

A bird's eye view of Tavistock's centre, circa 1912



VINTAGE VIEWS

By Tim Mosher

Tavistock and District Historical Society

In the last Vintage Views article about the construction of Tavistock's first water tower (1911), I explained that Mr. John "Jack" Lemp climbed the new tower with his heavy equipment: a very large camera with a bellows, tripod, negative holders, glass negatives and a dark cloth to put over his head, to take photos of the community and beyond. There were no such things, yet, as small, professional cameras and Mr. Lemp – surprisingly – even used that monster camera as late as 1948, when much smaller professional cameras were available.

This photo was taken from the same water tower looking northwest over the centre of Tavistock.

In the bottom-left is Valentine Stock's general store with an odd,

six-sided belvedere poking up towards its back. Odd because these small towers were usually built for observation from a high point on tall houses, but there's not a lot to see from here and this was not a house. Castle Kilbride in Baden has an excellent example of a belvedere.

Close to the left edge are two buildings that are there today, but at the time were Lemp's Pharmacy on the left and the smaller Bank of Montreal on its right, both with awnings.

Almost in the centre is the stationmaster's house and behind it are sheds for livestock and lumber up close to the railway tracks for ease of loading on and off of trains.

On the far right in the centre is

Tavistock's train station (moved in 1968 and converted into a house nearby). The three-storey structure close to the centre was the Commercial Hotel, rebuilt from an earlier two-storey hotel, which in turn was built on the site of Tavistock's first structure erected by Henry Eckstein.

Captain Eckstein was the community's founder in 1848 when he named it Freiburg after his hometown in Germany (later Inkerman in 1853 and finally Tavistock in 1857). In 1934, the Commercial was reconfigured into a two-storey gas station, first Miesner's, then Schaefer's, including a lunch room, with a few vestiges still visible from this grand building.

Today, the same corner is the wholly reconfigured Esso gas bar, Hasty Mart, Subway and New Orleans Pizza shops.

Mr. Lemp started his pharmacy and photo services in 1905, and new hydro poles and wires were set up in late 1911, which are visible in this picture. I suspect this photo was taken in 1912.

The last History Mystery: The question was, "What was Mr. Lemp, the photographer, standing on to take the 1911 photo of the



(PHOTO BY JOHN "JACK" LEMP)

John "Jack" Lemp had an invigorating climb up the new water tower with his heavy camera and accessories to take this excellent, high view of the village that we enjoy about 115 years later.

water tower?" Craig Wilker of Kitchener was the first reader to respond with the correct answer: "He was standing on the roof of the flour mill building." This was a substantial structure after being rebuilt following a fire in 1893. It was three and a half storeys tall with high ceilings. It's very likely that Mr. Lemp was on the roof. Today, this is W.S. Feed and Supplies.

This week's History Mystery: What important thing is missing from one of these buildings that a short time later had a direct impact on this Vintage Views series? The first reader to forward the correct answer to me at tim_mosher@hotmail.com will have their name and community's name or rural route number published in the next Vintage Views article.

Melanie B.'s

FLORAL ACCENTS, GIFTS, HOME AND GARDEN DECOR

SPRING SHOW & SALE

WEDNESDAYS TO SATURDAYS

MAY 6TH - 16TH

10 AM TILL 6PM

CEMETERY SADDLE SPECIAL \$55.00

519-393-6978

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MELANIEBFLORALDESIGNS 4176 ROAD 135 - NORTH OF THE OPP STATION IN SEBRINGVILLE

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM/WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE