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SOME HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE

COUNTY OF KENT

TAKEN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES OF
INFORMATION NOW IN THE HANDS OF

THE KENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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Chatham, Ontario,
March 15, 1948.

I N D E X

COUNTY OF KENT

Kent County in the Province of Ontario is situated in the most southerly part of Canada. It is further south than approximately one third of the habitable area of the United States; it is further south than the celebrated Niagara District; it is 700 miles further south than the English Kent, and a parallel drawn through the City of Chatham would pass through Southern France.

Latitude gives Kent a position singularly favorable. To the south lies Lake Erie; to the northwest is Lake St. Clair; to the north, with no great distance intervening is Lake Huron. These great bodies of water serve to modify the climate and Kent experiences neither the extreme cold of a northern winter nor the extreme heat of a southern summer.

The surface of Kent is almost level, broken only by two large streams, the Sydenham and the Thames, which provide natural drainage and deep water navigation; and by the Ridge along the Lake Erie Shore. Practically every square inch of its 580,000 acres is arable land - partly clay loam, with gravelly loam and sandy loam along Lake Erie, and considerable sandy and gravelly loam in the northeast portions of the County.

Farming is the corner stone of Kent County's prosperity and it is as a farming county that it makes its strongest appeal to the intending settler. It is not mere grain farming but it is mixed farming in the widest sense of the words and rotation of crops is scientifically practised. It today probably produces a wider variety of crops than any other portion of Canada and is famous as the home of specialized farming - of crops such as tobacco, corn, sugar beets and tender fruits, that, owing to climatic conditions can be grown only in Southern Ontario. Yet in the crops which can be grown in most parts of Canada, Kent also takes a conspicuous place. It is first in the Province in the production of beans and away in the lead for corn and soy beans.

In addition, its proximity to Detroit, the fourth largest city of the United States, the many industrial concerns which have located in Chatham, development of the summer resort facilities provided by an extensive lake and river frontage, excellent roads, and the fact that it is traversed by both the Provincial Highways between Niagara Falls and Windsor, make Kent County a very inviting place in which to visit or settle permanently.

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When Kent was Ravaged by Indian Warfare.

1.

According to ancient tradition the Ontario Peninsula between Lake Huron and Lake Erie was once held by the Attiwandiron Indians, also known as the Neutrals from the fact that they held aloof from the warfare between the Huron Tribes of Northern Ontario and the rising Iroquois power in New York State.

Doubtless prosperous Attiwandiron villages broke the monotony of forest and swamp; for the Neutrals could muster 4000 warriors. In historic times, traces of an Indian village were found on the Tobin and McGeachy farms east of McGregor's Creek in Harwich Township, close to the site of the present Maple Leaf Cemetery. There are vague hints, too, of Jesuit Missions planted in this territory.

Shortly after the first white men appeared, the Hurons and Iroquois formed a temporary alliance. They united their forces to exterminate the Attiwandirons. What is now Southwestern Ontario was ravaged by Indian warfare; the villages were wiped out; and the powerful Neutral nation was exterminated.

There are some hints of later Indian settlements in this desolate territory. The Jesuits at one time had a mission near Clearville; and in 1790 traces of an Indian village then recently abandoned, were found near Rondeau.

Such settlements, however, were merely transitory and were all close to the Great Lakes. The interior of the peninsula traversed by the Thames - known to the Indians as Eskuniseepi and to the French as La Tranche- was vaguely mapped and little known. A great expanse of soggy swamp and hardwood forest, peopled by deer, bears, beaver and other animals, this territory was practically untraversed by white men until the closing years of the eighteenth century.

The early French explorers, Galinee, Dolier de Casson and La Salle, had explored the Great Lakes which bounded the peninsula, had mapped Longue Pointe, Point aux Pins and Point Pelee, and had given Lac Ste.Claire its name. These explorers were, however, in search not of new lands in a new world but of a water route to China.

It was not until Canada became British and the American Colonies won their freedom that Southwestern Ontario received real attention from the white men or saw the beginning of permanent settlement.

After 1759, the disbanded French soldiers who remained in Canada, many of them struck westward toward the Detroit River. Some of these men seem to have settled along the Riviere La Tranche, as it had come to be known. However, very little was known of the interior of Ontario. For the most part, the country remained practically a wilderness of malarial swamp covered with hardwood timber until the latter years of the Eighteenth Century when John Graves Simcoe became the first Governor of the new Province of Upper Canada. It was his ambitious projects which gave the first impulse to permanent settlement in Kent County.

Thames Settlement

Except for a narrow strip of comparatively high land adjoining the Thames River on either side, most of the land for several miles back from the river was practically useless owing to lack of drainage. This explains why settlement started along the Thames and gradually worked back. There were many requests for land along the Thames River before any surveys were made. In fact, the surveys were the result of the numerous requests for land.

In 1790 Patrick McNiff, the pioneer surveyor, seems to have laid out the lots fronting on the River Thames in the Townships of Dover East, Chatham, Raleigh, Harwich and parts of Howard and Camden, but apparently did not lay out any lots from the mouth of the river up to the Raleigh and Tilbury East Townline owing to the fact that the land was low and wet.

In 1791, writing to the Surveyor General, McNiff states that in the Townships surveyed along the river, he had found 28 familes settled in front, some with considerable improvements on their land. This would indicate that the settlers had been there for some time. Probably 1775 or 1780 would be the date of the first settlement along the River Thames.

After 1794 McNiff seems to have done no work on the River Thames and the next surveyor to appear was Abram Iredell who in 1795 laid out part of the townsite of Chatham, an area of 600 acres (four hundred in Harwich and two hundred in Raleigh) having been set aside for a town plot and military reserve. In the same year Iredell was instructed to survey three concessions deep from the river in each of the Townships of Howard, Harwich, Raleigh, Dover, Chatham and Camden and to survey a road as straight as possible between Chatham and Rond Eau on Lake Erie, which road is now known as the Communication Road running through Blenheim.

In 1803 Iredell was instructed to complete the surveys of the Townships of Chatham and Dover and early the next year another surveyor, William Hambly, was instructed to join Mr. Iredell in the work.

After the War of 1812 the work of survey was taken up by M. Burwell who in the period between 1821 and 1831 surveyed parts of Tilbury East, Raleigh, Harwich, Howard, Orford and Zone. In 1838 part of Zone was surveyed by Surveyor McIntosh and still other parts in 1845 by B. Springer.

The front portion of Orford seems to have been reserved for the Indians, the Reserve extending the full width of the Township (something over six miles) and reaching from the River for about the same distance. The reserve was afterwards cut down and about 1857 a surveyor named F.Lynch surveyed the land adjoining the Reserve as we have it today.

There were a great many difficulties and hardships encountered by early surveyors and their assistants. All supplies had to be brought long distances by water or on the ice. If coming by water from Detroit, the weather had to be fine in order that their small boats might cross Lake St. Clair in safety. If coming on the ice, unless the weather was steadily cold, the ice was apt to be treacherous and there is no doubt but that for lengthy periods in the Spring and Fall it was practically impossible to get supplies in at all by water or ice. Then, there was the difficulty in doing the work. In summer they had the marshy ground to contend with and at the same time fight the fever and ague as well as mosquitoes and black flies;

and the remuneration was very small.

The early settlers are indeed deserving of the highest praise in braving the untold hardships which presented themselves from every side for those were times of wild and rough experiences. They never knew when they would be subject to attack from unfriendly Indians or when their cattle would fall a prey to the beasts of the forests around their little clearings. The long process of clearing their land and making it ready for crops must have been at many times discouraging but gradually the expansion of the clearings showed that industry and energy were the order among the pioneers in their fight with the forests.

With the opening of the 19th Century, the Thames Settlement had made considerable progress and numbered more than one hundred families, There had been a gratifying increase in the extent of the clearings and the first settlement in the County could well be considered as having been permanently established before the close of the first ten years of its history.

3.

Fairfield

After the settlement along the Thames came that of Fairfield in 1792. Christian Indians of the Delaware Tribe under the leadership of Rev. David Zeisberger, a missionary of an ancient Protestant Church called The United Brethren of Moravia, came to Canada to escape persecutions and massacres which they suffered at the hands of hostile pagan Indians in the United States. They arrived at Detroit in 1791 and a year later moved further inland, establishing a permanent Mission on the banks of the Thames River. A village by the name of Fairfield was laid out and grew rapidly.

In 1792 the village was visited by Governor Simcoe on his first visit to Detroit as well as on his second in 1794. So well pleased was he with it, both in respect to the loyalty of the missionaries to the British Government and their religious activities on behalf of the Indians, that he promised them a grant of land and a few months later Surveyor McNiff laid off for them the promised tract twelve miles long and six miles wide.

After seven years' service at Fairfield in the performance of faithful work, Rev. David Zeisberger returned to the United States to try to establish one more community of Christian Indians. Of a total of thirteen communities established, the only one standing today is at Fairfield.

To Rev. Mr. Zeisberger is given the credit of establishing the first house of worship, the first school and Fairfield, the first town or village in the County of Kent.

Among the several missionaries who laboured at Fairfield was the Rev. Jesse Vogler who also ministered to people of denominations who were without a minister. In 1837 he led a band of Indians to Westfield, Missouri, as the Reserve in Kent County had been reduced in size. Mr. Vogler and his wife stayed in Missouri until early in 1843 when they returned to Fairfield, some of the Indians coming with them. Rev. Mr. Vogler was stationed at Fairfield from some time in the 1830's until his death in 1866. There is a monument on his grave in the West Bothwell Cemetery.

After twenty years of prosperity, the War of 1812 gave a severe blow to the work of this Mission. The Battle of the Thames took place

nearby and the village was overrun by the victorious Americans, plundered and burned to the ground.

(During 1946, while Wilfred Jury of the London University was digging where the village once was, many articles used by the Indians prior to 1813 were unearthed and a quantity of wheat was rescued, a sample of which is on exhibit at the Chatham-Kent Museum.)

It was during this Battle of the Thames that Tecumseh, ally of the British and probably the most famous Indian of all history, was killed. This, Kent's only battleground, is today marked by a commemorative boulder.

After the close of the war, another village was built about a mile and a half from the former one. This they called New Fairfield, later Moraviantown. This Mission continued under Moravian auspices for a period of one hundred and ten years. During this period, there were many changes among the Indians both in regard to the tribes represented on the Reserve and the character of the educational work done among them. However, in 1902, an understanding was arrived at by Moravian Missionaries and the Methodist Church whereby the Moravians withdrew, leaving their work in the care of the Methodist Church.

Throughout the years of Fairfield's history, the population has stood in the neighborhood of three hundred and varies little from year to year but the saving of this remnant from extinction by the venture of faith of Moravian Missionaries in 1792 has fully justified its undertaking.

(About the year 1942 the United Church of Canada through some of the public spirited citizens of Chatham and the surrounding district, organized themselves into a committee with the assistance of Mr. John R. McNichol, M.P., of Toronto, with a view to establishing a historic site of what was once the old village of Fairfield, and, through the generosity of Mr. William A. McGeachy, of Chatham, who purchased a quantity of land where once stood the old village, have taken steps to make a memorial historic park at this point on the banks of the River Thames in the Township of Zone.)

4.

Baldoon.

The first movement of the Nineteenth Century towards further settlement was the well-meant but ill-fated effort of Lord Selkirk, at that time a nobleman of considerable wealth, vast enterprise and great philanthropic attributes, the latter of which he demonstrated by his endeavors to better the conditions of many of his countrymen.

To this end, Lord Selkirk had received from the Government a grant of all the land lying within the angle formed by the Gore of Chatham Base Line on the north, the Chenal Ecarte on the west and the Sydenham on the southeast; among other conditions of the grant being one for colonization of the territory by a certain number of settlers.

To this place the name of Baldoon had already been given in honor of a parish on the Earl's Highland Estate.

Scotland

The first shipload of his immigrants left Greenock in the ship

"Oughton", landing at Montreal in July, 1804. They were conveyed thence to Lachine in French carts, thence up the St. Lawrence to Kingston in batteaux, thence to Niagara by sailing vessel, thence across country on foot and in vehicles to Fort Erie, and from that point to Amherstburg and up the Detroit River and Chenal Ecarte to their landing place, which they reached during the month of August. The Earl also brought out a great quantity of very choice farm stock, including horses, cattle, sheep and swine.

The appearance of the place was from the start a rude disappointment. Ship carpenters and others had been sent in advance by the Earl to provide dwellings but none had been erected. Tradition informs us that these, afraid of Indians, had betaken themselves to Sandwich, leaving the future settlers of Baldoon and their children to their unsheltered fate. The days were shortening, rains were frequent, cool nights had already come. Without equipment or material, they had only a short month left to provide themselves sufficient shelter to meet the requirements of a Canadian winter. The only other white settlement in the District was seventeen miles away and could only be reached by trails through the woods. However, these hardy settlers set to work to wrestle with the problems facing them.

For some time the settlers drew their means of support from a common fund provided by the Earl when their individual efforts were not successful in gleaning a sufficiency from the soil.

In spite of the hardships of that first winter, many of the settlers remained. Later, fortune turned slightly, log houses were built, and, after years of hard work at clearing the land, farming operations were carried on. In fact, the settlement had even a degree of prosperity until the War of 1812 when the Americans raided it and robbed it of its grain, cattle and sheep.

Almost the worst enemy of the settlement were the waters which overflowed the banks and plains every Spring and finally for this reason the settlers moved away to make new homes on higher ground at the fork of the Sydenham. One of these, Hugh McCallum, in 1832 became the pioneer of Wallaceburg, which he named in honor of Sir William Wallace, the Scottish hero.

While the partial failure of his large enterprise is to be regretted the Earl is deserving of high praise for the liberal and courageous spirit displayed in bringing to our shores so large and useful a class of citizens as has been developed from the party alluded to, none of whom now live to relate the trials, privations and vicissitudes attendant upon their early experiences in the vicinity of the Sydenham and Chenal Ecarte.

5.

The Lake Erie Settlement.

Following next in order to the Baldoon Settlement we have the Lake Erie Settlement. Although settlers began to locate on the lands bordering on the lake as early as 1809, it was not until 1816 that settlement in the Southern section of the County could be said to have really begun. Even then it was but an extension of the Talbot Settlement in the County of Elgin, a part of that colonization scheme entrusted to Colonel Talbot.

There are many who have tried to analyze his motive for his renunciation of so brilliant a prospect as seemed to be awaiting him in the Old

Country for the comparatively obscure life of a pioneer in the forest wildernesses of Upper Canada. Some claim his reasons to have been patriotic, others commercial. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth if it were said they were a combination of both though no man could have chosen the career which he followed unless he had strong likings and other propelling reasons for his choice. Life in the illimitable forest must have had its appeal to him else he would not have sacrified so much even for a doubtful hope that he might some day be the lord of a large landed estate in Canada. Like Governor Simcoe, with whom he was associated so long, and whose counsel must have had much influence over him, his heart was made sore as he saw the enterprising and thrifty sons of England, Ireland and Scotland emigrating from their own native land to become citizens under the now alien flag of the United States. To turn this tide of desirable settlers toward Canada was his great aim and for its achievement he devoted the remaining years of his life. The country through which he passed on his initial journey to Detroit in 1793 suggested to him the possibilities which awaited all those who had the courage and perseverence to face the hardships of pioneer life for those few years which would be required to transform the tree-covered fertile soils into grain producing farms.

To divert emigration to Canada, he sent agents out among the newcomers in New York and adjacent states to tell them about the favorable climate and soil of the Lake Erie District and to offer a free grant to each of fifty acres of land and a promise of help during the first few and hardest years of pioneer life. His agents were instructed to make a wise selection of the men given grants.

On his own estate he worked diligently clearing lands to produce the necessities of life. He was not above the menial tasks attached to the pioneer's life. Col. Talbot knew that the successful man must cultivate a spirit of self reliance and he set an example to others by his own efforts.

Each settler was given the aforementioned free grant of fifty acres on condition that he would erect a house on his lot fifteen feet by twenty feet and clear a strip of land across the front of each lot one hundred feet in depth, a total of about six acres of cleared land in area. At the end of five years, having completed these settlement duties, he was given a certificate of ownership.

By 1820 Colonel Talbot had completed the location duties on the lands first allotted to him. After this the whole of Southwestern Ontario was put under his charge and the construction of the Talbot Road from Delhi to Sandwich completed.

Road building was considered by Colonel Talbot as an essential part of the work of settlement and the first task which he undertook after he had established himself on his own five thousand acre estate in Elgin County. A road was surveyed four hundred rods from the shore of the lake and running parallel to it, on either side of which were laid out farm lots of two hundred acres each. These lots were made narrow, eighty rods wide, in order that the settlers should be established close to each other and have the benefit of near neighbors. The survey of the road in Kent County was made by Colonel Burwell. He began his survey of this road in 1812 but his operations were interrupted by the outbreak of war. His stores and surveying instruments were captured and carried off by the American Militia and he was unable to proceed with the work until after the close of the war in 1815. That year it was resumed and continued as far as the Raleigh Townline.

The construction of this road in 1816 was the occasion for the

incoming of many settlers into the county. There were a few settlers located prior to this in the Lake Erie District. A man by the name of Crawford located at the Eau as early as 1809 and with him two other settlers, Dickson, an American hunter, afterwards murdered by some unidentified and therefore unpunished person, and Ramsay the owner of twelve hundred acres of what is now very valuable farm lands on the Eau Road. Three years later two brothers, Edward and Joseph Hackney, added two more to this first contingent of the Lake Erie Settlement. Following these there were none until after the Talbot Road was opened up. However, by 1820 most of the lots lying thereon, particularly in Howard, had been taken up.

The vastness of the forest and scarcity of "landmarks" constituted a source of combined annoyance and danger in those early days. It was not an unusual occurrence for settlers to lose their way amid the wilderness while it long remained positively dangerous to allow children to traverse the primitive trails lest a like fate should befall them.

Tales of privation and distress prevailing during that period form a more interesting than edifying link in the chain of early reminiscences Some who later rose to affluence in the community arrived in the county with only the proverbial shilling in the form of cash assets and one gentleman declared his cash capital on arriving in Canada to have been six cents. So rare was the "purchasing power" in those days that many of the settlers were for years unable to provide tea for their tables and for a like reason were unable to purchase the thread necessary for ordinary use and were obliged to unravel strands from such cotton garments as they were so fortunate to possess.

Until improved by artificial means, the drainage was very defective the surface in some parts being submerged at seasons to a depth of nearly two feet, and one year this state of affairs continued as late as July, thus preventing agricultural operations that year. Scarcity of food and money of course resulted and during a famine of more palatable and nourishing viands, it is related that pig-weed was extensively resorted to as an article of diet. Shoes could scarcely be purchased by those with money while those lacking that potent commodity were compelled for several years to swaddle their feet in cloth, this being the prevailing style of winter foot dress. Their crops were sown upon the rough and only partially cleared land and hoes substituted for harrows in covering the seed. Some of the women shouldered the axe when household duties permitted and chopped side by side with the men of the family, often displaying a degree of skill in the use of that implement which would shame a youthful farmer of the present day. The music of the axe was accompanied by psalm singing in the cases of several of the ladies mentioned by the pioneers, this combination of industry and piety displaying a degree of muscular Christianity highly commendable.

The chief service which Colonel Talbot rendered to the County of Kent was the building of the Talbot Road which opened out the Southern Section of the County for settlement. While Elgin County where he lived and where he did the major share of his life's work, owes its settlement more to him than to any other man, Kent County was well on its way towards settlement two decades before he may be said to have begun his. Every institution of a pioneer settlement, grist-mill, saw-mill, trading house, school and church, had become a permanent establishment along the Thames well on towards a self supporting stage a full decade at least before Talbot had begun to settle Elgin County. But settlement on the South awaited this road, and for that enterprise in Kent County he should receive his just mead of praise.

6.

Along the Talbot Road

by O.K.Watson, B.A., K.C.

Pioneer settlement in south Kent, along the Talbot Road, was due to the initiative of the famous Colonel Thomas Talbot. It was on May 21, 1803, that Talbot established himself in Dunwich Township; and the rapidity with which he peopled the wilderness may be judged by his statement in June, 1833, that he had placed a settler on every lot in Howard Township excepting, of course, the clergy reserves and the Canada Company lands.

In the year 1804 Surveyor John Bostwick blazed the road westward through Howard. As late as 1830, however, Colonel Talbot wrote that the Township of Harwich was "locked up by non-residents and clergy reserve lands," and that he was not extending his road through that township.

Settlement in Howard,however, appears to have antedated Bostwick's survey; though dates are difficult to determine because the land was sold on time and the patents were usually not issued till the last cent was paid.

The first considerable settlement on the Talbot Road in Kent was Morpeth. It seems to have come into existence as a resting place for travellers after climbing the steep hill. At a hill, help was required. Either the settlers' effects had to be partially unloaded, or extra ox-teams or horses secured; and, after negotiating the steep climb, the average traveller felt disposed to rest overnight before continuing his tedious journey, the more so as repairs to chains, wagon and harness were often necessary.

So Morpeth doubtless came into existence - helped by the brawling creek at the bottom of the gully, which furnished ample power for primitive grist and saw mills. At one time there were at least four mills on this stream - one located a half mile south of Morpeth, another just north of the village, Campbell's mill on the back road farther north, and Green's mill on Lot 13, Concession 12. West of Morpeth another stream provided power for two more mills. The surplus products of these mills, together with farm products, were shipped from the port of Antrim at the mouth of Morpeth Creek.

Antrim in the pioneer days had an excellent basis for dockage - long since silted up - and with a little dredging could have been made a good harbor. For some years it handled a large trade and helped the development of Morpeth into the third most important community in Kent.

Tradition has it that the naming of Morpeth was done by open vote in which the pioneer settlers split into two factions, one championing "Jamestown" - in honor of James Coll, the first settler - and the other "Morpeth" in honor of Lord Morpeth, who had recently visited Upper Canada. Both sides supported their claims with speeches, argument and whiskey; till the Morpethites captured the whiskey supply of their rivals, dumped it in the road - and won the day.

A traveller in 1845 credited Morpeth with two taverns, one distillery, three stores and a number of artizans. At a later period the town possessed no less than thirty shoemakers. Between 1861 and 1872 the population must have been 800, though an old map gives it as 1200, and shows a large area - now farm land - surveyed in town lots.

About this period the shipping port of Morpeth was moved from Antrim to the farm of Mr. Hill, whose dock became a busy place. A huge warehouse was constructed and large quantities of grain stored for shipment as favorable markets were found.

But in 1872 the advent of the Canada Southern Railway, which passed a few miles north, radically changed the destinies of Morpeth, in common with other communities on the Talbot Road. New communities sprang into existence along the railroad, and farmers, instead of taking their grain south to Lake Erie ports, took it north to the railway. Hill's warehouse and dock became deserted and dilapidated. In 1885 the Dominion Government built a pier and established the place as a harbor of refuge, but today fishing is the only industry in what was once a thriving lake port.

Morpeth, still a busy community in the 80's, gradually declined; though the paving of No.3 Highway and the development of tourist traffic brought some revival.

The newer community of Ridgetown, on the Canada Southern Railway, sprang up to take Morpeth's place as a trading centre. The high ground on which it is situated and from which it takes its name was still a wilderness when in 1823 an Englishman named William Marsh made the first clearing on Lot 9, Concession 10, Howard. James Watson came next; then Edmund Mitton and Thomas Scane, with their families. Ebenezer Colby, from New York State, came a little later. Their farms represent the larger part of what is today the town of Ridgetown.

A word as these pioneers. William Marsh, familiarly known as "Daddy" Marsh, owned the first hand mill, which was in constant use by the settlers and is still in existence. James Watson, a little Kentishman, walked all the way from Ridgetown to Philadelphia when making his first trip home to England after locating. Walking, indeed, seems to have been a common stunt; for Edmund Mitton, an old country weaver, is said to have walked nearly the whole way from New York to Colonel Talbot's place with his wife and family, the wife carrying an infant in arms. The Mitton family, ten in all, made their first home in a 14 x 18 log cabin, one storey high.

Mrs. Marsh, wife of "Daddy" Marsh, walked more than once from Ridgetown to Toronto, a distance of 180 miles, carrying a load both ways. That such strenuous exercise did not impair her health is evidenced by the fact that she lived to be 104, and on her 101st birthday, the last of the pioneers, she was publicly honored by the entire community, and presented with a medal.

The settlement grew; but, as late as 1837 the nearest stores were at Morpeth and Antrim, and for many years these remained the important trading points of the surrounding country. The building of the Canada Southern Railway in 1872, however, brought a rapid development to Ridgetown; on October 16, 1875, it was incorporated as a village; and thenceforth its growth continued steady.

Though, according to Colonel Talbot, his famous colonization road had not been extended into Harwich before 1830, a colonization survey farther west was made by Colonel Mahlon Burwell shortly after the War of 1812, when the first attempts at permanent settlement were made. There was a considerable settlement in the south end of Raleigh by 1817, the names of D'Clute, Toll, Lytle, Goulet, Pardo, Huffman and Simpson - still well

known in the vicinity - appearing on the Talbot land registers.

In 1817 the beginnings of municipal government were established in the townships; and the census taken by William Sterling, a resident of the Thames River front, in 1820, shows 45 heads of families along the Talbot Road in what are now Raleigh, Tilbury East and Romney. Most of this settlement was in the Ouvry district. A post office named Erieus was opened in 1831, if not earlier, by Colonel James W. Lytle, the storekeeper. This gave place in 1850 to Dealtown; while the name of Ouvry first appears in 1876. The first school had already been established in 1842.

South of the Talbot Road lies the natural harbor of Rondeau Bay. The first lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, had ambitious plans for this natural port; and, when ordering the establishment of the Chatham Townsite on the Thames in 1795, he also directed Deputy-Surveyor Abram Iredell to survey a "road of communication" south to Rondeau, with 200-acre lots on each side for United Empire Loyalist settlers. Simcoe's instructions also called for a townsite at Rondeau.

The road appears to have been opened only as far as the present Blenheim; but the town was surveyed and named Shrewsbury. The extent of Simcoe's dream may be realized from the fact that six hundred acres were reserved and at least four hundred acres actually plotted. The plan shows numerous streets, named after the royalty and the military heroes of the time; a large square for gaol and court house, another for a market and yet another for a church. Across the bay the present Eau Point was designated "Ordnance Lands" where fortifications were to be erected to protect the harbor of Rondeau and the City of Shrewsbury. Here were built, at a later day, some of the ships of Captain Barclay's squadron, defeated by Perry at Put-in-Bay.

Conditions changed, however, before any actual settlement could take place; and in a later era the still vacant townsite of Shrewsbury was used as a refuge for fugitive slaves from the United States, some of whose descendants still dwell there.

Another community important in the early days was the village of Buckhorn which sprang up where the "Gravel Road" from Chatham crossed the Talbot Road. Traditionally this site had once been occupied by a village of Neutral Indians. By 1840, a small village had sprung up along the Talbot Road. A tavern, the "Farmers' House", kept by Nelson Chapman, displayed a set of buck's antlers as a sign; and wayfarers united in christening the village "Buckhorn".

Hugh McPherson was the first storekeeper and, after 1850, the first postmaster. In 1866 he was succeeded by W. S. Stripp, then 26 years old, a man of unusual vision and enterprise, who established the beginnings of various industries, planted vineyards, and visualized a thriving town and perhaps a large city.

Unluckily for him, Stripp plunged into politics as Liberal candidate for parliament in 1872 and 1873, and though he came close to wresting the constituency from the redoubtable Rufus Stephenson, politics put a crimp in his business enterprises. Buckhorn was, however, for many years a busy place, farm products and cordwood being shipped in large quantities from Buckhorn dock just west of the present summer resort of Erie Beach; while a heavy traffic was conducted between the lake and Chatham over a plank toll road through Charing Cross. In the early 80's Buckhorn, grown aesthetic, rechistened itself Cedar Springs.

Iredell's survey, carried out subsequent to 1795, had blazed the Communication Road from Chatham as far as the Ridge, though at the time it seems to have gone no farther. The stretch of the Talbot Road across South Harwich, granted by the Government to absentee landlords, was a long time withheld from settlement; and as late as 1833 was known as the "Ten Mile Bush".

About that year, Richard Chute purchased a block of land from Robertson, Laird of Inshes, and built a log shanty south of Talbot Street and west of the Communication Road. Other settlers made clearings, among them John Jackson, who, after some years of pioneering in Romney, moved to the Ten Mile Bush and became one of the outstanding figures in the new community. Another leader was Colonel James W. Lytle, who came from the Ouvry settlement in Raleigh to purchase Chute's property, add some of his own, and therefrom plat, in 1840, the original village of Blenheim.

Settlement was slow till the completion of the Communication Road through to Lake Erie in 1844; when the resulting increase in trade and population, and the demand for mercantile services within easier reach than Chatham, led to the establishment of stores and small industries. Orrin Gee, founder of the first brickyard, was also the first postmaster in 1849.

Till that time the locality was still known as the Ten Mile Bush. Then it was discovered that Colonel Lytle's name of Blenheim already belonged to a post office in Oxford County; so the post office was christened Rond Eau, a name which continued in use for several decades. Eventually the name of Blenheim was adopted.

It was long before the first settlement of Blenheim that in 1828, Colonel Burwell completed the township surveys begun, years earlier by Abram Iredell and Patrick McNiff. An Englishman, William White, one of Talbot's settlers, was the first settler on the Middle Road, making the trip through the bush with ox teams, and cutting a road of his own from the Talbot Road near Blenheim to his location in Raleigh, a distance of six miles. This was the beginning of the Middle Road.

Some years later another Englishman named Cook settled close to the Harwich-Raleigh townline, giving his name to Cook's Corners, now Charing Cross.

In course of time the tide of settlement flowed farther and farther westward, across Raleigh and into Tilbury East, and the blazed trail of the days of Burwell and White became one of the most travelled highways in Kent, linking King's Highways Nos. 3 and 2, and the thriving town of Blenheim and Tilbury.

The latter, youngest of Kent's towns, owed its existence in the first instance to the Canada Southern Railroad, and for many years had a keen commercial rival in the thrifty Scottish settlement of Valetta, in the early days the commercial metropolis of Tilbury East.

7.

The Home Made Products of the Early Settlers.

Pioneer life is no respecter of persons. The jewelled hand that knew no toil in the Old Country had the same tasks, the same beds,

the same kind of houses to dwell in, and the same conditions of life to face as had their hired help which they brought with them from across the ocean. "I had often made my bed of hemlock, boughs and considered it no hard work", wrote Colonel Talbot in regard to his first years of experience as a settler in the woods of Canada. These pioneers came from every walk of life but they found nothing ready for them but everything to be made by their own hands if they would build for themselves homes in Canada. Although Colonel Talbot considered it his duty to share his experience with others and instruct all the newcomers to his settlement how to build houses, clear lands, plant corn and potatoes, and do other necessary work, the pioneers who first came to Kent County were not so well favored. Their only teacher was Experience and they learned to do by doing.

With only one tool, an axe, but with abundant material in the surrounding woods, each pioneer undertook, with courage and patience, his initial task - the building of a house to dwell in. With eyes to see what others had done, he felled the trees that were adapted in size for the work, cut them in suitable lengths, and then commenced the laying of its foundations. This structure was usually a small one, a one-roomed building with a floor space of not more than ten by twelve feet in area. The timber selected for the walls was of a size such as could be handled by one man working alone. On one of the sides, the front, larger logs than the back were used, that by the time the last tier of logs was put in its place, there was a sufficient slope from the front backward to make his roof. Poles were laid crosswise and on these was placed the bark peeled off the trees in large sheets, opened out and laid two tier deep to make the roof. On the top of this bark were placed poles tied down by basswood thongs to those beneath and thus a strong roof was obtained without the use of nail or bolt.

The lumber for the floor and door was also self made. Basswood logs were split as evenly as possible and smoothed with an axe, on one side for the floor and on both sides for the door. The open spaces between the logs were filled first with chinks and then plastered over with mortar made of clay and ashes, the ashes being used instead of lime. If any window were used, it had only one small pane of glass or at most two but the most of the first cabins were devoid of even that size of light giving convenience. The completion of his shanty thus far marked the pioneer's first achievement toward the establishment of himself and his family in their new home.

This primitive hut served the settler and his family for the first summer of their abode in the bush or perhaps for several seasons, if he were more ambitious to clear his land, than to provide for himself a more comfortable home. The erection of a house large enough to fulfil the requirements of his settlement duties was a later undertaking and was usually the co-operative work of the whole settlement. The logs used to construct the walls were hewn with a broad-axe, they were hauled to the place where the house was being erected, by oxen, and in contrast to the rude "notch and saddle" corners of the first shanty, expert axemen were employed to build up neat and perpendicular 'dove-tailed' corners.

Cornelius McBrayne, the first postmaster of Botany, thus describes an old time house raising:

"The logs were cut and hauled on the ground and about the middle of October they would have an old fashioned house raising. An invitation was given to about twenty men from the old settlement and with the help they had among themselves would have enough. The invitation was looked upon as general and some twenty-five or thirty were ready and

glad of a chance to assist. A good supply of handspikes, mulays and skids, with the bark peeled off, were provided beforehand so that there would be no hitch when operations commenced in the raising. -- It might be well here to explain what a "mulay" is as a great many people had never seen them. The head is in the shape of a crescent, or exactly like a new moon put upon the end of a pole by which the men would push the logs up the skids. It answers the same purpose in raising a log building as the pike poles of today do in the frame. As soon as the log reached the top it was spotted - a chip taken off the heaviest end and turned over; this would keep it from rolling while the men on the corners prepared the ends to fit the logs below.-- There would always be a race to see which party would get its end up first. The men on top would stand back a few feet and stick their axes in the top of the log laid down and thus prevent the rolling log from crushing their toes. Sometimes the cutting at the corners would be rather deep and cause the log to 'ride' as it was called, then it would be turned up and some taken off so it would rest firmly on the corners, and at the same time have as small a crack as possible.

During the time the corners were being prepared, those on the ground had a chance to discuss any matters of public or private interest and such as the general news of the neighborhood was given and in a like manner received. After the walls were raised up to a height of about seven or eight feet the beam plates were laid. The beam plates are two side logs somewhat larger than the other logs of the building with grooves cut for placing the beams which support the floor above. Three or four rounds are placed above the beam plate, the first rib, and then the roof is commenced. A straight grained oak is selected and cut in lengths for clapboards which when nailed together make a very good roof."

As was the house, so also was mostly every article of its inside furnishings, a home-made product of the settler's skill and workmanship, although both of these were not always of too high an order. The bed was a one leg structure built into the corner of the house, the walls of the house doing duty for the other three legs. The "springs" were either poles or basswood planks; the "mattress", first hemlock boughs, later corn husks, rye or wheat straw; and still later, sewed up in a tick, the feathers of wild fowl, so easily obtained every autumn, especially those of duck and geese. Sometimes the skins of wild animals were used, both to lie upon and as an upper covering.

The open fireplace was an indispensable part of the equipment of every pioneer dwelling. An opening was made in the far end of the wall of the cabin and here was rudely erected the boxlike structure of stone with open front which supplied a threefold service - cooking, lighting and heating - for the first dwelling houses of the County. The fireplace was large enough to take a back-log four feet long and a foot through. A few stones would be used for aldirons and sometimes a round green stick was used. Every night in the cold weather a backlog would be 'walked in' and placed in the large chimney, and this, with a fore-log and some split wood would make a rousing fire for all the night.

The chimney was built of clay and straw kneaded and rolled to such a consistency as to handle firmly and stay when placed between the poles that were put upright as the skeletons of the chimney. When building the chimney, a rod of iron, if it could be procured, was put in on which to hang the pots. Quite an improvement was the 'crane' which was set in the jam and could be turned out, the pots put on and then turned back over the fire.

The light from the fireplace was generally sufficient for the

work being done after night. The men employed their evenings making axe handles which were often broken in chopping and splitting wood and it was necessary to have a few extra on hand to replace them. Sometimes they devoted their evenings to mending their children's shoes or making hickory brooms for the housewife, while she, in turn, spent her evenings in spinning, knitting, patching clothes, darning socks, or one of the many other duties which fell to her lot. As a heat distributor when the weather was very cold, the fireplace was not very satisfactory as you would be burning on the one side while freezing on the other, but, by turning around frequently, this difficulty was remedied.

The clothes worn by the early pioneers were all home made, usually woolen homespun. Even if the settler could conveniently obtain from the trader the cloth required to stand the rough usage of the bush life, it was so dear that few could afford to buy. Many of the Old Country immigrants brought with them quantities of linen cloth but the great majority were clothed with the product of their own toil. The manufacture of the wool into cloth was by the primitive means of the hand cards, spinning wheels and handlooms. Spinning was a by-occupation of the women of the household but weaving was the occupation of weavers, either men or women, who had to take farm products in exchange for their work. As soon as the clearings were large enough to warrant the safety of keeping sheep, a few, at least, would be kept byeach settler for the clothing of the family. After the wool was taken off the sheep, it was washed to free it from dirt and picked by hand, making it ready to be carded, which was done with two hand cards working it into rolls, ready for the spinner. These rolls were spun into yarn by the old fashioned spinning-wheel. The elder women used a smaller wheel operated by foot which enabled the work to be done sitting down. The younger women and girls used a large wheel which was spun around by the hand. The wool was stretched and twisted into yarn by walking backward away from the wheel the whole length of the room. Sometimes girls would be employed to do the spinning in homes which could afford it. Three skeins of yarn composed of fourteen knots of forty threads around the home made reel of a certain size, constituted what was termed a day's work. The wages paid a girl for spinning eighteen skeins, a week's work, was one dollar, board included. The distance travelled to spin three skeins would be something over six miles, half of the distance backward. Every thread was gone over with the fingers after being drawn out when the required even twist was given to it. A good spinner would complete four skeins a day, which materially added to the distance travelled, and then say she was not tired. For a fancy piece of dress goods, the wool was spun into a fine quality of yarn about three skeins to one pound of wool. The yarn was colored to suit the taste, and, when woven in plaids, checks, or stripes, or any pattern selected, by the artistic selection of colors, a very fancy piece of cloth would be turned out for the wives and daughters of the most aristocratic families. The ladies vied with each other in making designs suitable to their fancy. For the use of the men the yarn was made coarser in order to provide heavier cloth.

Sometimes the clothes would be made out of the cloth as it came from the weaver, but, for the winter wear, the cloth was put through a process of fulling. This was done by placing it into a tub of lukewarm water with plenty of soap and tramped hour after hour by the boys and girls getting into the tub with their bare feet. By this means the cloth was shrunk up and made much thicker, a process which was called 'fulling'. Sometimes this work was done by 'fulling bees'. The web of cloth, previously soaked for some time in soapy, tepid water, was placed in a circle on a strong table provided for the occasion. The neighbors gathered to do the work took their places around this table, picked up the web together with

their hands and brought it down with a thud on the table.' The pounding was continued for about two hours, the company stopping occasionally to take a rest while the web was treated with a fresh supply of soap and water. The cloth was passed round at intervals so that the strong might alternate with the weak and in the end the web receive an equal degree of pounding throughout its whole length. To produce an equal shrinkage in every square inch of its area was an operation which required art and skill and hence a better result followed from the 'bee' than from the 'tub and children' method. The web was then 'hung out to dry' after which it was made into clothes by the ever resourceful and capable mother of the home.

The making of straw hats for the family was the work too of the housewife. She selected the straws by hand from either the wheat or rye fields of grain before they had quite ripened. These she cut with a scissors and spread out in the sun to bleach. When finished, they were tied up and put carefully away until the leisure of the winter months would enable her to have the time to plait them into braids about one half inch in width. These, when the hat was to be made, she wetted and bent into the required shape as she sewed them together by hand. In this way, by the spring months she had a hat ready for each member of the family which often times meant a dozen or more hats made every winter.

The first light used after the fireplace was simply a piece of rag set in a saucer of oil which had the advantage over the fireplace, in that it could be moved from place to place in the room. The oil used was principally coon oil as the settlers kept a good supply on hand for the purpose. Tallow candles were the next in order. The method of making these was as simple as it was tedious. The wicks were dropped into melted tallow and withdrawn. The tallow adhering to the wicks soon cooled when withdrawn and every time they were dipped added to the size of the candle. This was continued until the proper size was obtained. A block of wood with a hole to place the candle in answered the place of candlesticks. Finally moulded candles came into general use. Moulds capable of making three, six, or eight candles at a time came to be a part of every pioneer's household furnishings and the labor of making candles was thus greatly curtailed. These made a better appearance than the dipped candle though not giving any better light.

Paper, ink and pens were all manufactured by the early settlers for their own use. Bark was peeled from the birch tree and the inner bark divided and subdivided until it was as thin and pliable as paper, supplied a material which could be written on with ink very nicely. Ink was sometimes made by dissolving gun powder in water but the fluid mostly used by the settlers for many years was made by boiling soft maple bark till it would be about the consistency of ink. Some copperas and a little sugar were then added, making the cost of the fluid about one cent a gallon. This ink was used in the schools for many years and was considered a first class product. The pen was whittled out of a hickory stick and about the size of a lead pencil sharpened four square, with grooves from the point running back and widening as the square increased in size. Quill pens also were used and could be made by anyone with a sharp knife.

For the coloring of their cloth and yarn, the early settlers had to provide their own dye stuffs. There were three of these most in common use. The one was the butternut brown which was made by boiling the bark of the butternut tree or the outer covering of the butternut in water which gave a very durable brown. Brown was also obtained by boiling sumac bobs in the same manner. Yellow was obtained from the blossoms of Golden Rod, and black by boiling the bark of the soft maple, which, with the addition of copperas, gave a deep black.

Black salts, or pearl ash, was manufactured from the ashes gathered from the fireplaces or from the fallows where the log heaps had been burnt up. It was an ingredient contained in the ashes, principally of the hardwoods, but more especially of the elm. It was soluble in water and hence easily obtained by a simple method well known to all the early settlers. The ashes were gathered into leaches over which was poured water, which, after passing through the ashes and caught in vessels under the leach, was known as lye. This lye was boiled in large kettles until it became a solid, or, in other words, until the water was evaporated, leaving the desired ingredient called by the well known name among the early settlers as "Black Salts". The making of this black salts was the work usually of the housewife and added one more to her many domestic duties. It was in great demand for the making of soap and was one of the first products for which the settlers could get money, all other articles being bartered for other commodities.

This product of the leached ashes of burnt logs and timber, rendered into pearl ash by this boiling process was humourously defined as "the father of potash", the grandfather of pearl ash, the great grandfather of saleratus, the great great grandfather of soda, and a distant relation of the baking powder of the present day."

(The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926.)

8.

Interior of Kent

The only hope of settling the interior of the County was the advent of settlers or communities brave enough to dare the solitude, the hardships and dangers, known or unknown, that lurked in the depths of the primeval forest. There the night was made hideous by the eerie hooting of the owl. From its unsunned recesses at times would come to the settler's ears the baying of the wolf and thence at any time might emerge the figure of the Indian Savage. Added to the terrors that were real as well as those - creatures of the imagination - born in the gloom of the forest, were the practical difficulties never experienced or theretofore imagined by the new settler. To the eye of the newcomer, the prospect was dreary in the extreme. Almost everything in Nature seemed hostile. Night and day through the gloom of the woods his body was tormented by mosquitoes and every tree in the forest, in form however magnificent or in beauty however dressed, for him had little attraction for in each he saw a barrier to his progress and an enemy to be overcome.

A fertile soil awaited his skill and industry and gave promise of future reward. Before the soil could become hospitable to plant or seed, the original crop must first be cut down and burned off, root and branch. To most of the immigrants the work was new and arduous.

Different settlements arrived from year to year, to each of whom was given hospitable and enthusiastic welcome without question as to country, clan or creed. Without an hour's unnecessary delay, a raising bee would be called and in the morning of the first available day would assemble on the designated lot every able-bodied man, axe in hand, to clear the site for and out of the standing timber in the surrounding woods to construct for the accommodation of their new neighbours a primitive shanty. Such structures rough and rude as they were, afforded shelter and a degree of comfort commensurate at least with the modest expectation of their

prospective occupants who had come determined to do and endure what might be necessary to provide for themselves and families a home that they might yet be able to call their own.

In spite of the industry of the early settlers and the gradual improvements resulting, conditions continued to be extremely trying and consequently many became discouraged and some left the country in disgust. Indeed many that remained readily confessed that they remained only because of inability to leave. One settler on a lot on the Middle Road near Merlin is said to have sold out his farm with all improvements, for a pair of boots. In these he was able to get out with dry feet and utterly vanish from the scene of his tribulation. Another name-forgotten man who settled on Lot 13, Middle Road South in Tilbury East Township, is said to have sold out his property for a barrel of whiskey and preferring apparently a small sample of goods that were wet to a hundred acres of land in the same condition, passed otherwise from sight and memory.

Over the scene of discouragement, however, in a few years began to show on the horizon the first streaks of dawn. The tree stumps that for years after the toilsome removal of the standing timber impeded sorely the progress of the plough began at last to yield to decay in the earlier clearances, and, as the emancipated area increased from year to year, a corresponding increase in the acreage devoted to wheat production took place. In those early days the crops were peculiarly abundant and in consequence a moderate prosperity soon began to throw its radiance.

9.

Drainage.

Because of the extreme flatness of part of the County, artificial drainage was indispensable. Without it not only was road construction impossible but no crops could be raised. The first settlers, being located on the lands immediately adjoining the creeks found it impossible individually to effect the drainage of their small clearances, but, if the rest of the land were to become fit for settlement, drainage would necessarily have to be accomplished by the united efforts of all the community. The imperative necessity for such co-operation, therefore, soon laid its hand upon the growing settlements and the compulsory powers first of the annual Town Meeting and subsequently the Municipal Council, by Legislative authority conferred, were eagerly hailed and enforced for impressing upon every settler the performance of Statute Labour and the application of every spare dollar of municipal funds for highway drainage and construction. Fortunately ditches made for road construction were usually available as outlets for the drainage of the adjacent lands, and to this fact is largely due the eagerness, as shown by the records from 1836 and for many years after, with which applications had been made to Town Meetings and Councils for leave to commute for statute labor liability for a number of years for the immediate construction of road ditches, ostensibly for road construction or improvements solely, but in reality to obtain drainage for their own lands

From the time of the earliest settlement, it seems to have been well understood that under the provisions of Common, if not Municipal, Law, the occupier of lands on a higher level was restrained from constructing drainage works which should have the effect of causing injury to lands on a level lower than that of his own, but for years there seems to have been no realization of responsibility, legal or otherwise, for damages arising to lower lands through flooding of the natural creeks through the artificial drainage of lands on a higher level. In the course of time, however, as

drainage improvements went on and as the artificially drained area increased, it eventually became evident that the creeks themselves were becoming inadequate to bear their increased burden without encroaching more and more upon the lands immediately adjoining that had, in a state of nature, been free from inundation and that something should be done for the relief of the lands so injured. This conviction found first expression practically in connection with creeks which were deepened and enlarged under the provisions of the Municipal Act on the petition of the owners of lands to be thereby benefitted or which should use said creek as an outlet.

The work of constructing the drainage works covered many years; it involved heavy capital outlay; it required exceptional courage to undertake and exceptional engineering and business ability to carry through. The courage, ambition and enterprise of the descendants of the Kent pioneers may be judged by the fact that they did not shrink from the task. Today, extensive drainage works, their capital cost paid and their maintenance trifling, have brought back to fertile production, areas which once seemed worthless and which today represent some of the finest farms in Kent. It has paid for itself many times over and added immensely to the wealth of Kent County.

10

Township and County Roads

All Townships in the County between 1925 and 1935 adopted the Township Good Roads System, commenced to improve their roads under a qualified Township Road Superintendent, and at least 75% of the residents of the Townships have access to surfaced roads which they can use all the year round.

At present there are two hundred and ninety-three miles of good County roads and the mileage is fairly evenly distributed among all the Townships in the County. About fifty percent of the roads are paved and the balance hard surfaced, gravel or stone.

11

Buxton Mission & Elgin Settlement

by Miss Cassie Hill,
South Buxton.

The Elgin Association was formed at the urgent desire of Rev. William King in 1849.

William King was a native of Londonderry, Ireland, and as a youth had come over to the United States and settled in Louisiana where for some years he was connected with a college. Here he mingled freely with the first families in the State and became acquainted with their institutions. His heart was sore as he beheld the cruelty of slavery and he became a strong advocate of freedom, holding that no man has a right to enslave another.

He became heir, in the course of time, to fifteen slaves. He wished to bring them at once to Canada and give them their freedom. Legal difficulties stood in the way for a time but in the meantime he purchased a plantation, placed his slaves on it and gave them the proceeds of their own labour, thus developing in them some self reliance and training them for that freedom which he wished to give them. In 1848 the legal difficulties were removed and he immediately set out for Canada, a distance of

1500 miles, with these slaves, paid their passage and gave them their freedom.

Shortly before this the Fugitive Slave Bill had been passed. This bill deprived all slaves and refugees of all safety in the United States and thus many found their way to Canada and freedom. The white settlers were bitterly hostile to their settlement here. This hostility was at its height when Rev. W. King arrived with his slaves. His life was threatened; a meeting from three counties was convened by the sheriff to prevent him from carrying out his project. Petitions were sent to the Commissioner of Crown Lands demanding that no grant of land should be given him on which to settle these people.

Mr. King resolutely went forward, secured Lord Elgin's co-operation and a grant of 9,000 acres of land in Raleigh Township in Kent County, and a sum of $18,000 was subscribed. The land was divided into 50 acre farms and sold to the settlers at $2.50 per acre to be paid in ten equal annual instalments with interest. Then the settler would receive his title to the land.

Many fulfilled these terms and received their deeds. Each settler also had to erect a house 24' x 18' x 12', back from the road 33', and in the front of each a picket fence.

A larger, more pretentious home might be built if the s ettler wished. The land was heavily timbered, elm, hickory, oak, maple, ash, which had to be cleared out before the land could be cultivated. The land being very level, numerous ditches, large and small, had to be dug for drainage.

There was but one road, a military road constructed through the efforts of Colonel Talbot after the War of 1812, running from Sandwich to London.

To further the moral interest of the community, a Mission was formed and Rev. W. King was appointed to the charge. The name "Buxton" was given in honour of Sir Thomas Fowel Buxton, a friend of the slave.

The house in which Mr. King made his home had been built and occupied for several years by a white settler. It was not large but buildings which were for a while used as church and school house were incorporated in the dwelling house. Later a church was built a short distance east of this house, close to the road, a post office on the right hand side of the avenue leading up to the house, also a school to the left a short distance. These were all of log and only temporary structures.

About the year 1855 a steam saw-mill was erected, also a grist mill in 1856, a pearl-ash factory, a two storey brick hotel, a store and several private dwellings. A new industry, the making of black salts from the ashes of various timbers, was begun. A brick yard was in operation and excellent bricks were made.

In 1857 there were two schools, attended by 100 pupils, and three district schools near the settlement. The Sunday School had 100 pupils on the roll with eight teachers and a superintendent.

In 1857 the settlement was visited by Lord Althorpe and others and a wonderful banquet was provided in an arbour erected for the purpose in a grove on Mr. King's farm. The menu was luxurious - turkeys, ducks,

chickens, roast pigs, geese, venison, beef, mutton, lamb, vegetables of all kinds, pickles, preserves, cakes and pastry. Eight hundred people were served.

In 1858 the present church was erected. Funds for building the same were collected by a deputation, consisting of Rev. Dr. Burns and Rev. William King, in Ireland, Scotland and England. Willing hands cut down the prepared the timbers which were of the best and still are in good condition as was discovered a few years ago when a basement was being excavated.

The Directors of the Elgin Association reported sixteen years after the formation of the Association that seven hundred pupils had passed through the Mission Schools, some had been trained as teachers, and two were surgeons of prominence. The schools were self supporting, the subscribers had subscribed $1000.00 for educational purposes and also $400.00 towards the erection of a school in the Village of Buxton.

Mr. King was the Minister of this Church until 1880, when he resigned. He was born in Londonderry, Ireland, Nov. 11, 1812, and died in Chatham, Ontario, Jan. 5, 1895, aged 82 years. He was buried in Maple Leaf Cemetery, Chatham.

12

Government.

On 24th July, 1788, the Governor General, Sir Guy Carleton, divided Upper Canada into four Districts - Eastern, Midland, Home and Western.

In 1791 the Lieutenant Governor was authorized to divide each Province into Districts and Counties and determine their limits for the purpose of choosing representatives for the Legislature. Accordingly, Governor Simcoe issued his proclamation dividing Upper Canada into nineteen Counties; eighteen along the water front from the St. Lawrence to the west end of Lake Erie, all the rest of Upper Canada being included in the nineteenth County called Kent. It included Detroit and other parts of Michigan at that time. As the population in the northern parts increased, other counties were made from the original territory of Kent.

The Western District included the Counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton. The first Council of this District in 1841, had twenty-six members, and the Chairman, John Dolsen, was appointed by the Government. The first Clerk was John Cowan.

In 1847, Kent was formed into a separate District or County and a provisional Council met at Chatham in August, its special purpose being the erection of our present gaol and court house, completed in 1850.

By special Act in 1849 Districts were abolished and Counties substituted and in 1850 the proclamation of the Governor General declared the separation of Kent from Essex.

Powers of self government were conferred on all Municipal Corporations largely as those powers exist today. The inhabitants of each County became a body corporate whose Council consisted of Reeves and Deputy Reeves of the Townships, Towns and Villages in the County. The County Council was to meet at the shire hall on the 4th Monday in January to choose

from themselves a Warden who should preside at their meetings.

The first Council for Kent as a separate County met at the Court House in Chatham in 1850 and consisted of ten members, of which George Duck, the Reeve of Howard, was elected Warden. William Cosgrove was the first Clerk.

Kent has had three County Towns, Detroit from 1792 to 1796; Sandwich from 1796 to 1847, and, from that year when separated municipally from Essex, Chatham.

CITY OF CHATHAM

The present City of Chatham owes its first impetus to John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada. Simcoe was an old British Army Officer, and, when he came to Upper Canada as Governor in 1792, he saw that a renewal of hostilities between the United States and the Mother Country was inevitable.

Detroit was still held by the British though handed over to the Americans a few years later. Simcoe's ambitious plans were all framed in contemplation of war which, however, was not to come for twenty years.

In 1792 the first Parliament of Upper Canada met at Newark on the Niagara frontier. Simcoe, however, wished to establish his permanent capital at a point less exposed to attack.

The year previous, at Montreal, en route to assume his new duties, Simcoe had taken the trouble to carefully examine all the available maps of Upper Canada. These maps were necessarily very inaccurate, particularly those of the western part of the Province. They showed, however, the River La Tranche as a deep and navigable stream extending far inland and constituting a vital factor in communication.

Simcoe visited Detroit and ascended the Thames in 1795. He had already, it seems, selected the point at the junction of La Tranche and what was then known as Clarke's Creek as the site for his capital. The military branch, however, preferred Kingston. Simcoe, with a clearer vision of the possibilities of the practically unpeopled western portion of Upper Canada, held out for a capital in the western peninsula, London being his second choice. Ultimately York - later Toronto - was selected.

Had Simcoe carried his point, Chatham might today be the capital of Ontario. In the intervening 150 years, the growth of Western Ontario in population, wealth and political influence has fully vindicated the prescient Governor.

Though forced to abandon his plan to establish his capital here, Simcoe kept in mind the military importance of the river, which he re-christened the Thames, and of the strategic point which later became the City of Chatham.

The Governor decided to establish here a fortified stronghold on the line of a colonization and military road that was to run from Burlington Heights to Sandwich. The establishment of a dry dock was contemplated and the feasibility of navigation between this point and London was investigated. As early as May, 1793, Deputy Surveyor Patrick McNiff had made the necessary survey of the river and reported the navigation scheme "practicable with the erection of one or two locks".

The proposed military road from Burlington Heights to Sandwich was to join a lateral line of road at Chatham. This lateral road Deputy Surveyor Abraham Iredell was directed to run "as straight as possible to Point aux Pins on Lake Erie, to be hereafter called the 'Land Guard', where a position for a town is to be reserved". This lateral road was later known as the Communication Road.

Simcoe personally visited the site of the future City of Chatham about 1795. Already considerable activity was manifest there. The Military Reserve (now Tecumseh Park) had been practically shorn of its hardwood timber, a stockaded block-house erected, a shipyard established, and a number of gunboats were under construction.

Simcoe planned to improve transportation facilities from this point by means of artificial waterways. He seems to have been the first to vision the hardy perennial project of a canal from the Thames to Rondeau. An alternative line of water communication with the east, which would be relatively safe from attack in the event of hostilities, was by way of the Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe and artificial waterways then determined upon for construction, to Lake Ontario.

Simcoe clearly contemplated the construction of these two canal systems within a few years of his visit. The American War scare, however, passed off - for the time being. Years later, both canal projects were discussed but neither came nearer realization.

Governor Simcoe on his western tour ascended the Thames to Chatham and London. The guns of his blockhouse on the high ground of the Military Reserve saluted as his vessel came into view on the up trip. The shipyard on the flats east of Tecumseh Park was a scene of busy activity; all of which the Governor warmly approved. His Province was moving ahead pretty fast. Within a few years, however, all this busy activity fell silent.

2.

The shipyard established by Governor Simcoe at Chatham in 1794 was in charge of William Baker. It represented the first industrial activity within the present city limits of Chatham.

The position chosen for the shipyard was the river flat on the Military Reserve, at a point just east of the present Tecumseh Park, and nearly opposite the foot of what is now Victoria Avenue. The blockhouse stood on the high bank immediately above the flats; about midway between the present band stand and the river. The structure was of logs, furnishing a store room and sleeping apartments, and available as a fort if occasion demanded. Two small cannon were mounted at the blockhouse, commanding the river.

The saw pits were erected on the flats, apparently to facilitate the skidding of the timber, which was all hand-sawed, from the level. In 1795, some 23 workmen were employed in this shipyard. A payroll of the quarter from December 24, 1794, to March 24, 1795, shows the names of William Baker, builder; John Goudie, foreman, and 21 workmen, carpenters, blacksmiths, sawyers and laborers. Many of these were French Canadians, presumably recruited from the French settlers along the river or at Detroit. Baker received 5s.6½d. a day; Goudie 4s, the rate for carpenters and other skilled workers was 5s. and for the two laborers 2s. 6d. Such was Chatham's first industry.

In the year or two following 1794, several gunboats were built in this shipyard but it is a question if even one of them ever left the stocks, much less the river.

In 1812, the late John Toll of Troy, with some companions, berry picking at or near this point, came upon the decaying timbers of several vessels amid the brush and rank weeds on the river flats. Troy's compan-

ions told him that these were "Baker's boats". The late Daniel Fields of Harwich, a soldier of the War of 1812,(who lived to be past 90),told long afterward that the early settlers burned the timbers for the purpose of securing the iron - then an extremely scarce and costly commodity - used in the construction of the gunboats.

As an inducement to come to Chatham, Baker, in addition to his 5s.6½d. a day also received a land grant from the Government of the property in Chatham Township, just east of the present city, which was later known as the Eberts farm. Baker was a man of considerable standing in the ship-building trade, having held a responsible position in the British Navy Yard at Brooklyn before the American Revolutionary War. He appears to have spent some years here, and in 1810 his daughter Ann married Joseph Eberts. From this union sprang the Eberts family, long prominent in the affairs of Chatham.

Baker's grandson, William D. Eberts, was a conspicuous figure in the pioneer settlement at Chatham, engaged in the shipping and ship-building trade, and one of the builders of the Eberts Block which still stands.

-3-

The original Chatham Town Site was surveyed in 1795 by Abraham Iredell, Deputy Surveyor. Early in that year an area of 600 acres at this point was set aside by the Governor-in-Council as a town plot and military reserve.

The original site comprised Lots 1 and 2 in Harwich Township and Lot 24 in Raleigh. A portion of this area was surveyed by Iredell in the same year, the survey covering 113 lots of one acre each. The ground covered by Iredell's survey is the double tier of lots commencing at the eastern boundary of the present city and extending between Water Street and the present Stanley Avenue to William Street; then the double tier of lots between Murray and Colbourne Streets to the eastern boundary; then, south of the creek, the double tier of lots between Wellington and King Streets from the eastern city limits as far as the present Lacroix Street.

Thus, Iredell's original survey pretty well followed the natural line of the river and the creek; the property holders in this area - the "old survey" - having the distinction of owning territory within the limits of the original townsite.

The map covering this survey which bears date November 1, 1795, shows the jail and market blocks reserved as such. It also shows a block bounded between King, Third, Wellington and Forsyth Streets reserved for church purposes. This latter church reserve was later exchanged for the unsurveyed block bounded by Adelaide, Murray and Prince Streets and Stanley Avenue, which is still known as the "Glebe Lands", and which passed out of church possession more than 35 years ago.

The Military Reserve, now Tecumseh Park, was thus the centre of the community as originally planned, and Iredell's map shows Baker's block-house on this reserve. The map also shows on Lot 50, at the eastern boundary of the survey, a small hut built by Meldrum & Park of Sandwich for the purpose of trading with the Indians. This log shack seems to have been the first trading post in Chatham. In line with this trading post a primitive bridge spanned the creek, then known as Clarke's Creek.

The higher lands surrounding these outposts of civilization were

covered with heavy timber, elm, walnut, black ash and sugar maple, while much of the present South Chatham was swale and swamp.

Within a few years of the survey, some 30 of the lots were sold or granted by the Crown. In 1798, Lot 17 was granted to Surveyor Iredell; in 1801, Lots 87 and 88 were granted to Alexander and Charles Askin. Most of the other patents bear date 1802. With the exception of a few lots granted to M. Burwell, surveyor, in 1824, probably in payment for his services, no further grants seem to have been made until about 1830.

Iredell's own lot, No. 17, doubtless selected for its clear view of the river, was the southeast corner lot at the junction of William and Water Streets, a little east of Baker's shipyard. Here, about 1800, Iredell planted the first orchard in Chatham, and built a log house. Ninety years later, a few ancient apple trees ten feet in circumference still survived. On this historic spot in that same year 1800, Iredell, as returning officer, proclaimed as "Knight of Kent, with sword, etc." - or, in modern parlance, as Member for Kent.

Iredell spent here the last years of his life. The father of Chatham, as Iredell may justly be called -was a popular figure among the scattered settlers. He passed away early in 1812, a few weeks before the outbreak of the war with the United States.

-4-

On the night of October 3, 1813, Tecumseh and his Indian Warriors camped under the shade of Iredell's apple trees, and on the Military Reserve beyond. Barclay's little fleet on Lake Erie had been captured by Commodore Perry; the British and Indians had abandoned Detroit; and a disastrous retreat, culminating a few days later in the catastrophe of Moraviantown, was in progress. The same night the British vanguard camped on the Eberts farm, on the north bank of the river; the British rearguard was at Cosgrave's.

The British General, Proctor, reluctantly yielding to Tecumseh's insistence, promised his Indian ally to make a stand. The spot selected for defence was the military reserve. Here a bridge spanned the creek. "Here," said Proctor, "we will either defeat Harrison or leave our bones". Tecumseh viewed the scene with mournful satisfaction. "This is a good place," he remarked. "It reminds me of my village at the junction of the Wabash and the Tippecanoe."

Next morning before dawn, however, Proctor went ahead with the baggage; and by mid-day of October 4th the British were in full retreat. Tecumseh, with several hundred Indians, stood his ground, disputing the passage of the bridge with Harrison's Kentuckians. The Indians opened a heavy fire from the bridge and from the north bank of the river upon the American advance guard. Harrison, believing that the entire British force was opposing him, halted and formed his forces in battle line, and brought up two six-pounders to cover the party sent forward to repair the bridge. The fire of the guns forced the Indians to withdraw, after first firing the bridge and setting fire also to Baker's blockhouse.

In this, Chatham's first and last battle, two Americans were killed and four wounded in the early fighting near the present Bank of Montreal site. The Indians left two dead, one a chief, on the point, who were buried at the time by sympathetic settlers and later re-interred with Indian

rites on the north bank of the river near the corner of what is now Grand and VanAllen Avenues.

A little further up stream, near the present C.P.R. bridge at Pikeville, the British bateaux, which had accompanied the forces in their retreat, were fired and abandoned, with most of Proctor's ammunition. A few days later Tecumseh, abandoned by his British ally, fell fighting at Moraviantown.

There seems to have been fighting also on that memorable Fourth of October, 1813, further up the creek at McGregor's Mills, east of the town limits. Here at the mill dam was a bridge which the Indians destroyed. Colonel Johnson's mounted Kentuckians, however, forded the shallow stream, several Americans and some horses being killed in the attempt. A year later, John Toll and another boy from Raleigh who were hunting squirrels found the body of one of the fallen men under some brush.

The mill at this point, like the blockhouse, was fired by the Indians in their retreat, but at Arnold's Mills, further up the river, Tecumseh himself lingered behind to save the mill from his followers, knowing its importance to the scattered settlers.

-5-

In 1792 one Thomas Clarke, previously resident in Dover Township, undertook the erection of a grist mill on the stream later known as McGregor's Creek. The frame of this mill seems to have been erected in 1795, as Governor Simcoe, who saw it, refers to it in some of his letters as a peculiar and unique affair. Square in form it was built of logs, which, though rough-hewn, were left in their original lengths.

At the erection, which was effected by the usual "bee" stimulated by a great deal of whiskey, the settlers commenced to trim off the ends of the logs to the proper length; whereupon Clarke said, "Never mind, boys.. Let them hang over at the rear corners." In the end, the tail butts of the logs were left hanging over on all sides, and the completed mill was little better than a shell composed of these logs, a roof thatched with bark laid on poles, and a floor on which rested the mill stones and other machinery. Grain and meal lay in dirty heaps, through which squirrels and other small animals scampered.

Tom Clarke was as unique as his mill. His huge ungainly figure, his No.12 hob-nailed boots and his five foot cane were well known throughout the country. Clarke had a weakness for calling on the women at the widely scattered farm houses and indulging in afternoon tea, accompanied by much small talk. As tea was scarce and expensive, these requisitions were hardly popular.

Clarke's mill was actually running in 1797, preceding by a few years the operation of Christopher Arnold's famous mill further up the Thames. Clarke, however, fell into debt, was ultimately thrown into Sandwich Jail, and his mill was taken over by his creditor, John McGregor of Sandwich, a shrewd forceful Scot.

McGregor was for several decades the dominant figure of the little settlement. In 1808 he erected a new mill further up the creek. This he operated until in 1813 it was burned by the Indians in their retreat. After the Peace of Ghent, the undaunted McGregor rebuilt his mill - in 1818 - and around it gradually clustered a small settlement; while the isolated pioneers, clearing their holdings in the bush, came many weary miles to grind their

grist and to trade at the store erected later at "McGregor's" or "Chatham Mills" as the locality came to be known.

In those days there were settlements further down the river, notably at McCrae's and Dolsen's, and near St. Peter's Church, where a small chapel and mission had been established in 1803, the first church in the County of Kent. There were a few settlers, also along Lake Erie; and in 1804 Lord Selkirk had established his famous settlement at Baldoon, which in 1812 was raided by predatory Americans under General McArthur.

John McGregor and his son Duncan carried on the milling business for many years, and later Duncan McGregor erected the first steam saw mill in the flats. Those were the days when elm, black ash, oak and walnut that had been growing for centuries fell before the axes of the pioneers; when the finest hardwood timber ever cut in Canada sold for 50 cents a log; and when the lumbering business momentarily stimulated the growth of the new settlement.

John McGregor, the father of industrial Chatham, and the dominant figure in the community, thrice represented Kent in the Parliament of Upper Canada. The dirty, unprepossessing tributary of the Thames, which, first known as Clarke's Creek, came to bear McGregor's name, is hardly the most fitting memorial to the canny Scotsman's strenuous, hard-fisted but useful activities.

-6-

Following the War of 1812, the Chatham Townsite seems to have been completely abandoned. Baker's blockhouse had been burned in the retreat to Moraviantown, as had McGregor's Mill; the creek bridges had been fired, but repaired by Harrison's men. Iredell's log shack still stood among the old surveyor's apple trees.

McGregor's return in 1818 was the first step toward permanent settlement; but McGregor's activities were all beyond the eastern limit of the townsite. The first permanent settler within the present city limits was Will Chrysler.

In 1820 Chrysler, who had been living at Dolsen's, some miles further down the Thames, moved to Chatham and built a log house on the spot now occupied by the Jahnke & Greenwood Funeral Home. Chrysler cleared the ground above and below this site and farmed successfully, in 1822 raising no less than 2000 pounds of tobacco from an acre.

New settlers came in. That same year, 1822, besides Chrysler's phenomenal tobacco crop, saw the building of Chatham's first church. That was St. Paul's (Anglican). It stood near the eastern end of Stanley Avenue between what is now Victoria Park and the river. Here Mr. Morley, the Anglican Missionary at Sandwich, held occasional services. Later he became the first rector, and took up his residence in the settlement.

The log huts of the early settlers were erected chiefly along the south bank of the river or along McGregor's Creek.

Opposite the military reserve, an historic spot in those days, was the grove of sugar maples near where the Fifth Street Bridge now stands. Here, prior to the erection of St. Paul's Church, missionaries occasionally held divine service for the benefit of the hard-drinking and horse-racing pioneers; here they christened the "olive branches" of the new settlement and administered the sacraments. Here Indians resorted to trade, and, on

some occasions at least, to receive their annual presents from the Government; and here took place under a thorn tree the six days' polling of that early election which sent Joshua Cornwall, the celebrated "silent member", to the Legislative Assembly. Later the miller, John McGregor, was returned at a similar poll. Election trials and disqualifications were then unknown; and the free and independent electors declared their choice by word of mouth and recompensed themselves by getting drunk at the expense of their favorite candidate.

On this site amid the sugar maples, there was erected in 1830 the pioneer store. Stephen Brock, a grain buyer, previously in business at McCrae's, built this store and for years carried on the business. It was, according to tradition, the first frame building in Chatham and was deemed a most pretentious structure.

A little later, in a log house at the corner of King and Fourth Streets, Claude Cartier started the first tavern, a hostelry famous in even later days for its 3-cent drinks of corn whiskey and its 12½ cent meals.

By the middle thirties the settlement had grown. The first census taken by Henry Verrall at the request of the principal men of the village, showed a population of about 300.

The Chatham of that day was hardly prepossessing. King Street, forming part of the London or Tecumseh Road, was little better than a decent trail, full of holes and stumps, following the winding course of the river, and barely passable for wheeled vehicles.

Within the town plot little of the land had been even cleared. Along the river as far east as Fourth Street, the land was under cultivation; thence on the river side to Fifth Street was largely a sugar bush; and the square between King, Wellington, Fifth and Fourth Streets, now solidly built up, was an open common. The "Military Ground", now Tecumseh Park, was under crop; a few other spots near the present market were cleared and producing.

Beyond Sixth Street, the winding road trailed along the creek to McGregor's Mills and then plunged into the "bush". The school lands were mere forest; a large swamp lay along Wellington Street over which the children going to the little frame school on the site of the present Central, picked their way in wet weather on logs and rails. Toward the South the land was nothing but black ash swale. Except for "Brock's Corner" at Fifth Street, the creek bank between Fifth and Sixth Streets was still a sugar maple bush. The present North Chatham, cut off from the settlement by the unbridged Thames, had one inhabitant, a colored man named Croucher.

-7-

In 1824, Chatham relied almost entirely on the river for communication with the outside world.

In 1828 the first steamboat to ascend the Thames, the "Argo", of Windsor, Capt. Burtis, arrived at the settlement on August 1. Within a couple of years, however, the "Western", a Chatham-built craft, was constructed on the flats east of the present Pere Marquette Bridge by Duncan McGregor, and put on the route between Chatham and Amherstburg. The "Western" was a vessel of about 50 tons and 25 h.p. In 1832 or 1833 was built in the same shipyard the steamer "Thames" of 200 tons and 25 h.p. The "Thames" was a popular lake boat, running between Port Stanley and

Buffalo, until burned by the rebels at Windsor in 1838.

The "Cynthia McGregor" of 100 tons and 40 h.p., also built here, ran on the Chatham-Amherstburg route for several years but was ultimately burned.

Of the numerous steamboats built at Chatham in those early days, the finest was the "Brothers" of 150 tons and 45 h.p., completed in 1839, by W. & W. Eberts, their shipyard being on the creek at about the foot of the present Sixth Street. The "Brothers" ran for many years on the Chatham and Detroit route. On this popular steamer many hundreds of the pioneer settlers of the community first arrived here, Capt. Walter Eberts trusting not a few of them for their fares until at some date more or less vaguely fixed, they might be able to recoup him.

The first wharf was built by Stephen Brock near the creek mouth, immediately in the rear of the old Merchant's Bank.

Meanwhile, the stage coach had come. In 1827, one Chauncey Beadle obtained from Parliament a charter giving him the sole right for 21 years to run covered stages between Queenston and Sandwich, the fare not to exceed three-pence a mile. Among other Chatham men, William McCrae, M.P., and his son, Thomas, later police magistrate, were financially interested. It was not until 1828, however, that the stage carrying His Majesty's Royal Mail and heralded long in advance by the resonant posthorn, tore into the village.

With the advent of the stage, the post office for the settlement, previously located at McCrae's, was transferred to McGregor's Mills, or the Chatham Mills as they had come to be known. The post office with Duncan McGregor, the miller, as post master, was known as Raleigh P.O. It was not until 1843, long after the community itself had definitely assumed the name, that the post office at this point was officially known as Chatham.

Ship building, the first of Chatham's industries, continued throughout the first of the Nineteenth Century to be one of the most important. Small local industries gradually sprang up adding to the importance of the community. These included a couple of primitive canneries, a steam saw mill, and in 1836 a distillery erected on what is now Colbourne Street by one Roger Smith.

In 1854, with the opening of the Great Western Railway between Suspension Bridge and Windsor, a new and rapid form of communication with the outside world was established. The railroad put a more or less definite period to the romantic days of water transportation and the stage coach, and in course of time completely changed the character of the young settlement. In 1873 the Canadian Southern Railroad was completed and ran its first train; in 1883 the Erie & Huron; in 1889 the Canadian Pacific; in 1894 the Lake Erie & Detroit, later the Pere Marquette, as far as Ridgetown; and in 1905 was the start of the Chatham, Wallaceburg & Lake Erie Railway which operated for 20 years.

Previous to 1840 what is now Chatham formed portions of the adjacent townships. The Municipal Act of 1841 widened the powers of the township authorities and resulted in the commencement of such municipal services in the village as ditching and drainage, until then unheard of.

The same measure led to the formation of the first hook and ladder company, an organization which enjoyed high repute even outside the county.

The Municipal Act of 1849, however, marked the beginning of a new and larger epoch. Under that act the first Village Council was elected in 1850 with George Witherspoon as reeve; and Chatham Fire Company No. 1 was reorganized out of the Chatham Fire Brigade formed in 1848.

Chatham had by that time grown in population to 2000; and this growth coupled with the new powers conferred by the Municipal Act, resulted in the launching of larger municipal enterprises. The new Central School was built in 1854. The new Jail and Court House were constructed and completed in 1850. About the same time the first bridge across the Thames at Fifth Street was taken over from the Government. In 1853 the new public market was instituted.

With the Great Western Railroad in 1854 came a period of expansion Big ideas were in the air. Unlike most new communities, Chatham never suffered the rapid inflation and painful collapse characteristic of a "boom", but in a lesser way the era of expansion, with its many new activities that have since been amply justified, brought its minor drawbacks.

One of the costly mistakes of that era was the backing by the municipality and the citizens of a number of plank road ventures, which made large promises of revolutionizing this part of Canada. The Chatham, Rondeau and St. Clair Plank Company and the Chatham and Camden Plank Road Company not merely got the ear of the individual speculator but dug substantially into the corporation treasury.

The too generous grants made to these wildcat ventures left Chatham subsequently with a debt of more than $100,000 to the Municipal Loan Fund in return for which the people were mulcted in heavy tolls and received practically no benefits.

The year 1855 saw the incorporation of Chatham as a town. The first town councillors were A.D.McLean, Archie McKellar, Thomas A. Ireland, Joseph Northwood, John Smith, John Waddell, John S. Vosburg, R.S.Woods and John Winter. A. D. McLean was the first mayor of Chatham. Coincident with the incorporation of the town, Chatham was extended to practically its present municipal limits.

In 1895 the population having meanwhile increased to between 9000 and 10,000, Chatham was constituted a city. The formal inauguration of the community cityhood was followed by a period of marked expansion and improvement, the most noteworthy features of which were industrial development on an unprecedented scale, a marked growth in population, and the completion of a system of permanent pavements.

In 1889-90 Harrison Hall was erected jointly by the County of Kent and the City of Chatham to house all County and City offices, including the Judicial Offices, at a total cost of $38,203.09, with the land costing $5,500.00. Of the $38,203.09, the County paid $28,652.32 and the City $9,550.77. The City also contributed the price of the land on which the building stands. Harrison Hall was of sufficient capacity to accommodate both County and City for quite a number of years. Recently, owing to the growth of both municipalities, the building became too small and in 1947 arrangements were made for the County to sell its share to the City.

In the two decades immediately preceding the American Civil War,

the activities of Northern abolitionists in assisting the southern slaves to freedom made this part of Southwestern Ontario in effect the Northern terminus of the famous "underground railroad".

This organization provided help and shelter for the fugitive slaves on their way to Canada; and its activities resulted in the considerable influx of colored people, many of whom settled in Chatham.

At one time, probably one third of the population was colored. Since the risks involved in escaping from slavery were considerable, the adventure was one which appealed only to the more daring and high spirited of the slaves; so that the colored people who made their homes here were distinctly of the better and more intelligent class, many of them being exceedingly well educated.

The colored people in Chatham were for the most part industrious and prosperous and rendered material assistance to other slaves in escaping to the north.

Among the historical landmarks of Chatham is the red painted brick house just south and east of the C.P.R. crossing at Adelaide Street. Originally a four-tenement structure, known as the "Holton House", it was in this building that John Brown, the famous abolitionist, conferred with the leaders of the colored settlement in the fall of 1858 in regard to his plans for a rising of the southern slaves.

Here were partially matured the plans for the subsequent raid on Harper's Ferry, which historic fiasco resulted in the capture and execution of John Brown and his associates, and which, later, did much to precipitate the Civil War.

Another familiar figure of slavery and later days was Rev. Josiah Henson, who made his home at Dresden, but was well known in the Chatham colored settlement. Henson was in some respects the original of Uncle Tom in Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous book "Uncle Tom's Cabin". Mrs. Stowe visited Chatham and vicinity while writing the book to secure first hand information from some of the escaped slaves and several chapters of the book were written in Kent County.

The Civil War and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had a marked effect on the colored population of Canada. The Northern victory left them free to return to the United States without fear of molestation; and, while many of the older people clung to the community which had given them shelter, the younger generation largely gravitated to Detroit and other American Cities where they found ready employment and made new homes.

The result has been a shrinkage of the colored population in Chatham. At one time the colored people numbered probably 2000 or more out of a population of about 6000. In 1881, some 16 years after the conclusion of the Civil War, this colored population had dwindled to 781 out of the total of 7873.

In the latter 80's the famous horse car system was in full operation. A few years earlier the Erie and Huron Railway, now operated by the Pere Marquette, had been built as a local north and south line. The old Erie and Huron Depot was located at the eastern end of King Street.

The fact that the Grand Trunk Depot was considerably distant seems

to have inspired a number of citizens with the belief that a street car line, traversing the main streets of the town and connecting the two railroads would prove a paying proposition.

Anyway, the Chatham Street Railway, Limited, was organized in 1885, with $25,000 capital, in shares of $100 each. J. R. Reid was President and S. H. West was Secretary-Treasurer.

The street car tracks extended from the G. T. R. Depot along Queen Street to Fourth, along Fourth to King and along King eastward to the Erie and Huron Station. Part of the distance was cobblestone pavement, part was cedar block, and part was just plain mud road. Over this route four horse drawn cars made their trips, coming and going at more or less regular intervals, the fare being five cents for the trip.

Whatever the little horse-cars may have been for older people to ride on them, it was always a delightful adventure for the youngsters of that day and generation. However, popularity among children who pay half fare - or quite often no fare at all - is not sufficient to put even a horse car line on a remunerative basis. Owing to lack of patronage and consequent lack of funds, the system got in bad shape in the course of a few years. It was not an uncommon thing, according to tradition, for the cars to jump the tracks at the post office corner, when the passengers would get out and assist in prying them back upon the rails.

Eventually the C.P.R. came through and the Erie and Huron moved down town, taking on its passengers at the new C.P.R. Depot. Even without this drastic change in conditions, the Chatham Street Railway seems to have got into a bad way financially. Finally, a stage was reached where the Council refused to countenance the enterprise any longer. There seems to have been a number of acrimonious discussions in which critics of the system declared that it fulfilled only the first part of the slogan "Slow but sure" and that a passenger who ventured on one of the little yellow cars could be sure of only one eventuality - that he would not reach his destination on time.

J. R. Reid fought to the last for his enterprise and at the last vehemently declared that if the Town Council ordered the tracks up, they might as well put a high board fence around Chatham and call it a cemetery. Despite which, the tracks came up.

For several years - until the laying of the vitrified brick pavement in 1900 - a narrow cobble-stone pathway down the middle of the cedar block on King Street remained as a monument to the horse-car line. Even that vanished.

The little yellow cars themselves found a temporary refuge at the corner of King and Third Streets on a vacant, weed-grown lot and must have remained there for several weather-beaten years.

Then some enterprising individual with an eye to undiscerned possibilities got possession of them and moved them out to Erieau, in those days at the heyday of its popularity as a summer resort. There, the old horse cars, refinished and furnished, were miraculously transformed into more or less convenient summer cottages.

Such, as far as history records, was the end of Chatham's famous street car line. When a good many years later the Chatham, Wallaceburg & Lake Erie Line was built, the project of a local street car service in addition to the interurban line was mooted. The advent of the motor car

changed traffic conditions so materially that the bygone enterprise of J. R. Reid represents Chatham's one and only local street car venture.

In 1947 an attempt was made to establish a bus line throughout the City of Chatham. This enterprise, however, is yet in its infancy and will no doubt be continued successfully as the City continues to grow. According to the 1948 census the population of the City of Chatham is 19,315.

11.

Though the first permanent settlement in Chatham did not take place until 1820, education early received the attention of the pioneer settlement. Some time between the years 1820 and 1826 a private school was carried on in Abraham Iredell's deserted log shack "over the creek" at the corner of Water and William Streets. In 1826 a later school of the same type was conducted in Will Chrysler's house; here James Chrysler taught the "young idea" to shoot, one of his pupils being Israel Evans.

Chatham's first public school, a frame building, was erected on the site of the present Central School in 1831. Education, it will thus be seen, antedated other municipal activities by nearly ten years. Norman L. Freeman, a very able teacher, had charge of this school.

In the latter 40's a primitive sort of public school seems to have been opened in North Chatham in charge of John Etches. The public schools of that day were only partly free; and there were at that time three private schools as well as "Wilmotte's Grammar School, Miss Nelson's Junior School, and Mrs. Barclay's Girls' School. The total salaries paid the three public school teachers in 1845 amount to £108, 9s., 7½d. a year, this being supplemented by certain fees from the pupils.

With the growth of the municipality, the original Central School proved inadequate and in 1854 the frame building on this historic site was removed, making way for a square brick building which survived until 1895. It is interesting to note that this "old Central School" as it came to be known in its dingy latter days, was in its inception vigorously opposed by one of the town newspapers and a good many citizens on the ground that it was far beyond not merely the needs of the community but its needs for years to come, and far too expensive. The actual cost of the entire building in 1854 was $4,800!

In March, 1855, the nucleus of the later Chatham High School and Collegiate Institute was formed when Principal Jamieson began to hold grammar school classes in the old Barracks with a limited roll of secondary pupils. The Chatham Grammar School on Prince Street was opened with considerable ceremony on August 10, 1855. In 1885 it was superseded by the Collegiate Institute which some 25 years later was largely extended. Until the construction of the Collegiate Addition, however, the old Grammar School building remained, first as the principal's residence and later as the home of the collegiate caretaker.

The original North Chatham Public School, a frame building, stood on what is now Grand Avenue a short distance east of Victoria Avenue. It was succeeded in 1861 by the "old Head Street School" which continued in use until the construction of the Forest Street School in 1882, was then used for some years as a Model School, and still later was converted into a brewery. Ultimately the historic structure was pulled down to make way for

residences.

Meanwhile in 1882, the Forest Street School, later called McKeough School in honor of the late William McKeough, for many years chairman of the Chatham Public School Board, had been constructed. The original building cost some $12,000. In the war years the larger part of the old building was torn down to make way for a thoroughly modern structure. McKeough School early attained high rank under the principalship of the late James Brackin; then the late Miss Abram.

In the years between 1867 and 1895, Chatham possessed a fairly comprehensive system of what were then known as "ward schools", small neighborhood schools which took the junior pupils, the more advanced classes attending the two larger public schools. The ward school system in South Chatham, included the Queen Street School erected in 1870 at a cost of $8,000; the Princess Street (or old King Street) School built in 1872 at a cost of $8,000, and the Payne School at the corner of Murray and Prince Streets, a two-room structure erected in 1868. At one time a class was also accommodated in the "Old Free" Church on Adelaide Street near Wellington, which was leased by the Board for school purposes.

The Princess Street School was the third on that site. A log school had been erected there in 1840 to accommodate the colored children of the community. This was succeeded by a frame building, and later the brick school which still survives, was erected.

By 1895, when the reluctant community at last conceded that the "old Central School" owed the City of Chatham nothing of the original $4800 it had cost the town 40 years before, marked changes had taken place in the community. Chatham had grown south and west so that the so-called "ward schools" were convenient to only a small portion of the community. With the decline of the colored population, the ancient policy of segregating the colored pupils had been abandoned. Finally, the "ward schools" like the "old Central" had become out of date in the light of modern ideas in regard to school buildings.

Whether to rebuild on the original site or to seek a new site in another part of the city was for long a vexed question. The ex-pupils of "old Central" who for sentimental reasons advocated the original site, carried the day. A new Central School was planned to accommodate all the public school children of South Chatham; and with its completion the classes were centralized there and the older ward schools were sold.

This arrangement, helped out by one or two additions to the Central proved fairly satisfactory until 1910 when the overcrowded state of the school led to the building of the present Queen Mary School. So rapid was the growth of the city and of the school population that in a few years Queen Mary School had to be extended.

While the Chatham Collegiate Institute attained high standing throughout the province and gave admittedly excellent preparation for the professionsand excellent cultural training for all pupils, the fact came to be recognized by the public generally that the great mass of public school graduates destined to enter trades or business were entitled to practical training. Out of this conviction came the establishment of a commercial department at the Collegiate Institute whose popularity was attested by a continuously large attendance.

Still later, a beginning was made in the line of vocational training, a few rooms at the Central School then not required for public school

classes being utilized for this purpose. In addition to the day vocational classes, special night classes in various lines were conducted for some years with a steadily increasing patronage while the public school classes were supplemented along practical lines by the introduction of manual training and domestic science.

This finally proved inadequate and it was decided to establish a vocational school. In the year 1929 the building formerly occupied by the Senita Hotel was remodelled and fitted for such. In that same year an addition was completed to serve as an auditorium.

The Chatham High School also proved inadequate to take care of the large number of pupils and in 1940 a new high school was completed.

St. Joseph's Separate School on Cross Street was erected in 1873 and was after many years of service succeeded by the present structure. With the establishment of the Blessed Sacrament Church in North Chatham, a second Separate School was built on Victoria Avenue.

The Pines, another Separate School, was established in 1890, and two additions have been added since that time.

12.

There are two Hospitals in Chatham. St. Joseph's Hospital was established and opened on October 15, 1890, with a capacity at that time for from 16 to 20 beds. It has been increased until now in 1948 it has a capacity for from 140 to 150 patients.

The Public General Hospital was opened in 1893 with about a twenty bed capacity. The size of the Hospital has been increased several times until now it has a capacity for 150 beds.

13.

On Saturday, July 3, 1841, the first issue of the pioneer paper of Kent appeared - The Chatham Journal. It was a four page sheet presenting an appearance that would be quite creditable even in this age. The publishers were Charles Dolsen and William Fulford. Two or three columns of this initial number were taken up with a sketch of the County of Kent, which at that time comprised twenty townships, ten of which now form the County of Lambton and one (Tilbury North) since transferred to the County of Essex. Drainage was earnestly urged in this and subsequent numbers of the paper, and the seed then sown has borne good fruit as is evidenced by the many magnificent drainage schemes which have been constructed in all parts of the County at a cost of many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Journal also had a page of advertisements.

The second paper to appear in Chatham was "The Gleaner" started by Mr. George Gould in July, 1845. He continued the publication for several years but eventually transferred the business to Noah I. Freeman who was appointed Postmaster some time in the fifties and the Gleaner passed out.

The Kent Advertiser appears to have been the successor of The Gleaner, its first appearance being in March, 1848, Mr. Thomas A. Ireland being the publisher. He continued the business until 1853 or 54 when the office and plant were destroyed by fire. After the fire John S. Vosburg

who published a paper at Kingston moved his plant to Chatham and continued the publication of The Advertiser. A station a few miles east of Chatham was named in his honor.

The Chatham Planet which seems to have been the successor of The Journal entered the field in April, 1851, the publishers being Miles Miller and Matthew Dolsen. During their regime a young printer, Rufus Stevenson, who had learned the art preservative in St. Catherines, found his way to Chatham in search of fame and fortune and he was not long in the Planet Office until he and a fellow printer took over the business. Both were expert printers and the Planet soon became one of the leading papers in the Province.

In 1854 Jesse W. Rose bought out The Kent Advertiser and greatly improved the mechanical outfit of the paper, the office being recognized in other towns in the neighboring counties as one of the best equipped in the country.

The Western Argus succeeded the Advertiser in March, 1860, William H. Thompson being the publisher. When Mr. Thompson decided to leave Chatham, Rev. I. B. Richardson became the owner of the Argus Plant and changed the name of the paper to The Western Union and continued the publication for two years.

Cameron Bros. succeeded Mr. Richardson in 1863 and again changed the name of the paper, "The Western Reformer" being the title adopted.

In 1864 J. R. Gemmill became the owner of the plant. Purchasing new material and removing it to new premises, he succeeded in getting out the initial number of The Chatham Banner on the 12th of January, 1865, and the paper continued under one proprietor for twenty years. In 1885 a stock company was formed and the paper greatly improved, although still under the same management. In 1894 the Company disposed of its interests to James S. Brierly of St. Thomas and a daily issue of The Banner was inaugurated.

In 1900 Mr. A. C. Woodward became the proprietor of the establishment and again changed the name, "The Daily News" being now the representative of the line of Liberal papers that have come and gone during the years. The present printing establishment is a mammoth affair compared with the modest outfits of earlier days and a credit to the business tact and energy with which the paper is conducted.

14

In July, 1943, Aubrey Milner, of Denver, Colorado, offered to the City of Chatham, the former residence of his father, the late Robert Milner, for a Museum and Art Gallery. A primary purpose of the gift was to preserve for posterity the art works of his mother, the late Emma Milner. The city accepted this offer and the commodious and substantial brick residence on William Street opposite historic Tecumseh Park was remodeled and redecorated. The Chatham-Kent Museum, opened October 4, 1945, is able to present to its public many items of local historic interest and three exhibits which are unique. These are the pictures by Mrs. Milner, the Sandys Collection of Native Birds, and the Sulman Room which contains the most striking of a host of curios gathered by Mr. and Mrs. George W. Sulman in world travels which took them, during a long period of years, to the far corners of the earth. It also includes Indian relics, a collection of ore minerals and mineral bearing rocks, many works of art, and a goodly collection of articles used by the early settlers of Kent County.

15.

The Beginning of Church Life.

(Compiled from papers on the Roman Catholic Church, by Mrs. J.P.Dunn; the Church of England in Chatham, by Rev. Canon R.S.W. Howard; the Methodist Church, by the late W.E.McKeough and Dr.A.A.Hicks; and the Presbyterian Church in Chatham, by the late P.D. McKellar.)

To give, even in outline, the story of the various individual churches and congregations in Kent County, would require a volume much larger than this one. From pioneer days, religion has had a potent influence on community life; and the spiritual aspirations of the men who cleared the wilderness and the women who made homes for them is indicated by the eagerness with which they welcomed the early itinerant messengers of the gospel and the sacrifices they made to secure ministers and congregations of their own.

It seems probable that the first religious services in the present Kent County were conducted by the Jesuit Missionaries who visited the Neutral Indians in the first half of the seventeenth century. The pioneer white settlements along the River Thames were visited from time to time by missionaries from Detroit, and the first religious edifice in Kent County was a small Roman Catholic chapel, built on the site of the present St. Peter's Church by Rev. Father Jean Baptiste Marchand of Sandwich, who held services there once a month. The church records date back to this chapel's dedication on July 8, 1802, on which day the first baptism, that of Michael Deloge, aged 10 months, was recorded.

Father Marchand was succeeded in 1819 by Rev. Father Crevier, during whose pastorate the first RomanCatholic Church in Kent was erected on this site in 1823. This white frame church was for many years a landmark on the lower Thames till its destruction by fire on October 28, 1895, when the present fine brick structure was erected.

Meanwhile in the year 1836 Right Rev. Alexander McDonell, Bishop of Kingston - in whose diocese Kent was then situated - received from the Government a grant of land for a church at Chatham. Pending the building of a church, services were held in private homes by missionaries from St. Peter's and Sandwich. In 1845, with the advent of Rev. Father Joseph Vincent Jaffre, the building of a church was definitely undertaken, and on May 30, 1847, the corner stone of the first St. Joseph's Church was laid. In the pastorate of Rev. Father William, between 1878 and 1889, the present church was erected, though many improvements have since been made to the original edifice. Within comparatively recent times the Church of the Blessed Sacrament has been erected in North Chatham.

To Rev. Father Lorin, pastor of St. Peter's Church in 1845, was due the building of a small chapel to serve the growing Catholic population in Fain Court. In 1854 the first Church of the Immaculate Conception was begun, and, on its destruction by fire twenty years later, a brick church was constructed, being replaced in 1912 in the pastorate of the gifted Father Emery by a magnificent Gothic structure.

While the first religious edifice in Kent was built outside Chatham, most of the Protestant denominations had their beginnings in that

community. The first church in Chatham was built in 1819. Prior to that time Rev. Richard Pollard, stationed at Sandwich, was the first missionary of the Church of England to Kent County, and it was apparently due to his efforts, backed by the loyal support of his Chatham parishioners, that St. Paul's Church was erected. It occupied a site on the north side of the present Stanley Avenue, almost opposite Victoria Park, with the rectory on one side and the burying ground on the other. Rev. Thomas Morley, about 1827, was the first resident clergyman.

Of the ministers who succeeded him, the one who made the most lasting impression on the community was the Rev. Francis William Sandys, the first to bear the title of rector, who took charge in 1848 and whose diligent pastoral journeys took him to communities throughout a large area. It was during his rectorship, continuing till 1894, that the present Christ Church was built, being opened for divine service on August 26, 1861. The old St. Paul's Church continued in use as a mortuary chapel till its destruction by fire in 1869. In 1875 the present Holy Trinity Church in North Chatham was erected.

The settlers of the Methodist faith were, in the pioneer days, ministered to by the circuit riders who, traversing the blazed trails on horseback, held their services in school houses and farm homes. Of these circuit riders, Rev. Nathan Bangs was an outstanding example.

In 1809, William Case was appointed missionary to the "Detroit circuit" - a mission 240 miles long with 12 regular appointments, the greater part being in Canada. Though the work was interrupted by the War of 1812 (most of the Methodist missionaries being American citizens) the records show continuous growth in the "Thames circuit", from which the "London circuit" was detached in 1823. In 1833 the Methodist Episcopal body of Canada united with the British Conference to form the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and thenceforth Chatham and the Thames circuit were supplied from the Wesleyan Church.

Previous to 1841 services in Chatham were held in either the log school house on the present Central School site or in private homes. In 1841 or 1842 the Wesleyan Methodists erected a church on King Street where the C.P.R. station now stands, Rev. Thomas Flumerfelt being the first pastor. This building, seating about 400, continued in use until the erection of the Park Street Methodist Church, the foundation of which was laid in 1871, the building being completed and opened in 1874 with Rev. W. S.Griffin as pastor.

In the late 50's the Primitive Methodists formed a Society in Chatham, meeting first on the north side of the river and later on King Street East. About 1867 they erected a little brick church at the corner of Wellington and Centre Streets, with Rev. Manley Benson as minister. This edifice, now relegated to worldly uses, is still standing.

In 1877 the Canadian Methodist Episcopal denomination built the Victoria Avenue Methodist Church, Rev. Wm. Codwin being the first pastor. A little later the Methodist Church of Canada (in which the Wesleyan Methodists and the Methodist New Connection had been merged in 1874) erected a small frame church on Elizabeth Street. After the union of all the Methodist Churches in Canada in 1884, the Park Street and Victoria Avenue Churches between them carried on the work of the Methodist denomination in Chatham, the other edifices being abandoned.

When, in 1837, Alexander McIntosh, P.L.S., surveyed part of the town of Chatham, supplementing Iredell's original survey, a 10-acre

tract bounded by William, Wellington, Prince and Park Streets was reserved for the benefit of the Church of Scotland. The first visit of a Presbyterian minister was in 1841 when Rev. William Finlay came to organize a Presbyterian Church and urge the people to erect a place of worship. But the schism in the parent Church of Scotland about that time, and the difficulty of financing the building enterprise, delayed completion of the new church till 1847, Rev. John Robb, who came in 1853 being, apparently, the first regular minister. The church was rebuilt in 1869.

Meanwhile, adherents to the United Presbyterian Church had purchased a site on Wellington Street, the building of a brick edifice being started in 1842 and completed in 1844 when Rev. James McFayden became the first minister.

Rev. Angus McColl came to Chatham in January, 1848, as minister of the Free Church of Scotland. As they had no church, and the Old Kirk congregation had one but no minister, union services were held in the same edifice, with Rev. Mr. McColl ministering to both congregations, until the arrival of Rev. John Robb in 1853. The congregations then parted company, and the Free Church people erected an edifice of their own on the northeast corner of Wellington and Adelaide Streets. Rev. Mr. McColl's ministry was a strenuous one; after serving his own congregation in the morning, he would ride into one of the adjacent townships and hold afternoon services there, returning to Chatham for the evening service in his own church. This he did for years, till the outlying congregations became strong enough to engage ministers of their own.

The Free and United Presbyterian Churches, which in 1875 had become connected with the Presbyterian Church in Canada, four years later united in Chatham under the name of the First Presbyterian Church, with Rev. Angus McColl and Rev. William Walker as joint pastors. In 1889, when Rev. F. H. Larkin succeeded to the pastorate, initial steps were taken whose outcome was the opening in May, 1893, of the present First Presbyterian Church.

In the subsequent movement which resulted in the formation of the United Church of Canada, the Park Street, St. Andrew's and Victoria Avenue Churches entered the United Church, while the First Presbyterian Church followed the continuing Presbyterians.

While the Baptist congregations in Chatham date farther back, the present William Street Baptist Church was erected in 1874, the first minister being Rev. Archibald Campbell.

In addition to the aforementioned Churches, there are the following: Holy Trinity, the Regular Baptist, Alliance Tabernacle, First Lutheran, Church of Latter Day Saints, Salvation Army, and the First Church of Christ, Scientist.

From beginnings largely in the City of Chatham, the religious and spiritual life of the various denominations of the entire county has been developed through the devoted ministrations of a succession of able pastors.

16.

The City of Chatham is the commercial centre of a large area of fertile agricultural territory. As a result, a number of its many indus-

tries are factories manufacturing products of the farms such as refining sugar grown by the farmers as sugar beets; and catsup, sauer kraut, etc., from the tomatoes, cabbages, etc.

In recent years there have been a great many new industries located in Chatham and also many outside manufacturers have established Canadian branches here. Canada is a rapidly growing country and manufacturers have found it profitable to establish branches to serve this growing population in the most convenient way.

The City is well equipped with playgrounds and parks, namely, Tecumseh, Victoria, Stirling and McKeough, and just recently a Community Centre and Y. M. C. A. have been established. Also, within easy distance of Chatham are the summer resorts of Erie Beach, Erieau and Government Park.

THE KENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

J. F. Fletcher,
President.

Chatham, Ontario.
March 15, 1948.

CHATHAM TOWNSHIP

The Township and Gore of Chatham form the largest territorial division under one municipal government within the County of Kent. The original Township of Chatham extended from the Thames on the South to the line which bounded the original Indian Grant on the North, the line now forming the dividing line between the Township proper and the Gore. The side boundaries of the Township run at substantially right angles with the Thames. The Eastern Town Line separates it from Dover and the Western from Camden. Between the Thames and the base line of the Gore at the West side of the Township the least distance is about sixteen and a half miles, but, owing to the convergence of these lines toward the East, the distance between the points named at the Eastern Town Line is less than six miles. The Gore of Chatham (so called probably because, like the Gore of Camden, it is less similar in shape to a "gore" than any other geometrical figure) consists of four concessions of seven eighths of a mile each, lying between the base line referred to as the Lambton County boundary, and stretching from the Gore of Camden on the East to Lake St. Clair on the West.

The area of Chatham Township and Gore is 84,1[illegible] acres, of which in 1880, 31,955 acres were returned as "cleared", an increase from 26,[illegible] acres in 1871. The peculiarities noticeable in the surface of other Townships in this County are generally observable in Chatham, one of the most marked being the absence of streams dividing within its borders. The Thames on the South and the Sydenham traversing the Gore from East to West are the only bodies of water approaching the dignity of living streams, but the Township is intersected in different localities by depressions of about six feet below the general level and appearing to have been scooped out by early freshets. These gullies pursue a [illegible] course, substantially from East to West, are dignified by the name of creeks and by some called canals. Most of these creeks dry up in the summer season when their bottoms (usually averaging forty feet in width) yield luxuriant crops of wild hay which the cultivation and cutting [illegible] to a good grade.

The principal creeks of Chatham Township are Arnold's (the old one flanked by banks of respectable height), emptying about two miles above Chatham; Pain Creek, rising near Louisville and draining the Third and Fourth Concessions, thence to the Dover Town Line; Big Creek, rising near the Thames above Louisville, and coursing thence through the Third, Fourth and Fifth Concessions into Dover; and Little Bear Creek, the most considerable of them all, which drains the territory between these before [illegible] the Sydenham. The quality of the soil bordering these creeks (except a few localities on the Little Bear) is mostly first class, consisting of a generally heavy, durable and productive clay which the droughts of summer transform into flint, making tillage all high impossible until the visitation of after-harvest rains. As the land recedes from these creeks, its consistency becomes more pliable and a fertile loam, overlaid by a rich vegetable mould, succeeds the more stubborn grades nearer the creek banks. Another peculiar feature of the topography of this region is the sloping of the surface gradually away from the banks of rivers or creeks until the slopes meet

semi-swampy land whose surface is below the level of creek bottoms. These low-lying sections are in turn drained by municipal drains, some of which have to be extended many miles to secure eligible outlets.

This Township is now traversed by a perfect network of these drains, constructed under authority of the Drainage Act, so that little now remains to be done to secure its surface from the effects of floods and freshets. The most extensive of these works is the Dover Townline Drain, running nearly a dozen miles along that highway and discharging into the Sydenham. Did it run parallel with that stream one would find difficulty in determining from a superficial glance which was the river and which the drain so large is the volume of water discharged by the latter. At periods of high water, in fact, it is no unusual occurrence for small steamboats to ascend this drain considerable distances and load with wood, logs, timber, stave bolts, &c., immense quantities of which are annually floated down its surface to its junction with the Sydenham. The Prince Albert Drain, from the Western centre of the Township Northward to the Sydenham, is also a stupendous affair while the Mill Drain, traversing the territory lying between Pain Court and Big Creeks, and many others of lesser magnitude, contribute to make Chatham one of the best drained Townships within the area of the level lands of the West.

Comparatively little of this Township is incapable of being brought under cultivation as little of it lies too low to admit of drainage. There are, however, somewhat extensive stretches of "plain" land contiguous to the Western border and North of the centre on which the water lies during the greater part of the year, the surface level sinking as it approaches the Sydenham. This stream, towards its final end, runs between banks scarcely higher than its own water level which it overflows in unusually wet seasons, thus inundating large areas of the plains referred to. The river has even been known to attain a greater height of water than the drains emptying into it when the tactics of Hollanders have been resorted to and dykes constructed, over which the water from the drains has been pumped by windmill power.

The Township of Chatham received its first settlers when the original influx of pioneers to the County of Kent took place in the last decade of the Eighteenth Century. No authentic record exists of any settlement having been made within the bounds of the Township prior to 1, when Mr. Baker (referred to in our sketch of Chatham) was awarded a grant of several hundred acres on the River Front, apparently as one of the conditions of his locating here to superintend the construction of Government ships at the shipyard then established on the more recent "Block Ground", now called Tecumseh Park. It is related by the descendant of a pioneer, however, that the land alluded to had been previously drawn by the brothers Jacob and Valentine Iler who surrendered their claim to Government when the latter found it expedient to establish Mr. Baker in that location. At any rate, the Ilers did not again choose a location in this or any other Township of the County where their names have come under the notice of the writer. This farm remained the property of Mr. Baker for many years and finally passed into the hands of Henry Eberts whose father, Joseph Eberts, married Mr. Baker's eldest daughter.

Much uncertainty exists concerning the dates at which those whose early location in Chatham denominates them the pioneers of the Township, took up their residence here, neither the presence of memoranda or the apparent accuracy of tradition serving to locate dates during that

early period with any degree of precision. It would appear, however, that among the first to follow Baker into this Township was George Sicklesteele who settled on Lot Nine, River Front, probably not later than 1794. He was a Hessian by birth and had been a member of the Hessian Contingent of troops whom the British Government hired to assist in the fruitless task of subduing the Americans during the Revolution. A son of that pioneer, David Sicklesteele, who so long kept a hotel on the lot mentioned forming one of the prominent landmarks of the Township, was among the first children born here, the date of that event being during his life.

Other prominent families in the early history of this Township and not less prominent at the present day, were the Arnolds, Everetts, Blackburns and Frenches. Representatives of the three first named of these families arrived in or about 1796. They were all United Empire Loyalists from Pennsylvania who had remained in Michigan some time after coming West; but, when the surrender of that territory to the Americans became a foregone conclusion, they removed up the Thames, impelled by a sentimental preference for the British Flag. There were two brothers Arnold who settled in this Township, sons of Frederick Arnold who, with the balance of his family, chose a location on the River Front of Howard. The brothers who remained in Chatham were Lewis and John, the former of whom settled upon Lot Thirteen and the latter on Lot Fourteen, next adjoining on the East, building his house near where G. B. Grover's house now stands.

The Everitt family then consisted of William Alexander, the father, and his sons Adam, William, David and John. Mr. Everitt located Lot Fifteen where Louisville is now built, and continued there during the balance of his life. Not all his descendants remained in the Township; still there has ever since been a respectable and influential representation of the family here, several of its members becoming prominent in municipal affairs, as notably William A. Everett, J.P., grandson of the original settler of that name, now living near Louisville. The Blackburn family was then even more numerous than the Everetts and consisted of John, the father, and his sons Anthony, Joseph, Robert, James, Leonard, Isaac, William, another son who died in youth, and one daughter. With this same staff of assistants, Mr. Blackburn located East Half of Lot Ten, Concession Two, now occupied by his grandson, Abraham Blackburn. He also drew several other lots in the Second and Third Concessions, some of which were afterwards settled by his sons, nearly all of whom raised large families here, and, with a continued increase through succeeding generations, the name of Blackburn has become one of the most common in a Township noted for the numerical extent of several of its families.

The fountain head of the French family in this Township was Peter French who came here with the pioneers while yet in early boyhood. He subsequently took up Lot Eleven, Concession Three, where his son John still resides. The elder Mr. French distinguished himself in the War of 1812, as did several of his sons in the quelling of the Mackenzie Insurrection. He raised a large family of sons and daughters, several of whom, as well as a host of more remote descendants, continue to reside in the locality of the Third and Fourth Concessions from the Prince Albert Road Eastward, in consequence of which this part of the Township has long been known as French's Settlement.

Another of the pioneers of the Louisville section was Richard Jackman, who came in and settled about the same time as the other families named, or at any rate prior to the dawn of the present century, but this name has become extinct in the Township of Chatham. The above named

families constituted the bulk of the settlement in the Township for a good many years during which the current of progress was not directed towards its interior. Nor was the River Front brought to a very flourishing condition of improvement until the first quarter of the present century had sped by. It was but shortly before that period that Lot Eight was occupied by the Knapp family, in whose possession it still remains, but at a somewhat earlier period than that John Kesmore located Lot Seven, holding his residence about where the Messrs. Williamson's house now graces the scene.

The Fisher family arrived in the Township 1827. It comprised the father, John, and the sons Peter, John, Robert S. and James, the two last named of whom are still numbered among the highly respected residents of the River Front. They settled Lot Eleven along the river, on which a Frenchman named Fortier had kept store before their location there, the said store, the first in the Township, having been situated on the site now occupied by Mr. James Fisher's house. One of the sons, John, subsequently settled on Lot Nine, Concession Three, where one Moe had located as a "squatter" very early, and, it is related, had cleared forty acres when he was obliged to surrender his possession and improvements to Fisher.

With the exception of Moe and Peter French, there were no settlers back of the Second Concession of this Township up to 1830 but about the date mentioned a bachelor named Scott had taken up a residence in a mud-walled shanty on the banks of Pain Court Creek, Lot Seven, Concession Four. He remained at least long enough to raise a crop of wheat, a portion of which, instead of sustaining, deprived him of his life in this manner: He was following up along the creek, carrying a bag partially filled with wheat, and, coming to a fence on Moe's place, turned his back to transfer his burden (carried partially across his shoulder and breast), when it fell across the top rail, catching his throat in its embrace, and there he died of strangulation.

About 1833 Peter McGeachy located on the lot rendered vacant by Scott's death, becoming practically the pioneer of a considerable expanse of territory thereabout; but three years later, in 1836, there settled further down the creek, on Lot Six, Robert McCubbin and his sons Robert and William, since quite prominent in this part of the Township. They had come from the Township of Nelson, in Halton County. During the period between 1830 and the Rebellion, the nucleus of the Scotch Settlement was formed by the location of John McVicar and several sons on Lot Eleven, Concession Four (North part), Malcolm McKerrall on the lot adjoining on the West, and Donald and John McKerrall in the immediate neighborhood on the banks of Big Creek. Mr. McVicar's sons were Duncan, Neil, Malcolm and Donald, the former of whom, still residing on their original location, has long been a gentleman of much influence in the Township, and one of the younger brothers is now a widely noted doctor of divinity connected with the Presbyterian College of Montreal. Prominent among others who contributed to the composition of the Scotch Settlement were Duncan McNaughton, now residing in Chatham, who located Lots Nine and Ten, Concession Five, in company with his brother Dugald and their father's family, at the date prior to the Rebellion; Henry Robertson and William Wallace in Concession Six and James Simpson in Concession Eight. Of these Messrs. Simpson popularly identified with the progress of the Township, both holding places on the Commission of the Peace and contributing largely to the enviable status to which the Scotch Settlement has attained.

Highway facilities were neither numerous nor elaborate in

these early days and this remark in regard to the comforts of travelling holds good with respect to the comfort of living. The River Road had been cut out along the devious windings of the river bank but nothing save the most primitive kind of cart tracks pierced the interior of the Township up to the period of the Rebellion. The settlers along Pain Court and Big Creeks followed those trails along the banks of the streams named to a point nearly in rear of Louisville whence they took a cross-cut route to the River Road and thence to Chatham, the centre of their undeveloped commerce. With the closer attention to internal improvements which followed as a consequence of the Rebellion, however, Chatham received material benefit in the opening of the Prince Albert, Caledonia and Lindsey Roads and an increase of settlers in the interior. It was well into the present century before even a name was bestowed upon this Township, the style of its denomination having previously been "the Third Township North of the Thames"; Dover East and West having then been separately numbered to correspond with the numbers of those along the South bank.

The date is comparatively recent at which the tide of progress extended inland from the Scotch Settlement whose Northern limit may be stated as the Eighth Concession. The intervening period was devoted to settling more densely the territory already circumscribed by the slight cordon of pioneers named above. In the section in rear of Louisville and Eastward to the Camden boundary, the Arnold, Everett and Blackburn families became very numerous; the Merritt, then the others named, also rose into numerical prominence, and grasped large tracts in that part of the Township, while the Shaws and Traxlers along the River Front above Louisville, and several of the second generation of Frenches along Pain Court Creek, added density to the population of the Southern half of Chatham.

Referring, after this lengthy allusion to "Southern affairs", to the settlement of the Gore of Chatham (which, prior to 1850, belonged to the Township of Sombra), it should be stated that the pioneers of this section were principally the descendants of the emigrants brought out by Lord Selkirk and settled at Baldoon in August, 1804. That venture of the Scottish Earl will be more lengthily referred to in our sketch of Dover, to which the history of the enterprise largely appertains. Suffice it to say in this place that of one hundred and eleven persons so located in a little colony on the Baldoon Farm, many, and eventually all, removed to the adjacent lands bordering the Sydenham, Chenal Ecarte and other portions of Chatham Township and Gore, Dover and Sombra. Among the most prominent of those who located along the Chenal Ecarte (a French term signifying "lost channel", applied to the most Easterly channel of the St. Clair delta but which has been corrupted into "Sur Carty" through mispronunciation) was James Johnson, father of Lionel H. Johnson of Wallaceburg. He had accompanied his father to Baldoon where the latter was employed by Lord Selkirk in the capacity of overseer of stock. The location chosen by Mr. Johnson was Lot Three, Concession One, of the Gore, just at the head of St. Anne's Island, the date of his settlement there about 1809. Farther up the "Bay" Charles Fisher, a blacksmith, was one of the first to settle while on Lot Two James Stewart, another of Selkirk's settlers, located about the same time as Johnson. Others of these pioneers took up locations along the Sydenham, then called Bear Creek, among the earliest to settle in the vicinity of Wallaceburg being a numerous family of McDougalls, several of whom, including John and James, settled in the First Concession of the Gore, where traversed by the river, quite early in the century.

Above the village named the settlement is only about fifty

years old, the first to penetrate that locality in the capacity of settlers being George Little on the North and William James on the South side, the former on Lot Eighteen; and about the same time along the same stream between Wallaceburg and the Camden Gore border, Paul Dustan located on the North bank of the river and adjacent territory, lying partially within the present limits of Wallaceburg; Captain John McGregor drew a grant of eight hundred and fifty acres of consideration of services rendered during the War of 1812, in which he lost an arm. This tract he divided among his eleven children, only two of whom, one son and one daughter, are now living.

One of the earliest locatees within the present limits of Wallaceburg was Lachlin McDougall who took up a residence on the South bank just East of where the North branch enters the main stream. There he opened a store and hotel, the first of each in the village. Opposite him, in the angle formed by the main river and branch and East of the latter, his brother Archibald located also very early in the history of the place and just East of him was another brother, Hector. Lot Twelve, Concession Two, on which the major portion of the village now stands, received a settler about 1830 in the person of Hector McLean who resided on the North part of the lot, leaving the Southern portion, where the village has since been built, still a dense forest.

The Western margin of Chatham Township is not so highly developed as other portions to which we have alluded. The Dover Townline, forming the great highway by which this section is reached, was not opened for years long after flourishing settlements had been planted beside the waters of the Sydenham. The first settler on the Chatham side of that road was Stephen Kinney who located soon after the rebellion in the Ninth Concession. Here he opened a tavern and entertained those who were so unfortunate as to be forced by the pressure of circumstances to travel the Town line in those early days, a task bordering on the impossible even at this late period when the putty-like soil is overcharged with moisture. The tavern established by the father is still kept by a son and there is also located a post office bearing the unusually euphonious name of "Oungah".

The history of municipal government in Chatham Township dates back to 1832, on the first day of which year a meeting convened in the school house standing on the river bank, Lot Twelve (now owned by Adam Arnold), when the following named residents were placed upon the official list for the Township: David Everett and Banjamin Knapp, Assessors; Louis J. Arnold, Collector; David Sicklesteele and John Traxler, Road-masters; John Fisher, Sr., and John Arnold, Town Wardens; Joseph Blackburn, Pound-keeper; Samuel Arnold, Town Clerk. No meeting was held in 1833 but certain Magistrates appointed Samuel Arnold, Clerk, and other gentlemen to the minor offices. For 1834 the list included the names of Samual Arnold, Clerk; David Everett and Traxler and Peter French, Assessors; Jacob Arnold

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society, 1947.

DOVER

There are nominally two Townships of Dover in this County - Dover East and Dover West, but the existence of the latter is discernible only during periods of low water, when Lake St. Clair has temporarily withdrawn its floods from the region which the exuberant imagination of early surveyors coined into a township, under the name mentioned. Dover, by which name we shall hereafter refer to both Townships, is the most Westerly of the Northern tier of Townships in this County, stretching from Lake St. Clair on the West to the Chatham Township line on the East, and from the Core of Chatham base line on the North to the Thames on the South, a portion of its South-eastern extremity being included within the corporate limits of the City of Chatham.

The topographical features here displayed are similar to those prevailing elsewhere throughout the level areas of the West, except that in this Township a greater percentage of low lying lands is met with than in neighboring Townships, a large area of its extent bordering the Sydenham, Chenal Ecarte, Lake St. Clair, and the Lower Thames being submerged a considerable portion of the year. In the interior too there occur considerable areas of semi-swampy lands distributed in many localities, but the excellent character of the soil in more favored sections efficiently neutralizes these disadvantages, and secures to Dover the reputation of possessing as high an average of arable land as any of the Townships adjoining. This average is being constantly elevated too through the medium of an extensive and extending system of drains, some of which assume immense proportions, as notably the Bear Line Drain emptying into the Thames, which at its mouth presents much of the appearance of a trench cut through high banks for a narrow gauge railway. The natural drains traversing Dover are Pain Court, Little Bear and Big Creeks, each of which enters its territory from the adjoining Township of Chatham. Little Bear takes a tortuous course through an excellent agricultural section about the centre of the Township, and discharges into the Chenal Ecarte after flowing some distance towards its mouth through low plains. Big Creek also traverses a very fertile tract to within a short distance of its point of discharging into Mitchell's Bay, and Pain Court Creek is flanked by some as fair and fertile fields as ever lay exposed to the sunshine, producing the best barley grown in Western Canada, besides excellent crops and grades of all other cereals.

The pioneers of Dover were the Dolsen family, the Canadian branch of which sprang from a United Empire Loyalist who left the Valley of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania soon after the close of the struggle for American Independence. Mr. Dolsen was then far advanced in years, and beyond the age of active participation in the toils of pioneer life, but his two sons, Matthew and Isaac, were in the vigor of manhood. The former chose a location on the Dover side of the river, though the name of Dover was not then thought of in connection with this Township, which, after survey, was referred to as the "Second Township North of the Thames," Dover West of the present being then the "first Township." Isaac Dolsen, the other brother,

located on the Raleigh side of the river, in connection with which Township he will be at greater length referred to.

The location selected by Matthew Dolsen was Lot Nineteen where he settled probably as early as 1792, for it is related that when his family, including his two sons, John and Isaac M., arrived in 1794, he had already made considerable improvements upon the lot. Next lot East of Dolsen and of the present Bear Line Road, was early occupied by Thomas Clark, who removed thence to the creek banks above Chatham, very soon after his first arrival on the Thames and there he established the pioneer mill of the County, as related in our sketch of Chatham. On the next lot East, one Wilmore located also very early, but the removal of both of those pioneers left the river front between the Bear Line and Chatham without a settler for many years thereafter.

The centre of attraction along the river front for a long period was the Dolsen farm (now owned by William Gray, 1882), where the proprietor's enterprise had established several manufacturers of considerable magnitude, which he continued to operate until the second decade of this century was past. One of his first ventures there was a general trading mart, which he supplied with goods brought from Buffalo and Detroit in a vessel of his own construction, said to have been the first vessel built on the Thames, it having been launched within a few years of his settlement there. Later, he opened a distillery and grist mill, the former fitted with four "worms", and the combined establishments employing eight horses to furnish motive power for grinding. The immense quantities of whiskey thus manufactured were disposed of chiefly to the North-West Company, but as Mr. Dolsen's possessions at that point included a tavern and the red ribbon pledge had not yet become popular among the settlers, it is but reasonable to suppose that a goodly share of the "ardent" went to supply the local demand. A tannery, blacksmith shop, and cooperage, in which quite a large staff of men were employed added to the volume of trade and height of the dignity centering at this place; but with the increase of settlement throughout the country, the collapse of the North-West Company, the division of trade in general among other marts which an increased population called into existence, and the many other indefinable reasons which attended the decline of small trade centres in the early days, the spirit of commerce deserted this point, and the "hum of industry", which here established its original dwelling place in Canada, left for parts unknown.

Neither was the settlement of the river below the Dolsen centre either rapid or dense for many years after the pioneer locations were made. Matthew Dolsen's two sons grew to manhood here, when John (familiarly known as "Squire John") retained his residence on the old homestead and Isaac M. took up a home on the lot adjoining on the West, their father having drawn a four hundred acre grant here originally. Still farther down stream the settlement was formed during the present century by John Hamilton, the Poquettes, and Babys. The banks of Pain Court Creek, below the village of that name, were first settled by J. Bte. Loson, who was followed by Gabriel Primeau, in order named. All these parties took possession of the land as "squatters", but at their request Surveyor-General Rankin was sent up to survey a tract hereabout (to which is now accorded granted patents for their holdings.)

The interior of the Township was not settled until about the time of the Rebellion and the years succeeding that event. The van-

guard of settlement along the East centre was formed by Thomas Smith, who located on the Chatham Town Line in the Tenth Concession. He was followed somewhat later by the McPhersons, Rankins and Ashers in the vicinity of Baldoon Street and Little Bear Line, while in connection with the settlement of the region intervening between their locations and the North end of the Township the names of Bishop, Owen and Hyatt prominently appear.

Pursuing the course of our narrative Northwest necessitates retracing dates to the year 1804 when the Selkirk immigrants arrived at the Baldoon Farm lying within the angle formed by the Gore of Chatham Base Line on the North, the Chenal Ecarte on the West, and the Sydenham on the Southeast. Those pioneers came to the New World under the patronage of the Earl of Selkirk, at that time a nobleman of considerable wealth, vast enterprise and great philanthropic attributes, the latter of which he demonstrated by his endeavors to better the condition of many of his countrymen by transplanting them from the sterile Highlands of Scotland to the fertile plains of Canada and the North-West. The first shipload of his immigrants left Greenock in the ship Oughton, landing at Montreal in July, 1804. They were conveyed thence to Lachine in French carts, thence up the St. Lawrence to Kingston in batteaux, thence to Niagara by sailing vessel, thence across country on foot and in vehicles to Fort Erie, and from that point to Amherstburg and up the Detroit River and Chenal Ecarte to their landing place, which they reached during the month of August.

To this place the name of Baldoon had already been given, in honor of a parish in the Earl's Highland estate. The number of arrivals at that time and place was one hundred and eleven, but another large party who came across in the same ship continued their course to the banks of the Red River of the North where they founded the Selkirk Settlement which now forms so important a factor in the composition of Manitoba. Earl Selkirk had received from Government a grant of all the land lying between the Chatham Town line and Little Bear Line of the present, and extending from the Northern limit of the Township to within one concession of the Thames; among other conditions of the grant being one for colonization of the territory by a certain number of settlers. With the object and expectation of accomplishing this purpose and fulfilling those conditions, he brought out a great quantity of very choice farm stock, including horses, cattle, sheep and swine, the sheep so brought being said to have been the first introduced into the County of Kent.

The colony of Highlanders who first arrived included numerous families bearing the names of McPherson, McCallum, McDonald, McDougall, McLean and Stewart, but the McCallums and McPhersons of this party have since become extinct, while the other families have vastly increased in numbers. The entire community rendezvoused on the Baldoon Farm of about 1,000 acres, for some time drawing their means of support from a common fund provided by the Earl when their individual efforts were not successful in gleaning a sufficiency from the soil. The triangle referred to was considerably improved by Lord Selkirk at great personal expense, erecting suitable buildings, constructing drains, etc., but the entire grant subsequently passed out of his hands, through his becoming financially involved and being unable to carry out his grand scheme in detail. While the partial failure of his large enterprise is to be regretted, the noble Earl is deserving of high encomiums for the liberal and courageous spirit displayed in bringing to our shores so large and

eminently useful a class of citizens as has been developed from the party alluded to, only five of whom now live to relate the trials, privations and vicissitudes attendant upon their early experiences in the vicinity of the Sydenham and Chenal Ecarte. Lord Selkirk paid several visits to his colony after first planting it here. He used on such occasions to come in by way of the settlements on the Thames, whence he would traverse the woods and plains to Baldoon, employing as a body-guard a brawny Highlander, a portion of whose duty it was to carry the Earl across the creeks and swails upon his back.

Within a few years of their settlement at Baldoon, objections to the locality began to present themselves in the increasing number of inhabitants without a corresponding increase in the facilities of gaining a livelihood on that piece of territory, though it has meanwhile been divided up between the settlers in small farms, while some of them removed to the South bank of the river, or to the bank of the neighboring Chenal Ecarte, and a general disintegration of the community succeeded. Some of the settlers located in what is now the Gore of Chatham, while others penetrated beyond into the Township of Sombra, settling along the North branch of the Sydenham and the River St.Clair, others again removing to adjacent localities in Dover. There were some who remained on the original farm, however, but these were ultimately driven off by the rise in the water level of the neighboring network of streams and channels. This rise commenced about 1825, and to resist threatened inundation, dykes and levees of sufficient height were constructed where the variations of surface rendered them necessary. Despite their efforts, the water level continued its upward tendency and stories are told of harvest fields on which the shocks of ripened grain stood in luxuriant beauty, being flooded to the depth of several feet by a break in the levees. By 1830, the water had reached its utmost height, and in that year, it is related, the former wheat fields were navigated by moderately deep draught vessels. During that period also, as is stated by some gentlemen still living in this region, canoes were used as vehicles to carry children to school across what had formerly been arable land, and the practice of thus riding on the tide to a seat of learning and mooring their craft to the school house door is said to have been not infrequent.

This state of affairs of course necessitated a retreat of the settlers from the inundated localities and now the once fair scene of prosperous agriculture is a desolate waste, over which the floods sweep during several months of the year.

After the release by Lord Selkirk of his claim to the tract granted him, it was settled by families coming principally from the North of Ireland without any concerted plan of immigration, among whom were some of those referred to as locating the Baldoon Street and Bear Line. As another prominent pioneer of the Township should be mentioned Robert Mitchell, one of the earliest settlers, and the most influential resident in the locality of Mitchell's Bay, so called in his honor.

The history of Municipal affairs in this Township has not been wholly preserved on record, but from the book of earliest minutes extant, it appears that in 1848 the list of Township Officers contained the following names:

Robert Mitchell, District Councillor; Thomas W. Smith, Clerk; William A. Crowe, Assessor; Thomas Crowe, Sr., Collector; John

Toll, Isaac D. Dolsen and John Lawless, Town Wardens. On the introduction of the Municipal Act in 1850, Robert Mitchell, St. Luke Emery, Adolphus Reaume, Andre Peltier and Alexis Urquhart were elected the first Council, and the following appointments to Municipal Offices were made: T. W. Smith, Clerk; William Gordon, Collector; Wm. A. John and Robert Crowe, Assessors; and Thomas Crowe, Treasurer. The list of Township Officers for the present year stands thus, viz: John Wright, Reeve; Cornelius Purser, Deputy-Reeve; Philip Blair, Henri Thibodeau and Thomas Bordeau, Councillors; J. W. Welsh (Dover South P.O.), Clerk; Jos. Bechard, Treasurer.

There are but few post villages in Dover and none of considerable importance. The list includes Baldoon, about the centre; Oldfield, on the Chatham Town Line; Mitchell's Bay, near the shore of that inlet; and Pain Court, on the banks of the creek of that name, about seven miles from Chatham. The village is almost exclusively French and contains a very fine Catholic Church and Presbytery, store, hotel, steam saw mill, and a population of about 100. Its peculiar name (signifying "short bread") was bestowed under the following circumstances: Before the erection of a Catholic Church nearer than Sandwich, the settlers along this creek were annually visited by a Priest from that point on a tour of inspection and collection of contributions to the Church. The settlers were then very poor and often lacked the essentials of comfortable diet. One of them, with whom the Priest used to stop over night on such visits once expressed his wonder at the coincidence of these visits always falling upon a date when he was without bread in the house. The circumstances, thus brought to the notice of the reverend gentleman, resulted in him bestowing the above name upon the settlement, as a reminder to the residents of their former poverty and to his successors of the rough experiences attending clerical duties among the French settlers of Dover in the early days of its history.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

HARWICH

The Township of Harwich occupies a place of geographical advantage in the centre of the Southern tier of Kent County Townships, extending from the Thames on the North to Lake Erie on the South. A portion of its Northwesterly corner has been included within the town limits of Chatham. It is bordered on the East by Howard and on the West by Raleigh. Of an average depth of sixteen and width of ten miles, this Township embraces about one hundred and sixty square miles of territory, or ninety-six thousand acres. Its surface partakes of the same uniformly level nature which distinguishes this entire County, the only relieving feature being the "Ridge" which traverses the Township from Buckhorn in the Northeasterly direction to the Howard Town line. This natural elevation is quite narrow in extent along the Westerly half of its course through Harwich but East of Blenheim it broadens somewhat and expands in places into the form of a plateau of considerable width.

The principal stream by which Harwich is traversed is McGregor's Creek, which, crossing the Howard Townline about six miles from the Thames, flows in a generally Westerly direction to within a few miles of Chatham, when it diverges toward the Northwest and discharges into the Thames within the town limits. Other streams of less considerable volume traverse different sections of the Township but McGregor's is the only well defined water-course crossing its entire width. The current of all the streams not only in this Township but throughout the County is exceedingly sluggish, and, except during freshets, almost imperceptible, owing to the intense level nature of the surface. This latter feature, of course, prevents any great facility of drainage but not to such an extent as to preclude the highest agricultural excellence being attained.

The soil of Harwich is fairly representative of hard, stubborn, tenacious but exceedingly productive and durable clay for which the County of Kent is noted. Its fertility is evinced by the enormous crops of cereals, hay and roots which here reward the labor of the husbandman and the effects of its high culture reflected in the comfortable and well-to-do appearance which characterizes the farmsteads throughout the Township. In some localities, however, the compact character of the soil relaxes into a decided loam and even into an approach to sandiness as is the case along portions of the Thames River Front and at places along the Ridge. These displays of lighter soil do not impair the general fertility of the Township in the least, however, the prominent feature of those localities being of greater adaptation to fruit and root crops and a greater facility of culture.

The history of pioneer effort in Harwich dated back to 1792 when Thomas Clark located Lot Two on the River Front, on what is now known as the McGregor farm, at Chatham, but our remarks on this subject in connection with the sketch of Chatham render further reference unnecessary. Farther East, along the river bank, the pioneer settlements were made in the year 1796, if the statements made by descendants of the original settlers are accurate as to dates. The pioneers of that section

were the Traxlers, a family consisting of father (Peter) and several sons - Peter, Michael and John - who located about three miles above Chatham; John Shepley, who took up a farm a short distance down stream from them; Adam Everett, above the Traxlers; and one or two representatives of the Arnold family whose descendants are still so numerous along the river fronts of Harwich, Howard and Chatham. These parties were all United Empire Loyalists, and, though arriving here at so late a date after the Revolutionary War, many of them had resided in British Territory during the interval and now claimed their "United Empire rights", in the shape of land grants which had been here surveyed for them. In 1796 Hugh Holmes settled Lot Twenty-three, River Front, near Kent Bridge. He was of Irish birth but coming to America in childhood, he remained a time in Montreal, then took a course in Dartmouth (New Hampshire) College. He afterwards removed West and taught school in Detroit, where he married, removing thence to the location named in the year mentioned. Here his son Abraham, still living in Chatham, was born in 1797, this being the first birth in Harwich so far as we have been able to learn. The elder Holmes, being liberally educated, had his services in a clerical capacity widely sought by his less-favored fellows for whom he acted as notary in the preparation of all legal writings and was in fact for many years the scribe for the entire community of the river front. He subsequently removed to Sandwich where he taught school in the old stone school house which then constituted a prominent landmark of the frontier, his family remaining on the farm meanwhile and retaining its ownership even to the present day.

