laking Lumber Co. for eleven years dating probably from about 1912 or 1913 during which time he ran camp at Holland's Lake and did a great deal of jobbing. A jobber had a contract for taking so much lumber out per 1000 feet. A jobber would cut out the limit that other companies had left and also would go over the same ground that the pioneers had lumbered 50 or 60 years before. Moreover, Owen McAvoy was the "walking boss" and scaled logs for Ed Robertson who was taking out logs at so much per thousand per day. It is recalled that one log, sixteen feet long sound and straight, yielded some 1100 feet. Robertson took out mostly softwood but did, however,

lumber some hardwood when he jobbed for a company who in turn had a contract with a furniture company. Moreover, he built a large camp for jobbers only, which held 40-50 men. But it was not numbered as it was a jobbers' camp. In addition, he grew oats and potatoes at the old Spencer's farm for his men. Over the years Ed Robertson was "a great man to work for" and "he kept good order in his camp". In the mid twenties Jack Kirkpatrick and Earl McKay drove out of Holland's Lake. The logs were cut at camp six-and-a-half above Holland's Lake close to number seven camp. Previously, probably around 1913 or 1914, Jack Bell ran number six camp. There would be about one and a half million feet of logs and it would take one to one and a half months to drive the logs out of Holland's Creek into Minnow Lake and then into Drag Lake. Then a tug boat took the logs to

*Figure 10- Laking Crew - 1914*

*From left to right: Owen McAvoy, Frank Craddock, Jack Watt, Jack Potts, Ernest Boice, Elwood Hoxie, Fred Lillicraft, Carl Hadley, unknown, Jack Douglas, Tom Johnston, Jack Bird, Val Hoxie, Dave Bisette, unknown, Elwood Austin, Alec Spiers, George Cluff, unknown, unknown boy.*

*Front row: Wal. Kellett, Bruce Kellett, unknown, Ike Hadley - Photo Haliburton Museum (Hoxie Collection)*



Mud Lake where they were sorted and driven to the mill. The logs were warped down Drag Lake with a warping line and an old side wheeler over the Mud Lake dam and into the mill at Haliburton. Winching logs during a head wind on Drag Lake sometimes took two days. During a fair wind the boom of the logs would go down the river usually with the greatest of ease. Log drivers on Drag Lake were fed four meals a day including eggs. It should be noted here that Laking and Malloy & Bryans would each drive 2 or 3 times a summer and Laking would drive first. In 1912-1913 Lakings tried an experiment by using oxen instead of horses. They were used for years thinking that they would be better but in fact they were not.



*Figure 11- The second Laking Mill -  
Photo taken in 1912 -  
Dysart Council on Dam*

The last log drive for the William Laking Lumber Company was in 1926. Earl McKay, who had been employed earlier with the Gull River Co., was the foreman on this last drive. Eight men, including

Moss Robertson, the cook Jimmy Robertson, engineer on the gasoline boat, Roy Howe, Len Herron, Frank and Henry Howe, Orval Kimball, and Jim Dean were on the last drive. In sweeping the lakes in 1926 the logs were taken out of East Bay to the number seven camp marsh, then dumped on Mines Lake, over the Mansfield dam, and into Drag Lake where the logs were sorted and placed into booms. Then from the head of Drag Lake the boom timber was driven over the Mud Lake Dam, over Laking's Dam, and finally into the mill on the Drag River in Haliburton Village.

There were always some accidents on the log drives but usually none were too serious. However, such was not the case in 1917 when Mick Mansfield from Kinmount caught the knob of his peavey on a log and went up over the dam and was drowned. Mansfield always carried a painted pole with a knob on it; however, it was dull causing the end to catch itself in a log. Moreover, he lacked the strength to hang on to the pole as he was over 65 years of age

and as a result he went over the slide and under a jam. It is interesting to note that the last dam running into Drag Lake at Holland's Creek has been named in his honour. In later years another fellow James Kelly, drowned.

Log jams were always common on the Drag River, particularly just above Dover's Rapids. Of course, the key log in a log jam was always the one causing the trouble. In such case, a jam-dog would be used. Basically, a rope was hooked onto a log and then pulled by horses. If this did not work then dynamite was used. Breaking a jam was always dangerous work as you could be swept on logs that were rolling around vigorously like match sticks. It was nothing to work 2 or 3 days on one log jam, particularly Ike Winn's Eddy.

