



THE COBALT LODGE

Newsletter of the Cobalt Historical Society



Volume 25 No 2
June 2016

P.O. Box 309
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News From Cobalt Today

The CHS received the first cheque from the allocated funds from the **Historic Cobalt Legacy Fund**. There is a luncheon Wednesday June 1, 2016, where Agnico-Eagle is donating the remainder of the money promised to the Fund as part of their ongoing commitment to Cobalt.

Anne Fraboni has retired as curator from the **Cobalt Mining Museum** as she and her husband George have sold their house and are moving south. There was a reception in her honour to thank her for her 23 years of service to the Mining Museum.

Spring Pulse Poetry Festival was successfully held for the ninth year in April 22, 23rd. The Dr. William Henry Drummond Poetry Contest attracts attention to Cobalt from across the country.

The colours of the WWI **159th Battalion (Algonquin Regiment)** were patriated at the Bunker Military Museum with a good crowd in attendance despite the rain.

CHS Memberships for 2016

Your support is important, and appreciated. Monies are used to maintain and improve the **Historic Silver Trail**, provide information to the public, historians and institutions to preserve Cobalt's heritage. Thanks to you, our memberships for 2016 have increased over previous years.

We remind you also about the **Historic Cobalt Legacy Fund**, whose investment income will contribute to preserving local activities and organizations. Information available on the web at:

www.temiskamingfoundation.org

The Unforgettable Silver Country Game

By The Oldtimer

[This is a reprint of an article from 1934 and although we tried to identify the author, the identity of the Oldtimer remains a mystery.]

Among the 1,500 or more Big League Hockey matches I have reported, there is one which will always out in my memory; not because of the quality of the game, for in the Stanley Cup games particularly there was some really wonderful hockey seen, but on account of the circumstances surrounding it.

It was just 25 years ago this spring [1909], that I was sent to the now seldom-heard-of city of Cobalt, which then made the front page of the big newspapers, for months, almost every day. The silver mining boom was at its height, and men who had invested in some of the big mines like the Crown Reserve and others were made rich overnight.

The mine owners and superintendents on the spot had formed a hockey league, named the Temiskaming

or Silver Country League, and I was sent to report the final and championship match between the Cobalt and Haileybury teams.

In reviewing the situation I shall take the liberty of interpolating parts of my story, written on the spur of the moment on the Friday night of the match:

The championship was won by a final score of 12 to 6 in favour of Cobalt.

It was the last of the two home and home matches. The first one, exceedingly rough, was won by Cobalt in Haileybury by 7 to 1; the second played in Cobalt was a brilliant tie-game, as exciting and clean as could be seen in the Montreal Forum. The cleanness was due no doubt to the presence of what were considered at that time about the two best referees in Canada, Russell Bowie and Duncan Campbell, who made it understood from the first that they would permit no foolishness, and were well enough known not to have their warnings disre-

garded. They were probably the only two of the sixteen men on the ice who did not enormously profit in a financial way, by a season's play that would have found a fitting setting in the Arabian Night Tales.

Poor Campbell, who was one of the finest sportsmen, was killed at Vimy Ridge. Russell Bowie, still deeply interested in all sorts of sport, is a prominent Montreal Business man. Both played with the Victorias of Montreal.

The lineup was as follows:

Cobalt	Position	Haileybury
Jones	Goal	Nicholson
Ross	Point	Corbeau
Smaill	Cover	Baird
Campbell	Rover	T. Smith
Clarke	Centre	H. Smith
Redpath	Left	Ronan
C. Toms	Right	Gaul

The Haileybury goal keeper, who once was goaler with the Montreal Shamrocks, is a business man in Montreal; every hockey follower knows all about Art Ross, the point of the Cobalt team; Walter Smaill, the Cover Point, is an athletic coach in Montreal.

Cobalt, A Peaceful Place

Camp at that time became a misnomer for Cobalt which looked to the stranger like a thriving little city, not unlike a small Quebec. It rose from the railway track which ran along the shore of Cobalt Lake like the Citadel City, rising on its towering hills from the lower town and the hills on the opposite side of the lake, particularly when the electric lights were lit, seemed for all the world like the heights of Levis. A big bank and an opera house were the first buildings that caught the eye of the traveller and everywhere in close neighbourliness arose the smoke stacks of what might be cheese factories or manufacturing establishments, but in reality denoted the power houses of the celebrated mines which brought fortune to so many.

The population was a little depleted because many of the real fortune hunters of the Camp, for Camp they insisted on calling it, had gone down to Gowganda, the newest Eldorado, but as early as half-past seven, crowds started to wend their way up the hilly stretch to the rink, a fine modern structure about the size of the Jubilee rink in Montreal.