In 1795 the Township of Harwich was partially surveyed by Abraham Iredell whose instructions included an order to lay out a "road of communication between the Chatham Settlement and Rond Eau or Little Lake and to lay out two hundred acre lots on either side thereof for settlement by United Empire Loyalists". This was accordingly done, as some parties claim, as late as 1797, but the road was not established to the lake till 1844 though that portion between Chatham and where Blenheim now stands had been long previously cut out and named the "Mill Road" or "Communication Road". By the peculiarities of the survey, Harwich has been favored with four "first" concessions, one at the River Thames (R.T.), one at Lake Erie (L.E.), one East and West of Communication Road (E.C.R. and W.C.R.), the concessions numbering back from each of these fronts.

Although reserved for settlement by United Empire Loyalists, the land along the highway mentioned was not so taken except a few lots in the vicinity of Blenheim which, although drawn from Government by representatives of that class, were not settled by them but subsequently transferred to other parties. In the nearer vicinity of Chatham, however, settlements were made along the Communication Road at an early period of the present century. As early as 1804 Phillip Toll had located Lot Six, Concession Six, River Thames Survey, having removed thither from the Raleigh River Front, of which locality he was a pioneer, but he subsequently removed farther South in Harwich and became one of the first residents in the vicinity of the Ridge.

The same year Patrick McCarvin drew Lot Five, Concession Four, River Thames Survey, but did not take up his residence there till four years later, he having meantime lived in the neighborhood of Louisville, Chatham Township. Nearer Chatham, on the site of the present cemetery but on the opposite side of the creek traversing that lot, Solomon Mesmore and Peter Smith had also located at that early date. The removal of some of these settlers and the accidental death of two others

left this locality almost tenantless about 1811, in which condition it remained a considerable time. The accidents referred to were the drowning of McGarvin in the Thames above Louisville in 1811, and McSmore's death by a falling tree the spring following, when only Toll was left upon the creek and his removal sometime after left a deserted locality hereabouts.

The lot formerly occupied and abandoned by Toll was taken up by Daniel Field in 1816, he becoming thereby the pioneer of the second settlement in this vicinity, being followed sometime later by Michael McGarvin, son of the original locatee of Lot Five, Concession Four, who had now attained an age warranting his assumption of backwoods labor and responsibilities. The settlement of this portion of the Township was by no means rapid for some years thereafter. Among the next to locate along the creek (McGregor's) was John Searnes who located his wife's United Empire rights about 1820, and was followed in 1822 by Neil McQuarrie.

The sparseness of the population and their pecuniary inability to provide the facilities for education, public worship, social enjoyment, etc., - not to mention many of the more necessary elements of life in the shape of food, raiment and household furnishings - rendered the early existence of Harwich pioneers the reverse of luxurious, while in material status subsided several degrees below ordinary comfort; but the will-power and courage which had guided them to the selection of this region as their future homes, sustained them in uncomplaining patience during the reign of want and poverty, tiding them eventually in safety through those narrow straits and securing to them a degree of comfort and independence highly complimentary to their energy and application. Longfellow has described the Puritan Pilgrims as having "short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but gospel," which degree of plenteousness was denied to Harwich pioneers; but under the order of things long since inaugurated, through the medium of their muscles they and their descendants now enjoy plenty of either commodity.

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HOWARD

The Township of Howard occupies a position between Orford on the East and Harwich on the West, the River Thames on the North and Lake Erie on the South. It contains an area of about one hundred and five square miles and ranks second to no Township in the County in point of agricultural excellence. It is quite densely settled by a peculiarly thrifty and enterprising class of farmers whose labor has rendered Howard one of the most attractive Townships in appearance to be found on the map of Western Ontario. Especially has the feature of attractiveness, both natural and artificial, been highly developed in the vicinity of Talbot Street and Lake Shore, where a succession of handsome and even elegant farmsteads form a picture of rural beauty rarely surpassed in any of the other agricultural sections of Canada.

The topographical characteristics of Howard are somewhat more varied than those of the Townships farther West. The Township is traversed by a gravelly ridge running at a distance of about five miles from the shore of Lake Erie, toward which sheet of water the surface gently slopes on the South while to the North of the elevation alluded to a gradual decline toward the Northwest is observable. The "Ridge" forms the only "water shed" in the Township, numerous small streams flowing thence into the lake on the one hand and toward the Thames on the other. A network of rivulets combine to form the volume of McGregor's Creek in this Township and to the North of that system several others of local importance. Field, McGorgan and Arnold's Creeks afford convenient drainage. The soil of Howard is of a generally lighter and more porous consistency than is found in the West riding of the County, the vicinity of the "Ridge" being especially devoid of the stubborn clay features which characterize other Townships of Kent. There a gravelly loam of great fertility and pliability predominates and, though in other parts of the Township a somewhat heavier grade of soil is found, it in no locality assumes a nature too compact to forbid its classification as a rich loam with alternate inclinations to clay, sand and gravel. By nature Howard has been more favored than any of her adjacent sister Townships in being provided with a soil quite as productive as is elsewhere found while being more convenient of tillage and drained by natural water courses.

The Township of Howard remained uninhabited, representatives of the Anglo-Saxon rare, until the American Revolution had been brought to a succesdful issue and the contemplated early cession of the territory of Michigan had suggested to the numerous adherents of the British Crown who had removed thither after the close of hostilities, the sentimental desirability of transferring their residence once again to British territory. Accordingly, when the surrender of British authority in Michigan became a foregone conclusion, a considerable exodus of residents of Detroit and vicinity to the Western Counties of Canada took place. Among the devotees of British institutions who then filed up the Thames, seeking a new home under the flag that many of them had fought for during the then recent struggle, were the pioneers of Howard.

Among those was Isaac French, who located Lot Three on the

on the River Front probably as early as 1794 but removed thence about two years later after disposing of his interest therein to Frederick Arnold who was a native of Berlin whence he emigrated to Pennsylvania. Espousing the Royalist cause, he bore arms against the Continentals during the Revolution and was obliged to quit the country or take the oath of allegiance after the termination of that struggle. Coming West to Detroit, he resided there a short period then removed to Petite Cote below Sandwich, remaining a couple of years and removing thence to the Thames about 1796 as above outlined. His sons, four in number, were respectively named Louis, John, Christopher and Frederick, the first two named of whom located on the river front in Chatham Township, the younger ones remaining in Howard where their posterity to a large number still reside.

Previous to the location of the Arnolds, Lots One and Two adjoining the Harwich Town Line had been taken up by J. G. Ribley and Lot Four by one Miller who was subsequently drowned while fishing in Lake St. Clair. Lot Five was settled by William Howard about the same period and Lot Six next adjoining on the East was patented to William McCall who was soon after succeeded in its possession by John Carpenter, and beyond him to the East were John Gordon on Lot Eight, Nicholas and Elihu Cornwall on Lot Nine and Jacob Quant, who had borne the chain for Patrick McNiff in the survey of this tract along the Thames, on Lot Twelve. One McDonald settled on Lot Thirteen at quite an early date though not as early as the others named who were United Empire Loyalists, and beyond the location occupied by him the settlement of the Howard River Front did not extend for several years. The community did not expand in any direction with great rapidity for a considerable time after its first settlement though new accessions to its population arrived from time to time, the progress of the entire County during the first two decades of its settlement being of a very moderate order. Quite early in the present century, however, Joseph Johnson settled on Lot One, and, with the location of others, the population of this locality became gradually quite dense.

Soon after his advent upon this scene the elder Arnold erected a small saw mill on Lot Three on the banks of a small creek, since called Arnold's Creek. To these facilities were soonadded gristing apparatus, both of which branches of industry were extensively utilized by settlers from long distances for many years.

There was no rapid development observable in this Township prior to the War of 1812 except such as took place within the limits of the locality outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. The entire Southern part of the Township was still an unbroken forest without a white resident save John Crawford and family who took up a residence on the Lake Shore adjoining the Harwich Town Line in 1809 and there continued to reside amid the solitude of the mighty forest and the murmurs of the lake until their isolation was broken in upon by the influx of other settlers. Soon before the outbreak of the Anglo-American War of 1812, he removed to Lot Eighty-eight, Howard Lake Shore, where the latter built the first mill South of the Thames in Kent County. The Hackneys were Englishmen, remained in single blessedness during the greater portion of their natural lives and exhibited other peculiarities which distinguished them from the "common herd" and gained a considerable degree of prominence along the shore. It is related of "Ned", as one of the brothers was invariably called, that chancing to visit a house in the neighborhood where an infant girl was asleep in a cradle and the mother expressing a desire for a new splint broom, he offered to

"swap" such a broom for the child when it should have grown to womanhood. The offer being jokingly accepted, as is stated, "Ned" performed his part of the contract and in after years successfully solicited the fulfilment of the other part.

In 1817 the first general influx of settlement along Talbot Street occurred in furtherance of the governmental plans which Colonel Talbot as general land agent was sent out to superintend. Here, as elsewhere along the shore of Lake Erie, free grants were made to settlers on condition of the not very onerous "settlement duties" prescribed at the time, which have been repeatedly described in this work. The previous fall of 1816, however, had marked the arrival of pioneers upon the site of Morpeth in the persons of three Nova Scotians, the brothers Joseph and Robert Woods, and the former's son James, who cut the first tree on the site of that village, has ever since resided in the vicinity and is now spending his declining years at Troy. The trio named returned East with the approach of winter and the following spring returned to their Western location and formed the vanguard of a numerous colony who in 1817 and the years immediately following settled along Talbot Street in this Township.

Early in the year 1817 the Cull family moved into the neighborhood of which Morpeth now forms the centre, coming from the River Front. There were six in number, named respectively John, William, Samuel, Jesse, James and Thomas. James Cull settled on Lot Ninety-two North of Talbot Street; his brother Samuel opened a blacksmith shop in the vicinity; Lots Nine-one and Ninety-two South were taken up by Woods brothers mentioned; and the arrival of others in the same locality speedily transformed the recent forest into a scene of pioneer development. Those whose location here came next in order were John Desmond, afterwards one of the most prominent men in the Township, and Nicholas Cornwall from the River Front who built a mill on his new location.

The settlement along this street became quite dense within a year after the arrival of those named, the locatees on the South side, commencing at the Orford Town Line in addition to those already mentioned, being Freeman Guen, William Brown, David Palmer, Murray, Walter Galbraith, McGill, John Armstrong, Jos. Lyons, John Shippy, Peter Stover, James Clarke, James Leonard, Jacob Smith, James Brown, William Fisher, Isaac Bell, Thomas Lambert and Samuel Crawford. On the North side of the street at the same time were located one Tipp, on the East and thence toward the West (besides those before mentioned) the list included Samuel Brundage, - Stewart, Isaac Swartz, Edward Scarlett, George Howitt, Alexander Goff, William Desmond, John Bell, Rufus Hubbell, Lovell Harrison, Israel Smith, Thomas Brown, Joseph Richardson, Joseph Oakley, Joseph Wheatley, Mark Chase, Benjamin Bell and Adam Richards. The only survivors of those named above who then invaded the wilderness armed with the implements of husbandry and the courage and patience so characteristic of the pioneer, are John Desmond and James Woods, both of whom have considerably exceeded the age prescribed by the Psalmist.

The first store in Morpeth was opened by Edward Lee who had established a similar institution on the Howard and Harwich Town Line about 1822 and removed to Morpeth about 1826. It was about the latter date that the name now borne by the village was conferred upon it by choice of the people, that of "Jamesville" having been diligently urged by James Cull who owned the lot forming the North West part of the

village. In 1828, or soon thereafter, George Duck came to the Township, settling on Talbot Street about midway between Morpeth and the Harwich border, where he opened a store and continued its management for a long period. Mr. Duck was one of the most active and influential public men of the Township up to a comparatively recent date, serving the people repeatedly in a representative capacity in Township, District and County Councils, and contributing in numerous ways to the material interests of the community.

The locality of the "Ridge" in this Township was included in the tract under the management of Colonel Talbot but continued in its primeval state until 1823. The first stage of its development was marked by the location of settlers upon the site of the present Town of Ridgetown. The distinction of cutting the first brush heap here in 1882 is accorded to Edmund Palmer, who still resides in town, a son of David Palmer mentioned among the early residents of Talbot Street. The occasion of that incident was a trip to this place by the gentleman named in company with Alexander Marsh, their object being to clear a space and erect a log habitation for the reception of the family of William Marsh, father of Alexander, who had drawn Lot Nine, Concession Ten, upon which he took his residence early in 1824, becoming the pioneer of the Ridge Road. The same year Edmund Mitton located Lot Ten, Concession Nine, and built a house opposite where the town hall now stands. Several other families settled here about the same time, including John Wilson, John Scane, James Watson, Richard Tyhurst and Ebenezer Colby. Among others whose connection with the early settlement and subsequent developments of the Ridge rendered them conspicuous were Thomas French, George, John and Henry Reeder, Levi Cornwall, James Scaife, John Palmer, David McKinley, Thomas Dickson, Samuel Kitchen, John Bryhurst and Richard Rushton, the last named of whom settled at the Harwich border and gave to that point the name of Rushton's Corners, which it still bears.

The development of this section was not particularly rapid for some years though the gradual expansion of the clearings and appearance of well cultivated farms proclaimed that industry and energy were the order of the period among the pioneers. The settlement progressed as is usual with rural localities. With the production of grain which followed the clearing of the forest came the establishment of numerous distilleries whose product was liberally partaken of by those whose inclinations took that bent. It is related that, for want of more convenient vessels in which to carry this fluid, metallic bells were used, being carried by the "clapper" - these articles having been quite plentifully manufactured by an Orford blacksmith who used to send them to the local centres for sale by such of the neighbors as chanced to be thither bound; hence the utilization of them for the purpose named.

The styles of wearing apparel, both in texture and design, were then of a very primitive order, the fabrics being spun at the domestic wheels, woven in the home looms, and dyed in lye to impart a "fast" color of butternut brown for Sunday wear. Churches and schools were few and far between until the settlement advanced in age considerably; but, previous to their establishment, itinerant preachers expounded holy writ in different houses throughout the Township. A log school house, the first South of the Thames Settlement, was built on Lovell Harrison's farm, Talbot Street, where one Eastman first presided as pedagogue, being followed in that capacity by a gentleman named Boyd. The first school house on the site of Ridgetown was

erected about 1830 by William Nash on James Watson's farm, being first taught by one Gowdy; and to John Moody is ascribed the credit of having built the first mill in this flourishing town.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

ORFORD

This is the most Easterly Township of Kent County lying South of the Thames. From that river it extends a mean distance of about twelve miles to Lake Erie, its respective Eastern and Western boundaries being formed by the Townships of Aldborough in Elgin County, and Howard. Being about seven miles in width, Orford contains a superficial area bordering upon 54,000 acres, about 4,000 acres of which bordering the Thames midway between its Eastern and Western limits are reserved for the residence of the Moravian Indians, of whom more will be said anon. Exclusive of this Indian Reserve, 48,973 acres of the Township are occupied by actual residents, leaving only nine hundred and one acres of non-resident land. The assessed valuation of this area, including the personal property thereon, is $1,018,811.

Orford presents more varied topographical features than any other Township in the County. Entering its Eastern border along Talbot Street, one meets a succession of quite sharply defined hills which extend Westward about to Clearville where the surface subsides into a gentle roll, which it retains thence to its Western border. Remote from the Lake Shore, a ridge of slight elevation traverses the Township in rather irregular order from East to West and along the crest of that outline the "Middle Road" has been surveyed, with a range of lots extending on either side out of uniformity with the later surveys. North of this ridge the surface is a generally level expanse with slight knolls in some localities, succeeded by corresponding depressions below the general level but neither so strongly marked as to merit the application of the term "undulating". The soil of Orford is also varied in character and consistency, that lying to the South of Talbot Street being considered the most productive. It is of clay composition, inclining to loam at some points; while North of that thoroughfare a tendency to sand is in some places observable. Further North the stern features which mark the Lake Shore relax into a decided loam which is in turn succeeded by a light sandy soil around Highgate and the Northern centre of the Township, the vicinity of the Thames partaking of much the same features.

A large area in the Northern part of Orford was early granted by Government to the Moravian Indians together with a considerable tract on the North bank of the Thames in Camden and Zone. These Indians were the principal remnant of the once flourishing congregations of the Moravian or United Brethren Church in the United States who were compelled in the year 1792 to seek an asylum in Canada on account of their hostility to the American Government. By an Order in Council dated July 10th, 1793, a tract of about 50,000 acres flanking the river in this vicinity was granted to them and there they proceeded to build a church, habitations and other premises. This village, which was located on the North bank of the river, was burned by the victorious Americans under General Harrison October 4th, 1813, when its defenders, including the notorious Tecumseh, were so disastrously defeated and the chief mentioned killed. After that catastrophe the band removed to the Southern bank and built another village, now called Moraviantown, but which was formerly called New Fairfield. In writing of these Indians

in 1851, the author of "Smith's Canada" says that about three hundred and fifty acres of the river flats had been cultivated by them and that as late as 1817 the community numbered one hundred and sixty-seven Indians of the Delaware and Iroquois Tribes. Up to that date no natural increase of the number had occurred but it had received accessions through conversions from other bands. A German Missionary was supported by them; the habit of drinking had been conquered to a great extent, and, as stated, they "had kept themselves more sober than the white people." By a second Order in Council, dated February 26th, 1795, a survey of that part was made about 1816 or 1817, a double tier of lots being laid out, one on either side of what is now called Talbot Street which is located one and a quarter miles from the shore, the Southern tier of lots extending to the latter point, the Northern tier an equal distance in an opposite direction. The tier of settlement reached this Township from the East in 1816 but pioneer locations were not at first so numerous through the extent as along this same street in Howard, next adjoining on the West. The first actual settler within the Township was John Bury who located at the mouth of Clear Creek on the Lake Shore in the spring of 1816, being followed about a year later by David S. Baldwin, John Kitchen and Samuel Burns. Accompanying Mr. Bury was his son Philip, then grown to manhood, who settled upon the Northern part of the lot occupied by his father, the one next East of the creek and South of Talbot Street (No.58) being taken by Mr. Baldwin referred to; Burns located opposite Baldwin and Kitchen on Lot Fifty-four, North side, now the Aldborough Town Line. But a short interval passed between the location of the first and the last of the three last named. There followed soon after them several families who remained but a brief period, being frightened out of their locations by the many hardships and privations which characterized the life of the pioneer, unattended by comforts of a corresponding degree to neutralize the former. Of these families little can be said that would interest the reader at the present day, their stay in Orford having been about equally brief and uneventful and their names in most instances forgotten by those who remained behind and reaped the fruit of their severe exertions in the "times that tried men's souls."

Among the next prominent arrivals whose posterity still possess the land of their fathers, was Eliakim Newcomb who settled on Lot Sixty-two in the fall of 1820. He brought with him a numerous family, including his sons Timothy, Dan Webster, Elizah and James, the second of whom still resides, at an advanced age, on the old homestead. Further to the West, the prominent pioneers were Jacob Street and John Eberle, who settled, each with a family of sons, on Lot Seventy-two where Palmyra is now located, the former on the North and the latter on the South side of Talbot Street. Among Mr. Street's sons, some of whom were then but boys, were Joseph L., Charles and Samson, the homestead still remaining in the possession of the former. The sons of Mr. Eberle, some of whom still reside in the vicinity, were Abram, Anthony, John, Joseph, Jacob and William. Nathaniel Mills was another of those to whom the early progress and pioneer of this locality is largely due. He located on Lot Sixty-nine, North side of Talbot Street, among the earliest residents, and for many years held a place of influence and esteem in the community. Several of his sons are still among the most popular and useful members of society hereabouts, one of them, the Hon. David Mills, having long since acquired a national reputation in the political arena.

On Lot Sixty-three South, David H. Cesner located at an early date, though not until that lot had been already drawn and occupied

a short period by another party who removed from the Township. Mr. Gesner took a very active and leading part in the management of public affairs for a long time after the introduction of a very crude form of Municipal Government; he was a man of more than ordinary ability and as popular as he was useful to the interests of the Township in general and the "street" in particular. Other pioneer names which figure in the history of progress along this thoroughfare are those of William Ridley who located on Lot Sixty-one North, and Alexander McTavish who settled farther West at a somewhat later date.

Another of the influential men of his day was George Henry (whose sons now conduct grain merchandising in Chatham), a gentleman of considerable enterprise, who came to the Township about 1830 and built a grist mill on the Lake Shore on Lot Sixty-one, this being the first mill in Orford. Prior to the date of completion the settlers were obliged to go to the neighboring Townships of Aldborough and Howard for milling conveniences. About the time of Henry's building his mill, Duncan McLaren established a saw mill on the creek traversing Lot Fifty-two adjoining the Aldborough Town Line. One of the most noted institutions then possessed by the Township was the tavern opened at Clear Creek (now Clearville), by David S. Baldwin soon after his location there. At that hostelry a good share of the public interest centred and there were all reforms and improvements, either proposed, impending or accomplished, discussed around the cheery log fire that blazed on the spacious hearth of "mine host". That, too, was the "seat of government" after the privilege of partial self-government was extended to the people; there the "town meetings" were held for many years and the political features of the times were discussed with all the profundity of rural statesmanship. A school house, erected on the creek bank South of the road, was added to the attractions of the locality and "there in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule", David Herring taught the young idea how to shoot, he being the first or among the first to wield the tawse in Orford.

The vicinity of the Middle Road was settled about eight years later than Talbot Street, the survey of this locality having been deferred until about 1826. The first house in this portion of the Township was built by John Blue on Lot Seven North where he still lives, though now in the decline of life. He arrived in February, 1826, and the spring following Lot Four, both North and South of the road, was taken by the brothers, Duncan and Daniel McIntyre. The pioneer location on the site of Duart was made about two years later by John Hatch; Timothy Newcomb located West of that point; and one Smith, who assisted in the survey of this tract, took up a farm somewhat nearer the setting sun, as did also John Sinclair who had been similarly connected with that work. As the settlement of this section progressed, the need of milling facilities was met by T. A. McLean, son of the then Chief Justice of that name. He established at Duart an extensive steam saw mill and other branches of industry connected with the timber trade and for a long time wielded a vast local influence through this medium and from him did the village receive the euphonious name it bears. The first store in the village was opened by James Tait who was also the first, as he is the present, Postmaster, the post office having been opened in 1857.

North of Duart, in the vicinity of Muirkirk of the present, the settlement lagged considerably behind that of the Middle Road, and not until about 1840 did that section receive its pioneer settlers, among whom may be reckoned John and Duncan Gillis, Thomas Simpson, David Ford, Thomas English and William Curtis. Still farther toward the river, the

land was held by the Moravian Indians until 1858 when they surrendered all except the block above referred to as being now held by them, whereupon the portion so released was thrown upon the market and soon thereafter sold among numerous settlers, the list of names identified with the history of this section including those of Marcus, Sussex, Donald, Grant and Parker on the East, and Brown, Norton, McFarlane and Richardson on the West of the present Reserve.

The locality of Highgate was first settled by several brothers of the Gosnell family who arrived there some time prior to the survey and settlement of the Middle Road. Most prominent among the early residents of that name were Joseph, John and James, whose posterity have now become very numerous in that section. The members of this family early exercised a leading influence in Township affairs and have in later days been closely identified with the progress of this community and the Municipality at large. Others who bore the burdens of pioneer life in and adjoining the Gosnell Settlement, as that locality was then called, were John Lee, since Warden of Kent, Finlay McKerricher and his son William, now one of the leading citizens thereabouts, and Thomas Tape, which latter name is now borne by a large number of the enterprising residents of the neighborhood.

Those were indeed times of wild and rough experiences when the unsmoothed surface of trying circumstances presented alternate aspects of distress and danger, jewelled by the occasional visitation of comforts which, though of so abstractly indifferent a grade as would now give them a place among the so-considered hardships of life, yet then, by the very force of their contrast to the prevailing monotony of toil and privation, became decided luxuries. True, game was plentiful in the dense forest which then stretched almost from limit to limit of the Township but its very plenitude robbed it of pecuniary value beyond such as attached to it as an article of food for the settlers not always provided with the means of purchasing supplies. In fact, the number of beasts and birds then haunting the forests was often productive of annoyance and danger rather than sport; wheat fields required watching to repel the foraging expeditions of deer and turkeys while the sheepfold was in constant danger of receiving wolfish attentions. Stories are told by the pioneers of remarkable achievements in gunning during that period, one disciple of Nimrod having, as is related, brought down an even dozen wild turkeys at one shot. The absence of streams probably alone accounts for the non-recital of equally reasonable fish stories. It not infrequently happened that settlers would get benighted in their journeys to or from other settlements or villages, and, while awaiting the dawn, be entertained by the cheering refrain of a wolfish chorus reciting their desire for more intimate relations with the settler's ox team. On one occasion a deer was chased by those denizens to the door of a settler in the night whereupon he went out and caught the hunted and exhausted creature as easily as though it had been domesticated.

But the exercise of those habits of industry and perseverence so eminently characteristic of the average pioneer soon transformed the wilderness of Orford into a series of progressive settlements; and, with the additions to the population and increase in the wealth of the people, the pace of progress quickened, the forest became diminished, the clearing expanded, and this Township was soon accorded a place among the most promising in the West. At no time has a halt in the onward march of improvement and development been here observable. The industry of

the sires, inherited and exercised by the sons and aided by the spirit of enterprise which has characterized the people of this Township throughout its entire history, is now reflected in the handsome villages and succession of smiling farmsteads throughout its limits where tidy premises, elegant buildings, blooming orchards and other equally attractive features denote the fertility of the soil and thrift of the people.

The inception of Municipal Government in Orford took place in 1828 on the 7th day of January, of which year a "Town Meeting" was held at David S. Baldwin's tavern, Clear Creek, at which the following named parties were elected to official positions: David H. Gesner, Clerk; James Moorehouse, John Kitchen, Assessors; John Stewart, John Bury, Jr., Joseph Cornell, Daniel McIntyre, Roadmasters; William Bury, Constable; William Ridley, Collector; Alexander McTavish, Eliakim Newcomb, Poundkeepers; Fred Lampman, James McLaren, Town Wardens. Mr. Gesner was continued in the Clerkship until the close of 1841 when he was elected District Councillor and succeeded in the Clerkship by Archibald Walker who was in turn followed by Peter Lampman in 1843, he giving place to Daniel Moorehouse the year following. In 1845 Mr. Gesner was again installed in the Clerk's office and held that position thenceforward till 1853 when he was succeeded by his son, John H., who continued in the incumbency of the position till 1865. In the latter year James C. McDonald received the appointment, holding it ten years, and in 1875 the present efficient and courteous officer, Henry Watson, of Clearville, was entrusted with the duties of the office. The succession in the District Councillor's chair was divided about equally between Messrs. Gesner, Morehouse and George Henry up to 1850 when our present Municipal system was inaugurated. In the year last named, the Council elected was composed of Messrs. Daniel Morehouse (subsequently elected first Reeve of the Township), Duncan McLaren, Archibald Walker, John Stewart and Francis Johnston. The name of Orford's Reeves and Deputies since that date may be found in our Municipal History and for the present year we append the names of local magnates as follows: John Mason, Reeve; H. C. Gilmore, Deputy Reeve; Robert Henderson, Joseph L. Street and Andrew Marcus, Councillors; Henry Watson (Clearville P.O.), Clerk; John D. Cillis (Duart P.O.), Treasurer.

The list of Orford's villages is but moderately extensive, which remark will also apply to the villages themselves.

Duart is the Township "Capital" as there the Town Hall is located. Its other attractions embrace a brewery, steam mills, three stores, several shops, and a population of about one hundred, including one or more practitioners of the healing art. Clearville, situated on Talbot Street at the crossing of Clear Creek, contains two stores, churches, hotels, shops, and a small rural population. Palmyra, also on Talbot Street near the Western border of the Township, boasts attractions similar to those of Clearville. Highgate is a station of some importance on the Canada Southern Railway which traverses the Township from East to West near the centre. It is twenty-six miles from Chatham, contains a population about three hundred, steam saw, cut and flouring mills, two churches and the conveniences in mail, telegraph and express matters incident to railway villages.

Turin, a post village between the Tenth and Eleventh Concessions near the Howard Town Line, and containing church, school and shop, completes the list of trade centres within a Township whose chief attractions consist in its highly wrought fertility and the intelligence, industry and thrift for which its people are noted.

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The above information was compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

RALEIGH TOWNSHIP

Raleigh lies to the South of the Thames, bordering Lake Erie on the South, with the Townships of Harwich and East Tilbury forming its respective Eastern and Western boundaries. Lying immediately to the Southwest of Chatham, a portion of its original territory is included within the corporate embrace of that town. The area thus included is 71,083 acres, of which, in 1880, 33,238 acres were returned as cleared and 66,289 acres as owned by actual residents of the Township.

Raleigh displays topographical characteristics similar to those which distinguish the surrounding Townships, being a generally level plain which in no place arises to any considerable elevation, though in some localities it sinks to a level too low to admit of successful tillage. In the vicinity of the Thames, there are quite large areas of these plains or low prairies which become flooded in periods of high water, and, as is the case in some localities, remain in a semi-submerged condition a good portion of the year. These low expanses stretch considerable distances into the interior, in places forming a contrast to the scarcely more elevated but densely wooded areas bordering and, in some instances, surrounding them. The characteristics of surface prevailing throughout the balance of the Township are decidedly monotonous, the face of the country being generally quite low and thickly covered with a fine growth of elm, among which is intermixed a considerable proportion of excellent oak and black ash of goodly size, these forming the principal though not the only grades of wood produced in Raleigh. The neighborhood of the Lake Shore is marked by the "Ridge", so often before referred to as skirting the banks of Lake Erie. Its average height does not vary far from forty feet nor does its distance from the shore vary materially from half a mile throughout this Township. The soil along the Ridge is of a light gravelly consistency, easy of tillage and very productive of hay, grain, root and fruit crops, the latter flourishing better in this than any other Township of the County apparently. Between the Ridge and the Thames the soil is generally a heavy, adhesive character of clay, almost utterly lacking in porous qualities and so compact that horse tracks on the highway often retain the water as would a cup until it evaporates.

Underlying this surface soil is usually a very heavy grade of blue clay intermixed with gravel which contains but few and unsatisfactory springs of water, the difficulty of obtaining which fluid in sufficient quantities forms one of the most serious disadvantages of the central or Middle Road section. Farther North, among the lower wood levels, this difficulty is not so observable. The clay subsoil is generally overlaid with deep mould of vegetable accumulation and great fertility, though not very durable. The soil of the plains is much the same as that last referred to, differing in no essential features. An extensive drainage system has now redeemed nearly all the redeemable lands of the Township and greatly improved the agricultural value of Canadian Townships in so far as concerns agricultural capabilities. The plain lands thus far brought under culture yield the finest crops of corn to be found in this eminently corn-growing County, the lower areas furnish a good quality and immense quantity of wild hay as well

as luxuriant pasturage, while the more elevated localities produce in great abundance the many other crops for which this region is noted, as well as those specifically named.

Raleigh received its first settlers from among the vanguard of civilization which moved up the Thames in 1792. Unfortunately for the precise accuracy of dates, no memoranda touching the events of its earliest history appears to have been preserved and some confusion of opinion consequently prevails as to the exact dates of certain occurrences. There appear to have been three separate periods of settlement here during the last century - the first in 1792, the second in 1794, and the third extending over the interval between 1796 and 1800. The population of the Raleigh River Bank had assumed quite a numerical importance; but at this distance of time from the dates named, it is well nigh impossible to determine to whom is due the distinction of having been its pioneer or the respective years in which subsequent settlers located. Among the first, however, were the Dolsen, McCrae, Reaume, Peck, Jacobs, Drake, Parsons and Toll families. It is related that Edward, a son of the pioneer Parsons, was born in this Township in 1790,but other circumstances fail to confirm this early date, though he was evidently the first white child born in the County.

The Dolsen family, now so numerous along the lower Thames, sprang from John Van Dolzen and his two sons, Matthew and Isaac, who located along the bank in 1792 and whose surname has since been altered to the more Anglo-Saxon style of Dolsen. The elder gentleman was then far past his prime but his sons were in the summer of life, each having a family at that date. Matthew settled on the Dover side while Isaac and his father chose a location on the South bank about five miles below the present Town of Chatham where their descendant, William Dolsen,now resides (1880). Isaac's family then or subsequently consisted of seven sons and three daughters, the names of the former being Isaac, Daniel, Gilbert, Matthew, Peter, Jacob and John, several of whom afterwards removed to the States, but at least three of them made this their permanent abiding place.

The McCrae family consisted of Thomas, the father, and several sons, including Thomas, Alexander and William. The parent is credited with having built the first brick house in the County of Kent. He was among the early Parliamentary representatives of the County, the influence which he asserted in the pioneer history of the community being perpetuated to a considerable extent in his sons, one of whom (William) was M.P. for the County from 1834 to the union of the Provinces. The brick house referred to as having been built by Mr. McCrae was erected soon after the present century opened, one Lenever being the artizen employed in the undertaking. George Jacobs was another of the pioneers. Soon after his settlement he opened a small trading post on the river bank and continued in that line of business for a number of years, raising a family whose posterity are still reckoned among the highly respected residents of the locality.

On Lot Eleven, Philip Toll settled in 1796, being then little advanced past the age of boyhood. He, in common with several of the other settlers of that date, had removed hither from the village or vicinity of Detroit when the cession of Michigan to the Americans was formally decided upon and announced. He lived a long period in the Township though not in this vicinity as he subsequently became a pioneer of Talbot Street where his life was closed many years

since. On the West of his location on the river bank were the houses of John Williams, John Peck, Andrew Hamilton (with his son John), and Robert Drake and his son Francis, the latter afterwards gaining a local celebrity as a Colonel of Militia.

In 1817 the Thames Settlement in Raleigh had increased to no very formidable or promising proportions considering the length of time since its foundation. It then contained but twenty-eight inhabited houses tenanted by one hundred and ninety-eight residents; while the Lake Shore or Talbot Street Settlement, though started only the previous year, then contained twenty-five houses and seventy-five inhabitants. There was then no church in the Township but one Methodist preacher claimed residence here. One school, two horse mills and brick-yard were also among the attractions.

The settlement of Talbot Street in this, as in neighboring Counties, was formed under the supervision of Colonel Talbot who allotted their locations to the settlers and exercised a general superintendence over their performance of 'settlement duties', consisting of cutting out the road fronting their property and making certain stipulated improvements thereon, these duties constituting the purchase price of their farms which were deeded to them on payment of notarial expenses connected with drafting and registering the necessary documents then amounting to nearly thirty dollars. Many of the locatees in this, as in other sections of the Township, came to their new homes in abject poverty of worldly goods, some of them having but an axe, an industrious disposition and indomitable energy as a capital stock on which to begin the conquest of the forest. But their poverty did not deter them from the effective exercise of the advantages which nature had furnished them, and the result of their courage and perseverance in coping with difficulty cannot but challenge the respect and admiration of all who commend those sturdy qualities.

The pioneers of the Lake Shore located quite numerously in 1816 and the following year, Some of them came direct from the British Isles but many came from other parts of Canada and the Maritime Provinces, the Township of Harwich contributing a few who had been ousted from their locations there on finding the land already deeded, and the Southern Townships of Essex County furnishing likewise a few who have since ranked among the most influential citizens of that locality. Prominent among those to whom belong the distinction of identification with pioneer effort along this street was John Sovereign who "squatted" on Lot One Hundred and Thirty-three, afterwards disposing of his interest to Richard De Cluto, from whose hands the farm passed into those of its present owner, (1880), Magnus Crawford, in 1831. Samuel Watson, on Lot One Hundred and Thirty-five, achieved a local prominence by building there the first mill in Southern Raleigh where he charged one shilling per bushel for grinding. Located at intervals along the front were also Nathan Slater, William Wedge, the twin brothers - John and Solomon Shepley, David Quick, Nathan and William Harvey, Flater, -- Wilcox, -- Hamlet, and Thomas and Samuel Pardo, the two last named of whom arrived in 1817. On the border of Harwich, South of Talbot Street, where W. S. Stripp's store and a portion of the Village of Buckhorn now stand, James Dolsen was the first to settle, his claim being subsequently transferred, and, passing through the hands of several owners, was purchased by Mr. Stripp at a comparatively recent date.

Flater's location was chosen near the West border of the Township and was transferred about 1820 to James W. Little, afterwards

commander of the local militia during the Mackenzie Insurrection. Mr. Little opened a store soon after acquiring that property and that enterprise was continued in operation for many years, being co-existent at different periods with others of less pretentious magnitude, one of which was conducted at the house of Thomas Pardo by another party who subsequently sold out to Pardo, by whom the store was carried on several years. The highway at that date ran in close proximity to the lake bank, being flanked by but one tier of lots; but convenience afterwards suggested its location in its present position. As early as 1826 a school house was erected where the cemetery on Samuel Crawford's place is now located, the road not having been removed at that date from the place of its original survey.

In 1825, or thereabout, Colonel Burwell contracted with Government to finish the survey of Townships in this region, left uncompleted by Abrahsm Iredell and Patrick McNiff who had conducted all surveys up to that date. By the terms of the contract referred to, the interior portion of Raleigh was prepared for occupation by settlers in 1828 or before, the vicinity of the Middle Road, traversing the Township from Charing Cross to the Tilbury border, being the first settled. The pioneer of the "Middle Road" was William White who took up Lot Twenty-four, in Concessions Eleven and Twelve, during the fall of 1826. Mr. White was of Kentshire nativity, removing thence to Pennsylvania, from which State he removed to Canada in 1825. Locating at Talbotville, in Elgin County, he conducted a farm for Colonel Talbot until 1826, when, as before stated, he came to the forests of Raleigh and laid the foundation of his subsequent prosperity at a time when his sons were in their boyhood. He was accompanied also by a son-in-law, Thomas Williams, and George Harvie, making the trip hither through the bush with ox teams and wagons brought from Pennsylvania, and was obliged to cut out a road from their point of leaving the Talbot Road, where Blenheim now stands, to their destination in Raleigh. The stock then brought in by that party consisted of fourteen cattle and one horse, which were compelled to subsist on browse in the absence of more palatable fodder.

Mr. White and his companions had effected a clearing of considerable size before the arrival of any other settlers along the Middle Road which was then marked only by a line of "blazed" trees. The next or among the next to settle after the White family was John P. Powell on Lot Two, South, just East of the present Village of Merlin. He located in the fall of 1830 and was followed by his family the succeeding year; while at intervals between there and the Eastern Town Line quite a number of locations were made, including the families of Joseph Ake, Lot Four South, John Pardo, Lot Thirteen North, and his brother William, a short distance to the East on the South side of the road. One Green was an early settler on Lot Eight North but within a short time of his location there he mysteriously disappeared, failing to return home after starting to visit Talbot Street Settlement. The circumstances of the case gave rise to a suspicion of his murder but no tangible clue to such a deed was ever discovered. Samuel Hall and his son Samuel, who had preceded him on Lot Four North, and an Englishman named Cook on the North side of Middle Road flanking the Harwich Town Line, were also among the pioneers; the Village of Cook's Corners (now known as Charing Cross) having received its name from the last named gentleman, the original locatee upon its site.

The vastness of the forest and scarcity of 'landmarks' constituted a source of combined annoyance and danger in those early

days. It was not an unusual occurrence for settlers to lose their way amid the wilderness while it long remained positively dangerous to allow children to traverse the primitive trails lest a like fate should befall them. On one occasion a little daughter of John Powell, now Mrs. Samuel Hall of Merlin, strayed from the path she was attempting to pursue, wandering for five days and sleeping for five nights amid the wild and awe-inspiring surroundings of the forest fastnesses before being found by the 'Vigilance Committee', into which the entire community formed itself to search for her. During that period she carried her father's gun and sustained life by feasting off the brace of pigeons which he had shot and given her to carry home while he pursued his way to the Lake Shore.

Tales of privation and distress prevailing during that period form a more interesting than edifying link in the chain of early reminiscences. Some of these who have since risen to affluence in the community arrived in the country with only the proverbial 'shilling' in the form of cash assets, and one gentleman, now resident near this street, declares his cash capital on arriving in Canada to have been but six cents. So rare was the 'purchasing power' in those days that many of the settlers hereabout, as stated by some of them, were for years unable to provide tea for their tables and for a like reason were they unable to purchase the thread necessary for ordinary use and were obliged to unravel strands from such cotton garments as they were so fortunate as to possess. To us of the present day it appears almost incredible that women should then have been driven to such shifts to procure thread for patching purposes.

The first preacher to visit this part of the Township was a Methodist Minister named Jeffrey who used to hold service in the different houses along the street. The first Sabbath School was organized about 1836 on Lot Four North by Samual Hall and his mother. There had been previously built a Catholic Church at the Thames on the boundary between Raleigh and Tilbury, this being the first ecclesiastical edifice in the Township. A mill was opened by Joseph Ake (who was an American) on this lot some time previous to 1840, prior to which time the settlers were supplied by the mills at Chatham on the Lake Shore. Until improved by artificial means, the drainage of this part of Raleigh was very defective, the surface being submerged at seasons to a depth of nearly two feet, and one year this state of affairs continued as late as July, thus preventing agricultural operations that year. Scarcity of food and money of course resulted, and, during a famine of more palatable and nourishing viands, it is related that pig-weed was extensively resorted to as an article of diet.

It was many years subsequent to the location of the pioneers along this thoroughfare that highway communication with the then insignificant Village of Chatham was opened, and, until the establishment of such facilities, the settlers were obliged to traverse the intervening woods and plains on foot or in ox carts when dry weather or winter's frosts permitted the latter condition of things. It is related by one lady how she once made that trip on foot, wading through water two feet deep on portions of the plains and carrying half a bushel of salt on her homeward route. Nor were these the only difficulties and privations presenting themselves. Shoes could scarcely be purchased by those with money while those lacking that potent commodity were compelled for several years to swaddle their pedal extremities in cloth, this being the prevailing style of winter foot dress. Their crops were sown upon the rough and only partially cleared land and hoes substituted for harrows in covering the seed.

Many of the women, fired by a commendable zeal for forest conquests, were none too delicate to shoulder the axe when household duties permitted, and chop side by side with the sterner sex of the family, often displaying a degree of skill in the use of that implement which would shame a youthful farmer of the present day. The music of axe was accompanied by psalm-singing in the cases of several of the ladies mentioned by the pioneers, this combination of industry with piety displaying a degree of muscular Christianity highly commendable.

The settlement along the road alluded to did not become very dense for a score of years after the first locations were made, and, when the attention of philanthropists was drawn to the project of providing in Canada asylums for colored refugees and liberated slaves from the United States, a tract of eighteen thousand acres of Government land, located in the interior of Raleigh on either side of the Middle Road, was set aside for that purpose, under the ownership of the Elgin Association. The prime mover in this humane enterprise was Rev. William King who had emigrated from his native home in the North of Ireland to Louisiana at an early age. He there cultivated the anti-slavery sentiments natural to his humane disposition, and, when by process of law he found himself the possessor of several slaves, he settled them on a plantation in that State where he gave them the pecuniary benefit of their labor until he completed preparations for their removal to Canada.

When the rumor spread over this region that the planting of a negro colony in this section was designed, the most violent opposition was manifested in mass meetings and petitions to Government to prevent a grant of land being made for that purpose. Through the persistence of Mr. King, however, and the co-operation of Lord Elgin, then Governor-General, all obstacles to the project were surmounted and in April, 1848, Mr. King arrived with his fifteen slaves whom he emancipated and with them formed the nucleus of the Elgin or Buxton Settlement, called by the latter name in honor of Sir F. T. Buxton who interested himself largely in the formation of the Elgin Association, of which corporation Mr. King was appointed the agent. Other accessions to the population of the settlement followed, land being sold to the settlers at two dollars and fifty cents per acre on easy terms of payment and the colored population of the Township became an increasingly important factor, the success of the colored people in wringing from the Northern forests a fair livelihood with growing prospects of ultimate independence, quite justifying the estimate of their capabilities formed by the philanthropic founders of the colony. As time progressed, educational and commercial institutions were established; the latter became self-sustaining as early as 1866; churches were added and the Buxton Settlement strode forward to a position of very considerable importance, embracing about one thousand two hundred inhabitants in 1866, since which date the number has increased materially, though at this writing no authentic figures of its resources have been published.