The winter bush operations employed 50 to 75 men including jobbers. Ed Robertson was foreman in the bush with over 7 or 8 teams and 3 gangs of skidders. A lot of logs 700 to 800 feet were cut. Moreover, approximately 8,000 feet were cut in a logging season for Ed Robertson at camp number seven. Two men could cut one hundred logs per day. There was always someone to keep track of how many logs were cut and skidded. A seven foot cross-cut saw was used for felling the pine and it is recalled that Adam Graham of Gooderham was good on the saw and Johnny McColl could really file a saw. Adam Graham always picked a large spruce or maple tree to fell the pine onto as this would break the fall of a log. Logs of 12, 14 and 16 feet were made according to the quality of the timber. Teamsters were paid \$28.00 per month, since they put on extra hours looking after the



*Figure 12- Laking Mill #2 with steel siding that was later used to cover the 1932 arena – Photo Haliburton Museum*



*Figure 13- Laking Mill from Skyline Park – Photo Haliburton Museum*



*Figure 14- The "Black Bridge" – Lakings' mill pond at right with the 1912 Dysart Council proudly posing – Photo compliments David Bishop*

horses, while others got \$1.00 per day. Inexperienced workers would get \$16.00 per month while a chore-boy would receive \$8.00 and the cook \$35.00 or perhaps somewhat more. Essentially, however, you

got paid for the work you could do.

Some of the cooks who were employed with the William Laking Lumber Co. were Sid Bradley, who cooked at East Lake, Moss Robertson, Harry McBrien at Mud Lake, Lon Gibson and Tom Fell.

The William Laking Lumber Co. used water instead of steam power as it was much stronger. There was a large flume which turned the water wheel until the proper speed was reached. It should also be pointed out here that Lakings also had a large burner which, while keeping the black flies away, created havoc for house-wives who had clothes on the line since there was always a lot of smoke. Consequently, after receiving numerous complaints Lakings had to destroy the large burner. Perhaps another interesting trait of the William Laking Lumber Co. was the fact that the lumber ran on an elevated track. Moreover, there were several small cars used on the track which could transport a variety of lumber. Finally, it should be pointed out that William Laking was the first lumber dealer to ship cedar shingles to the U.S.

At the mill site there would be a staff of 15 to 20 men. About 35,000 feet per day were cut with a large saw.

The Laking Lumber Company ceased operations in 1928 and many of the timbers and all of the metal siding was used to build the new Haliburton hockey arena in 1932.



*Figure 15- W.O. Bailey*

# *W.O. Bailey and Sons Limited*

## **How Post-War transportation dynamics changed the fundamental sawmill business model.**

*As illustrated with the former mills, the location in proximity to timber limits was an important factor in their success. However, by 1945 trucks became more readily available and roads began to improve. Therefore, mills around the county contributed to new and improved roads. The logs could be transported to the mills and directly to the rail line by truck. W.O. Bailey took this a step further and actually brought material in by rail, provided manufacturing and sent it back out.*

*This section was reproduced from an article written by Merrill Bailey.*

W.O. Bailey was born near Dundalk, Ont. in 1887. His father at one time operated a small sawmill and here was born his love of lumber and sawmilling which never left him. While still a young man he moved to Toronto where he held various jobs.

However, the lumber business was in his blood and he was not content. As a result of answering an advertisement, a partnership known as Jennings & Bailey was formed at Baptiste, Ont. in 1917. Mr. Jennings eventually sold out his share and Mr. Bailey then formed a partnership with his two brothers-in-law Garfield and Whitney Martin known as Bailey and Martin Lumber Co. This company at one time operated three sawmills, one of which was a year round operation.

About 1927 he sold out to Martin Bros. Lumber Co. and moved to Weston where he acquired some property and started building houses. In 1929 he purchased, with the aid of mortgages, 28 unfinished houses in one deal which he finished and rented.



*Figure 16- W.O. Bailey Mill 1945-1959*

In 1933, Mr. Curtis Way contacted Mr. Bailey in Weston advising that he had some timber limits near Eagle Lake and wondered if he would care to enter partnership in taking out this timber. His answer was in the affirmative and accordingly Mr. Way and Mr. Bailey came to Eagle Lake.

A sawmill was built at Eagle Lake in 1934 but even before it was finished a fire that burned along the Haliburton-Eagle Lake road swept right past the mill. The mill was saved probably because of the fact that the roof was not yet on although a few logs did get burned. To finish building the mill they used the lumber as it came from the saw. Other limits were acquired and the firm progressed favourably. Mr. Way was an excellent hardwood lumber scaler and he looked after most of the shipping. This partnership was dissolved in 1938, Mr. Way having purchased some timber in the Gooderham area on his own.

Shortly afterwards, the road from Eagle Lake to Redstone Lake was put through and another sawmill was then created on Redstone. This mill was built to cut hardwood primarily, leaving the Eagle Lake sawmill to cut their softwood which was more easily floated from Redstone to Eagle Lake.

In 1940 Mr. Bailey took his son M.G. Bailey into partnership and the company was henceforth called W.O. Bailey & Sons.

A few years later the Mill Reserve property was purchased in Haliburton and in 1945 the erection of a planing mill and retail lumber yard was started.