They could pack thirty-five hundred people in it, and the teams played to capacity. The building itself did

not cost a million dollars, but the land on which it was built represented that value and was part of the claim of one of the big mining companies doing active business in the Camp and it was expected that the following season the team would probably contest for the championship again, which weary miners a hundred feet or two feet below them were labouriously dragging the shining riches out of the earth. They even expected that the rink might have to disappear entirely for in the thriving little silver city no leases were given for more than sixty days, as the managers never knew when they might want to take the ore out of a man's house foundations.

Close to the rink was a dump and the manager of the mine referred to said that when the apparently useless-looking gravel was worked over, he expected at least \$100,000 worth of silver to be taken out of there.

The utter disregard of money or rather the utter carelessness which with it was thrown around in connection with the Temiskaming League has been marvelous. There were tales of betting, great tales of salaries offered which in some cases have been exaggerated and in others has been denied, but as far as the truth could be ascertained it was such as to utterly stagger those followers of hockey who did not walk on silver, did not pull it out of the Square, of the town they live in from under their very feet and did not see it daily shipped to the far away smelters by the thousands and thousands of dollars worth as those people of Cobalt and Haileybury did.

As near as can be found out there was over one hundred thousand dollars bet on the last four matches and of that sum only fifteen or seventeen thousand on the last two. In the last match hundreds of dollars worth of bank notes were thrown to the ice.

The night of the memorable match there was a trifle of five thousand wagered for Haileybury sat pat and though Cobalt had fifty thousand to put up, they could not get people to cover it. It is said that Haileybury was forty thousand to the good on four matches and decided to hold on to it.

The hockey players seemed simply in love with the mining prospects and admitted they dreamed of huge fortunes.

Horace Gaul, of Ottawa, who was on the same train as the writer, also sported some specimens of silver, and could not say enough to praise the people of Haileybury and the manner in which they had treated him and the other member of his team.

“We will all put at least eleven hundred dollars in the bank as the result of this season and just think of it, Mr. Richardson the president of our club, bought four claims for the team and we are going out in a few days to work them. At the end of the second match before last, the one on which so much money was bet and in which each member of the team received some three hundred and fifty dollars in bonuses, one man alone divided fifteen hundred dollars amongst us.”

Harry Smith, who has been with four teams that season, bore him out. He said he had about seven hundred dollars in the bank as the result of his visit to Silver Country, and still more salary to come in. Figuring from the way they talked, it meant counting in their regular salary, these Haileybury men on one occasion at least, got over four hundred dollars for one match, or \$7 per minute play.

Making the computation more liberal, it meant they were paid at the rate of \$70 per working day.

Confined Rink Space

It was a snappy, speedy game, in which attempts at team play were somewhat spoiled by the confined rink space but which was chuckful of excitement.

The ice was fine, but the smoke spoiled the play somewhat and towards the end it became so thick that the players at times could hardly see one another.

That made surroundings quite homelike and the more so because there were so many familiar faces amongst the players.

There was rotund Billy Nicholson, for instance, smiling and alert as ever, who had a worthy opponent in Jones, the Cobalt goal-keeper, and Harry Smith and Horace Gaul, besides Ross and Smaill. Both sides played first class hockey and judging from the result of the game it almost looked as if the Haileybury's defeat the previous Tuesday was mainly due to foul play.

In the first half Ross and Smith showed all the wonderful energy that has made them famous. They played defense and forward and at the beginning of the second half Haileybury had a lead of twelve to two to overcome. Clark, Redpath, Campbell and Toms all played a good game on the Cobalt forward line, while the Haileybury team suffering from being a man short every little while, also showed weak in defense, and careless in their forward work.

But in the second half the two Smiths, who resembled each other greatly, and Gaul cut loose while

Corbeau did stunts that no one who saw him in the first half had expected of him. Baird and Ronan also showed up well and Billy Nicholson made some great circus stops, now standing on one leg, now sitting on his haunches and again protecting his net lying full length on the ice in front of it.

The crowd too looked homelike and yelled and shouted and shook cowbells and blew horns and swung rattles the same as in little old Montreal of those days.

As the match started, which by the way was not 'till ten minutes past nine because the train carrying the Haileybury team was late, a loud-voiced gentleman offered 100 to 60 on Cobalt, without takers but a few big bets were made that Cobalt would not have doubled the score in the end.

The referees, who exchanged their Victoria oat sweaters for grey and black ones because their own resembled too much in colour of the competing teams, were on hand early and as they made for the rink, Mr. Campbell who has been a prospector himself, pointed out the site of the great dynamite explosion some years ago, when there was no city and he and his chums helped to rescue women and children whose log cabins had been shocked down about their ears.