The Township records of Raleigh contain no information of municipal affairs prior to 1850 when our present municipal code was introduced. In that year a Council was elected consisting of Messrs. John Weir, Thomas Jenner, Alexander Peck, Nathaniel Hughson and Thomas Dillon. The first named of these gentlemen was elected Reeve; Walter Hoare (then of the unincorporated Village of Chatham, who was subsequently elected to the Legislative Council and is now (1880) Judge of Algoma) received the appointment to the Clerkship; William West was appointed Treasurer; John Smith, Assessor; and Martin Drew, Collector.

The villages of Raleigh are not very numerous nor is their commercial consequence highly developed. Probably the most important of them is Charing Cross, situated partially on either side of the Harwich Town Line about seven miles South of Chatham. It contains a station on the Canada Southern Railway at which all trains stop, connecting with a line of stages for Chatham, steam saw mill, two hotels, church, store, post office and several shops. This Village is connected with Chatham and Blenheim by what is alleged to be a gravel road though that feature was not apparent to the writer when he last narrowly escaped foundering in its bogs. Some dignity is imparted to the highway by toll gates at frequent intervals whose rates of toll suggest the excellence which is not observable in the road.

Merlin is a village of about one hundred and fifty inhabitants, situated on the Tilbury Town Line where crossed by the Middle Road sixteen miles from Chatham. It contains a few stores, shops, steam saw and grist mills, several churches and a good temperance hotel. It is located about three and a half miles South of Fletcher Station on the Canada Southern Railway and has risen to its present status since 1877 when the Messrs. Marshall established their extensive mills at this point.

Buckhorn is built principally on the Harwich side of the Town Line between that Township and Raleigh, where intersected by Talbot Street. About 1855 this little centre was founded by Nelson Chapman who opened a hotel on the Raleigh side, using as a sign a pair of buck's horns placed on top of a high pole, from which incident the place took its name. Buckhorn now contains a population of about one hundred and fifty and the usual concomitants in the way of stores, shop, et cetera, including a mill and two churches.

Fletcher, on the Tilbury Town Line where crossed by the Canada Southern Railway, is a place of few attractions and only such as are incident to a country post village of seventy-five inhabitants, possessing railway facilities.

Buxton, on the Middle Road, before alluded to, is but a small place whose residents are principally colored. It lies about two miles South of the Canada Southern Railway or North Buxton Station.

The high development of her agricultural interests and prosperity of her people rather than her possession of numerous important trade marts, form the chief attraction of this Township. Its public affairs are well administered, its schools are neat, numerous and efficient; its residences uniformly indicative of taste, comfort, and in many cases, wealth. The adoption and enforcement of the Dunkin Act evinces a decidedly moral inclination on the part of the people while an almost total absence of crime among the residents furnishes an argument in favor of Local Option as enforced in this Municipality.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

ZONE TOWNSHIP

The Township of Zone forms the Northeastern corner of the County of Kent, being bounded on the North by the Township of Euphemia in Lampton County; on the East by Mosa, in Middlesex County; on the South by the Thames River and a portion of Camden; and on the West by the Core of Camden. With the exception of a small gore extending South of its general boundary, it lies entirely to the North of the line reaching from Lake St. Clair to the River Thames between the Cores of Chatham and Camden and the old time Townships of these names, a line which bounded on the North the original Indian cession granted to the Government in 1790.

The outline boundaries above given include the Town of Bothwell which is situated near the Northwest corner of the Township, and, though its chief attractions are confined to a comparatively small area, its corporate limits extend to the Thames on the South and the Middlesex line on the Southeast; and we find the town possessing the anomalous features of a population numbering about one thousand two hundred and extent of nearly two thousand four hundred acres, or about two acres per capita for its population.

The Township of Zone does not rank highest among those of Kent County in point of either agricultural excellence or advanced development. Its soil is of a generally loamy consistency inclining to sand and in some localities the sandy feature predominates to such a degree to render the surface almost sterile; nevertheless the Township generally is fairly fertile and well adapted to the culture of such cereals and root crops as find warm, light soils congenial. The surface is very level with only sufficient fall towards the Thames and Sydenham to admit of moderate conveniences of drainage. No streams of considerable dimensions traverse its area, the only ones of even slight importance being those flowing through ravines to the Thames South of Bothwell. The area of Zone is less than any of its sister Townships in the County, being but twenty-four thousand nine hundred and forty-eight acres, and, added to the area of Bothwell, makes up a total original area for what is now the Township of Zone of about twenty-seven thousand, three hundred and fifty acres.

The history of Zone is alike brief and without incidents of thrilling interest. In date of settlement it lagged behind the entire balance of the County but its development since the pioneer's axe first awoke the echoes of its forests has been of an order to place the Township in a very favorable condition, whether viewed in the abstract or in comparison with surrounding Townships. The first men to invade the woods of Zone in the capacity of settlers appear to have been the brothers, Richard and John Stephenson, who located Lot Eleven, Concession Two in 1842, where they remained several years without white neighbors on either side. In 1849, William Corlett settled the West Half of Lot Ten, Concession Two, just south of the Stephensons, and was followed in 1852 by Samuel Harris, present Township Clerk, (1880), who took up a location immediately adjoining on the South, Lot Nine, Concession Two.

In the vicinity of Florence there were few settlers on the Zone side at that date; one Ackland, a tenant to another party, being the only one in that immediate locality, and he occupying the corner lot of the Township.

Along the Western border of Zone, Henry Buchanan, Sr., and Peter McAnnally were prominent among those to whom the development of that section is attributable while the names of Ferguson, Shaw, Brooks and Miller appear in connection with the settlement of the more South-westerly portion. The vicinity of Euphemia Town Line is of quite recent settlement comparatively, as is also the case with a large area of the more central portion of the Township. A considerable tract fronting the River Thames continued up to 1858 to be held as a reserve by the Moravian Indians, but, they surrendering it in that year, it was thrown open for sale and settlement. The first to permanently locate within the precincts of the former reserve was Joseph Swalwell who still resides on his location, now included within the corporate limits of Bothwell.

The pioneers of Zone experienced comparatively few of the hardships which usually fall to the lot of the pioneer, as, owing to the establishment of prosperous settlements on all sides of them and the reasonable proximity of mills, stores, markets and other conveniences, they escaped many of the privations endured by those who founded the settlements from which Zone's settlers now draw many of the conveniences of life. We would not, however, detract from the credit due to those who braved the solitude and sacrifices inseparably connected with a location in the midst of a forest of such area as the Township under review nor from the toil and suffering, never slight, necessary to the transformation of the pathless woods into so attractive a scene of agricultural development as today meets the eye of the visitor of Zone.

Prior to the coming into effect of the Municipal Act of 1849, which erected the County of Lambton, the Township of Zone included the territory now embraced within the Euphemia Township limits, but, by virtue of the Act referred to, the line now dividing the two Townships was drawn, and Zone, being almost uninhabited, was attached to Camden for municipal purposes. In 1857 it succeeded to its municipal independence and elected a Council composed as follows, viz: Henry D. Monroe, William Carson, John Tinney, Peter McAnnally, Jr., and William Corlett. At its first meeting Mr. Monroe was elected Reeve, G. A. Smith appointed Clerk, and Hugh McLachlin, Treasurer.

With a goodly supply of schools and churches of a creditable order, the advantages of a railway traversing it in a convenient locality, and a large degree of intelligent industry among its inhabitants, the Township of Zone seems destined to take a high and enviable place among the Rural Municipalities of the West.

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ROMNEY TOWNSHIP

Romney is the smallest in territorial extent of any Township in Kent County. It is of nearly triangular shape and occupies a position in the Southwestern extremity of the County, being bounded North and East by Tilbury East, South by Lake Erie and West by the Township of Mersea, in the County of Essex. Its superficial area embraces twenty-six thousand four hundred and fifty-two acres, of which extent eighteen thousand and nineteen acres are owned by actual residents, among whom are two hundred and forty-five ratepayers. The surface of Romney is generally very level and too low to admit of the highest convenience in agricultural affairs. The shore of Lake Erie is here skirted by the "Ridge" which forms the only relief to the monotonous levels of the entire County, the elevated outline referred to running in close proximity to the lake throughout the greater part of this Township toward its Eastern boundary forming a bank or bluff directly overlooking the waves and from which the surface slopes away nearly twenty miles to the River Thames, falling only twenty-six feet in that distance. The characteristics of soil in this as in other Townships hereabout include a tendency to gravelly loam along the Ridge; and in its rear a general inclination to clay loam, underlaid by a heavy clay subsoil and capped in many localities by rich deposits of vegetable matter, constitute the leading topographical features.

The Lake Front of Romney was first settled in 1817 by parties from the North of Ireland, England, the Maritime Provinces, and the United States. The two first to locate within the limits of this Township were Nathan Baldwin and James Stewart who were settled but a short time when the Jackson family took up six hundred acres near the Eastern Town Line. The brothers Samuel and Jonathan Wickwire were among those who located here the same year, and in 1818 Robert Coatsworth from Durham, England, took up Lot Two Hundred where his son Caleb now resides. Peter and Joseph Heatherington, John Robinson, Thomas Renwick, Robert Shanks, John Dawson and John Edwards followed soon after and took locations farther East along the shore. The settlement of the Ridge was for many years confined to these families who experienced their full share of the difficulties and hardships attendant upon pioneer life in the woods in being so far removed from a source of supplies. Their nearest trading post was then Malden (Amherstburg), which offered but indifferent attractions, they being often obliged to go clear to Detroit to obtain the necessaries of life. The nearest mill was on McGregor's Creek at Chatham, forty miles distant, and accessible only on sleighs in winter; but at a somewhat later date a mill was erected in the Township of Gosfield in Essex County which reduced the inconvenience incident to a trip through the woods to Chatham. They made their journeys to the mills of Gosfield and Malden in canoes, coasting along the shore in their freighted crafts with comparative ease.

That portion of Romney remote from the Ridge did not attract settlers for many years after the forests had disappeared from the shore and their former sites had long since bloomed with the fruits

of successful agriculture. In fact, the date when settlers began to select homes in the section referred to is still so recent as to constitute no text for an historical reminiscence, and the record of their progress in the fight with the forest has been so uneventful as to call for no comment unless expressions of respect and admiration for the zeal, industry and patience displayed by those who braved the hardships which presented themselves to the settlers and by their persevering energy have wrought such substantial improvements in this originally uninviting portion of the Township as today meet the eye of the visitor.

Prior to the inauguration of our present municipal system, the Townships of Romney and Tilbury East were united for representation in the District Council, the honor attaching to that office being shared in about equal degrees by Thomas Heatherington of this Township and Peter Simpson of Tilbury. In 1850 a separate Council was elected for Romney, consisting of Thomas Jackson, Joseph Heatherington, John White, John Robinson and Robert Shanks. Mr. Jackson was elected Reeve and the minor offices were filled as follows, namely: Ralph Stobbs, Clerk, John Dawson, Treasurer; Jacob Hyatt, Assessor; John Coatsworth, Collector.

Romney contains no villages of importance nor any in fact deserving a more dignified appellation than rural post villages. On the Essex County line, where crossed by Talbot Street, the Village of Wheatley stands, principally in Essex, however, at a distance of forty miles from Chatham. Its attractions are not extensive, consisting of such evidences of industry and commerce as usually accompany a population of three hundred people.

Romney is a post office on Lot Two Hundred where are also a telegraph office, a few small mechanics' shops and docks, over which considerable quantities of forest products are annually shipped.

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TILBURY EAST TOWNSHIP

The Township of Tilbury East is bounded on the North by the River Thames, on the South by Lake Erie and the Township of Romney, on the Northeast by the Township of Raleigh and on the West by the County of Essex.

The Township therefore partakes, roughly, the form of a right angled triangle of which the boundary line running North and South between the Counties of Kent and Essex and the boundary line running East and West between Tilbury East and Romney Townships form the two sides and the boundary line running Northwest and Southeast between the Townships of Tilbury East and Raleigh the hypotenuse.

The concessions, with their flanking roads, are run at right angles to, and the side lines and roads are run parallel with the Raleigh and Tilbury East boundary line, thus producing a fringe of gore lots along both the Essex County Line and the Romney Town Line.

On reference to the map it will be seen that diagonally across the middle of the Township, as originally surveyed, was run (with a concession of lots on each side) a road, known as "The Middle Road". Designed, originally, for military purposes, the road was run in a zig-zag course, forming within the Township two or three angles of varying obtuseness obviously designed for the protection of troops against exposure to a hostile enfilading fire. This interference with the original plan and survey of the Township became in after years, more or less of an inconvenience although, by way of compensation, its early opening was of great benefit to the settlers at the time and in after years became the means of shortening the distance by highway between the Northwest and Southeast parts of the Township.

The Township, as surveyed, bounded as it was, on the North by a navigable river, and accessible from the South by Lake Erie, would, at first sight, seem to have presented to the prospecting immigrant a most hospitable aspect. As a matter of fact, on closer examination such an aspect was found fallacious. An early settlement, it is true, took place along the narrow alluvial bank of the Thames, while a little later, settlement commenced on the Talbot Road Lots fronting on Lake Erie. The extension, however, of either of these settlements towards the interior of the Township was, at the time and in view of the peculiarities of the terrain and the limited resources of the settlers, an impossibility.

The bank of the Thames on which the earliest settlement took place, itself an ideal field for agriculture, slopes away from the River southerly towards and soon reaches a submerged, marsh less area of about eight thousand acres, known as "The Plains" which was the home of the bull-frog and aquatic fowls and plants. These Plains extended from Lake St. Clair on the West, Easterly through the Township of Tilbury West (or North), through Tilbury East, and terminated in the Township of Raleigh two or three miles East of the Tilbury East Town line.

South of the Plains, which, in earlier geological times, had probably been a continuation of the Flats of Lake St. Clair, lay the great bulk of the Township as an exceedingly flat plane with an inclination Northerly from the bank of the Lake to the Plains averaging about three feet to the mile. That inclination turned the drainage waters of the Township Northwards diagonally across the Township lots as surveyed, and these waters, seeking, in their Northward course the line of least resistance, formed for themselves five principal channels or creeks with numerous tributaries. These main channels came to be known respectively as The Hickey Creek, The Ten, or Smith's Creek; The McDougall Creek, The Twenty, or Wilson's Creek, and The Burgess Creek.

In pursuing their Northerly course, both the Hickey and the Smith's Creeks (at separate places) crossed the Township limits into the Township of Raleigh, finding there, within and near the Easterly end of "Head" of the Plains an outlet in Jeannette's Creek. Along the capacious channel of that sluggish stream their liquid burden was thence borne Westward, along with the accumulated drainage of, practically, the whole Township of Raleigh, to re-cross the Township limits into the Township of Tilbury East near the Southeast angle of the Fourth Concession of the Township last named. Running thence Westerly, the Jeannette's Creek is soon joined by the waters of The McDougall and ultimately finds an outlet for its burden in the River Thames at Lot Number Nine in the First Concession.

The Wilson Creek had its source in the Township of Romney and in its Northerly passage, together with its tributaries, provided drainage for the Westerly half of the Township of Tilbury East, with the exception of a small territory near its Southwesterly angle which was drained by the Burgess Creek above named into the County of Essex.

The Wilson Creek crosses the Middle Road at Lot Number Twenty and thence proceeds Northerly to the River Thames, providing in its passage an outlet for the super-surface waters of the Westerly section of The Plains.

It will thus be seen that, for the time at least, the extension Southerly of the River Settlement was an utter impossibility.

Scarcely less difficult should have then been the extension Northward of the settlement on the lots fronting on Lake Erie. It will be remembered that the lots fronting on the Lake are a mile in length and that the fall Northerly from the Lake Front is about three feet to the mile. Against that fall the drainage, Southerly, of the lands still further North was, then at least, impracticable. Northwards there was no natural creek or channel of capacity sufficient for use as outlet, the feeble trickling of the precipitated waters so near the head having proved inadequate to the formation of such a channel. To construct drainage works Northward was, for lack of means, out of the question.

The only hope of settling the interior of the Township was therefore the advent of a settler or community brave enough to dare, on the margin of one or other of the creeks above named, the solitude, the hardships and the dangers, known and unknown, that lurked in the depths of the primeval forest. There the night was made hideous by the eerie hooting of the owl. From its unsunned recesses at time would come to the settler's ears the baying of the wolf and thence, at any time might emerge the figure of the Indian Savage. Added to the terrors that were real as well as those - the creatures of the imagination - born in the gloom of the forest, were the practical difficulties never

experienced or theretofore imagined by the new settler. In Spring, the whole territory was an unbroken swamp, its watery contents oozing slowly towards the natural creeks which, at that season, overflowed the deeper central channel to which their waters were usually confined, filling to repletion the shallower reaches of the deepened area which extended some distance laterally on either side. As the season advanced, the country generally dried out, and by mid-summer, in ordinary seasons at least, the whole land became so dry that nowhere - not even in the creek bottom or its margin could be secured, by digging or otherwise, a drop of water for man or beast. With the exception of a spring on North Half Lot Number Four, Concession Nine, which was eventually owned and occupied by Mr. James Campbell, which came to be known as "The Deer Lake", and two others in the same locality of less repute, there is not a living water spring in the whole Township. The only possible method then known, of securing a water supply available at all times for man and beast was to make an excavation in the soil of sufficient storage capacity for all requirements.

EARLY SETTLEMENT.

To the eye of the new comer, the prospect was indeed dreary in the extreme. Almost everything in Nature seemed hostile. Night and day through the gloom of the woods his body was tormented by mosquitoes and every tree of the forest, in form however magnificent or in beauty however dressed, for him had little attraction, for in each he saw a barrier to his progress and an enemy to be overcome. Around him stood representatives of forest development from the first feeble sprout to the graceful elm, the gorgeous maple or the giant oak. There stood also the skeleton remains of the king of the forest, gaunt and grim, extending to heaven his whitened truncated limbs awaiting dumbly the fiat of the storm that should, with thundering crash, lay him low with his mouldering ancestors which, here and there, around him lay prone on the floor of the forest. Some whose fall had been recent, lay stripped and naked. Others, encased in Nature's green winding sheet, of living moss, had already begun to yield their substance for the sustenance of plants and infant trees which, finding rootage in his decaying surface, flauntingly, in the face of death, upreared the flag of triumphant life. But whether dead or alive, erect or prone, rigid in death or decomposed so as to collapse under the passing foot, to him, every tree was an enemy that stood or lay in the way of his progress.

Into such a possession had the early settler come. A fertile soil indeed awaited his skill and industry and gave promise of future reward, but what of the present? Before the soil could become hospitable to plant or seed, the original crop must first be cut down and burned off, root and branch. To most of the immigrants the work was new and arduous, the climate, in its extremes of heat and cold, was trying, and few indeed were fortunate enough to escape the chills and fevers produced by the malarial exhalations from the limitless field of decomposing timber and vegetation or by the poisoned bites of the swarms of mosquitoes from which there was no escape.

The first to dare the solitude of the forest seems to have been John Beaume, who with his wife Ann Tyndall, about 1784, settled on the bank of the Thames and proceeded to prepare for himself and family a home in the forest. They were rapidly followed by others, and soon, a prosperous community was formed. Mr. Beaume, it would seem, was the first white man to die in the Township, becoming in law, the first

victim of an epidemic of smallpox which in that year is said to have borne to their last resting place a large proportion of the population of the little colony.

By 1803, the settlement had progressed sufficiently to suggest the need of a common place of worship, and, accordingly, in that year, was erected on the river bank, three miles below the site of the present St. Peter's, the first Roman Catholic Church in the Township. In 1822, according to the late Judge Woods, in his "Harrison Hall", that old church was abandoned and, in its place, erected a new church on the site now occupied by the present structure. That church continued to be a land-mark over the treeless plains for miles around, as well as a place of worship until 1896 when it was accidently burned. Soon afterwards was erected, on the same site, the Church now existing.

The Lake Erie Settlement.

The Lake Erie Settlement originated in 1819 with the arrival, by way of the Talbot Road, of Peter Simpson, Thomas Askew and Robert Shanks driving an ox cart which is said to have been the first wheeled conveyance to have reached the Township. Mr. Shanks took up land and settled in the Township of Romney, then united municipally, with Tilbury East, to become the founder of the Shanks Family in that Township, still so well and favorably known. Messrs. Askew and Simpson both settled on the Talbot Road in the Township of Tilbury East. Up to 1825 they had shared together in brotherly fashion, the joys and toils, the hopes and discouragements of pioneer life, but, in that year, they became brothers in a more real sense by marrying, each a daughter of Mr. Thomas Willan, who, by that time had become their neighbor. Mr. Simpson's bride was Miss Ann, aged 18, while Mr. Askew's choice was Miss Mary, aged 16. Arrangements for a double wedding having been completed, the two couples set out together in quest of a magistrate to perform the double ceremony. On their way they encountered a bridgeless stream, but Love, - as ever, undaunted by a pad-lock or flood, overcame the difficulty by bearing safely to the other side the fair brides in the arms of their respective grooms.

It was not till seven years after the date of the celebration of this double marriage that the sleeping echoes of the interior of the Township were first awakened by the stroke of a settler's ax. In 1832, two brothers, Thomas and Robert Smith - both widowers - hailing from Dumfries-shire, Scotland, accompanied by their respective families set their faces towards Canada and at last landed at Montreal during the time of a cholera epidemic. There they were detained for two weeks waiting for a Durham boat to carry them Westward to what was then known as "Canada West". Unable to obtain lodgings elsewhere, they were compelled to camp in tents on the common and to supply themselves with the necessaries of life, including water which they purchased at the price of ten cents a pail. At last the eagerly awaited Durham boat arrived and immediately they struck camp and took passage for the West. These freight-carrying Durham boats seem to have been constructed with flat bottoms and to have been otherwise specially adapted for use in shallow water, their usual motive power being poles operated by the hands and muscles of the boatmen. Besides the crew, this particular boat, at least, is said to have carried on board five yoke of oxen which were kept in reserve for traction purposes in propelling the boat against the current in the rapids encountered in Western passages. In this way they were carried to Kingston, whence

they proceeded to Toronto, then known by the less euphonious name of York. From York they went to Niagara by boat and thence, by wagon to Chippawa, where they secured passage on a schooner from which they were landed at Port Stanley. In search of a desirable situation or locality in which to settle, they made a visit to St. Thomas, but failing to find a suitable location, they returned to Port Stanley. There they found awaiting them an invitation from Colonel Talbot to visit him at his residence. At the meeting thence resulting Col. Talbot advised them to visit the Township of Tilbury East, giving them permission to look through the Township and to select for each of themselves and for each of their boys over twenty-one years of age, a 100-acre lot. The brother Robert had, however, been meantime offered a position as foreman in a saw-mill at London (then known as "The Forks") which it was deemed advisable that he should accept. It was therefore resolved that Thomas and his family, consisting of Robert, James, David and Eliza, together with Robert's sons Edward and Robert should proceed to Tilbury as instructed by Colonel Talbot and that Robert, the elder, should go to London with his youngest son John, in fulfilment of his engagement and rejoin the others in Tilbury as soon as found advisable.

The party thus designated for Tilbury East therefore took passage in a little sloop, from which they were in due time landed at Cedar Springs, whence they found their way (probably along the blazed trail of the Middle Road Survey) twelve miles into the bush, landing at lot number ten, at which is situated the present Stewart P.O. Miss Eliza, the only woman of the party, when leaving Cedar Springs, parted with womankind, nevermore for the space of eighteen months, to see the face of a member of her own sex.

The lots were "all before them which to choose", and they finally selected South Half Lot Number 10 N. R. N. as the site of their future residence. Through it meanders the channel of what became thenceforth known as The Ten, or Smith's Creek. Their nearest accessible neighbour being then on the Talbot Road, about six miles distant, they were completely thrown upon their own resources. The time of their settlement was the month of August and the creek was dry - so dry that, in their ignorance of its habits, they had begun to build their shanty in its flats, which, in Spring and other flood times were completely overflowed. Fortunately, a visitor from the Lake Settlement had given warning of their mistake and the structure was moved to higher ground. For the present, however, their trouble was not the over abundance but the famine scarcity of water. None was to be had short of the Lake, distant as already stated, about six miles. It was, therefore, necessary to detail two of their strongest young men for the purpose of bearing through the woods in pails, sometimes suspended from a pole resting on the shoulders of the bearers, the precious liquid. For the first season, at least, supplies of wheat or flour must have been borne in, in the same fashion. Indeed it is on record that supplies of flour were, for years afterwards carried all the way from Amherstburg in fifty pound sacks on the shoulders of newcomers, as they successfully arrived. Soon, however, the Smith families would have wheat of their own production and then, if not before, Mr. Smith's eldest son Robert constructed a hand grist-mill or machine, said to have been his own invention by which the household grists and those of neighbours were for some time ground. This feeble device, with its deer-skin belt, punctured and fitted for service by the use of a red-hot wire was soon sup-

aded by an ox-driven mill which in turn gave place to steam driven machinery equal to the ordinary standard of its day.

The Smiths were not long left in their condition of loneliness and solitude, although as to who were their first successors in the procession in which they were, themselves, the leaders, there is some uncertainty. It is certain, however, that among, if not the first, to become their neighbours were Matthew Martin and his wife with their family, then consisting only of girls. Immediately following Mr. Martin came Alexander Stevenson and his wife with their family consisting of both boys and girls. Mr. Martin settled on South Half Lot Number Four, Concession Nine, and Mr. Stevenson on North Half Lot Number Four, Concession Ten, just across the Road Allowance. Mr. Martin had had experience as grieve or farm manager on a large farm or estate in the South of Scotland and immediately set to work to clear a field on which he succeeded in sowing fall wheat the same year. From the time that the produce of that sowing was reaped, he never left his home in search of work, purchased a pound of flour, or, other than for change of seed, bought a bushel of wheat. That was perhaps an achievement unparalleled in the community. In all his work he was neat, forceful and successful, becoming eventually one of the wealthiest farmers in the County.

Mr. Stevenson, who also came from the South of Scotland, had in his native land been a blacksmith. In disposition, he was kind and generous - ever ready to help a neighbour by service at the forge or on the farm, while in sickness (no doctor being available) he would give wisest lay prescription for man or beast and would, in case of accident, with tenderness and wonderful skill, set a bone or dress a wound. He was, however, less forceful and industrious than was his neighbour across the road and consequently found it necessary to make frequent withdrawals to the United States to earn the means of supplying the needs of his household.

Soon after the advent of the Stevensons the little colony on the Smith's Creek was cheered by the arrival from the North of Ireland of Charles Campbell and his family, consisting of his wife and six boys and three girls. Mr. Campbell settled on North Half Lot Nine M.R.N. Four, at least, of his six sons became each the owner of half a lot of 100 acres, but James alone settled permanently in the Township. His location was North Half Lot Number Four in the Ninth Concession. His career was honourable and prosperous but only one of his four sons has seen fit to settle down permanently in his native Township.

From that time on, the different settlements were year by year reinforced by fresh arrivals to each of whom was given hospitable and enthusiastic welcome without question as to country, clan or creed. Without an hour's unnecessary delay, a raising bee would be called and in the morning of the first available day, would assemble on the designated lot, every able-bodied man, axe in hand, to clear a site for, and out of the standing timber in the surrounding woods, before the setting of the sun, to construct for the accommodation of their new neighbours a primitive shanty. Such structures, rough and rude as they were, afforded shelter and a degree of comfort commensurate, at least, with the modest expectation of their prospective occupants who had come determined to do and endure what might be necessary to provide for themselves and families a home that they might yet be able to call their own.

Slight as was the obstruction which the erection of a structure

so rude could possibly put in the way of Hymen's activities, a still easier pathway was afforded him in the case of a young couple, one of whom belonged to the Campbell family who are said to have commenced housekeeping and to have made their home for a year in the hollow interior of a monster buttonwood, or sycamore tree whose open door and capacious interior, as it lay prone on their farm on North Half Lot Number Six (or Seven) N.N.R. on rent free terms involving no increase in the assessment value of their estate.

In 1833 arrived in the Township John Coutts, who a year earlier had left his farm in the parish of Glengairn, Scotland, bearing the imposing name of Tullochacoharrick to make for himself, his wife and four stalwart sons and two daughters who accompanied him a home in the wild woods of Canada West. Landing first at Ancaster in the County of Wentworth, Mr. Coutts took a year to look around for a suitable location and, at last, attracted by the wide range of treeless pasture lands on the margin of the Thames , then less flooded than they subsequently became, he settled on the North Half Lot Number Nine in the Fifth Concession. That lot, adjacent to the Wilson Creek, wooded on a level sufficiently high for drainage purposes, was in the immediate vicinity of the coveted pasturage, and, in contrast with the land dearth and dearness prevailing in Scotland which had made him hopeless of being able to provide there at any possible rental, farms for his boys, here, all around stretched thousands of acres of fertile lands eagerly inviting occupation by the stout heart and the willing hand.

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Coutts was a cousin of Mary Robertson, the poet Byron's boyhood love.

Three years later, John Fletcher, who, in early boyhood, had through accident or other cause, lost entirely the use of one of his lower limbs, had been educated for a school teacher. In that capacity he had found for some years employment in the Parish of Glengairn, near what had been his boyhood home. Influenced by the example of his friends, the Coutts family, he resolved to follow them to Canada and accordingly, in 1836, with his young wife, set sail for Quebec, and found his way to Port Stanley. There he obtained employment in his chosen profession for one year, receiving at the end of the period of his engagement, as compensation for his services a yoke of oxen, partially trained, and a horse. With these and a rude cart to which the oxen were hitched and behind which the horse was led, he made his way through woods and partial clearances to Chatham, then an insignificant village or hamlet. Two or three miles down the River Thames, in the Township of Dover, he was fortunate enough to obtain employment as school teacher. In 1840, he purchased from Robert Smith (who, later, became a successful farmer in the Township of Harwich) the South Half of Lot Number Two, Concession Eight, Tilbury East, agreeing to pay therefor £90.00 in cash and to deliver to the vendor, a year later, eight three-year-old steers and one heifer. On the property, of which ten acres had been cleared of timber, was a log house and barn. There, with an interruption of two years during which he taught school in the Township of Romney, he made his home till the time of his death in 1873. His career as a farmer, notwithstanding his physical handicap, was most prosperous. For several years he taught school within the Township near his home, remuneration for his services being chiefly, if not entirely confined to school fees. Money being, in those days extremely scarce, cash payments except for taxes were seldom made or expected. For that reason the collection of even trifling sums such as

school fees should have been then probably impracticable. Mr. Fletcher was, however, always willing to accept and his patrons were usually willing to make settlement of such accounts in the shape of manual labour either in land clearing or on the farm in lieu of cash. By such means, together with his own spare time industry, a considerable portion of his farm soon became fit for cultivation and meantime his stock of cattle, hogs and horses began to assume considerable proportions. For seventeen years prior to his death (1856-1873) he held the position of Township Clerk, coupled for several years with that of Treasurer as well. By the time of his death he had acquired and, with the exceptions of portions theretofore deeded over to some members of his family, still owned about 800 acres of land.

Meantime, the advent of fresh settlers was being maintained with increasing rapidity. On the Middle Road, in the vicinity of the Wilson Creek, soon after the arrival of the Smiths, originated a prosperous settlement of which one of the first members was John Wilson, a native of the North of Ireland who was destined to take an active part in the initiation, locally, of Municipal Government.

In a section of the Southeasterly part of the Township which is drained by the Hickey Creek a settlement was commenced in comparatively early times. The settlers were mostly all of English descent. From one of these, named Badder, the settlement early derived and still bears the name of Baddertown. Being for the most part adherents of the Methodist Church, the settlers were at an early period in the history of the Township able to erect for themselves a place of worship, which, to their credit, has been ever since maintained.

The centre of the Township was settled largely by people of Scottish descent with a considerable mixture of immigrants from the North of Ireland. Most of these were members or adherents of the Presbyterian Church, though, for some time unorganized and destitute of religious ordinances of any kind. In 1846, through the instrumentality of Rev. Mr. Sutherland of Eckfrid, a congregation was organized, and in a short time thereafter a log church was erected for their accommodation on Southeast part of Lot Number Sixteen, N.R.R. That structure was replaced in 1862 by a substantial frame building on the same site, which fittingly served its purpose until superseded in 1904 by the present handsome structure.

The Southwest part of the Township was, at first, settled by a mixed population, of whom were a large proportion of people of Irish descent. Those adhering to the Roman Catholic faith had access to a place of worship on the Middle Road in the Township of Tilbury West, but no Protestant Church was for some years established. Help came, however, about or possibly a year or two after 1850, by the arrival of the Rev. Wm. Burgess who came as a missionary of the English Congregational Church. Mr. Burgess was a zealous and effective Minister and the beneficent effects of his labours soon became, and still are manifest in the locality.

Discouragements.

In spite of the industry of the early settlers and the gradual improvements thence resulting, conditions continued to be extremely trying and consequently many became discouraged and some left the country in disgust. Indeed many that remained readily con-

fessed that they remained only because of inability to leave. One settler on a lot on the Middle Road near Merlin is said to have sold out his farm, with all improvements, for a pair of boots. In these he was able to get out with dry feet and utterly vanish from the scene of his tribulation. Another name-forgotten man who settled on North Half Lot Number Thirteen, M.R.S., is said to have sold out his property for a barrel of whiskey and preferring apparently, a small sample of goods that were not to a hundred acres of land in the same condition, passed, otherwise from sight and memory.

Dawn.

Over the scene of discouragement, however, in a few years began to show on the horizon the first streaks of dawn. The tree stumps that for years after the toilsome removal of the standing timber impeded sorely the progress of the plough began at last to yield to decay in the earlier clearances, and as the emancipated area increased from year to year, a corresponding increase in the acreage devoted to wheat production took place. In those early days the crops were peculiarly abundant and in consequence a moderate prosperity soon began to throw its radiance over the community.

With improved conditions, however, the compelling hand of necessity which had theretofore stirred to utmost capacity the physical and mental energies of the settlers was withdrawn and a short period of reduced activity appears to have set in. During that period, the early settlers, finding from their fruitful fields produce sufficient for the supply of their frugal needs, ceased to exert themselves as formerly, for the extension of their clearances. The result was that, for a time, only slight increase in the arable area of their farms took place. Nature, however, has her own way of correcting her children and her correcting hand was soon felt by the youthful settlement. Some time in the fifties of the century appeared the wheat midge or weevil and the wheat crop was by its ravages so reduced from year to year that at last enough wheat was not produced within the township to supply its own necessities. In 1866, the year in which the present writer, as a young man arrived with his father and family, our supply of flour was purchased at the rate of ten dollars a barrel. Not much of it was used by our household, a cheaper substitute being found in corn meal which, as mush and johnny cake, became our staple diet in common with most of our neighbors.

(About, or perhaps a little before the time of the arrival of the midge pest, several families from the neighborhood of Montreal made their home in Tilbury East, bringing with them a knowledge of the manufacture of potash. Amongst those were the Richardson, Stewart, Laing and Ainslie families. Perhaps the most enterprising amongst these was John Richardson, who came with his own family and also accompanied by his own parents and the other members of his father's family. Mr. Richardson purchased from Messrs. John and Daniel Kerr the South Half Lot Number Fifteen, M.R.N., a lot well wooded with elm timber which, though then of no merchantable value, was the king of potash producers. Commencing with his usual energy, Mr. Richardson not only had his farm speedily cleared, but demonstrated to his neighbors that he could, during the clearing process, make wages, at least. The result was that soon the woods all around were resounding anew the strokes of the woodman's axe, which soon produced a large increase of the area of deforested land.

In 1866 the hopes of the community were revived by reports that began to be circulated that a variety of wheat had been produced or discovered that was proof against the ravages of the midge. That same fall, a number of the Tilbury farmers had been supplied with the seed-wheat of the new variety, and in the fall of the next succeeding year wheat was sold at seventy-five cents per bushel. Since that time there seems to have been no return of that particular midge and the fields extended in area, as they were by the clearance made for potash production, became available for more extensive sowing and more abundant harvests.

Municipal Government.

Prior to the year 1850, when came into force an Act of the Province of Canada for the erection of the Municipal Corporations, et cetera, the Province of Canada was, for municipal purposes, divided into several large districts, as the divisions were called, each comprising more than one County. One of these, known as the Western District comprised the Counties of Kent, Essex and Lambton. The Council for each District was composed of Commissioners or Councillors elected annually by the legally qualified electors resident within the district, each Township being entitled to return annually one such representative and no more. The Western District held their meetings in the Town of Sandwich, to reach which, over the roads or trails then existing must have been, indeed, for the more distant members, a most serious undertaking.

Prior to the first Township meeting held in Tilbury East (which was held in January, 1836) it would appear that statutory provision had been made, not only for the election of District Councillors, but also for the election in each Township of certain officers for the management of purely local affairs. Such meetings were held on the first Monday of January in each year under the Statute, provision being made for holding interim or extra meetings under magisterial warrant. All appointments seem to have been formally made (after being moved and seconded) by a show of hands. The local management Board consisted of three men who seem to have been known as "Commissioners" or "Wardens". Other local officers so appointed were Clerk, Treasurer, Pathmaster, Pound-keeper, Auditor, Fence-viewer and several others, all appointments being for one year only.

Judging from the records still extant, these elections would appear to have been taken rather seriously. In 1842, for instance, Hector Simpson, already named, was duly elected as representative in the District Council. For some reason not disclosed, he had been found ineligible for the office and, therefore, by virtue of a warrant under the hand of J. W. Little, Esq., J.P., a special meeting of the Electors convened on the 27th day of January of the same year for the election of a fit and proper person to take his place. The Candidates at this meeting were Mr. Francis Trudell from the river and Mr. Duncan McDonald from the lake district. At the close of the first day, the majority of the votes polled were in favour of Mr. Trudell. At the request of Messrs. James Smith, John Willan and Thos. Smith, the poll was continued next day, at the close of which Mr. Trudell was still ahead. Still dissatisfied, Messrs. Thos. Smith, W. F. Robertson and James Smith demanded and obtained an extension of the poll for next following day. At the close of that day, Mr. McDonald was declared duly elected.

Mr. McDonald, however, did not take his seat at the Council, though no explanation of his failure so to do is recorded. From the record it appears that a third meeting was held on the 18th day of April of the same year, in pursuance of a warrant under the hand of John Dolsen, Esquire, Warden of the District "For the purpose of choosing and nominating one fit and proper person to serve as a Councillor on the Municipality of the Western District". The Candidates were N. W. McNeil, nominated by Mr. Robert Syers, Mr. James Smith and Mr. Reuben Hall; and Mr. Francis Trudell, on motion of Mr. Wm. Houton, seconded by Mr. John Wilson and Mr. Alex. McGregor. The result was the election of Mr. McNeil by a majority of seven votes.

In 1839 no Town Meeting was held, as appears from the following recorded minute:

"Account of the Township of East Tilbury for the year 1839 - Owing to the disturbances in the Province last winter and all the settlers being out in the militia service, there was no Township Meeting held, and of course the officers for the preceding year were bound to serve as if they had been elected in January meeting past."

In 1841 a like failure of the Town Meeting had occurred as shown by the following minute under the hand of John Coutts, Town Clerk:

"Tilbury East, 9th January, 1841.

"There has been no Town Meeting held in this Township this year owing to the Magistrates not issuing a warrant for the purpose, and, of course, the officers of the preceding year have to continue."

On Monday the 7th day of January, 1850, was held the first meeting under The Municipal Act, Twelfth Victoria, Chapter 81, under which, for the first time, the business of the meeting was restricted to the election of five Councillors for service in the Township as a Local Municipality. The Councillors so elected were John Smith, John Coutts, John Wilson, Francis Sharman and John Fletcher for whom were polled, respectively, 81, 76, 72, 70 and 59 votes.

This Council, at their first meeting on Monday, 21st January, 1850, by unanimous vote, appointed as their president, Mr. John Wilson, under the old Saxon Title of Reeve, as by law provided. The only other recorded transaction being a resolution descriptive of the shape, size and device chosen for their corporate seal which is thus described:- "One and a half inches long by one and a quarter inches wide, of an elliptical shape, the devise to be an acorn in the centre, entwined by the rose, thistle and shamrock; on the upper side the word "Municipality" on the lower, "Tilbury East". At the next session, held on the 11th of February of the same year, the seal was produced by the Reeve for inspection and approved. That session must have been an arduous one. It was continued by adjournment, from day to day, for four successive days, during which, along with other business, six by-laws were passed, providing for the appointment of officers and other purposes. Some time during the fourth day, Mr. Smith was, by resolution, allowed to withdraw, for amendment, a by-law by him introduced and immediately follows on the record a resolution passed for adjournment until ten o'clock P.M. when (as the record shows) Council resumed and passed as number six, Mr. Smith's by-law.

At this meeting were appointed under by-law, the following

amongst other officers:- James Smith, Clerk; Robert Sloan, Assessor; Andrew Wilson, Collector; Angus Grant, Treasurer; and Richard Carr and Robert Smith, Auditors.

On the first day of January, 1853, the Township of Romney, which up to the end of the next previous year had continued to be united municipally with Tilbury East, acquired the full status of an independent municipality.

For many years no professional land surveyor was employed. Probably none such was available. So long as the original surveyors' stakes remained, little difficulty in ascertaining the true boundaries of lots and highways would be experienced, but as these began to yield to the tooth of time, it became absolutely necessary that some one capable of running lines should be employed officially. Fortunately one was found at hand, a man for the purpose, both reliable and capable, in the person of Robert Smith, who was officially appointed to the position of Township Surveyor, his fee for services being fixed at ten shillings (presumably York) per diem. Equipped with a primitive compass (now in the possession of the present writer) he did his work, running lines for the municipality and for individuals as well, to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

Drainage.

Because of the extreme flatness of Tilbury East, artificial drainage was indispensable. Without it not only was road construction impossible, but no crops could be raised. The first settlers, being located on the lands immediately adjoining the creeks found it possible, individually, to effect the drainage of their small clearances, but if the rest of the Township was to become fit for settlement, drainage would necessarily have to be accomplished by the united efforts of all the community. The imperative of necessity for such co-operation, therefore, soon laid its hand upon the growing settlements and the compulsory powers, first of the annual Town Meeting and subsequently of the Municipal Council, by Legislative authority conferred, were eagerly hailed and enforced for impressing upon every settler the performance of Statute Labour and the application of every spare dollar of municipal funds for highway drainage and construction. Fortunately ditches made for road construction were usually available as outlets for the drainage of the adjacent lands, and to this fact is largely due the eagerness, as shown by the records from 1836 to recent times, with which application had been made to Town Meeting and Council for leave to commute for statute labour liability for a number of years for the immediate construction of road ditches, ostensibly for road construction or improvements solely, but in reality to obtain drainage for their own lands.

From the time of the earliest settlement, it seems to have been well understood that under the provisions of Common, if not Municipal Law, the occupier of lands on a higher level was restrained from constructing drainage works which should have the effect of causing injury to lands on a level lower than that of his own, but for years there seems to have been no realization of responsibility, legal or otherwise, for damages arising to lower lands through flooding of the natural creeks through the artificial drainage of lands on a higher level. In the course of time, however, as drainage improvements went on and as the artificially drained area increased, it eventually became evident that the creeks themselves were becoming inadequate to bear their in-

crease burden without encroaching more and more upon the lands immediately adjoining that had, in a state of Nature, been free from inundation and that something should be done for the relief of the lands so injured. This conviction found first expression practically in connection with the McDougall Creek which about 1868 was deepened and enlarged under the provisions of The Municipal Act on the petition of the owners of lands to be thereby benefitted or which should use said creek as an outlet.

Soon, after, followed the deepening and enlarging of the Smith's and Wilson Creeks, under the provisions of The Ontario Drainage Act, and under Government supervision, on the petition of the Council without reference to the land-owners immediately interested.

