

# Old Age: Daddy Hall's Three Century Span

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H.G. Tucker



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The following article by Mr. H. G. Tucker has been copied from an American exchange, reference to which is made elsewhere: The British Sovereign, who lately celebrated with such éclat the completion of the sixtieth year of her reign, has, herself already enjoyed more than the allotted span of human life, but it is most interesting to find among her subjects a man perfect in memory and in full possession of his mental powers, who was

45 years of age when Victoria, ascended the throne. Such a person is old “Daddy” Hall, who lives in his little cabin in the driving park at Owen Sound, Canada. Daddy Hall was born in the year 1783. He is a half breed Indian and Negro - and in his youth lived with Indians on Walpole Island and the adjoining mainland. Although he most resembles the Negro in features and hair, he is a thorough Indian in his habits and was known by the Indians of his tribe as “Sho-ho-ho-hone” or “Big Smoke.” About the year 1800, the Canadian Government, requiring an interpreter for the farm instructor of the Indians on the Credit Reserve, appointed Hall to that position. Accordingly he moved east with his squaw and remained in the government service until the war of 1812, when he was engaged as a scout, doing good service until early in 1815, when he was captured by the American soldiers and taken as a prisoner to Fort Meggs, from which he was released only when hostilities ceased. After the close of the war he made his way to Toronto<sup>1</sup>, squatting on the lake front near the Humber river, where he farmed, fished and made Indian bark work, for a living. On the breaking out of the Upper Canada rebellion he was taken a prisoner, Dec. 5, 1837, and compelled to act as guide to MacKenzie and his band. He was captured at Wells Hill on the Dovercourt Road, near Toronto, and conveyed to Montgomery’s Tavern on Yonge Street, whence he escaped by night. Such are the most important incidents of his career. In the War of 1812, Daddy was pierced by a bayonet which left him lame on one leg, yet despite this he has been a most active man, and quite unlike either Indian or Negro, has always led an industrious life. He has now his fourth wife and is the father of nineteen children, his eldest daughter being a great-great-grandmother. When about 95 years of age, Daddy lost the last of his teeth, and at that time had become quite bald. About ten years since, nature supplied the old man with a new set of teeth and a new head of hair, both of which he has today and in which he takes much pride. Shakespeare divides life into seven ages, the last of which is second childhood. If second childhood is the mark of the last stages of human life, then the subject of this sketch, although 114 years of age, has not left the sixth rung of the ladder, and he may yet rival Jacob, who is said to have lived 147 years. There is little reason to doubt that, after making a full span of the present century, he will live to see the beginning of his third century.

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<sup>1</sup> Would have been York at that time.