Haileybury Started

Haileybury started the rush and Tom Smith scored the first goal in three minutes. Toms for Cobalt the next in six minutes; Clark for Cobalt scored the third in ten minutes; Campbell the fourth for Cobalt in seven minutes and Redpath the fifth for Cobalt in three minutes. That ended the first half, which had been rather one-sided although at times Jone, the goal-keeper, was quite busy.

Tommy Smith followed his brother's example and made it 5 to 3 and Horace made it 5 to 4. Then the real excitement broke loose. The crowds in the gallery, men and women, and there were hundreds of ladies present, invisible on account of the smoke, yelled and roared to their hearts' content and surging towards the edge, again threatened to break the railing, which they did some weeks before when a half-a-dozen had to be sent to the hospital.

On the ice shadowy figures of players could be seen darting at furious speed hither and thither, forgetting any attempt at team play and crushing their ribs and bumping heads with resounding whacks against the high fence as they clashed in their chase for the puck.

Tied Score

And then when there were only thirty seconds left to play Ronan scored the fifth for Haileybury, and tied the score amongst the tumultuous rejoicing.

After that Mayor Lang of Cobalt presented Mr. Hare's fine champion cup to the winning team with a neat little speech, Messrs. Hair of Cobalt, Haynes of New Liskeard and Solomon of Haileybury accompanying him on the ice.

The teams cheered one another, the miners went back underground to dig up more silver for the insatiable outer world, the excursion trains drew out and the richest sportiest little city of Canada went to take a well-earned rest at the end of the feverish fabulous hockey season.

This is letter from Mary Pond who wrote the article in the last Newsletter.

Cobalt, Nov 25th, 1918

Dear Ida [sister-in-law]

We got a letter from Clarence [Mary's son age 16]; I will just write you a copy of it. I know it all off by heart.

Dear Mother.

Just a few lines to let you know I will be all right. I was lucky enough to be among the first wounded.

Another fellow and I crawled into a shell-hole, but Heinie put a shell in to keep us company. The other fellow wasn't hurt but I got hit in the groin and then I got a bit of gas in the bargain. I was blind for 3 days.

But I'm alright now. I was eleven days in bed but I'm up today.

It sure is a funny feeling waiting for the word to go over the top. We went over the first morning we were in line. I must confess my knees shook and I thought about home and wished I never had left, but I laughed at myself after.

1030046 Pte CV Pond [13th Battalion, Royal Canadian Highlanders Battle at Bourlon Wood Sept 27-Oct 1, 1918]

32 Stationary Hospital

B.I.F. France

We were relieved to hear from Clare personally. We have no idea when he will be home. The "Flu" is

just raging here. [Spanish Flu] The hospitals are full, and the Y.M.C.A. building [now the Cobalt Community Hall] and some halls are turned into emergency hospitals. Everyone that can leave home is being pressed into nursing service. Louise [daughter] has to report this afternoon to a Girl Guide.

People are sending soup, jelly, milk and custard to the hospital.

We have had no church or school for the past long while, and won't have until the middle of January. Viv [Mr. Vivian Pond, Mary's husband who was mine captain at McKinley-Darragh Mine] and I walk Sunday afternoons, not a little stroll but a good five miles straight. I weigh 176 and Viv weighs 163. Baby Margaret [daughter] is sick today with a teething spell—tonsils are very bad.

It snows here every day, week in and week out—snow or mist but there is a couple of inches that is all.

Didn't I tell you about our house? [Coleman Township south side of junction of Coleman Road and Creighton Drive.] It is a large bungalow. Parlour, dining room, Kitchen, Bathroom and three big bedrooms downstairs—a bedroom and a store room and hall upstairs. Telephone, open fire place—hot water heating furnace—sleeping porch and front verandah—coal and wood heater and electric lights free, and cow feed. Man to tend the furnace fire, and it's just splendid.

Electric car passes our door. [Nipissing Central] We've a big lawn all fenced in, and man to mow it.

I'm not bragging, just stating facts as you asked me to. Beulah Burpee wrote and asked me should I have cards engraved *Mrs. Captain Pond* as Al Logan's wife did when he got to be conductor. She had cards engraved *Mrs. Conductor Logan* (truth).

I must seal this up as Lou will be going in a few minutes.

Good bye. Love to all,

Mary

Mrs. Pond's Cake Recipe

325° or 350°

Cream together

1 cup shortening (margarine) and

2 cups white sugar

Add

1 cup sweet milk

Gradually add:

3 cups sifted flour, 3 teaspoons baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon vanilla and then 3 beaten eggs.

Bake 45-50 minutes at 325° or 350°