In 1873 was passed a by-law, under which was afterwards deepened and enlarged the Burgess Creek, and in 1874 was passed a by-law under which was similarly enlarged the Hickey Creek.

Soon followed the construction of the King and Whittle Drain which was the last of the more important works for drainage by gravitation. There followed, however, from year to year, numerous drains of less magnitude, nearly all of which formed tributaries of one or other of the larger works above referred to.

For some time it seemed that all the drainage difficulties had vanished and that the time had come to rest and be thankful. Such a time never comes, however, to a community that is alive.

Again trouble more serious than ever arose and this time from a new and unexpected quarter. In 1878, Mr. Harry Forbes landed in Canada and in the following year took up his residence on South Half lot Number Four, Concession Seven in Tilbury East. For some years he quietly pursued his calling as agriculturist, living in friendly social relations with all his neighbours, many of whom he had known - some of them as relatives, and all of them as friends, on the upper reaches of the Don and the Dee in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, of which he was a native. By some means he had become possessor of a hundred acres of land within the Southerly margin of the marshy Plains a short distance from his original farm the Southerly part of which he had hoped to be able to cultivate and from the rest of it to find rough pasturage for his cattle, if not to cut from its plains, hay for them as an additional, or emergency ration in time of need. To his disappointment, he found that no part was sufficiently dry in Spring for cultivation and that if it was to be of any use, it would be necessary to enclose a section of it for protection from the surrounding waters and to install a pumping outfit for discharging from the enclosure such waters as might therein accumulate. Accordingly he set to work and carried out his scheme, which proved, in some degree successful. His bank, however, being composed, mostly, of the surface peaty mould, proved too light to make sufficient compression of the surface soil to prevent leakage, and it became apparent that to be successful, the redemption of such lands would require to be undertaken on a more extensive scale. In the course of his investigation of the surrounding plains, he satisfied himself that the high water in the Spring, which had been his chief obstacle, was caused, in part at least, by the increased rapidity with which the drainage waters of mostly the whole of the Township of Raleigh and Tilbury East were being discharged into the Plains area through the operation of

artificial drainage works. Believing also that the reclamation of the whole area of the Plains lying South of Jeannette's Creek could be accomplished by the co-operation and to the mutual advantage of both the interested land-owners and the Municipality, he made repeated appeals to the Council but without effect.

At last, on July 10th, 1884, he presented to them a petition signed by a majority of the interested land-owners, praying for the drainage, by banking and pumping, of certain Plains Lands lying South of Jeannette's Creek, containing 5,000 acres.

The Council of that year consisted of Col. Martin, Reeve; John A. McGregor, Deputy-reeve; and W. C. Fletcher, Henry Sales and Henry Wilson, Councillors. Deputy-reeve McGregor and Councillors Fletcher and Sales were disposed to regard the petition favorably, but the Reeve and Councillor Wilson were both opposed to its reception.

As a preliminary precaution, it was resolved that the whole matter, especially as to the Council's responsibility for protection of the lands in question against increase (over what had existed in a state of nature) of the depth or area of submergence thereof, as a consequence of the construction of artificial drains under the control of the Municipality, should be submitted to Mr. Pegley, their Solicitor, for his opinion and advice.

Subsequently, the Reeve admitted the receipt of Mr. Pegley's advice, but, for what he deemed prudential reasons, declined to submit it to the Council. That refusal was naturally taken by the members favorable to the petition, to indicate that the Reeve's own position had not been on all fours with that taken by the Solicitor.

However that may have been, the matter, for that year, was allowed to rest.

In the following year (1885) the membership of the Council was unchanged, except that for Mr. Henry Sales, who was retired and substituted by Henry Powell, who, likewise, was favorable to the petition.

On the second day of March, 1885, a fresh petition having been presented to the Council, Mr. Augustine McDonell, C.E., was instructed to make a survey of the territory described in the petition and to make report, with plans and specifications of and assessment for such works and mechanical means as he might deem necessary for the carrying out of the prayer of the petitioners. Having been able to make his survey on the ice before the end of the same month, Mr. McDonald's report was in the hands of the Council ready for their meeting on the tenth of April next following, but was, at that meeting, laid over till their next meeting on the fifth day of the following May, when the Clerk was instructed to prepare a by-law for its adoption. On May 23th that by-law was provisionally adopted, and on August 12th, it was finally passed.

Both within and without the Council, however, the measure was met with most violent opposition, and was finally quashed on the appeal to the Courts on a technicality, the ground being a clerical error, the costs, amounting to $4,000.00, being paid by the Municipality.

Mr. Forbes then became to be regarded, and for a time so remained, the most unpopular man in the Township. He was not the man, however, to be put down permanently by one defeat.

On January 24th, 1887, a fresh petition, but in terms similar to those contained in the former, was presented to the Council which, that year, was composed of John A. McGregor, Reeve; W. C. Fletcher, Deputy-Reeve; and David Simpson, Geo. Hope, and Henry Powell, Councillors.

By the Council that petition was again referred to the same Engineer, who, on March 24th presented his report, which, in some details varied slightly from his former report in the same matter.

On May 16th an adopting by-law was provisionally passed, and in due time was finally passed.

On July 28th of the same year the contract for the construction of the works was let to The Chatham Dredging and Contracting Co. for the sum of $45,500.00, being a sum considerably under the estimate of the engineer in that behalf.

The works contemplated by the by-law consisted of:

(1) A heavy embankment along the boundary of the drainage area as far as was necessary for protection from the inflow of exterior waters. This embankment was formed of materials excavated by a dredge in the construction of a large drain, contiguous to but outside the embankment, and in all, probably, about eight miles in length.

(2) An internal drain, also constructed by a dredge, for receiving and conducting to the pumping station the drainage waters of the whole drainage area.

(3) A pumping station at the lower or westerly end of the internal drain, in which was a steam operated "flash" wheel revolving in a narrow channel by which the waters were lifted five or six feet above the bottom level of the internal drain and discharged into the adjoining outlet of the Wilson Creek.

The debentures issued for construction were sold at a premium, and the work was let and completed at a cost considerably under that as estimated by the engineer, and the surplus thus arising was used towards the redemption of the debentures, covering, at least the amount of the debenture and the interest coupons first falling due.

To most of the assessed owners, especially such of them as were possessed of no reserve financial resources, this provided a welcome and substantial relief. Their position was nevertheless precarious. The land, after the first laborious ploughing, had to lie fallow for a year, and in the following Spring had to be subjected to further toilsome preparation before becoming fit to receive the seed for a crop. Under these circumstances, the maintenance of their families and the payment of taxes, augmented as they were by the yearly debenture levies, became, as the years went on, a burden which the less affluent among them were unable to bear. After some five years of heroic, though seemingly unavailing effort, a number of them were constrained to apply to the Council for an extension of the period limited for debenture redemption. Unable to comply with that request the Council applied to the Ontario Legislative Assembly for a special Act to empower the Council to amend their by-law so as to add twenty years to the time thereby limited for the payment of the amount of

their indebtedness still outstanding. The prayer of this petition was granted and a special Act passed accordingly. Under the authority of that Act, an amending by-law was passed, under the provisions of which the time limited for the payment of the remainder of the indebtedness represented by the debentures still outstanding, was extended twenty years and the amounts leviable yearly against each lot and part of lot assessable therefor, proportionately reduced, provision being made for the redemption of the original debentures still outstanding, as they severally fall due by means of the reduced yearly levies, supplemented by the issue of a debenture in each year to the end of the currency period of the original debentures, equivalent to the amount of the said reduction in each year, of the said levies respectively.

By the majority of the interested land-owners, the relief accorded under the provisions of the special Act and the amending by-law was accepted with gratitude, while such of them as preferred to meet their assessments in terms of the original by-law and duly gave notice to that effect, became legally entitled to exemption from the operation of the special Act and the amending by-law thereby authorized.

In actual operation, the flash wheel with its connected machinery was found most effective for the discharge of the waters from the internal drain, but difficulty was experienced from the first, in persuading the waters to proceed along the drain at sufficient speed either to give prompt and efficient drainage relief to the more distant lands or to bring to the pumping station, except in time of flood, water sufficiently fast to give steady employment, at full pumping capacity, to the pumping machinery.

In a few years that defect was cured by the installation of a second pumping station some two or three miles back from the first equipped with two steam-driven centrifugal pumps. The cost of that second installation was raised by the issue of debentures yielding interest at four per cent which were sold at or slightly above par.

Outside the drainage territory, the drain upon the general funds of the Township caused by road and bridge construction within the drainage area, caused some mutterings of discontent for a time but it soon became apparent to all that an addition of 5,000 acres to the tillable area of the Township could not fail to become an economic advantage as well as an important contribution to the salubrity of the surrounding country.

Soon after the completion of The Forbes Works, a like drainage scheme, known as "The Dauphin Drainage Works", was set afoot for the reclamation of about 2,500 acres of marsh lands on the North side of Jeannotte's Creek, along the Southerly bank of the River Thames and a little later was launched "The McGregor Drainage Scheme" for the drainage (also by embanking and pumping) of 500 or 600 acres of plains or flooded lands adjacent to the Kent and Essex County line.

These three schemes, therefore, together embraced about 8,000 acres of land which were, previous to being thereby reclaimed, valueless for any purpose except the raising of muck rats and bull-frogs.

To the late John A. McGregor, the late Wm. C. Fletcher, the late Henry Miller, the late Geo. Hope, the late Henry Powell and

Alexander Gracey, the last named of them alone survives, belongs the chief credit for service within the Council in inaugurating and forwarding the interests of The Forbes Drainage Scheme, in the face of much opposition and abuse. Outside the Council, however, they had the valuable support of a large number of influential men without whose support and influence the scheme could not have been carried through.

In view of the successful operation of all these works for a quarter of a century or more, and of the immense benefit thence resulting not only to the interested land-owners but also to the Township generally, it is not easy to understand or sympathize with the strenuous opposition with which The Forbes Drainage Scheme was, at its first introduction assailed. It must not be forgotten, however, that the initiation of such a scheme is not unattended by serious risks, nor that in its continued operation (to which the Council, as trustee, would be committed under the by-law) would expose the Municipality to risk of liability in damages arising from possible negligence on the part of the Council in discharging the duties assumed by them on behalf of the Municipality.

To such risks the friends of the scheme were not blind. They had, however, faith in the practicability of the scheme and in the successful and profitable operation of the proposed works. They further believed that the danger of being subjected to payment of damages arising from future negligence on the part of the Council was exceedingly remote. In any case they were prepared to accept of such a possibility rather than risk the probability of an action at law to compel the protection of low lying lands in and on the margin of the plains complained of, which could be, in their opinion, effectually accomplished only by the construction of works costing little, if any less than that (as estimated) of The Forbes Works.

Education.

At the time of Confederation, the Township had progressed sufficiently to be able to establish and maintain within its limits four Public Schools. Since then, their number has been, at least, doubled, giving ample opportunity to every child within the Township for the attainment of such education as the primary school is calculated to afford.

From these Schools and the rude culture of bush and farm, have gone forth from the Township a number of men who have taken a useful and honorable place in the world, though none of them, perhaps, have become known to fame. Of these may be mentioned the late Mr. Alex. Coutts, one of the earliest settlers who had the honor to represent, in the interests of the Conservative Party, the riding of West Kent in the Ontario Legislature, and Mr. Archie McCoig, whose maternal grandfather, the late Mr. Matt. Martin, Sr., was one of the first settlers in the Township. Mr. McCoig who is, himself, a native of the Township and a product of its Schools, represented for many years West Kent in the Dominion Parliament, and today holds the position of Senator.

Of those of the natives of the Township who have become members of one or other of the so-called learned professions, may be mentioned the following:- Of the family of the late Mr. R.H. Waddell, an early settler, one son; of the family of the late Mr. Andrew Wilson,

one son and one grandson; of the family of the late Mr. David Ferguson, an early settler, one grandson; of the family of the late Mr. John Coutts, who, with his late father of the same name, was one of the first settlers in the Township, four sons, (besides grandsons enumerated under a different surname); of the family of the late Mr. John Fletcher, (Tp. Clerk), four grandsons; of the family of the late Rev. Mr. Burgess, one son and one grandson; of the family of the late John Kerr, one son; of the family of the late John Laing, one son; of the family of James W. Smith (whose father, David Smith, was a member of, and accompanied on their first arrival in the Township, the first family to settle on the Smith Creek), one son; of the family of the late Charles Farquharson, two sons and four grandsons; of the family of the late Mr. Henry Forbes, one son; and of the family of John Fletcher, (nephew of John Fletcher above named), one son; of the family of Timothy Feenan, one son.

Gold Hunters.

Some time in the early sixties, a number of the young men of the Township left for the gold mines in British Columbia. None of them were overstocked with capital and some of them were compelled to use all their ingenuity to enable them to reach their destination. John Wilson, one of the earliest settlers, already mentioned, is said to have covered the intervening distance over the Rocky Mountains on foot. James Stewart, also named above, with a number of others, among whom were Henry Richardson, John Reid, James Fletcher, and probably William Hickey and others, went by boat from New York to, and by the usual means of transport at the time available, crossed the Isthmus of Panama. Mr. Stewart had the misfortune to lose his purse in New York and had to use his wits to make his way. By some means, he had been allowed to get employment as ship's carpenter, on the boat on which his more fortunate fellows had taken passage, though he really possessed no knowledge of ship construction or of the duties which he had undertaken to discharge. Fortunately for him, and possibly for others as well, no necessity arose for the exercise of skill above what he possessed, and he landed with his companions at the Isthmus with funds sufficient to enable him to reach, with the others, his destination.

Politics.

In Politics the population was divided, with preponderance of votes usually in favor of the Reform Candidate. For several years, Mr. Archibald McKellar had been the popular Representative for the County of Kent, but in the first election for the Dominion Parliament in 1867, he was defeated by Mr. Rufus Stephenson, then Editor of The Chatham Planet.

In one of Mr. McKellar's previous political campaigns he held a meeting in the old Town Hall of the Township of Tilbury East. At the time, the Rev. Mr. King was arranging for the establishment of a refuge in the Township of Raleigh for slaves escaping from the United States. However sympathetic they may have been with the slaves as long as they were in the United States, the people of Raleigh and Tilbury East did not like the idea of having them as near neighbors, and the opposition to the establishment of such a refuge was being met with violent opposition in both Townships. Mr. McKellar was known to be sympathetic with Mr. King's plans and to have

been taking an active part in aiding their accomplishment. Thinking that this question, if brought home to Mr. McKellar, might be the means of making a split in the ranks of the local Reformers, Mr. John Wilson who was in politics, strongly Conservative, asked how the education of the colored people was to be carried on and what Mr. McKellar would think of having them attend the Public Schools along with the white pupils. To this Mr.McKellar replied that the question asked was rather a difficult one, but it must be remembered that the British Constitution took no notice of color and that it was probably just as well that it did not. If notice were taken of color, it would follow that notice should be taken of grades of color all the way from white to black and if that should be done, he was afraid that neither Mr. Wilson nor himself would pass as of first grade.

For Mr. Wilson, Mr. McKellar and all their generation, life's battles are past and gone. Most of the questions that then divided politicians into hostile parties have ceased to divide the community. But the question arises, "Are we any better or any wiser that were our fathers?" Have we, with our added experience, been able to free ourselves from the prejudices which we have inherited or acquired, or have we become better able than were they to regard matters of public concern without regard to our own personal interests and to record our vote in accordance with our own convictions of right and duty without fear, favor or affection of, for or by any person or persons whomsoever. If, in this direction, we have individually and as a people made progress, there is hope for the future. If we have failed so to advance, we have morally and politically lived in vain.

The above history was written about the year 1926 by the late Donald R. Farquharson at the suggestion of the late Rev. Hugh Cowan, a former Minister of St. Paul's Church, Harwich Township, who was collecting material for a book he intended publishing on the early history of Kent County. This book was never printed but permission was given the Kent Historical Society in the year 1946 to use any part of it for its records.

Donald R. Farquharson was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, in 1846, and came to Tilbury East Township in 1866, where he was Clerk of the Township from 1873 to 1901. He was then appointed head of the Customs Department at Chatham, Ont., from which position he retired in 1921. He died in Chatham in 1936.

KENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

J. F. Fletcher,
President.

June 10, 1947.

BOTHWELL

The Town of Bothwell, according to the last census, had in 1921 a population of six hundred and thirty-three inhabitants. It is situated in a favorable location in the Township of Zone, enjoying good transportation facilities from the main lines of both the Canadian Northern and Canadian Pacific Railways and the Longwoods Road, a Provincial Highway and paved, connecting Toronto with Windsor. It is also surrounded by an improving agricultural community on which it at present depends for whatever of business and trade is transacted in the town, and to which source it must look for whatever progress awaits it in its prospective future.

Bothwell owes its status as a town to the development of the oil interests in its neighborhood, or rather to the 'oil boom' incident to that development. Its incorporation took place in 1867 by a special Act of Parliament, having never enjoyed municipal existence as a village, though its present population would not justify a standing any other than that of a village.

The settlement of the vicinity commenced in the year 1852 by the purchase of a tract of four thousand acres lying to the North of the Moravian Indian Reserve and including the entire site of the present town, by the Honorable George Brown, founder of the Toronto Globe. In that year the line of the Great Western Railway had been located through this district and Mr. Brown saw in this an opportunity for a splendid business proposition selling the hardwood timber off this tract for lumber, and in cordwood to the railway when it was put in operation, and in utilizing the cleared land afterwards for farming purposes. He also was the founder of the town. From the remoteness of competing points and the future promise of the surrounding country as a farming district, he conceived that point to be a desirable place for establishing a trading centre. After it had been cleared, he had that part North of the railroad surveyed into town lots, established saw-mills to manufacture the marketable timber of his lands into lumber, and built a furniture factory employing about thirty hands. In these days he had the nucleus of a considerable town established when the oil boom blew down upon it in 1863. In his survey, Mr. Brown made provision for the two streets which still remain the principal thoroughfares of the town, the one, Main Street, which connects it with the Lambton County Line, and the other, Peter Street, connecting with the London Road.

After these initial undertakings of Mr. Brown, others came in and began to assist in building up the town. A grog shop was one of the first of these additional institutions to be established, an eighteen by twenty-four foot structure named "The Sebastopol", enjoying it was said a patronage so great that crowds were often unable to gain admission, and had, therefore, to be served out of doors. Others in the same business followed in rapid succession until no less than five hotels were firmly established here before 1857, an unmistakable evidence of the social conditions of the times. The first store was

established in 1856 under the proprietorship of Messrs. Campbell and McNab who subsequently removed to Chatham. In 1858 a second store was opened by William Laughton who became a permanent resident of the place and continued to prosper during all the changing vicissitudes in this history of the town. On the South side of the railroad a third store had been built by a man named Crawford which was burned down some time later. During these years and before the oil boom, the greater proportion of the workmen in the village and vicinity were under the employ of Mr. Brown. Money was a commodity almost unseen, the circulating medium being mainly orders on Mr. Brown in payment of wages which were readily accepted by the merchants in exchange for goods or in payment for debts, a condition which continued until and for some time after the boom days in the oil industry.

The oil boom which lasted several years was occasioned by the discovery of a well in 1863 on the Colville farm near the Mosa Townline and close to the London Road by one John Lick, a Pennsylvania promoter, followed by a second on the Chambers farm South of the town, and a third on the Gordon farm which yielded one hundred barrels a day. In addition to these discoveries the price of crude oil itself went up from $1.00 a barrel for the first shipment of one thousand barrels to the fabulous price of $10.00 a barrel in 1864, which reached the maximum of $12.00 a barrel in 1866. The opening up of the industry in this district with this enhanced price in the value of crude oil brought a legion of American operators into the town with limitless wealth who began to invest their moneys both in prospecting and boring for oil, and also establishing hotels and business houses and dwellings in the town. Business blocks rose up rapidly, some of them brick and three storeys high, including hotels, banks, billiard halls and the numerous other institutions required for a town with a population of six or seven thousand. A magnificent public hall called Catling Hall was erected by a brother of the inventor of the famous Catling gun. Hotels sprang up like mushrooms in the night, some of them of immense size, not only within the limits of the town but throughout the whole of the oil area. For these building operations alone, an army of workmen was required, but when the bottom fell out of the boom, a backset was given to the progress of the place from which it has never since recovered.

In 1865 Honorable George Brown sold out his interests to the Bothwell Land and Petroleum Company who allowed the land which had been devoted by him to agriculture to turn into commons while they concentrated their energies in extensive operations for the discovery of oil on their acquired lands. With the collapse of the oil industry, it took some considerable time to bring about a stable readjustment of the affairs of the town and vicinity. The numerous hotels became deserted, business houses were closed, and an utter abandonment of all the interests that gave life and prosperity to it took place. This was followed by a disastrous fire which swept away the greater part of the finest buildings in the town, including Catling Hall. Following this, the boom town gave place to a commonplace and unattractive village without anything now to enhance its growth save the trade that could be obtained from the surrounding farming district.

The special Act of Parliament of 1866 which incorporated it a town took effect in January of the following year with Mr. John Taylor, a secretary for Honorable George Brown, its first Mayor, and John C. Collier, Reeve, with ten others as Councillors, two from each of the five wards into which the town limits had been divided.

The history of the town since the fire has been one of slow though steady progress. Several handsome brick blocks have been built up on its two principal streets, some creditable residences, and a fine town hall of red trimmed with white brick, which has a seating capacity of about four hundred, contains stores and offices on the ground floor and presents a very good appearance. Its churches, schools and other institutions are sufficient for its present needs. In its electric light plant, waterworks system, telephone system and public park, it has kept pace with recent discoveries in supplying modern conveniences and comforts to its citizens.

Its industries include a saw-mill, a sash and door factory and a grist-mill, which find in the surrounding agricultural districts an ample market for their productions. In Bothwell, Zone Township has an attractive centre for its industrial, business, educational and social requirements, while the town on the other hand has in the Township a dependable source for its future progress and prosperity.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

BLENHEIM

Among the earliest pioneers of Blenheim was the owner of a groggery, George Hughson. The other two who shared with him the honor were Thomas Lynch, a tailor, and Harley Halstead, a farmer and contractor. In 1844, Mr. Halstead completed the construction of the Communication Road from Talbot Street to the Rondeau and thus gave the newly surveyed town plot transportation facilities to Chatham on the one side and Lake Erie on the other, an important aid to the future settlement of the town.

Post Office at first named Rondeau.

The first store was established in 1845, by two brothers of the name of Pass. These continued in business but a few years when it passed over into the hands of two other brothers long identified with the subsequent history of Blenheim, Orrin and Redman Gee. The Gees, in addition to their store, established a brick yard and were the first to erect a brick building in the town. A post office was established in this store in 1849 and one of the brothers, Orrin, became its first postmaster. The post office was named Rondeau though the village itself had previously been named Blenheim. This was done to avoid confusion as the name Blenheim had already been applied to a post office and town in Orford Township.

Up to this time all that section of the township East of the village to the townline on both sides of the Talbot Road was unsettled and was known as the "Ten Mile Bush". It was, therefore, situated in the midst of a splendidly timbered region. The land which hitherto had been held in the hands of speculators, was being opened up for settlement and consequently there was a boom in the activities of the district. With increasing industries, an increasing number of men were being employed and houses began to be erected for their accommodation. Timber, unlike what it was in the days of the first pioneers, had now become of marketable value. This was especially true of three of the varieties widely distributed in the Southern section of the Township of Harwich, oak, elm and walnut. Oak was exported as square timber and as staves for barrels. Elm was manufactured into staves and walnut into lumber, both for export. For the first thirty or more years of its history, Blenheim was a lumbering centre and owed its progress to this industry. It was one of the many lumbering villages then so thickly distributed throughout the County but one of the few also to survive and continue an urban centre after the supply of timber had been exhausted. Its favorable position surrounded by an excellent farming district secured for it a large volume of agricultural trade which it still continues to hold and increase.

From this it will be seen that Blenheim is one of the newer corporate towns of the County. This year, 1925, is the semi-centennial

anniversary of its incorporation into a village. For the first thirty-five years of its history it was a part of the Municipality of Harwich, a centre of its municipal business and the trade of the Southern half of the Township. Its incorporation as a village took effect on the first day of January, 1875, the personnel of its first Council consisting of A. L. Bisnett, Reeve, and T. R. Jackson, John McMichael, George Mallory and Lewis Kinno, Councillors.

A. L. Bisnett was well worthy of the honor of being elected the first Reeve of the newly incorporated village as he was also the first Mayor when it became a town. His life is a splendid example of the success which under favorable circumstances attends consecrated aim and effort. His father died when he was a youth, leaving his mother with her four children, of which Alfred was the oldest, unprovided for. In consequence he was compelled to forego further education, a handicap which retarded the progress of all his future enterprises. He engaged himself while a boy to a lumber firm where under these necessitous circumstances he learned to practise the saving virtues of self reliance and industry. He steadily advanced his position until he became first the proprietor of a lumber mill at Blenheim, then a carriage bent goods factory, a grist mill and a store, finally rounding up the sum of his activities by purchasing eight hundred acres of unimproved land which he converted into a first class farm. During all these years he was a leading spirit in the Municipal Government of the village and town and was as zealous and successful in administering its affairs as he was looking after the interest of his own private business. To him is rightly given the credit of being the most prominent figure in the first fifty years' history of Blenheim.

T. R. Jackson was a native of the village. He was the eldest son of John Jackson, one of the early pioneers of the County, who settled in Romney in 1815 but moved to Blenheim after it was set apart for a townsite and became a pioneer of the East end of the village, owning both lots on either side of Talbot Street. His son was born here in 1841 and spent his early life upon the farm. Later he entered into a banking business in Blenheim and became senior partner of the firm of Jackson, Fuller & Company, having also a branch in Leamington. He creditably filled a number of responsible public positions, served four consecutive years as Reeve of Blenheim and was Warden of the County in 1879.

John McMichael was also one of the early settlers in the County. At first he lived in Toronto but about 1848 removed to Blenheim and there he made his home, becoming a man of substance in the community. He was Justice of the Peace, a member of the County Council, County Warden and Reeve of the Township, and School Director, acting in the latter capacity for forty years, while for many years he was Captain of the Militia. His death occurred December 2, 1896, when he was eighty-two years of age.

The other two members of this first Council held similar creditable records in the future history of the town.

The town is indebted also to Stoddard whose activities are described in another chapter, to Morris & Ash, whose factory was burned in 1873, and to others who helped in that busy era connected with the timber days in the history of the County. But with the disappearance of the wood lands, the town settled down to what it has since become, a rural centre depending for trade and commerce upon the growth and pros-

perity of the farming district surrounding it.

The town was a busy, industrial centre during the lumber era but the passing away of the industries connected with the manufacture of wooden products left the town practically an agricultural centre. Although the town has increased in population from 1212 in 1881 to 1565 according to the last census, there has not been a commensurate advance in its commercial and industrial activities in that period. In 1864, the town contained two steam saw mills, one grist mill, two general stores, three groceries, four blacksmith shops, one saddle and harness shop, three hotels, two turning factories. Today the town contains but two industries, a grist mill and a canning factory, but the number of commercial houses has increased. It now contains two drug stores, one hardware, two general stores, five garages, two bakeries, seven groceries, one shoe store, and several other smaller shops. One of the hotels has been replaced by a business house, leaving only two, the Idle Hour Inn and the Cadillac.

The town presents considerable attractions as a place of residence for retired farmers and others. The houses are neatly built and surrounded with pleasant gardens, brick structures predominating. It has ample transportation facilities. A provincial highway, the Southern, which places the town on the tourist route between Detroit, Toronto, and other Eastern places, passes directly through the town. The Ridge Road, on which it is built, is well gravelled and connects with Ridgetown. The highway to Chatham is paved more than half its distance, a promise of future pavements in the near future on all the leading highways of the district. All other highways are well kept up and supply convenient routes of traffic to farmers seeking to do business in the town. In addition to its highways, the town is served by two railways, the Pere Marquette, running East and West from Detroit to St. Thomas, and the Wallaceburg and Lake Erie Line running from Sarnia to Erieau. The Michigan Central is but five miles distant to Charing Cross, to which there is regular connection by bus line.

Blenheim has a peculiar feature of being built away from the conveniences of lake, river or stream of any kind. Consequently the water supply is by deep wells which are controlled for household purposes by private enterprise. The fire department of the corporation has its own system of wells and makes provision for emergencies by the erection of tanks located at different places but sufficiently numerous to cover the requirements of every locality. These are always kept full in readiness to serve their purpose for every emergency. The town is lighted, as are all the other towns of the County, with hydro-electric, Chatham being the distributing centre. In addition, the town is served by natural gas from the Tilbury oil fields and from surrounding private wells. These also are developed and controlled by private enterprise.

The interests of the town are kept before the public by a very readable and well conducted weekly journal edited by J. M. Denholm who succeeded his father, Andrew Denholm, in its ownership. This newspaper was established in 1873 by Samson & Ash under the title, the Rond Eau News, since changed to the Blenheim News, and, after passing through several ownerships, was purchased by the late Mr. Denholm in 1880. It enjoys a large circulation and has a wide influence because of its advocacy of high morals and the ability displayed in its local and editorial departments.

Blenheim is well served by all the religious denominations.

It has one Roman Catholic Church, one Baptist Church, one Anglican, two United Churches, one Latter Day Saints Church, and there has recently been formed a small congregation of continuing Presbyterians. The first denomination to erect a church building was the Methodist, in 1856. It was called a Union Church where both Methodists and Presbyterians preached for a time. Before this, all the denominations used the school house for their services and here also Mrs. Stoddard and Mrs. Sheldon established the first Sunday School of the village. The Methodist Church was served in those days by itinerant preachers, both lay and ordained men, of whom Mr. Jeffrey of Raleigh seems to have been the first. The Anglicans were served occasionally by Rev. F.W.Sandys, a travelling missionary whose parish covered the whole of the Southern part of the Lake Erie District. This denomination built their first church in 1861 with the Rev. Mr. Lampman, the father of the well known Canadian poet, as its first rector. This was a frame building with a seating capacity for two hundred, which is still in use, having been removed out of the town four miles East for the Ridge Community Church. The Presbyterians erected their first church in 1866 during the pastorate of Rev. Alexander Waddell, the first minister of the United Presbyterian Church, on the Ridge, Harwich, inducted there in 1854, and for thirty-six years afterwards laboring in Blenheim and vicinity.

These original wooden buildings have all been replaced by brick structures. The first brick building erected was that of the Baptists in 1878. The Anglicans built their present building in 1891, a solid brick structure with a tower and steeple with a seating capacity for two hundred and fifty. The Methodist Church erected their present building, now called Chatham Street United Church, in 1881, a solid brick building with a seating capacity for four hundred and fifty. The Presbyterians built what is perhaps the best appearing and largest of all the churches of the town. The corner stone was laid on September 11th, 1895, and is now known as the Erskine United Church of Blenheim.

As with its religions so also is it with its educational institutions. The town is well equipped with schools. From the very first its people gave attention to the need of educating their children and the establishment of good buildings. In fact, for a time, it excelled all other places in the County in the provision which was made for school buildings. A writer of forty years ago, visiting the County, wrote of Blenheim Public School, "Of the Public School buildings in the County outside of Chatham, that at Blenheim bears the palm for beauty of design, elegance of finish, extent, and perfect adaptation to the purposes for which intended. Not only does this building eclipse any in the County but compares favorably with the best in any village of Ontario. Its cost was $13,000; it has six departments, controlled by as many teachers, and enjoys an enviable reputation as an institution of learning." Unfortunately this building was burned down in 1899 but it has been replaced by a very creditable structure in 1900 containing eight rooms and large enough to accommodate over three hundred pupils. For higher education a Continuation School has been built containing four school rooms and an assembly hall besides teachers' apartments. This school is now in charge of four teachers with an enrolment of three hundred for this year, 1925.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

DRESDEN

The Town of Dresden is built up on both sides of the Sydenham River at the head of navigation, occupying an area of about six hundred and twenty-three acres, the greater part of which is on the South side of the river. It is situated about twelve miles from Chatham to the South of it and the same distance from Wallaceburg to the West of it. The honor of being the first resident here belongs to Gerard Lindsley of the Thames River Settlement who settled on Lot Four, Concession Five, as early as 1825, but the honor of founding the Town is conceded to Daniel Ross Van Allen, a prominent lumber merchant in the early days of Chatham. He became a resident there in 1845 when all the surrounding district was an almost unbroken forest, as managing clerk in a small store carried on at the point where Dresden is now situated. Thinking this locality, with the Sydenham navigable to this point and all the district around a rich and fertile land heavily timbered with the best of marketable hardwoods and elm, a good situation for a townsite, he purchased seventy acres from Gerard Lindsley and in 1852 had twenty acres of his purchase surveyed into sixty town lots. In 1854 a post office was established to which the name of Dresden was given by the postal authorities and with John Blackwood as the first postmaster. South of Mr. Van Allen's town plot, William Wright, who settled in Dresden in 1840, had about the same time an area surveyed into lots which he named 'Fairport' and which continued to be the name of the place for some considerable time.

In order to get the place established as a centre of trade, Mr. Van Allen built there an hotel, a grain warehouse and a merchant's shop in which he carried on business for a time. Mr. Wright also established on his location a store and tavern, to which he later added a grist-mill, the first to be erected in the village.

In the immediate neighborhood, beyond the town limits, the British and American Institute had in 1840 begun the establishment of their settlement of refuge colored people and quite a colony of them soon grew up about the town. A store, a mill, a house of refuge, and a cluster of cabins were erected and with these for a beginning the settlement soon became a prominent feature in the development of Dresden and continued as such for the next thirty years of its history until the abandonment of the Institute work in 1870.

The growth of the village at the first was very slow. Two stores, an hotel and a school house were all that existed in 1850 upon to base the expectation of an important urban centre to be established in the future at this point.

Soon, however, the prospects of the village brightened materially. The number of settlers locating on the surrounding lands were increasing rapidly, especially that part North of the river. The navigable waters of the Sydenham were extensively used for their convenience both in bringing them and their goods into the settlement and transporting out whatever of products they had available for an export market. Especially was this true of the timber products of the district of which, like all other timbered parts of the country, there was no

lack.

Addition after addition both in the number of its houses, industries and population continued until in 1862 there were three mills, one grist and two saw-mills, and four stores erected, their sustenance made possible by the growing requirements of the increasing number of new settlers locating on the farm lands of the surrounding district and the trade in lumber and cordwood which was now at its height. From a population of three hundred and fifty at this date, it increased to nearly a thousand in the next decade, at which time it was incorporated a village, while in 1882, when it became a town, its inhabitants numbered over two thousand people (2082). Unfortunately the census of 1921 shows a population of only one thousand three hundred and thirty-nine so that while the town itself had been increasing in material wealth, there has not been a proportionate increase in the number of its inhabitants.

Dresden was also fortunate in the quality of the men who located here and the success which attended their exterprise and thrift. One of these, Alexander Trerice, deserves special mention. He was born in Elgin County in 1835 of Scotch descent. His grandparents were early pioneers of Nova Scotia where his father was born. He removed to Dresden when he was twenty years of age and remained there until his retirement to Northwestern Canada in 1891, his personal history being a part and a conspicuous part of the municipal and commercial history of Dresden as it expanded first into an incorporated village and then into a town. Although he had the advantages of nothing more than a public school education, yet he developed in ability - both as a business and public man - as he seized new opportunities for advancing his own and the interests of Dresden. At first he employed himself as a carpenter and joiner, a vocation which he gave up to become a carriage manufacturer though on a small scale. Moving still onward, he erected a saw-mill which he operated successfully for many years. Finally, he rounded off his achievements by establishing a ship-building plant, where he erected five vessels, three steam-boats and two sailing vessels, one of the former, the "Byron Trerice", named after his son, did duty for many years as a transport vessel on the Sydenham, a valuable asset in the building up of the town at a time when it lacked the railway facilities now enjoyed by it in the services rendered to this section of the County by the Pere Marquette Railway.

Mr. Trerice was the first Reeve when it was incorporated a village in 1872 and the first Mayor when it was incorporated a Town in 1882, and Warden of the County in 1878. He was a strong supporter of the Baptist Church and an ardent Conservative in politics.

Associated with the activities of Mr. Trerice in building up the town have been the industries operated by the McVean family, Smith's Woolen Mill, and Rudd's Carriage Factory. After the lumber and cordwood business had ceased when the supply of timber was exhausted, it was necessary, if the Town should give employment to its two thousand inhabitants, to have some stable industries established. This need was met in respect to two such, established in the early history of the Town, a grist-mill and a wood-working factory, both of which came later into the possession of Alexander McVean.

The McVeans came from Scotland in the beginning days of Ontario's settlement, in fact, their family were the first white settlers in the Gore of Toronto. Alexander McVean was born in Weston, 1829, and after learning the milling trade, settled and operated a grist-mill at

Yorker, Ontario. He married Sarah Hennery of Kingston and to them were born six children, five sons and a daughter. Looking out for an opening which might offer an expansion of business which would provide occupation for his sons, he came to Dresden and purchased, first, the grist-mill in 1872, and two years later the wood-working factory, manufacturing hubs, spokes and bent goods for wheels.

The grist-mill was taken over by his son, Sandy, in 1878, who operated it until 1887, when he built an additional mill, a large roller flour-mill, with its attached elevator, but still using the former stone-mill for cornmeal and buckwheat flour, of which he did an extensive business.

The wood working factory was operated by his two sons, Osgoode and William, who came into sole possession in 1890, on the retirement of their father from active business. To provide for his other two sons, John and James, Mr. Alexander McVean purchased a hardware business eight years previously, 1882.

In these three spheres of activity, the five sons continued energetic, industrious and respected citizens of the town during the whole period of their business careers, achieving a well-merited success which gave to their family name a place of prominence second to no other in the past fifty years' history of the town. The grist-mill and the hub, spoke and wheel factory are still the main industries of the town.

Owing to its situation, Dresden is assured of a good commercial trade from the surrounding rural districts. Paved roads connect it with Wallaceburg, to the West of it, Thamesville to the East, and Chatham to the South. These with its railway facilities and navigable stream ought to assure it a stability and progress commensurate with the increase of growth in wealth of the farm lands surrounding it and augur for it an increasing development both in the quantity and quality of its manufacturing industries.

Finally, if one were to single out the chief attraction of Dresden, we think this would be found in the quality of its private residences. Few centres of its size in Ontario, and none in the County, can surpass it in this respect. It has good public buildings in its town hall and schools and churches, but in these it is as in other towns of its size. But in beautiful residences, beautiful both in architectural design and in their surroundings, and in the size and number of them, the town has a feature of attraction that would bring prestige to a much larger centre and gives to the place an air of prosperity, and comfort, which a passing traveller cannot fail to appreciate.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS.

1825. Gerard Lindsley located on Lot Four, Concession Five, of Dawn, now Camden Township.

1839. Josiah Henson, settled on Lot Two, Concession Five.

1840. British and American Institute established at Dresden on Lot Three, Concession Four, of Dawn Township, later Camden Township.

1845. Daniel R. Van Allen having purchased seventy acres from Mr. Lindsley, had twenty acres of it in this year surveyed into sixty-three town lots.

Shortly after William Wright to the South of it on Lot Three, Concession Five, Camden Gore, had a plot surveyed into lots which he named 'Fairport'.

1850. Camden Gore taken off Dawn Township and added to Camden Township.

1854. Post Office established here and named Dresden by the P.O. authorities with John Blackwood the first Postmaster.

1855. Alexander Trerice located at Dresden.

1862. Population 350, of whom majority were colored people.

1864. First bridge erected across the river.

1871. The first Newspaper established by Alex Riggs, The Dresden Gazette.

1871. Institute lands sold (1½ acres reserved for market) and a total of $40,000 realized.

1872. Institute merged into the Wilberforce Educational Institute of Chatham.

1872. Dresden incorporated a village with Alexander Trerice, Reeve, and Alexander Watson, C. H. Clancy, W. C. Huff and Horatio Hughes, Councillors.

1872. The steamboat "City of Dresden" built by Captain John Weston.

1882. Incorporated a town.

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RIDGETOWN

The Southeastern section of the County of Kent has in Ridgetown its own centre or trade, a flourishing town which bears the same relation to Howard Township which its sister town of Blenheim does to Harwich. When a post office was established at this place, it was given its present name from its situation on the watershed running from East to West across the County midway between Lake Erie and McGregor's Creek or the River Thames, locally known as the Ridge. The selection of the summit of this plateau for the townsite gives it a high and dry location, in contrast to the low lying lands, so characteristic of much of the neighboring district to the South and Northwest of it, and lends added attraction to it as a clean, healthy and pleasant place in which to live. The town is situated twenty miles from Chatham, the near city, eighty-five miles from Windsor, and about seventy from London, leaving for it a large territory of excellent and fertile lands with which to establish a trade, a circumstance that ought to promise it a bright and progressive future.

The Ridgetown district was opened up for settlement in the year 1822. Some years before this there was laid out across the bush a road - from the Talbot Highway to the Thames River, which was used for military purposes during the War of 1812, but no settlement was made along this road until William Marsh settled on Lot Nine on the Tenth Concession of Howard Township in 1823. He was followed immediately after by James Watson who located on the opposite lot from him, with Edmund Mitton and Ebenezer Colby settling on the two adjacent farms on Lots Ten on the Ninth and Tenth Concessions respectively. On these four lots the town is now situated.

On their arrival, this quartette of pioneers found the whole surrounding district a forest in which oak, walnut, beech, hickory and maple, were the chief timber trees. Wild fruits, such as berry bushes, crab apple and wild cherry trees were also found distributed here and there throughout these woods. Here these four, with Wilson, Scane and others added to their numbers built for themselves homes, very primitive in character and without too much surplus of room for their accommodation. The Mitton family, comprising ten members, were housed in a log dwelling, fourteen by eighteen feet in dimensions, one storey high, and the others had similar dwellings. The growth of the settlement was very rapid from the very first. The land was high and dry; the soil, one of the most fertile in the province; and communication from outside points to the place was easily made by way of the Talbot Road and by way also of boats on Lake Erie. It thus became a place of popular location until all the lands of the neighborhood were taken up. Clearances came into existence rapidly both as to their number and size. Yet notwithstanding the rapid growth of the settlement, nothing to justify the name of a village was established before the middle of the century on the lands where is now situated Ridgetown. In 1851, the survey into town lots was first begun. At that time a blacksmith shop established by James G. Mitton, a store carried on by Malcolm McLean, and a school house erected in 1830, were all that existed of a nucleus

from which has since been built up the present business centre, now noted for its pretty homes, wide streets and progressive business houses.

From the date of its survey progress towards a village of some consequence was commenced. In that year the first church was built by the Presbyterians on the site where later has been erected their present commodious structure at a cost of $20,000. 00, and other institutions were added to the place as the needs of the surrounding community seemed to require it. But at no time for the next twenty years did the place show any inclination to a progress which would lift it above the status of a small rural centre for the supply of a limited local demand.

In the meantime an event took place in the history of the district which entirely changed the future prospects of this heretofore country hamlet. This was the construction of the Canada Southern, now the Michigan Central Railway, running from Niagara Falls to Windsor, and passing just one short mile North of Ridgetown. Before this it was Morpeth which gave promise of becoming the commercial metropolis of Howard Township and the surrounding district and its steady progress before and up to this time supplied just grounds for this expectation.

This flourishing village was situated four miles South of Ridgetown, one and a quarter miles North of Lake Erie. It had good seaport facilities at Antrim and later at Port Hill's landing with its warehouse and pier erected (by William Wilson) there in the early history of the County. In 1830 a post office was established there with Captain Wheatley, a disbanded British Soldier, as the first post-master and it had besides at that time a store, a tannery, a shoe shop, and a blacksmith's shop, all doing a flourishing business with a rapidly increasing farming settlement surrounding it. In 1841, William Sheldon erected a tavern and laid out the Eastern end into a village site. At the end of five further years, it contained three stores, two hotels, two blacksmith shops, a distillery, a cabinet and tailor shop, with a population which increased to five hundred before the end of the next five years.