Bailey built the concrete dam at Haliburton in 1946 so they could have their own electricity supply to run the mill. The dam was built by using cement mixers and wheelbarrows. After the dam was built, the town power plant came up for sale because it couldn't meet the town's electrical needs.

Bailey bought it and didn't go any further with the dam in Haliburton.

The output of Bailey's mill at Haliburton was 15-16 thousand feet per day of softwood and 9-10 thousand feet per day of hardwood. There were 12 men employed at the mill in Haliburton.



*Figure 17- The Bailey Mill*

At one time, there was a gang of men working for Bailey who went around to the lakes where there had been mills and camps. These men would dive and get the logs which sank. These logs supplied Bailey's veneer mill. The logs were not as good as the new logs but could still be used. Wood was steamed and dried at the veneer mill and made sides for 6 quart and 11 quart fruit baskets.

Another major change came in 1946 when all the timber limits and the Redstone mill were sold to Hay & Co. Shortly after this purchase, the Redstone mill burned to the ground never to be rebuilt. The Eagle Lake mill was dismantled.



*Figure 18- The Concrete Dam - Built in 1946. Ron Davies is the young man posing for the photo. Picture taken by Jack Johnston.*

From here on the company operated from Haliburton. An electric power plant capable of providing approximately 400 H.P. was acquired from the Municipality of Dysart when the town of Haliburton converted to Hydro. The planing mill containing a planer and resaw was open for business in the summer of 1946. Building supplies were now a part of this firm's operations. A private railway siding was built into the property to aid for building up a milling-in-transit business.

A further expansion took place in 1947. A used veneer lathe and clipper was purchased from a veneer mill in Georgia in the States and a small lathe was also installed.



*Figure 19- Bailey Mill*



*Figure 20- Bailey Mill*

In order to dry veneer, a Moore cross-circulation Dry Kiln was installed. This kiln contains two tracks, each which is 75 ft. long. With this additional equipment the firm started to produce veneer for the wirebound box trade, core stock for furniture, grade plywood and siding for fruit baskets. White birch veneer is also shipped to another firm for manufacture into popsicle sticks and still other veneer is shipped to a company which specializes in the manufacture of bath salt containers etc. Other veneers were shipped to Curveply in Orono to be manufactured into curved seats for stacking chairs. The hardwood bolts left over from the veneer operation were cut up and sold locally as firewood. Some of the veneer waste went down to the boiler which produced steam for

the steam kilns into which the logs were placed after they had been cut to specified lengths according to the orders that were on hand. Steaming was necessary to soften the wood before putting it into a large lathe for turning. The boiler also produced the heat for the dry kiln. W.O. Bailey was also the reeve of Dysart et al in 1947.

Some shavings were compressed in a baler and then bundled using slats of veneer. These were sold locally and also shipped out to various places to be used as bedding for cattle and other uses.

Bailey had a railway line built to the mill from the Haliburton station by the Canadian National Railway at his own expense. It included a main line, a siding, and a bridge over the Drag River. The volume of material handled by the mill justified its construction, and it allowed Bailey to carry on what they called “milling in transit”. This was a process whereby lumber shipped in by rail car could be unloaded, run through the mill, then reloaded for shipping out. The track layout allowed for easy shunting of the cars with handjacks or with trucks to keep the process running smoothly.

(Note that there was no railway line on the Mill Reserve lot when Bailey came to Haliburton in 1945-46. The tracks which had been used by the

Laking Lumber Co. when they occupied the lot had long since been torn up.) In the meantime the growth of the retail end continued and to ensure an adequate supply of lumber the company branched out again purchasing timber limits in Sherborne Township and erecting a small electric sawmill on Head Lake (where the bandshell now is) in Haliburton in 1951. Employees now number 50 on the average, and the company now sells two million feet of lumber and veneer annually. In 1952 a glue mixer, glue spreader, hot press, a sander and a special sawing machine were installed in the veneer department for the manufacture of plywoods, primarily 16" X 16" X 1/4" plywood panels called "Plitile", a registered trade name used for decorative purposes in walls and ceilings. A limited quantity of plywood was also manufactured for television cabinets. The hot press and special sawing machine were built by the on-site veneer foreman, Mr. Elgin Stouffer of Minden, the machine work being done by a Lindsay firm.

Mr. Bailey passed away on January 11, 1953. After his death, his sons Merrill, Cecil and Lorne ran the business along with their staff. Merrill served as the general manager of the planing, veneer, saw mill, and retail yard, as well as the Bailey logging operation on Red Pine Lake in Sherborne township. Cecil looked after the yard and Lorne looked after the planing mill. Due to changing market conditions in the late 1950's, the Baileys began to phase out the planing mill/veneer mill aspects of their operation. Baileys' other mill operated at Head Lake under the hand of Lorne Bailey until 1969 when, after diverting their attentions from the veneer mill to the saw mill, the saw mill burned down. A fire started in the mill, perhaps from a cigarette and because of the sawdust and dry wood, blazed away uncontrollably until the mill had burned to the ground.