Sometimes the growth of one populated centre is obtained by the decline of another. Such was the case as between Ridgetown and Morpeth by the coming in to the District of the Canada Southern Railway. Had this railway chosen a route proximate to Lake Erie, as some of the original promoters sought to have it do, then the story of the rise and progress of Ridgetown would never have been written. But the event decreed otherwise. The inhabitants and business men of Morpeth lost faith in the future prospects of their town and they moved out and took up their residence at Ridgetown, now made the more favored place because of the transportation facilities supplied by the incoming railway. At that time Morpeth contained four general stores, three groceries, one saddle and harness shop, five shoe shops, two tailor shops, three hotels, one carriage factory, two cabinet shops, one cooperage, one bakery, three blacksmith shops, one carding and fulling mill, a foundry, town hall, Masonic and Orange Lodges, two churches, four physicians, a good school. There were two mills within a mile and a half of the village, Campbell's Grist Mill, situated on Big Creek, and Simon's Grist and Saw Mill (steam and water power), and much business was done at both of them. But all this has now become non-existent. A sleepy country village only remains were once was situated this flourishing business and industrial centre. The railroad built up the one place but at the

expense of the other.

From this time the growth of Ridgetown was phenomenal. Five years after the coming of the railway, the increase of population warranted the establishment of an independent municipal existence - hitherto it was a part of the Municipality of Howard - and accordingly it was incorporated a village which took effect on January the first, 1877. That year the first Village Council was elected, composed of Jacob Smith, M.D., as Reeve; Zenis Watson, David Watterworth, Charles E. Scane and H. W. Westland, as Councillors.

The growth of the population continued until in 1882 it reached in the immediate neighborhood of two thousand one hundred. This increase above its former figures led to its incorporation as a town which took effect that year with H. D. Cunningham accorded the honor of being its first Mayor. Since that time, although there has been an increase in the number and quality of its houses and institutions the population has not advanced. The last census, 1921, gives the population at that time as numbering one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, a decrease of over two hundred since the date of its incorporation, a depopulation of the rural town corresponding with the depopulation of the rural district immediately surrounding it.

Advantages for education are liberally bestowed upon Ridgetown. It has an excellent public school, a Collegiate Institute, and there is now being added a Vocational School in which Agriculture, both its scientific knowledge and its practice, is to be the main subject of study.

The first school in the district was built in 1828 at the East corner of Lot Seven, on the Ninth Concession of Howard Township. The teacher was supported, as was the custom of those days, by monthly fees from the parents of children attending and by boarding round at their homes, a practice which often times placed the burden heaviest on those least able to carry it. The next school was built by Joseph Nash in 1830 on the West corner of Main and Erie Streets. This location on the main business thoroughfare of the town becoming undesirable, the school house was moved to another and a wing added in 1872, the increased population due to the coming of the railway to the town demanding it. In 1875 a still larger school was required, followed in 1882 by the building of the present large brick structure on the South side of Jane Street which has remained since the only public school building in the town.

Ridgetown's supply of water is obtained from artesian wells. The water is drawn from these wells by means of compressed air and then diverted into a reservoir or tank erected one hundred and twenty-seven feet high. The power house is equipped with the latest engines and pumping machinery with a capacity of about fifty-five thousand gallons an hour. The system is considered to be one of the best possible, costing the town in the neighborhood of forty thousand dollars to establish and capable of supplying a sufficiency of water not only for its domestic use but an ample provision is made also in case of fire, which can be greatly augmented in case of such an emergency.

Ridgetown is essentially a centre of agricultural trade and from that source it must look for whatever of future progress awaits it. It has several thriving industries but all of them are in keeping with this circumstance. These consist of a large canning factory, a

grist-mill, a sash and door factory, a basket factory and a machine shop. As a shipping point for agricultural produce, in some respects it stands second to no other in the County. It has three large cleaning elevators and more beans are said to be shipped from this place than from any other Canadian centre, arising from the fact that the soil of the surrounding farm lands is specially adapted for bean-growing, while its Southern latitude supplies it with the suitable climate. Tobacco, potatoes and corn are also grown in large quantities on these lands as well as the market garden produce and fruits which supply the canning factory with the needed material for its continued operation.

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THAMESVILLE

In the middle forties of the last century Sir Richard Bonnycastle Military Engineer, "a chief takin' notes", as he travelled Westward towards Detroit spent a night in Thamesville - a name which excited his ire as an unwarrantable liberty with the name of old Father Thames. He put up at Freeman's tavern which stood West of the present limits of the village about where Mr. Taylor Vance's residence now stands. He does not give the number of houses in Thamesville, but at that time there were not many families in the vicinity - to say a dozen would be to overstate it. Sir Richard found a black substance on the stoop bench outside the tavern which he was told had been brought by the Indians from a dozen miles beyond Cornwall's Creek. It was crude petroleum. He was informed that salt was procured by evaporating briny pools in the neighborhood. He noted the immense white wood and elder trees and also the large walnuts, which he complained the settlers were wasting by using for fence rails. Of birds he mentions the mourning dove, a new variety to him, whippoorwills and the quail.

Soon after Sir Richard's visit Freeman's tavern was bought by William Mayhew lately out from England. His young wife agreed to perform the duties of postmaster gratuitously for the convenience of getting her own mail. The mail was carried on horse back from London and when the roads were bad - which was often - its time of arrival was uncertain. Mrs. Mayhew sometimes left her bed in the middle of the night to change mail. Besides Freemans and Mayhews, there would be Shermans, Cornwalls, Jackmans, Sanfords, Hubbells, Wallaces and Ingalls getting occasional letters.

In the early fifties when the Great Western Railway was surveyed two bids were made for the honor of having the postoffice. Mr. Erastus Wallace subdivided for what he hoped woult be the future village on the South side of the river near the present Railway Bridge, and called it Thamesville; and Mr. David Sherman subdivided part of his patrimony which won the honor of being the third and last corpus to carry the name Thamesville. Mr. Sherman did not first choose that name, calling his subdivision Tecumseh after the hero he remembered speaking to in 1813 just as he was going to his death in battle with Harrison's troops. But that name had already been given to a postoffice in Essex, and Thamesville was his second choice.

He might have called his village Shermanville. His father, whose original location he was subdividing, was the first white man to settle within what is now Thamesville. He was a United Empire Loyalist from Pennsylvania and came here in the late days of the Eighteenth Century, building his cabin on the banks of the river, where the Sherman Cemetery now is. He had few neighbors when the battle of the Thames was fought. His wife prepared a breakfast for Proctor's men but they did not stop to eat it. The Americans being so close, they had to press on to the spot chosen by Proctor to make his stand. David Sherman was about nine years old when he spoke with the great chief and afterwards helped bury the dead. Mr. Sherman's barn was used by Harrison for a military hospital after the battle, some of the wounded men spending months there, and one James Dunakey electing to make his permanent home with the Shermans. He

is buried in their plot. The old barn still stands, having been moved to a site adjoining Tecumseh Hall, Miss Ferguson's residence. Mr. David Sherman suffered imprisonment as an adherent of McKenzie during the '37-'38 troubles. The fourth generation of Shermans still holds part of the original grant of land with a fifth generation growing up around them.

When the Railroad was built Mr. Mayhew moved near it and built a hotel which was the principal hostelry of the village for forty years. He has descendants of the third and fourth generation still among our citizens.

The Great Western station was built in 1854 and Thamesville Postoffice moved near it. The Postmasters since that time are: H.F. Cummings, Mr. Collier, James Duncan, John Duncan and Catherine Duncan Kenney.

Mr. Robert Duffus coming here from Scotland in 1854 built a mill on the creek which enters the river near the present bridge and conducted a ferry before any bridge was built.

In 1857 James Ferguson moved hither from Ridgetown having emigrated from Stirlingshire, Scotland, a few years earlier. With his sons John and Robert he carried on an extensive lumber business for many years. A mill was built on the property now occupied by Dr. Stewart's residence. Later they bought the Northwood mill on the South side of the river near the Railway bridge, which the sons operated till the late eighties, Mr. James Ferguson having died in 1866. A loan business founded by John and Robert Ferguson still subsists, and grandchildren and great grandchildren of Mr. James Ferguson are still among our citizens.

With the coming of the Railroad, Thamesville took the position she has since occupied of shopping centre for the fine farming district surrounding her, one store after another opening with a display of the various merchandise necessary for the local trade. The Canadian Pacific Railway station built in 1889 a mile and a half North of the village made it a still more desirable shipping centre. Houses have always been in demand although few years pass without some new ones going up. No place took greater advantage of the invention of cement blocks to beautify and render substantial its dwellings. Good foundations, handsome verandahs, well kept lawns, with good cement walks and adequate street lighting make the village a desirable residence.

At half a dozen stores one may buy dry goods of limited or general variety. Nearly a dozen sell groceries, and there are four ice cream parlors. There are three hardware stores, one drug store, three where farm implements may be bought, one flour and feed, and one harness shop, two blacksmith shops, three barber shops, two shoe repair shops, one furniture and undertaking establishment, one sewing machine shop, two millinery shops and two garages. The are two Banks and two billiard rooms.

Thamesville began its corporate existence in January, 1874. The first Council consisted of: Robert Ferguson, Reeve, and C. A. Tye, G. F. Speckman, F. J. Mayhew and Lemuel Sherman, Councillors. They assembled in Mayhew's Hall, now the property of the Canning Factory, and appointed Wm. McKinley, Clerk, D. McFarlane, Treasurer, E.C.Decow, Assessor, and N. Boutzon, Collector.

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WALLACEBURG

Wallaceburg is the second largest urban centre in the County. This is, no doubt, due to its advantageous position on the Sydenham, a deep and easily navigable river which branched at this point, making an ideal spot for a townsite from the point of view of boat traffic. Situated but a short distance inland from Lake St. Clair, it has, therefore, facilities for transportation by water second to no other town or village in the County.

Wallaceburg was founded by Selkirk settlers.

The inception of the town may be said to be a by-product of the Selkirk Settlement. Its history cannot be disassociated from that well-meant but unfortunate venture. It was a Baldoon settler who built the first log house and started the first clearance in its neighborhood. The first store and hotel were opened out by Laughlin McDougall, one of the original 'one hundred and eleven', where soon after him were located his two brothers, Archibald and Hector. It was a Baldoon school teacher, Hugh MacCallum, that became its first postmaster and gave to the town its name, which he called after Scotland's patriot and soldier, Sir William Wallace. It was a Baldoon settler, Hector McLean, who settled on the lot where now stands the major portion of the town and it was a Baldoon settler, Lionel H. Johnson, who opened out the first blacksmith shop and store in the Northwest angle formed by the junction of the two rivers.

Pioneer stores established on the South side of the river.

The South bank of the river was the first to take upon itself the aspect of a village. On four adjacent lots, Twelve and Thirteen in the First Concession, and Twelve and Thirteen in the Second Concession of the Township, then called Sombra but now Chatham Gore, four families had settled and established on their farms, three of them, stores, and the fourth a post office and school. These were the McGregors, a family of grown up sons of John McGregor who distinguished himself in the War of 1812 and to whom was given by the Government eight hundred and fifty acres of land for the services he then rendered; James Baby who was a descendant of that honorable and priminent French family of Detroit, one of whom was appointed by Governor Simcoe an Executive Councillor for the Western District in the first parliament of Upper Canada; and Laughlin McDougall and Hugh McCallum, the above mentioned pioneers from the Baldoon Settlement. On the North bank of the river, there was erected in 1833 a frame building by one James Henderson in which he too kept a school. This building passed into the hands of Hector McDonald which he turned into a tavern or boarding house and kept there a place of entertainment for many years. This place, called then the 'Gore', has since become the principal business section of Wallaceburg and that which was last chosen as a business site has now become the first in importance and the chief centre for trade in the town.

Noticeable development did not begin until 1850.

Although the Post Office was established as early as 1834 and the first survey of town lots made in 1837, it was not until about 1850 that the place gave any indications of developing into a centre of trade and industry such as it has since become. Like all other centres within the bounds of the County, the first and most important influence impelling a noticeably forward movement in its progress was that of the lumbering industry. The district round about was covered with the best of timber, especially oak and elm, and its good location as a vessel port gave to it an opportunity for advance when the timber became marketable, which its enterprising inhabitants were not slow to seize. For the next ten years the lumbering industry was at its height, and, save for the lull in the year 1857, when, owing to the financial hard times then existing, there was considerable unemployment among its inhabitants, Wallaceburg went forward with rapid strides. The lumber industry in this decade brought much business and settlers to the town. As it was with the Thames River, so also with the Sydenham, its banks were lined every winter with timber sticks and staves and in the spring of the year its waters were made hardly discernible because of the numerous quantities of these floating down on its surface to find a market at Detroit and elsewhere. But the prosperity attendant upon this industry was merely temporary. Stable prosperity came through the development of the surrounding farm lands and the establishment of industries. The next decade, 1860 to 1870, was a period of transition. As a source of employment every year in this period the timber business was getting more precarious. Every increase in the production and exportation of square timber, staves, lumber and cordwood, lessened the quantity of timber available and brought the end of the lumber industry that much nearer. The opposite was true of the farming industry. As the farming district round about became developed and the quantity of its agricultural productions increased, the village grew proportionately. It was not so rapid a progress as the lumber industry brought to it but it was permanent. Wallaceburg was saved from the fate of many other equally thriving lumber centres by its position on a navigable river and the rapid increase of settlement on the surrounding lands of the district. In the transition from one source of dependence to the other, progress lagged but did not entirely cease.

Boat traffic on the Sydenham was one of its first enterprises.

When the country all around was a forest and the roads impassable owing to the low nature of the surrounding district, the Sydenham River became in the early history of the County the highway for lake sailing vessels and lumber barges. The first of these was built by Laughlin McDougall. To men accustomed to fishing and fishing boats, as were the Highlanders who composed the Baldoon Settlement, it could not be supposed that they would leave so navigable a stream as this unutilized. Hardly had McDougall settled in the neighborhood of 'The Forks' when he began to use the banks of the river for boat building purposes. It was perhaps the remembrances and experiences which he and his forebears went through on his native Island of Mull that suggested to him the sailing schooner as the means of obtaining the goods wherewith to start a trading post at this locality. At any rate, two vessels, which he named respectively

Wallace and Selkirk were constructed and setafloat as early as to do duty for the conveyance of the products of the hunter and trapper of his store to Detroit and the bringing back with them the necessaries required for the hunting and trapping trade, the household needs of incoming settlers, and,later, the requirements for the camps of lumbermen. This first attempt at navigation was soon followed by the coming and going of many vessels as soon as the lumber industry created a demand, with the building of necessary docks and warehouses, until the village became such an important point of navigation that it was made a port of entry and honored with a customs official, an event which is dated in the calendar of the village as having taken place in the early fifties.

Captain Steinhoff, a noted shipbuilder and prominent industrialist.

Next to McDougall, the name which stands out most conspicuously in the shipbuilding enterprises of the past history of the town, is without doubt that of Captain James W. Steinhoff. He was born in 1834 of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry, a class of settlers prominently associated with the early history of this County. His father moved from St. Thomas,where his son James was born, and settled in Howard Township in 1836. There he remained until 1848, when, moving to Wallaceburg, he took up a small farm and followed this vocation for the rest of his life time. At ten years of age, the boy, who was destined to become so noted a citizen of industrial Wallaceburg, began his life's undertakings employed in carrying the mail between Chatham and Stony Point, a distance of twenty-five miles between them, and driving both ways the same day. This was followed by his becoming in turns a stage driver, a cook on a lake vessel, a teamster in the lumber woods, finally ending his career as a laborer, a sawyer in a lumber mill. At twenty, with what money he had up to this time saved, he began business for himself, a purchaser of cordwood, which he transported with his own scow to Detroit. This he found a most profitable undertaking. His business rapidly expanded and his increasing capital enabled him to add other barges which he had constructed at Wallaceburg until he had a fleet of half a dozen employed steadily at this work during the navigation seasoh. To these he added a sailing vessel, the Anna Steinhoff, in which he carried barley between Chatham and Toledo. For a time, he was the master of a steamboat, The Islander, which earned for him the title of "Captain". At Wallaceburg he built four steamers, one of which was the J. W. Steinhoff on which he had the honor of being host to Lord and Lady Dufferin, the Governor General, when on a travelling expedition through the district, he visited Detroit, Sarnia, Goderich, and other lake ports. After long service, it was sold to the 'McKenzie and Mann' interests at Toronto and plied as a passenger vessel between that port and Port Dalhousie under the name of Garden City, an old bottom under a new title, where it rocked the passengers to sickness in every little gale until it was finally removed off the route for safety's sake. In 1887, Captain Steinhoff retired from business though it was not until 1902 that he sold his last vessel. In the meantime he had been a promoter and a large contributor to the establishment of the town's best and largest industries, the Dominion Glass Works, the Sugar Beet Industry, the Flax Mill, and the Cooperage business. In addition, he was interested in a private banking business and in farming, owning and operating not less than two thousand five hundred and sixty acres of farm lands in the Counties of Kent and Lambton. He left as a monument to his enterprise and ability not only these industries which he helped to call into existence but a

beautiful park or play ground, his gift to the town, and now comprising, with Government and Library Park, an outstanding feature in the scenic attractions of the place.

Future enterprises must not overlook the capabilities of the Sydenham.

In forecasting the future development and industrial enterprises of the town, the capabilities of the Sydenham to supply facilities for transportation, should not be overlooked. This same river which was used as the highway for passenger and freight traffic in the days of the incoming of the first settlers to the district, and the capabilities which McDougall and Steinhoff saw in it for the building up of trade, is still looked upon by the present day citizens of the town as one of the resources upon which they build their expectations for additional progress and development in its future history. There is nothing to prevent Wallaceburg from being a port of entry for all vessels which have to make use of our inland lakes and canals for the river can supply a channel of water eighteen feet in depth and wide enough to provide a turning basin for vessels three hundred and fifty feet long. It but requires the enterprises of trade and industry to develop these capabilities which Nature has supplied the town through the medium of this river. Nor has the town been unmindful of its heritage. Although today no local Navigation Company exists to take the place successfully held by McDougall and Steinhoff, yet as a navigation centre it still holds an important place. Its sugar refinery is visited bi-weekly during its season by vessels coming in from the tropical South with their freightage of raw sugar and going out with the refined product to its various destined markets. Passenger vessels look after the tourist trade in the summer months and supply facilities for pleasure seekers to pass to and fro between Wallaceburg and Detroit, Buffalo, Sarnia and other lake ports. The prophet of tomorrow doubtless sees a boat traffic, with Wallaceburg as its centre, worthy of the river and the fertility of the district of which it is the medium for drainage.

Activities of D.A.Gordon add new industries to Wallaceburg.

Associated with Captain Steinhoff in some of his industrial enterprises and surpassing him in the benefits conferred through him to the town was his nephew, David Alexander Gordon. He was born in Wallaceburg in 1858 and since 1883 until the time of his death in 1919, one of the most prominent industrialists in the County of Kent. His first venture was in the Cooperage business which he established in partnership with his uncle, becoming its president and general manager. When the Sydenham Glass Works were established, he became managing director in 1897 and under his guidance it enjoyed from the start a constantly increasing business until it became the largest and most important enterprise of its kind in the Province. Through his efforts, the Beet Sugar Company also was located at Wallaceburg and he was made its president and general manager. Without doubt the progress of the town during the last forty years of its history, the years in which it ha made the largest strides forward in its prosperity and size, was due in large measure to the industrial enterprises which his activities and influence were instrumental in establishing. He took an active part in the municipal affairs of the town and was Mayor for three consecutive terms. He also represented West Kent in the House of Commons for fourteen years, being elected as a Liberal, holding the seat continuously

from the time of his first election until his death.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

WHEATLEY VILLAGE

Wheatley is situated on the County Line between the Counties of Essex and Kent but wholly in Kent County for Municipal, Provincial and Federal purposes. It was called Pegtown when the first few settlers congregated in this territory on Talbot Road a couple of miles from the shores of Lake Erie. One story has it that there were seven cobblers there, another was that houses were built on posts or pegs without foundations, thus giving rise to the name 'Pegtown'.

There was a man named Wheatley, a farmer, who was very highly respected in the settlement. He died and it was suggested that the name Pegtown (which did not meet with favor) be changed to Wheatley in honor of the fine citizen by this name.

The nearest trading post was Amherstburg. Sometimes the men had to cross the river to get supplies from Detroit. The nearest mill was in Chatham. The date of the first settlement was around 1800.

The following is a copy of a letter written by Caleb Coatsworth which is on file in the Archives East Block, Parliament Buildings, Toronto:

"To the Honorable
The Commissioner of Crown Lands,
Province of Ontario.

Hon. Sir:

The undersigned petitioner humbly represents that he intends building a dock on the shore of Lake Erie in front of Lot 200 Talbot Road as there is no dock for shipping timber, lumber, staves, cordwood or produce within seven miles to the West of this locality nor to the East for a distance of twenty miles.

That the estimated cost of the dock is five thousand dollars, and your petitioner now prays that you will grant him an exclusive claim as applied for by C. W. Hotchkiss, that your petitioner may have some protection to guarantee such outlay of money on this open coast, his privilege to the exclusion of all others, and your petitioner will forever pray.

Signed

Dated Dec. 19, 1817. Caleb Coatsworth"

From Wheatley East there was a dense forest called the "Five Mile Woods". Many years of work were spent on clearing this territory.

Walnut and chestnut and oak trees were abundant. White wood, or the 'tulip tree' as it is now called, was also plentiful. In those early days the white wood was used for making furniture for the pioneer homes, axe handles and wagons. It was very durable and would not split. The tulip tree had blossoms in June resembling clusters of large, beautiful yellow and orange and green tulips. There is one tree near Wheatley now, a very old tree about sixty feet high. When the tree is in bloom visitors come to see it from miles around. Trees that were very valuable were cut down for firewood and many of them were burned after they were dired because of the difficulty of selling the wood and the need of clearing the land.

There were wild animals in this woods, deer and wolves aplenty and wild turkey for a meal whenever desired.

Talbot Road rambled along the lake front, a crooked road little better then a trail. It was moved back in places some distance as the lake encroached year after year.

In 1857 there was a fishery operated at the lake by the McLean family. This was said to be the first industry. It continues to be an important business and is still operated by McLeans. There are six or more other large fisheries and fish is shipped to American and Canadian Cities, the sales of which are up over a million dollars' worth a year. Omstead's filleting establishment is the largest in Canada.

Alexander Wilkinson built the first post office and W.Buchanan was the first postmaster. Thomas Dales had the first store.

The Baptist Church dates back to 1850 and is linked with the names of Elder Wilkinson, Elder Corlett and Elder Fitch. They held meetings for a time in a Methodist Church West of Wheatley and in the public school. Later, George Middleton, hotel keeper, gave the Baptists the use of his bar room on Sundays which they gratefully accepted. Jacob Julien, another hotel keeper, gave them a lot and a little white church was built in 1866, the first church in Wheatley. Later, they bought their brick building and it has been used ever since. It belonged to the Episcopal Methodists and was built in 1874.

The Methodist Church in the village dates back to 1874. This brick church was bought by the Anglicans about 1918 and services were held in it for a few years. About 1935 it was sold, to be remodelled for an apartment house, but this did not materialize. It was used for a Pentecostal Church. In 1914 a new Methodist Church was built on Talbot Street at a cost of $20,000.00. This is now a United Church.

In the Baptist Church a minister named Dodds became dissatisfied with his work and he, together with a number of his members, started the Immanuel Baptist organization, later buying a church building. After a few years it was closed.

Before there was a Methodist Church in Wheatley, there was a little meeting house about a mile West of Wheatley. Rev. Thomas Culbert had charge of thirteen appointments in this territory and this was one of them. He had a young minister and a number of laymen in the district to assist with the preaching services each week. Rev. George Clarke was one of his assistants in 1865 and he was only 20 years old when in this little church he preached his first sermon. He had it well prepared but did not preach on thetext he had chosen. Mr. Culbert

had told him the members had a way of staying around outside visiting with each other before coming into the meeting. George Clarke decided he would try to teach them to be on time. There was only one man in the church when the service began. The minister and his listener sang the first hymn, then came the prayer and Scripture reading and another hymn. The sermon followed. Instead of the text prepared, he switched to a more suitable one - 'Thou art the man'. As the last hymn was being sung, the members who had been outside, strolled in. At the close of the hymn, he pronounced the benediction. The next Sunday there was no one late. Dr. George Clarke died in Thorold at the age of 97. He preached in St. Paul St. Church in St. Catharines when he was 93.

The first school section was organized in 1871 with M. L. Shaw, William McLean and H. Bickford as trustees. The site of the one room school was on the lake road near W. Derbyshire's home. James Neil was the first teacher. In 1884 a new frame school was built nearby. Up until 1894 one teacher handled all classes. In 1902 the brick public school was built at a cost of $5000.00. W. C. Dainty was principal and three other teachers were employed. A $30,000.00 continuation school was built in 1922. The public school was burned in 1943, and, until building materials are available, classes will be held in the continuatic school.

The Pere Marquette Railroad was constructed in 1890 and brought much delight to the villagers.

The Wheatley Journal was printed first in 1895 by Dan Kenyon. Later, (1899), it was taken over by Epplett Bros. and is owned now by Epplett and Son.

Dr. J. A. Campbell had the first automobile.

Arlo Wilson, a pupil of the Continuation School, won the gold medal in the W.O.S.S.A. speaking contest one year.

The Greyhound Bus Line runs a bus through the village on Highway No.3 from Windsor to Niagara Falls.

Excitement ran high when it was learned that gas wells were being bored in Romney and that there was an abundant supply. Farmers, on whose farms the wells were bored, received $200.00 a year and were given each free gas for heating and lighting. Wheatley streets were lighted with gas and everyone used it for all domestic purposes when it was piped through the village about 1907. There were seven wells bored in the village. These gas wells eventually played out but even yet at times they are active. It was gas seeping from one of them that caused the explosion of the I.O.O.F. Block in 1935.

Wheatley became an incorporated village in 1914. Previous to this the village, which was partly in Essex and Kent, was controlled by the Councils of Romney and Mersea. Major T. M. Fox was the first reeve.

A franchise was given to Marvin White to use the streets for an electric lighting system to replace the old gas lights. In 1922 Hydro was installed.

The Provincial Highway No.3 through the village was paved in 1927 and village streets were also paved about that time.

An excellent water supply from the lake was secured in 1929. This is extending each year. In 1946 a $90,000.00 filtration plant was begun and will soon be in operation. This year (1947) the P. M. Railway will be supplied with water.

An outstanding event that brought publicity from coast to coast was the organization of a Community Club in 1935. There are open air concerts every Saturday night from May until the end of September. The Wheatley Band of thirty-three or more members with Ivan Coulter, a local musician, as leader, assists on the programs, and musicians, vocalists, dancers, magicians and other performers provide snappy entertainment for the crowds that attend. Some of the best speakers in Ontario, including Premier Drew and Members of Parliament, Doctors, Lawyers, Judges, and many others have given outstanding addresses. There are up to date movies and pet shows and various other forms of entertainment during the summer. Maclean's Magazine sent a representative to write it up and a glowing account of this organization and its activities was given. Seldom less than two thousand people attend and there are often many more. The village in 1947 has a population of about nine hundred.

During the winter when snow storms often tie up Ontario in many towns, cities and villages, Wheatley residents sit back contentedly and smile for seldom, very seldom, does the weatherman inflict severe weather and heavy drifts on the little Lake Erie Village. During the winter of 1946-1947 when nearly all of Ontario was covered with snow drifts, in some places as high as telephone poles, there was at no time a drift to be seen in Wheatley. Two or three inches of snow and of short duration made the winter of 1947 a pleasant one.

About 1910 an English Syndicate bought up 2000 acres of land along the lake front. It was to be divided into 25 acre farms and sold to Englishmen. Before the plans were completed, World War No.1 prevented the scheme from materializing. The depression which followed was the cause of further frustration. In 1946 this valuable land was sold to a Kingsville Company and they plan to develop it for summer homes and recreation parks and sell land farther back from the lake to farmers.

During the summer months the breezes are usually from the South and South West. Wheatley, being on the North shore, gets the cool breezes from the lake in the summer and the North and North West winter winds are not so cold as on the other side of the lake. It is said that Cleveland, Ohio, just across the lake, is much warmer in the summer and colder in the winter.

There are a few homes in Wheatley that were built about 1867, Enoch Shaw, Charles Potts, Ralph Liddle, Thomas Dales. None of the builders are now living. Mrs. Oscar Lounsbury, Mrs. Arthur Wilson, John Mills, Mrs. Charles Brown, Melvin Batchelder are the only ones now living whose parents were Wheatley pioneers.

Life in the pioneer days was hard for women as well as for the men. There was little time for pleasure and driving in homemade wagons over rough trails was far from enjoyable. Buckboards, horseback, were used by many. Women worked from dawn till dark making by hand all clothing worn by the family. Long distances were driven to get materials for all needs. Food was cheap, so was labor. Women worked for a dollar a week and less. Butter was 10¢ a pound, eggs 10¢ a dozen, three dozen for a quarter, beef and pork 3-6¢ a pound. Chickens were 20¢ ready for

the oven. There were no packaged foods. Sugar, molasses, oatmeal and most other foods were in open barrels. There were no screens in the olden days. Flies swarmed all summer and in the evenings the ceilings were black with them. Those were the days when diarrhea was killing off scores of children each summer. Flies were responsible for this and many other diseases. If one had tuberculosis there was no hope. Patients were made as confortable as possible but no one ever expected a patient to recover. If a number in one family took the disease, it was thought to be 'in the family' and no precautions were taken. There was no insulin, no immunization against infectious diseases, no X-ray, and there were none of the methods that in later days seem so essential to sickness.

The following are in business in Wheatley in 1947:

Canning Factory - Sinnott Co.
C. Whitsell, Chopping Mill.
Murray McLean, Chrysler Engines.
H. Nelson, Box Factory.
G. Mateer, Saw Mill.
H. McClellan, Elevator and Coal.
General Store - H. Hanson.
Claudia Dress Shop.
Children's Dresses - Mrs. Julien.
Groceries, Tait's, Elsley, Lounsbury.
Restaurant - Hyatt, Sovie, Tait.
Hardware, Lynn, Nicoll, Coleman.
Electric Shops - Dean, Pinch.
Postmaster - N. Hyatt.
Undertaker & Furniture - Dan Gillies.
Jewelry - K. Vizzard.
Five & Ten Cent Store - K. Vizzard.
Barbers - Lounsbury, Thompson, Neery.
Drugs - J. Barker.
Doctors - McLean, Edsall, Leader.
Vet. - A. Wilson.
Meat - Lee, Derbyshire.
Garage - Jackson's, Derbyshire, Adams.
&
Service- Featherston, Wigfield, Chute.
Implements - Bob Lynn.
Radios, Men's Wear - Bill McVittie.
Men's Wear - George Robinson.
Auto Accessories - Bill Jackson, Lorne Jackson.
Beauty Parlors - Alice Siddal, Eva Liddle, Mrs. Whitsell.
Naylor's Lumber.
Bakery - Tait's, Stein's.

REEVE - Darryl Getty.

High School Teachers: E. Richardson, Principal.
Mrs. McQuarrie,
Miss Robinson,
Miss Healey, Assistants.

Public School: C. Heywood, Principal.
Miss Wallace,
Miss Newton
Mrs. Fox, Assistants.

Baptist Minister	-	Rev. W. Arthurs.
United	-	Rev. W. Smith.
Bell Telephone	-	Florence Malott, Manager.
Insurance	-	W. L. Kennedy.
P. M. Agent,	-	Arthur Cowan.
Bowling Alley	-	Chute, Cantor.
Royal Bank	-	W. Finlay, Manager.

written by

Jeanette Leader
(Mrs. R.W.Leader)

Wheatley, Ontario,
May, 1947.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COUNTY OF KENT TO CANADIAN LITERATURE.

OUR POETS AND PROSE-WRITERS

A. LAMPMAN.

The County of Kent has the honor of being the birthplace of several poets and prose-writers who have commanded a wide circle of readers in our own country and some of them a still wider circle outside of our own, especially the country South of us. Among the poets, Archibald Lampman easily occupies the first place in the County, and, as a nature poet, a similar place of priority is accorded him for the whole of the Dominion. "The greatest poet that Canada has produced, greatest as a nature-poet, and as an interpreter of the essential mind and heart of the Canadian people and country, is Archibald Lampman. He is a consummate artist. He is par excellence the poet of Canadian Nature and Nationality." This estimate of his place and work by Dr. Logan and D. R. French in the "Highways of Canadian Literature" has not been challenged. "Lampman is superb; supreme, unmatched and even unrivalled by any other poet that Canada has yet produced." A native of the County of whom such statements could be made by outstanding men of literary merit, is surely a personage towards whom local citizens of Kent may entertain sentiments of admiration and pride. Though born in the County, Lampman spent only six years of his life within its bounds. His Father was Rev. Archibald Lampman, appointed Rector of Trinity Church, Morpeth, and missionary at large for the Lake Erie District in 1856. The Lampmans were Pennsylvania Dutch and United Empire Loyalists who had moved North and settled in the Niagara Peninsula at the close of the American Revolutionary War. The poet's father married Susannah Gesner on May 29th, 1860, fifth child of David Henry Gesner and his wife, a Stewart from the County of Tyrone, Ireland. The Gesners were also Pennsylvania Dutch and Loyalists. David Henry settled on the Talbot Road about seven miles distant from Morpeth where the homestead still stands. He was a prominent citizen in the early history of this settlement and one may find his name on the County records as a Crown Lands Agent for the County. They were an intellectual family; one of them, Abraham Gesner, a grand-uncle of the poet, being a well known writer and scientist of Nova Scotia.

Archibald Lampman, the poet, was born at Morpeth on Sunday morning the 17th of November, 1861. When he was six years of age his father removed to a small town on the shore of Rice Lake where the family remained for seven years.

The rectory here was damp and Archibald contracted rheumatic fever and lay suffering acutely for months. For four years he was lame and part of the time compelled to use crutches. His physique was never powerful nor was his health robust and it may be that the cause of both

lay in his long illness. "But despite his crutches," as one has said, "he was active and interested in life for his spirit was always great and courageous to triumph over any ills of body or estate which he had to bear."

The poet, notwithstanding his father's limited means, received a liberal education. Until he was nine years of age, he was instructed at home under his father's direction. After this, and until he was thirteen, he attended the school of Mr. F. W. Barron, a Master of Arts of Cambridge and formerly a principal of Upper Canada College, by whom he was thoroughly grounded in Latin and Greek and "taught to write beautifully." A year in the Coburg Collegiate Institute, and a course in Trinity College School, Port Hope, prepared him for entrance into Trinity University, Toronto. He graduated from this seat of learning in 1882 with second class honors in Classics. He could easily have obtained first, had he applied himself but he spent much of his time in his last year in general reading and social intercourse, which perhaps aided his intellectual development as much as the additional study of his text-books for examination would have done. Throughout his course he was hampered for want of means, but, through the obtaining of prizes and scholarships both at Port Hope and Toronto, together with what his father was able to do for him, there was given him an opportunity, on the foundation of which he built a worthy monument for himself, an enduring place among the great writers of Canadian Literature. In the schools it was said of him that "he was probably the poorest man, in a worldly sense, and physically the least powerful, yet he had a greater influence than any of his fellows." This limited means and narrow income followed him throughout his life. In his last sickness, the ability to obtain a forced rest for travel and change of scene was made possible only through the generosity of his intimate friends and well-wishers. Of him, it therefore could be truly said, he snatched achievement from adversity.

Archibald Lampman owes his reputation both in this country and others, not only to the exquisite felicity of his art, but because he, as none others like him, interprets for us the sentiments of the Canadian heart in communion with its native woods and streams and hills. This is evidenced in the "Three Flower Petals" one of his first two contributions to the public, journals which appeared in 1884 in the "Week", a Canadian periodical which has since ceased publication.

THREE FLOWER PETALS.

What saw I yesterday walking apart
In a leafy place where the cattle wait?
Something to keep for a charm in my heart-
A little sweet girl in a garden gate.
Laughing she lay in the gold sun's might,
And held for a target to shelter her,
In her little soft fingers, round and white,
The gold-rimmed face of a sunflower.

Laughing she lay on the stone that stands
From a rough-hewn step in that sunny place,
And her yellow hair hung down to her hands,
Shadowing over her dimpled face.
Her eyes like the blue of the sky, made dim
With the might of the sun that looked at her,
Shone laughing over the serried rim,
Golden set, of the sunflower.

Laughing, for token she gave to me
Three petals out of the sunflower.
When the petals are withered and gone shall be
Three verses of mine for praise of her,
That a tender dream of her face may rise,
And lighten me yet in another hour,
Of her sunny hair and her beautiful eyes,
Laughing over the gold sunflower.

- A. Lampman.

"Bird Voices" appeared in the Century Magazine but the greater number of his contributions to periodicals appeared in Scribner's Magazine, a monthly which greatly encouraged him to persevere in the production of his poems.

In 1888 he published his first book which he entitled "Among the Millet" named after the first poem of the volume, a private venture followed five years later by his second entitled "Lyrics of Earth", a collection of poems following the sequence of the seasons. His third "Alcyone" was on the Press when he was stricken by the brief illness which resulted in his death. In 1900 his three books with additional poems and a Memoir by Duncan Campbell Scott were published in one large volume of five hundred pages, an enduring monument embodying the great achievement of one of Canada's greatest sons.

SAPPHICS.

Clothed in splendour, beautifully sad and silent,
Comes the autumn over the woods and highlands,
Golden, rose-red, full of divine remembrance,
Full of foreboding.

Soon the maples, soon will be glowing birches,
Stripped of all that summer and love had dowered them,
Dream, sad-limbed, beholding their pomp and treasure
Ruthlessly scattered;—

Yet they quail not. Winter with wind and iron
Comes and finds them silent and uncomplaining,
Finds them tameless, beautiful still and gracious,
Gravely enduring.

Me too changes, bitter and full of evil,
Dream by dream have plundered and left me naked,
Gray with sorrow. Even the days before me
Fade into twilight,

Mute and barren. Yet will I keep my spirit
Clear and valiant, brother to these my noble
Elms and maples, utterly grave and fearless,
Grandly ungrieving.

Brief the span is, counting the years of mortals,
Strange and sad; it passes, and then the bright earth,
Careless mother, gleaming with gold and azure,
Lovely with blossoms--

Shining white anemones, mixed with roses,
Daisies mild-eyed, grasses and honeyed clover--
You and me, and all of us, met and equal,
Softly shall cover.

--A. Lampman.

The first employment that offered itself to him after his graduation was uncongenial. He was appointed an assistant in the High School at Orangeville, but, although a good teacher, he could not enforce discipline and was forced to relinquish this on the first occasion which presented itself. Through the influence of a college friend, he obtained a clerkship in the civil service at Ottawa, to which there was attached a small salary, but at this post he remained for the rest of his days doing his work with thorough care and fidelity. His leisure he devoted to his writings. In 1887 he married Maud, the youngest daughter of Dr. Edward Playter of Toronto, a happy marriage, enhanced by the birth of several children, two sons and a daughter. Never robust, his health became undermined by the hardships of a holiday trip to Lake Temagami, inducing a sickness from which he died February 10th, 1899.

The above information was compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

THE BALDOON

The well-meant but disastrous venture of Lord Selkirk to assist his tenants - to found for themselves new homes in Canada.

With the opening up of the Nineteenth Century, the Thames Settlement had made considerable progress and now numbered more than a hundred families. As the flotilla of canoes, which carried back Zeisberger and his thirty Indians to the United States in 1798, floated down the Thames, wonder and surprise was expressed by the departing missionary, as he saw the progress which had been made in the settlement from what it had been six years before, when he preached to the vanguard of them, an historic, because the first, sermon to the White Settlers in the County of Kent. Not only had the original number of families been increased by more than five hundred per cent, but there was also a gratifying increase in the extent of the clearings made on their farms and the number of houses erected on them. "The improvements which everywhere presented themselves filled him with astonishment. Sixteen miles below Fairfield was a flour-mill; near by a saw-mill; and fourteen miles farther down, Dolsen's Place, an inn and a farm, the proprietor of which was a warm friend of the Mission." With such progress to its credit, this first settlement in the County could well be considered as having been permanently established before the close of the first ten years of its history.

Emigration of Scottish crofters to Canada.

The first movement of the Nineteenth Century towards further settlement was the well-meant, but ill-fated, effort of Lord Selkirk to establish a colony of Highlanders on the prairie lands lying adjacent to the mouth of the Sydenham River. Emigration of the crofters of Scotland, as the small land-holders or tenants were called, had in this period become an economic and social necessity. The country was greatly over-populated, and these crofters had to divide and subdivide their holdings as their descendant families increased until the holding became too small to provide sufficient land for a living for their ever increasing numbers. In addition, the landed proprietors had begun to put in force what were called "clearances". A new system of farming was being inaugurated. Instead of small holdings and intensive farming, sheep ranches were being established. Larger acreages with increased rentals were put into the hands of a few holders and the rest were ordered off the estate. Some of the proprietors were more heartless than others and the fate which might befall their erstwhile tenants gave them no concern. Others were more humane and sought to assist the evicted tenant to find for himself another home. Of this latter class was the young nobleman, Thomas Douglas, the only son of the fourth Earl of Selkirk who was born in 1771 at St. Mary's Isle, mouth of the Dee, in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland. When his father died in 1799, he inherited the estate and became the fifth Earl of Selkirk. Immediately he took

possession he began to put into effect his scheme for the amelioration of the hardships of his over-populated tenantry. Patriotic as well as benevolent, emigration to Canada appealed to him as the solution. Instead of being crowded together on one estate in Scotland he would create three estates in the New World, and on these would find for his tenantry new and more profitable homes. One of these estates he established in Prince Edward Island, a second at Kildonan and the third in this County.

Journey from Tobermory to Kent by sailing vessel and open boats.

In 1803, he began to make preparation to bring out this third colony. They were gathered together at Tobermory, a port of Mull, twenty-six families comprising one hundred and eleven persons, some from the Isle of Mull, some from Teree, some from the mainland of Argyle and one at least from Glasgow. From Tobermory they set sail for Kirkcaldy but hearing that war had been declared between France and England, and fearing they might be molested by French privateers, under counsel of the young Earl, they remained for the winter at this port. In May, the following year, they set sail in the ship "Oughton" of Greenock arriving within sight of the banks of Newfoundland within five weeks' time after their departure and at Montreal one week later. The trip might be said to be uneventful save for the death and burial at sea of one of their numbers, a young farmer by the name of Buchanan, an incident which cast a gloom over the whole company and might be said to presage the many other misfortunes which were to befall them. From Montreal they were conveyed by French carts to Lachine where batteaux awaited them. By means of these they were conveyed safely to Kingston, the men of their party rowing these unwieldy vessels successfully up against the swift stream of the St. Lawrence. Here they were joined by the Earl, who had preceded them to America by way of New York coming overland from thence to Kingston. A small ship was chartered to bring them across Lake Ontario to Queenston. After their effects were conveyed a safe distance above Niagara Falls, their men again took batteaux and rowed themselves along the shore of Lake Erie to Amherstburg and from thence by open boats to their destination.

After four months they arrived at Baldoon, September, 1804.

It was now September, more than four months having been expended in making the journey, when they landed at the farm which had been selected by the Earl for his settlement. It was a triangular piece of land containing about nine hundred and fifty acres between the Chenal Ecarte and the Sydenham River, a part of the low-lying and treeless prairie of thirty thousand acres bordering Lake St.Clair. They named it Baldoon after a parish in the Highlands of Scotland. The appearance of the place was from the first a rude disappointment. Ship-carpenters and others had been sent in advance by the Earl to provide dwellings, but notwithstanding none had been erected. Tradition informs us that these, afraid of Indians, had betaken themselves to Sandwich, leaving the future settlers of Baldoon and their children to their unsheltered fate. The days were shortening, rains were frequent, cool nights had already come. Without equipment or material, they had only a short month left to provide for themselves sufficient shelter to meet the requirements of a Canadian winter. They had settled where flat creeks, stagnant pools, and abundance of decayed

vegetable matter made malarial fever a certainty. Their food was only of the poorest and coarest kind, and in no case could be over-abundant. To the North and East they were surrounded by a dense forest, most of it swamp lands. The Thames Settlement, the only other white settlement in the district was seventeen miles away and could only be reached by devious Indian trails through the woods. Little help could be expected from that quarter. But with earnestness and some enthusiasm also, for these hardy Highlanders did not soon allow themselves to become the victims of despair no matter how untoward the circumstances, they set themselves bravely to wrestle with the problems immediately facing them.