*Figure 21- W.O. Bailey on the right with son Merrill and grandson Johnston starting into the retail business in the early 1950's*



*Figure 22- Bailey Mill on Head Lake - It burned down in 1969- Photo by George Wheeler. This land had previously been occupied by the mills of Malloy & Bryans and their successor the Carew Lumber Co.*

# *Haliburton Machine and Manufacturing Company Limited*

No history of the Mill Reserve would be complete without mentioning “Haliburton Machine and Manufacturing”. This business operated in a corner of the Mill Reserve from 1961 until 1988 when it burned down.

It was operated by Jim Way and then his son-in-law Murray Burton. Other than business normally associated with a machine shop, the main notoriety was the production of forklifts (towmotors) that were built from the frames of army trucks. The forklifts became very popular in their time and were labeled “Waybuilt”.



*Figure 23- Waybuilt Forklift  
Photo courtesy Dorothy Way*

*Figure 24-  
Wm. (Bill) Emmerson  
1928-1986*



# *Emmerson Lumber Limited*

**The transition to selling lumber and building materials to the retail market.**

**E**mmerson Lumber Limited is named after its founder William (Bill) Emmerson and he was instrumental in bringing the company's operations to its present status.

Bill was born in Haliburton in 1928, his parents being John E. Emmerson and Eva (Wallis) Emmerson of Donald, Ontario. John was the proprietor of the general store in Donald which supplied not only the local residents but as well the operations of the Standard Chemical Company. He was also a tourist entrepreneur building rental cottages on Koshlong Lake (part of the present day Camp Wanakita Property) for summer visitors to the area.

The family was outgoing and as a store operator the family was in constant touch with the local scene. This was a factor in Bill's interest in local municipal politics as he was the Reeve of Dysart in 1958 and 1959.

The decision to go into business at the Mill Reserve Site was partly influenced by his marriage in 1953 to Lois Bailey



*Figure 25-Wm. Emmerson in 1952  
Delivering lumber by boat*



*Figure 26- The first Emmerson Lumber Showroom*

who was a daughter of W.O. Bailey. In the early years of their marriage, they operated Koshlong Marina near Donald. However in 1957, he formed a partnership with his brother-in-law Dr. Lloyd Bailey, calling the company Emmerson Lumber Company. Although the W.O. Bailey sawmill and veneer mill operations were winding up, the building supply side of the business was still going. In 1959, the assets were formally transferred to Lloyd Bailey and William Emmerson. The company was officially incorporated as Emmerson Lumber Limited in 1963.

Bill Emmerson built a small office in the vicinity of the present day Rent-All. The business continued to expand over the years including a new showroom in the 1960's. The top half of the W.O. Bailey mill was torn down in 1979 to make room for more storage.



*Figure 27- A proud fleet of Emmerson Lumber trucks*

When Merrill Bailey finished university in 1963, he returned to Haliburton and joined Bill Emmerson as a partner. During this time, Emmerson Lumber bought the lumber yard in Carnarvon from Ross Harrison. It had formerly been Windsor Lumber, owned and operated by Maurice Windsor. In 1975, Emmerson and Bailey split the yards, the one in Haliburton being retained by Bill and Lois Emmerson and the Carnarvon operation rolled over to Merrill Bailey and his children.

Bill Emmerson also was President of the Rotary Club of Haliburton in 1965- 1966 and was a partner in local land development companies, most

notably the development of Redstone Lake (Redkenn Drive), the Halbiem subdivision in Haliburton and the Riverside Drive/Cattail Road subdivision.



*Figure 28- New Showroom in the 1960's*

Emmerson Lumber Limited also brought on a partner Ray Arppe who helped guide the company from 1980 to 1987.

Bill Emmerson passed away in 1986. Emmerson Lumber Limited is a shareholder in Castle Building Centres Group Limited, a national co-operative buying group with 230 building supply yards across Canada. The company now employs 36 staff members and offers design services, building materials and a Rent-All.

The business, premises and yard are under constant updating but the land still maintains its connection to the original importance to the community of the “Mill Reserve” in its supply of building products to a growing and prospering community. This was the original design of the surveyors of the Town Plot of the Village of Haliburton and the obligations of the first Haliburton promoters - The Canadian Land and Emigration Company of London.

In recognition of the 50th anniversary, Emmerson Lumber Limited has just completed a renovation of the main store and rental buildings to reflect a “Heritage” theme. We hope that you have enjoyed reading this article and we look forward to serving you in the future!



*Figure 29-  
The Bailey Mill  
being dismantled  
in 1979*



*Figure 31-  
The Company  
survived a January  
2002 fire that was  
started by youths*



*Figure 30-  
The present day Mill Reserve*

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