Owing to their inexperience and unpreparedness, and the ravages of diseases, many of them perish.

The inevitable happened. The lack of dwellings was not their greatest problem. From near copses of elm, walnut or willows on the plains, or from the neighboring forest, they collected small timber and erected for themselves temporary huts. But an epidemic of fever and dysentery visited the colony and before they were there one month, Donald McCallum and his wife and his daughter Emily, aged ten, died from its ravages within five days of each other. A little knoll in that monotonously level country was selected and there the three were laid away the first tenants in that pioneer cemetery, now neglected and forgotten, where they were followed by thirty-nine others of their number before the year was out. Those who escaped or recovered from the epidemic continued their brave fight against adverse circumstances and succeeded in establishing a fairly prosperous settlement. But they had two other enemies yet to face - the one was the American Nation and the other the moody waters of Lake St. Clair.

Hardships increased and the settlement robbed of its sheep and cattle by American soldiers in the war of 1812-14.

If this venture of Lord Selkirk failed, it was not from any lack of motive or effort on his part. Among other undertakings for the benefit of the colony, a ship-load of one thousand sheep were brought out by him from Scotland. Lionel Johnson, a native of Northumberland, England, a shepherd of Fenton Farm, Woller, came out to America the previous year, 1803, and settled at Albany, New York State. This man was engaged by Lord Selkirk to take charge of these sheep. With his family, consisting of his wife, one daughter and two sons, he accompanied the Earl to Kingston and joined with him there the other members of the colony. At Hamilton, he and his eldest son, James, a lad of eight years, awaited the arrival of these sheep and drove them from there all the way through the woods to the Baldoon farm. A large pen, or fold, was built for them on the South-easterly part of the farm fronting on the Sydenham, where they were placed every night to protect them from wolves or other wild beasts and a section of the surrounding prairie set apart for their pasturage. In addition to this successful sheep ranch, the Earl had procured a herd of several hundred cattle, which also found plenty of pasturage on the treeless plains in the immediate neighborhood, but on the opposite side of the river, from the colony. When the war of 1812 broke out, several raids were made by detachments of American Militia on this little and helpless colony. Their stores of grain were pillaged, their cattle driven off, and their sheep taken off by Captain Forsyth to Detroit under instructions from

General McArthur, a blow to the struggling settlement from which it never apparently rallied.

Finally they were flooded out by the overflowing waters of the Thames and Sydenham.

But the biggest obstacle to progress was the nature of the site chosen. It was in a section of the country so low as to be scarcely above lake level. Every Spring, as the waters of the Thames and Sydenham and numerous creeks became swollen with the increased volume of water made by the melting snow of the district which they drained, they overflowed their banks and the plains became inundated. A steady rise of the lake level above that which it was in 1804 made these conditions to become permanent. What had been before arable land became a sea of water over which canoes and boats of considerable draught could be easily floated. These conditions grew worse as the lake level continued to rise which it did to its greatest height in 1825. One by one the settlers became discontented and moved off the Earl's estate leaving at least not one descendant of the original hundred and eleven behind.

Old Country conditions did not find a favorable soil for continuance in Canada.

But had the conditions been favorable, it is doubtful if the venture would have succeeded in the form which it had been attempted by the Earl. It was an effort to reproduce Old Country conditions in this new land and although the motive was benevolent and generous above reproach, it could only succeed by the lands of this country getting into the hands of a monopolistic class as they had in Scotland and other European countries. All around the Baldoon section, the country was being opened out and surveyed into 200-acre lots, of one of which a settler might obtain possession on condition of paying only registration of Patent fees after doing needful settlement duties. Gourlay, an historian, writing of the conditions of the settlement in 1817-18, says, "From an original roll of one hundred and eleven souls who had settled in 1804, through death, desertion and war causes, it had dwindled down to about ten families and fifty souls." James Soutar, writing in 1882, says, "This is not quite correct. In spite of the causes named, the settlement - now partly spread over adjoining lands at the date referred to contained all told, perhaps including a very few not original emigrant settlers or their descendants, one hundred and fourteen souls." The Parish Records of Dover Township of that year substantiate this latter statement, showing an increase of three over its original number in the population of the settlement at the end of the thirteenth year of its existence.

The Earl's venture, undertaken at so great a pecuniary cost to himself could be counted a failure only in the form originally planned by him. As a benevolent movement in behalf of his tenantry, it was as great a success as could be expected under the circumstances. Of Donald McCallum's family, so sorely stricken by the epidemic, five of

Note: In Scotland, 1700 landlords were represented at that time as holding 17,000,000 acres of land, that is, an average of 10,000 acres each.

his family survived, a son and four daughters. Hugh, his son, became founder of Wallaceburg and its first postmaster. Lionel Johnson, a grandson, was Reeve of Chatham Township for several years and Warden of the County in 1863. A great-grandson, Norman Gurd, is a respected citizen and eminent barrister of Sarnia and a writer of considerable merit. If the story of each other family were written, it would doubtless show an equally creditable record.

To Lord Selkirk himself, the venture brought no gain. The patent to the Baldoon Farm was granted to him in 1806. He also owned, besides several other lots in Dover Township, Lots 1 and 2, Chatham Township, comprising 389 acres, this land now forming a part of the City of Chatham North of the River. Twice only, after his initial trip to Baldoon, did the Earl pay a visit to his Kent County estates, once in 1816 and again in 1818. On the last trip, he sold his Baldoon Farm and other Dover Township lands to John McNab, a Hudson Bay trader, and his Chatham estate to James Woods of Sandwich, his solicitor, the father of the late Judge R. S. Woods of Chatham, and went back to the Old Country in shattered health, two years afterwards to die. He received for his lands but a trifling sum, not sufficient to pay interest on the money spent, but the country to which he brought his tenants received in these colonists an asset of inestimable value.

Note: Dover Parish Census, 1817, Baldoon Settlement.

	Males	Women	15 years and Upwards.		Children		Hirelings M	Hirelings F.
Alexander McDonald	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	0
Nancy McDonald (Widow)	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
Mary McClain (Widow)	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0
Angus McDougall	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
Angus McDonald	1	1	3	0	2	2	0	0
John McKenzie	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Margaret Morrison (Widow)	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
Daniel McDonald	1	1	3	1	4	0	0	0
Catherine Brown (Widow)	0	1	4	2	4	0	0	0
John McDonald	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Laughlin McDougall	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
John Sians or Cenence	1	1	0	1	0	4	0	0
Angus McDonald	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
John Brown	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Lionel Johnson	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Charles Fisher	1	1	0	0	5	1	0	0
Russel McCary	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Archy McDonald	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Frs. A. Cadotte	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
William Jones	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	1
Hector McDougall	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
In all 114	17	17	19	6	24	25	5	1

THOMAS DOUGLAS
the Fifth Earl of Selkirk,
Born June, 1771, at St.Mary's
Isle, Kircudbrightshire,
Scotland.

The founder of the Baldoon Settlement was a scion of one of the old and noble families of Scotland, the seventh son of Dunbar, the fourth Earl of Selkirk. He succeeded to the family earldom at twenty-eight years of age, being the only survivor of seven brothers at the time of his father's death. In his personal appearance, he has been described as pleasant in countenance, tall and spare, fully six feet in height, energetic and resourceful, 'a remarkable man who had the misfortune to live before his time'. He was a contemporary student with Walter Scott at the University of Edinburgh, a man of literary abilities, the author of several books and possessed a kindly and generous disposition which led him after inheritance of the family earldom to devote himself to the assisting of the poor of his own countrymen to better their economic conditions by emigrating to Canada. Although a Southron, he learned the Gaelic language and during frequent visits to the North of Scotland he became extremely fond of the Highland people. Moved with compassion by the distress caused by the Napoleonic wars and the landlord "clearances", at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century era, he laid plans for a systematic emigration policy which he deemed as the best solution for the removal of the economic distress from which the British nation was at the time suffering. In August, 1803, he brought over three shiploads of Highlanders to Prince Edward Island, where they settled and became a prosperous colony. The next year, the Baldoon Settlement arrived, and the Prince Rupert and Red River Settlements followed soon after.

In addition to the establishment of these colonies, to remove the obstacles to settlement and improvement arising from lack of facilities for communication, he offered to build a road at his own expense from York to Amherstburg at an estimated cost of £40,000 sterling, payment to be made by a grant of wild lands on which he would be able to settle other immigrants. This offer was turned down by the Government. Had it been accepted, we would have had a "Selkirk Road" corresponding to Talbot's, and settlement of Western Ontario would have taken place fifty years in advance of what it did. The Baldoon Road was built between his two properties, at Chatham and Lake St. Clair, but his Canadian undertakings, though highly beneficial to the immigrant poor of his own country, proved unremunerative to the earl himself. He died in early life, April 8th, 1820. "I never knew in my life," Sir Walter Scott wrote of him, "a man of more generous and disinterested disposition, or one whose talents and perseverance were better qualified to bring great and national schemes to conclusion".

JAMES JOHNSON
of the
Selkirk Settlement, 1796-1873.

James Johnson was born in Northumberland, England, in 1796, the son of Lionel Johnson, the shepherd whom Lord Selkirk engaged to look after the ship-load of sheep which he brought to the Baldoon Settlement in 1804. James Johnson is of special interest to us, since as a boy eight years of age, he accompanied his father and walked with him as his assistant in driving the sheep (1000) through the woods all the way from Niagara to Baldoon with only Indian trails at best for their guidance. He married Margaret McCallum, also of the Selkirk Settlement, and followed farming on the Baldoon tract as his occupation in life. The illustration shows him dressed in the military uniform which he wore in service as a volunteer in the Kent Militia during the war of 1812-1814. His son, Lionel, became a prominent merchant in the Village of Wallaceburg, was postmaster, a Warden in Kent County and held other important public offices. Henry E. Johnson, a grandson, was clerk of the Town of Wallaceburg for many years.

MARGARET McCALLUM
wife of James Johnson,
1797-1891.

Margaret McCallum was born on the Isle of Mull, Scotland, in 1797, daughter of Daniel McCallum and Mary Morrison, who came to Canada in 1804 as a part of the Selkirk Settlers. Her father, mother and one sister died within three weeks of each other, the first of the forty-seven of the settlers to perish because of the hardships met within their first year in Canada. She married James Johnson in 1817, and they settled on a farm, a part of the Baldoon tract, where was born to them a family of ten children, all of whom became prominent citizens in the pioneer days of the Western District.

LIONEL JOHNSON,
County Warden,
1863.

Lionel H. Johnson, of Wallaceburg, was the eldest of a family of eight children of James and Margaret Johnson, born at the "Baldoon Tract" in 1818. He spent his younger days on the farm; was educated at the Upper Canada Academy; moved to Wallaceburg in its primitive days, and entered commercial life. He was married in 1839. During the time that the Chatham Gore belonged to Sombra, he was chosen, first in 1845, as its representative in the District Council of Essex, Kent and Lambton. On the establishment of municipalities in 1850, he was elected its first Reeve and continued to hold the office of Reeve, or Deputy Reeve of Sombra or Chatham Township for over twenty-five years. He was Warden of the County in 1863. In 1837, he joined the militia, and served on the frontier till the restoration of peace. He was postmaster of Wallaceburg from 1840 until his death. His son, H. E. Johnson, was town clerk and librarian of the Public Library, Wallaceburg.

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The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1 947.

THE EMERGENCE OF CHATHAM FROM THE LOG CABIN ERA.

The first frame house was built in Chatham in 1831; before this it was a village of log cabins. As the population at that time was something over one hundred, at least thirty of these dwellings would be required to house its inhabitants. Although thirty-five years had by this time passed since the place was surveyed into a town plot, the village of 1831 represented only a ten year's growth. After the cessation of the Government ship-building industry and the scattering of Captain Baker and his men to Sandwich and other places, the town plot became deserted; no settlers were added to its permanent growth until 1820. The distinction of starting out the future city on this second stage of its career belongs to William Chrysler and his son Henry. The son provided the first influence of attraction to the place as a centre of trade and commerce. As early as 1823 he erected a blacksmith shop and served industriously for many years at this trade, a great convenience to incoming settlers on the farms of the surrounding district. The elder Chrysler seems to have devoted a part of his time to farming on his town lot, as it is recorded that he raised a ton of tobacco on an acre of it in 1822. It is also claimed that a James Chrysler was the first school teacher of Chatham. At any rate the family occupied a prominent place in its subsequent history.

But the family most prominently associated with Chatham, in these early years of its history, and the only family to form a connecting link, between the first and second stages of its growth, was that of the above mentioned Eberts family.

The history of this family takes us back to the War of American Independence and the employment by George III of Hessian troops to fight the Revolutionary Army in his American Colonies. The original of the Chatham Family - Dr. Herman Von Eberts, the prefix 'Von' is now dropped by all the families of that name - was of Austrian descent and became attached to the Hessian Regiment as surgeon. After the close of the war, this unit was disbanded in America, and many of the troopsremained in the new land, and became settlers of Canada. Dr. Eberts settled after the war in Montreal where he remained for two years when he was appointed in 1784 to be Governor of Michigan, that territory being still under British occupation. When it passed into the hands of the Americans in 1796, he moved to Sandwich.

His son, Joseph, was born at Boucherville, Lower Canada, March 15th, 1765. In 1810, he married Anne, the eldest daughter of Captain Baker. He served for some years as an officer of the North-west Fur Company, under the late Alexander McIntosh of Moy (now Windsor, Ont.) and subsequently became a trader and manufacturer there. He served throughout the war of 1812 as a captain in the Essex Regiment of Militia, and participated in all the chief events of that war on the Western frontier; on one occasion during his absence on service, his house was destroyed by the Americans, his wife and two children being turned out on the road. After the removal of Mr.

Baker from Chatham, Joseph Eberts took possession of his father-in-law's farm on the outskirts of the town plot, on which he lived continuously afterwards, and reared a family of three sons and four daughters, two of whom, Walter and William became prominent merchants and boat-builders in Chatham. Joseph Eberts, as did Dolsen, opened a store on his farm, where he did an extensive business. Before bridges were built, a considerable business was done in ferrying, and he controlled this business which he carried on in conjunction with his farming and merchant trading.

His two sons, William and Walter, moved the store from their father's farm in 1836 and opened out business on the corner of King and Fifth Streets, in a frame building which has since been replaced by the brick block bearing their name. In addition to their store, they had a boat built, which they named "The Brothers", in 1839 and commenced sailing the following year, one of the brothers being himself captain of it. This vessel did a considerable carrying trade on the Thames and many of the early settlers came in on it. They also had a share in the building of the first dock in Chatham, and in many other ways became prominently identified with undertakings leading to the advancement and progress of the city.

Another prominent man to arrive in this period of the city's history was one Israel Evans whose family was long identified with its subsequent history and whose son was License Inspector for many years. He arrived about the year 1825, was a miller by trade, and for about five years followed that calling in McGregor's Mills. In 1830 he purchased the property now occupied by the Garner House and three years later erected a carding and grist mill on the North end of the property. This may properly be called the pioneer industry of the city as the McGregor Mills were outside the city limits. This was of necessity a rather primitive undertaking, the motor power being supplied by horses, but it supplied a much needed convenience for the incoming settlers and served to add to the attractions inducing others to come and settle on the town plot.

No school had been established in this period of the city's history, but a church was erected in 1820 under Anglican auspices. The incumbent was the Rev. Mr. Morley, who continued his residence here for a number of years.

The appearance of the village at this time was said to be not very attractive. The streets were but trails through the woods, full of holes and stumps, twisting along the bends of the river; and barely passable for wheeled vehicles. There was very little clearing done within the town plot. The Barrack ground was under crop as it had been cleared during the time of its occupation by the Government as a military post. A sugar bush, a beautiful grove of maples, stood in the middle of the town which was long used afterwards for a gathering place of politicians and picnickers and served as a polling booth where the first and open elections were held. Even the portion of the town plot set apart for school purposes was a dense bush up to 1840, while a large swamp occupied that space of the grounds along Wellington Street where now are built the principal churches of the city.

The period when settlers began to come more numerously dates from the year 1830 until the coming of the first railway into the district. It was at this time also when Chatham began to move forward rapidly towards that progress and achievement to which it has since attained.

It was in 1836 that Mrs. Jameson paid her first visit to Chatham. "I can hardly imagine a more beautiful or more fortunate position for a new city than this of Chatham," she wrote of it, describing it later. It is sufficiently inland to be safe, or easily secured against the attacks of a foreign enemy; the River Thames is navigable from the mouth up to the town, a distance of sixteen miles, for all kinds of lake craft, including steamers and schooners of the largest class. Lake St. Clair, into which the Thames discharges itself, is between Lake Erie and Lake Huron; the banks are formed of extensive prairies of exhaustless fertility, where thousands of cattle might roam at will. As a port and depot for commerce, its position and capabilities can hardly be surpassed, while as an agricultural country it may be said literally to flow with milk and honey. A rich soil, no rent, no taxes - what here is wanting but more intelligence and a better employment of capital to prevent the people from sinking into brutified laziness, and stimulate to something like mental activity and improvement! The profuse gifts of nature are here running to waste, while hundreds and thousands in the old country are trampling over each other in the eager, hungry conflict for daily food."

By this time the budding village had added a school house to the church, it could boast of at least two taverns, and a population of three hundred people. One of these taverns had a reputation of being one of the best in the district. The other did not bear so good a reputation. "The first view of the beautiful little town," continued Mrs. Jameson, "made my sinking spirits bound like the sight of a friend. There was, besides, the hope of a good inn; for my driver had cheered me on during the last few miles by a description of "Freeman's Hotel", which he said was one of the best in the whole district. Judge then of my disappointment to learn that Mr. Freeman, in consequence of the "high price of wheat", could no longer afford to take in hungry travellers and had "no accommodation." I was driven to take refuge in a miserable little place, where I fared as ill as possible. I was shown to a bedroom without chair or table; but I was too utterly beaten down by fatigue and dejection, too sore in body and spirit, to remonstrate, or even to stir hand or foot. Wrapping my cloak around me, I flung myself on the bed, and was soon in a state of forgetfulness of all discomforts and miseries. Next morning I rose refreshed and able to bestir myself; and by dint of bribing and bawling and scolding and cajoling, I at length procured plenty of hot and cold water, and then a good breakfast of eggs, tea and corn cakes; - and then I set forth to reconnoitre."

The village which thus roused the ecstacies of Mrs. Jameson was, as we have observed, not much better than a scattering cluster of log cabins, with here and there a frame building giving promise of the progress which had now begun for Chatham. Many fresh arrivals marked the years between 1825 and 1835, beginning with P. P. Lacroix, there were added such names as: Joseph Northwood, Henry Van Allen, James Reed, Henry Verall, several of the Baxters, Joseph and Robert S. Woods. The coming of these families of enterprise gave a new impetus to the life of the village. Its growth for a few years afterwards was remarkably rapid. From three hundred of a population, it rose to seven hundred and fifty-nine in 1840, eight hundred and twelve a year later until it reached no less than one thousand and eighty-two in 1843. The future of the village was now certain. The coming of the railway in the middle of the century and the boom in the lumbering industry following it kept up the pace of progress set for it in the five years preceding 1840.

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The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

THE LAKE ERIE SETTLEMENT

Colonel Talbot extended his activities into Kent, influencing the settlement of the Southeast end of the County, following the construction of his road Westward towards the Detroit River.

Following next in order to the Baldoon Settlement we have the Lake Erie Settlement. Although settlers began to locate on the lands bordering on the lake as early as 1809, it was not until 1816 that settlement in the Southern section of the County could be said to have really begun. Even then it was but an extension of the Talbot Settlement in the County of Elgin, a part of that colonization scheme entrusted to Colonel Talbot.

This outstanding pioneer was a scion of nobility, an Irishman by birth, and one to whom settlement in Western Ontario owes more than to any other man. He was born in the year 1771, and just attained his majority when he accompanied Governor Simcoe as a part of his suite on his first official trip from Niagara to Detroit in 1793. He began his career as a soldier in the 24th Regiment and had attained to the rank of Lieutenant when he became a member of the Governor's official staff in 1792. During Governor Simcoe's regime he was attached to the Queen's Rangers at Niagara but after the Governor's period in office had expired Lieutenant Talbot returned to the Old Country where he became attached to the 85th Foot Regiment with the rank of Major. In 1796 he was made Lieutenant Colonel enjoying all the prestige that comes from belonging to a great family, a favorite at the Royal Court and a popular officer in the Army. In 1800, the first year of the century that saw the organization of Canada into a nation enjoying freedom as a part of the great British Empire, he turned his back upon the promising career awaiting him in the Army and returned to Canada to become the pioneer settler of Elgin County.

Why did Colonel Talbot devote his life to the settlement of Southwest Ontario?

There are many who have tried to analyze his motive for his renunciation of so brilliant a prospect as seemed to be awaiting him in the Old Country for the comparatively obscure life of a pioneer in the forest wildernesses of Upper Canada. Some claim his reasons to have been patriotic, others commercial. Perhaps we would be nearer the truth if we said that they were a combination of both though no man could have chosen the career which he followed unless he had strong likings and other propelling reasons for his choice. Life in the illimitable forest must have had its appeal to him else he would not have sacrificed so much even for a doubtful hope that he might some day be the lord of a large landed estate in Canada. Like Governor Simcoe, with whom he was associated so long, and whose counsel must have had much influence over him, his heart was made sore as he saw the enterprising and thrifty sons of England, Ireland and Scotland emigrating from their own native land to become citizens under the now alien flag of the United States. To turn this tide of desirable settlers towards Canada was his great aim and for its achievement he devoted the remaining years of his life.

The country through which he passed on his initial journey to Detroit in 1793 suggested to him the possibilities which awaited all those who had the courage and industry and perseverance to face the hardships of pioneer life for the few years which would be required to transform the tree-covered fertile soils into grain-producing farms. He had already made a successful experiment of hemp-growing and he desired to obtain a tract of land on the shore of Lake Erie, where he would continue the experiment on a large scale. He had been promised by Governor Simcoe a tract of five thousand acres to which his rank in the Army entitled him according to the practice of giving free grants then in vogue but unfortunately General Simcoe had quit the office of Lieutenant Governor before the grant was made effective. Still, in expectation of receiving it from the new Governor, he returned to Canada and started a clearance on the shore of Lake Erie, near to the place where Port Stanley now is, the district which he had selected for his grant. Finding difficulty in obtaining it, he returned to London where he busied himself in giving information to the Government regarding the soil, climate and brilliant prospects of the Lake Erie District. In the meantime, through the good offices of General Simcoe, now in London he obtained a grant of five thousand acres in Dunwich Township and was given control of the remaining land of this township together with the whole of Alborough Township for the purposes of carrying out his scheme of settlement of the Country.

Talbotville founded May 21, 1803.

To this tract of land he came on the 21st of May, 1803, landed with four helpers at the mouth of a little stream, climbed the high embankment and selected an elevation overlooking the lake as his future home, the prettiest spot along the whole of the Lake Erie Shore. Here, with his own hands, he felled the first tree, and in this way initiated the work of settlement to which he consecrated the rest of his life. Disassociating himself from the Royal society to which he had hitherto been accustomed, and the comforts and elegancies attached to such a life he set himself to the arduous task of settling the country with those whom he deemed well qualified to be the foundation strata of a nation yet to be and loyal to its great mother across the sea.

Talbot encourages his prospective settlers to cultivate self-reliance and self-helpfulness.

His method of procedure was wise and fruitful. Although the greater part of his work was done in the neighboring county, yet his exertions were extended later to Kent, and his methods there followed in a measure here. To divert emigration to Canada, he sent agents out amongst the new-comers in New York and adjacent States, set before them the favorable climate and soil of the Lake Erie District, with an offer not only of a free grant to each of fifty acres of land, but to render them also such aid as might enable them to meet successfully the first few and hardest years of pioneer life. It is not unusual, in reading the story of these early settlers of Kent to find that they had spent a year or two in the United States before coming to Canada, the efforts of Talbot accounting for their change of abode. His agents were instructed to make wise selection of the men to whom they offered

grants, his preference being the Welsh and Scotch then emigrating so numerously from their own over-populated native hills. In many instances he had these new-comers engaged on his own estate, and after receiving there both test and training, they were set up on lands for themselves, with continued aid until they had attained unto a position of self-dependence. On his own estate, he worked diligently clearing lands to produce the necessaries of life, superintended the building of houses, undertaking a full complement of the work himself. He was not above the menial offices and tasks attached to the pioneer's life in the undeveloped forest lands of Canada. If we can rely upon contemporary tradition, he baked his own bread, milked his cows, made his own butter and cheese, washed his own clothes, ironed and dressed his own linen. His doing of these things was attributed to eccentricity, but when we consider his aim as he adhered to it throughout his whole life, we can easily see a higher influence behind these so-called eccentricities. In the unorganized state of society then existing, and the utter ignorance and inexperience of many, if not of the most, of the immigrants in reference to pioneer tasks and hardships, the tendency would be to discouragement ending in despair. Colonel Talbot well knew that the successful man must cultivate a spirit of self-reliance, leading to self-helpfulness and self-sufficiency, and he looked for these traits of character in the persons whom he sought to aid, and cultivated them by precept and example in favorable soil.

Progress halted by the War of 1812.

But notwithstanding his commendable aim and strenuous efforts, progress for the first few years in the history of the settlement was slow, very slow. The war between Great Britain and France had just been resumed, and this gave occupation to all available men either as soldiers, or as mechanics and tradesmen attached to the army, and in the factories providing munitions and other war equipment. In 1809, after six years of effort, there was said to be not more than a dozen families along the whole of Talbot Road in the four townships of Dunwich, Southwold, Yarmouth and Malahide. But he continued to persevere and success was beginning to crown his efforts when the war of the Americans against us in 1812 broke out. In 1814, the settlement was invaded by American soldiers, his mills burned and other injuries done to the struggling pioneers, which retarded but did not stop the progress of the settlement.

By 1820 he had completed the location duties on the lands first allotted to him. After this the whole of Southwestern Ontario was put under his charge and the construction of the Talbot Road from Delhi to Sandwich completed. By 1826 he had placed twenty thousand persons on the lands granted to him without any expense to the Government but at an expense of one hundred thousand dollars, (twenty thousand pounds), to himself. By 1831, in all of the twenty-eight townships in Southwestern Ontario placed at his disposal comprising more than half a million acres, he had influenced forty thousand settlers to locate and perform their settlement duties.

"I was the first person," he wrote to Sir John Colborne in that year, "who exacted the performance of settlement duties, and actual residence on the land located, which at that time was considered most arbitrary on my part, but the consequence now is

that the settlers that I forced to comply with my system are most grateful and sensible of the advantage they could not otherwise have, for a length of time derived by the accomplishment of good roads, and I have not any hesitation in stating that there is not another settlement in North America which can, for its age and extent, exhibit so compact and profitably settled a portion of the new world as the Talbot Settlement."

For every settler whom he induced to come and make his permanent abode in the country, there was given a free grant of fifty acres to the settler and two hundred to Colonel Talbot for procuring the settler. This land was granted to incoming farmers on condition that they would erect a house on their lot fifteen feet by twenty feet in dimensions, one storey high, and clear a strip of land across the front of their lot one hundred feet in depth, a total of about six acres of cleared land in area. At the end of five years, having completed these settlement duties, they were given a certificate of ownership and the balance of the lot sold to them at a nominal price.

The Talbot Road constructed in 1816 opened up the Lake Erie section of Kent for settlement.

Road-building was considered by Colonel Talbot as an essential part of the work of settlement and the first task which he undertook after he had established himself on his own five-thousand-acre estate. A road was surveyed four hundred rods from the shore of the lake and running parallel to it on either side of which were laid out farm-lots of two hundred acres each. These lots were made narrow, eighty rods wide, in order that the settlers should be established close to each other and have the benefit of near neighbors. This road was first blazed out in Elgin County in 1804 by a Mr. John Bostwick, a son of a Church of England Clergyman, one of its first settlers and later a high constable and sheriff of the London District. After it was constructed in that County, it was extended Westward through Kent. The survey of the road in Kent County was made by Colonel Burwell, a native of New Jersey, 'a gentleman who became a conspicuous figure in the life of the settlement for the rest of his life - as Colonel of Militia and Member of Parliament as well as in his capacity of surveyor of many portions of the township lands and of the Town of London.' He began his survey of this road in the County of Kent in 1812 with its line of usual sized lots on either side, but his operations were interrupted by the outbreak of war. His stores and surveying instruments were captured and carried off by a detachment of American Militia, and he was unable to proceed with the work until after the close of the war in 1815. That year it was resumed and continued as far as the Raleigh townline.

The construction of this road in 1816 was the occasion for the incoming of many settlers into the county. There were, however, a few settlers located prior to this in the Lake Erie District. A man by the name of Crawford located at the Eau as early as 1809, and with him two other settlers, Dickson, an American hunter, afterwards murdered by some unidentified and therefore unpunished person, and Ramsay the owner of 1200 acres of what is now very valuable farm lands on the Eau road. Three years

later, two brothers, Edward and Joseph Hackney, added two more to this first contingent of the Lake Erie Settlement. Following these there were none until after the Talbot Road was opened up, after which "settlers filed in along its length, and ere the expiration of the year 1820 most of the lots lying thereon, particularly in Howard, had been taken up. John Bury and sons, as early as the Spring of 1816, had established themselves on Lot 59 and adjoining lots, part of the site of modern Clearville, and had already felled the historical tree. The same Fall Joseph Woods and sons had laid the site and opened the history of Morpeth by a similar act. The year following saw D. S. Baldwin, Samuel Burns, E. Newcomb and John Kitchen located as neighbors to Mr. Bury; and in Howard, pioneer Mr. Woods was already equally well supported. On the several lots directly opposite the latter, or near by, three or four members of the patriot family of Coll, from the Thames River, whose parent head and six sons had taken up arms at the call of country in the eventful war of 1812, were at work on their drawings; and immediately East, on Lot No. 90, Nicholas Cornwall, a member of that U. E. Loyalist family whose members formed early leading settlers of Colchester and the Upper Thames, and not only twice gave the County of Kent a Member of Parliament, but the County of Essex one of the first and subsequently, by marriage, a second, under the name of McCormick, had broken into the surrounding forest, and was then perhaps planning and anticipating the erection of his pioneer saw mills on Big Creek, which he completed in 1819 or 1820. Later, and a little farther East, the Hackney brothers, Mr. Desmond, also of patriotic 1812 fame, not forgetting Mr. Green, a member of that long-lived family whose eleven members aggregated a lease of life of 907 years, were at work hewing out their future homes. Present Palmyra was located for the future by the advent of Messrs. Street, Eberlie and W. Mills, the latter little thinking that his son in the person of the Hon. David Mills would not only represent his own locality and the County of Bothwell in the Parliament of the Country, but become a leading Minister in the Cabinet Councils. But it is needless to continue the list of pioneers whose many enterprising sons still very generally possess the homesteads of their fathers - the Bells and Smiths of magisterial reputation; Unsworth of the Western District jailorship; Stover, the first local tavern-keeper; Armstrong, Desmond, Galbraith, Stewart, Palmer and other well-known families in the West; and Moorehouse, Gesner, Ridley, all of municipal fame; McTavish, McPhail, McLaren, and Ruthven in the East. In Norwich, too, a number had settled in the locality long known as the "Old or Little Fields," and had effected out of the dense bush what the name suggests, a cultivated oasis, when the discovery of prior grants and other causes dispossessed and drove them from their clearings, two or three of their number, Hall, Bolton, etc., going to the Upper Sydenham and there becoming the pioneers of that river."

The chief service which Colonel Talbot rendered to the County of Kent was the building of the Talbot Road which opened out the Southern section of the county for settlement. While Elgin County, where he lived and where he did the major share of his life's work, owes its settlement more to him than to any other man, Kent County was well on its way towards settlement two decades before he may be said to have begun his. Every institution of a pioneer settlement - gristmill, saw-mill, trading house, church and school - had become a permanent establishment along the Thames and the settlement

well on towards a self-supporting stage a full decade, at least, before Talbot had begun to settle Elgin County. But settlement on the [illegible] awaited his road, and for that enterprise in Kent County, he should receive his just meed of praise.

POPULATION OF THE COUNTY OF KENT 1817-1881
also
that of the last Census Returns, 1921.

	1817	1842	1851	1861	1871	1881	1921
Camden	102	298	1434	2744	4095	3239	2133
Chatham Twp.	162	931	1768	3585	5036	5907	5766
Dover	324(1)	1075	1723	2656	3315	4447	4345
Harwich	114	1590	2627	4556	5974	6430	4952
Howard	150(0)	1891	4364	3976	4512	3962	2897
Orford	167(2)	575	- (4)	2554	3113	3766	2032
Raleigh	273	1596	2460	3750	4081	5298	4343
Romney	30	237	- (5)	470	711	1082	1563
Tilbury East	60	510	1023	1267	1846	2872	3197
Zone	-	1129	- (6)	1159	1083	1495	905
Chatham Town	-	- (3)	2070	4466	5873	7873	13256
Bothwell	-	-	-	-	995	965	633
Dresden	-	-	-	-	-	1979	1339
Ridgetown	-	-	-	-	-	1538	1855
Blenheim	-	-	-	-	-	1212	1565
Thamesville	-	-	-	-	-	740	800
Wallaceburg	-	-	-	-	-	1525	4006
Indian Reserves		-	-	-	-	-	1011
Tilbury	-	-	-	-	-	-	1123
Erieau Vill.	-	-	-	-	-	-	205
Erie Beach Vill.		-	-	-	-	-	28
Highgate Vill.-		-	-	-	-	-	394
Wheatley Vill.-		-	-	-	-	-	378
	1382	9832	17469	21183	40634	54310	58726

(0) Includes Talbot Street, Orford. (1) Includes 54 in Baldoon Settlement. (2) Moravian Indians. (3) Chatham Village numbered 812. In 1830 there were but 4000 in Kent and Lambton, and in 1835, 900 in Chatham. (4) Included in Howard. (5) Included in Tilbury. (6) Included in Camden. In 1842 Zone then included Euphemia. In 1842 population of Kent and Lambton 16,000.00.

The above table is here inserted to indicate the years in which the population of the County made its greatest progress. The thirty years, 1830-1860, were the years wherein the settlement of the County by immigration mainly took place. After that period the natural increase accounted for the growth in population, the addition to it from immigration becoming a negligible quantity, and much less than what was lost of the natural increase to the United States and to other sections of the Dominion. It will beseen that although there has been an increase

of 4416 for the whole County in the thirty years between 1881 and 1921, there has been a marked decrease in every rural district excepting Romney and Tilbury and in the rural towns and villages also, Chatham and Wallaceburg because of their industries, alone showing a marked increase.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

BATTLE OF THE THAMES
and
DEATH OF TECUMSEH .

By Thaddeus S. Arnold.

In writing an account of the death of Tecumseh, I am aware that I undertake no ordinary task for there are as many contradictory accounts of the manner and circumstances of his death as there have been writers upon the subject, and, although his death occurred in a neighbourhood which was fairly settled at the time, the actual occurrence of that day are to many students of Canadian History still shrouded in mystery. My facilities for gathering together the facts in connection with the death of Tecumseh and the Battle of the Thames have been exceptional in that my Grandfather, Captain Christopher Arnold, born in 1774, had lived since boyhood on his farm about six miles from the scene of the battle,and,besides having been intimately acquainted with Tecumseh in the previous campaign in the vicinity of the Maumee, had been in consultation with him at his house the afternoon and night before the battle and was on the ground shortly after his death. I remember well a number of times when out hunting with my father that he, while sitting down to rest, repeated to me the many oft told incidents that he had gathered in reference to that memorable man, Tecumseh, and the manner of his death. All these things are as fresh in my memory as if told but yesterday.

Tecumseh was born near where Springfield, Ohio, now stands, was the fourth son of a family of seven, his parents being of the Shawanee Tribe, having a tribal distinction of the totem of the turtle. He was an athletic Indian, abnormally strong in both body and mind, and is thought to have been born in or about the year 1768. Tecumseh spent most of his life at war. His first battle was fought when he was only seventeen years of age with some Kentuckians on Mud River, Ohio. From this date to the beginning of the War of 1812, he was continually at war in some part of the country until his fame became as wide as the continent on which he lived. He always displayed great skill and bravery in battle and suffered stoically and without a murmur. When the War of 1812 broke out, Tecumseh, who had by this time gathered about him 1,000 Indians, threw in his lot with the British and succeeded in rendering great assistance in several battles. He was with General Brock at the surrender of Hull and was presented by the General with a sash as an evidence of his bravery. So far what I have written is a matter well known in history as are the accounts of the movements of Proctor and Tecumseh. After the repulse of the forces under General Proctor at Fort Stephenson, the British sailed across, while Tecumseh, with his followers, marched around the lake, joining forces at Malden. From this time to the death of Tecumseh, Proctor seems to have lost

heart, refusing to face the Americans even when urged by the brave Tecumseh to do so. One position after another was abandoned, much to the disgust of the Indian Chief, until a stand was made on the spot known as Tecumseh Park, Chatham, but, when the Americans approached, Proctor retreated, leaving a rear guard of Indians to check the Kentuckians. As a dash was made for the bridge which spanned McGregor's Creek, the Indians fired, killing three Americans, and it is said several Indians were killed, one of whom, a chief high in Tecumseh's favor, was finally buried near where the dwelling of D. R. VanAllen now stands. The rear guard of Indians was forced to retire up the river, and, in passing, burned McGregor's grist mill. Tecumseh rode swiftly to the farm of his old acquaintance, Capt. Christopher Arnold, on the river front in Howard, twelve miles from Chatham. It was at the residence of Mr. Arnold that the plan of the morrow's battle was arranged.

Several years ago, a writer in the Chatham Banner under the nom de plume of H.L.H., said: "Twenty years later at a point where McGregor's Creek slips quietly into the Thames, there existed a small cluster of rude log houses surrounded by the usual stockade. This was Chatham of a century ago. It was here on the spot where now stands Tecumseh Park that one of the most remarkable men that America ever produced, the noble Tecumseh, received the wound which led to his death."

Claude Puer, in speaking of the death of Tecumseh, says: "Now resistance was no longer thought of and the dreadful cries of fugitive and pursuer, every man for himself, quarter to none, mingled in the heavy autumn woods. Urging to greater speed the panic stricken remnants of Proctor's once victorious army, all about the flying chieftan and his pale faced friend and through the dark scared forest aisles, old warriors and youths flew blindly forward, none escaped the dreadful spell of panic. Of a sudden the pitiful ping of a rifle bullet rattled through the bare, leafless trees and Tecumseh, clapping his hand to his already scarred breast, fell heavily forward and exclaimed: "I am dying, leave me and save yourself." This somewhat eloquent statement lacks the important element of truth. It is no nearer truth than the assertion of Eugene Smalley who says that Tecumseh met his death at the battle of Tippecanoe in the year before the War of 1812, and permit me to add here that the wounding of the Chief at Chatham is purely imaginary and written, I imagine, at a time when the writer desired to see the monument built in Tecumseh Park, the spot where the wounding is said to have occurred. W. H. Merrifield gives a lengthy account of the death of Tecumseh as told by Joseph Johnston, a man who lived from childhood with the Indians. His story was as follows: He with other British white traders had been with the Shawanees and Tecumseh for a long time, and, when the war with the United States commenced, they joined with the Indians on the retreat of the British from Michigan to Canada. The Indians were afraid their beloved chief might be killed by treachery as they knew the inveterate hatred of the Yankees for Tecumseh would make them hesitate at nothing to accomplish his destruction. To protect him, Joe Johnston, two other white traders and three Indian sub-chiefs formed themselves into a bodyguard and were fighting around Tecumseh when some time after the route of Proctor, Tecumseh was shot through the thigh and disabled from standing. The bodyguard bound up the wound and set him against a tree some distance in the rear of the fighting line where he could still cheer his warriors and direct the battle. In a fierce charge made by the Yankees, the Indians were pressed back to where Tecumseh was seated and a mounted officer seeing him apparently helpless dashed toward him, pistol in hand, but, before he had time to fire, Tecumseh threw his tomahawk, hitting him on the side of the face, splitting his head and tumbling him from his horse. The Yankee charge

was repulsed, but, for fear of another such danger to Tecumseh, his bodyguard carried him further to the rear and seated him beside an elm tree while his war shouts rang through the forest, encouraging his warriors in their desperate defence against the tremendous odds in Harrison's army. All at once these cries ceased. Joe Johnston and the rest of his bodyguard ran to where they had left him, knowing something serious had happened. They found Tecumseh stretched in death." Mr. Merrifields then tells of the carrying away of the body, its burial and the solemn oath never to reveal the spot.

My father always stated that Joe Johnston was not a trader neither was he a warrior; he was not with the Indians at Chatham nor was he with Tecumseh the night before the battle; in short, he was not at the battle of the Thames nor was he ever associated with Tecumseh in any of his undertakings, that he possessed none of the characteristics of a warrior, and, in fact, was unfitted in every way for any material achievement. I am quite certain the version of the Chief's death given by Mr. Merrifield, if told by Johnston, was simply a creation of his untutored imagination. My father, who knew Johnston well, asked him if he knew where Tecumseh was buried. He answered: "Mr. Arnold, I was too long with the Indians not to know where the Chief is buried." "Why do you not let us know so that we can erect a monument?" Johnston replied: "If I told where he lies, the Yankees would come over and steal his bones and work his shin bones up into button molds." Some years later, Johnston and my father went to the scene of the battle and Johnston pointed out the spot between two beech trees on which there were markings which he claimed signified that the Shawanoe Chief was buried there. Some years after, my father tried to find the spot but failed entirely to locate it as the land had been cleared and the landmarks all removed. I lately came into possession of a deed made by Joseph Johnston bearing date 1810. He had purchased the land from Abner Bole some years previously. This proves positively that Johnston lived in the County of Kent several years before the breaking out of the War of 1812 and from first to last possibly never came into contact or ever had anything to do with Tecumseh or his so called bodyguard.

The confidence I place in the story told by my father I think is fully warranted by the circumstances surrounding it. Tecumseh and several of his Chiefs passed the night of the 3rd of October, 1813, at the house of Captain Arnold. They had two objects in view, first to prevent the Indians from burning Arnold's mill as they had done McGregor's mill at Chatham, and, second, to consult with Captain Arnold as to the plan and place of the battle that Tecumseh was determined to fight before reaching the Indian settlement at Moraviantown.

It was arranged that Tecumseh should watch for the Yankees under a large tree on the road about a half mile from the mill while Captain Arnold was to watch for their coming on the mill dam. If Capt. Arnold saw them first, he was to throw up a shovel of earth. When Arnold first saw them, he looked for Tecumseh who had been standing beside his white horse with his elbow on its withers but the Chief was on his horse and the animal was running at full speed. The Americans gave chase but the fleet footed pony was too speedy for his pursuers. Tecumseh kept to the road until he reached the Hubble farm; he threw a bag which contained some flour Capt. Arnold had given him, into Hubble's yard. He then rode to the river bank some distance further up the stream to a spot where a squaw awaited his coming. He at once got into a canoe, his white pony swimming by the side, and quickly passed to the opposite bank, thus throwing his pursuers for a time off the trail. Finally, the Kentuckians followed him to the scene of the battle two miles East of Thamesville. The ground

was admirably adapted for defence. The British occupied the left wing, protected by the River Thames, while the Indians extended to the right at an angle of 45 degrees behind a bog swamp extending nearly to the bank of the river. There were about 900 Indians and 600 British. Harrison made no delay but immediately rushed to the attack. Proctor's lines were soon broken. Proctor ordered a retreat to the everlasting disgust of many of his followers. It is said that many of the militia in their rage and disgust at Proctor's want of courage, broke their guns and refused to obey the order to retreat. When the attack was made, the British commander lost his self possession as he had already lost his courage. He precipitately left the field in a headlong flight for the British camp at Burlington, arriving there with some 240 of his followers.

Tecumseh, with his braves, fought desperately and maintained their ground until their Chief fell mortally wounded. At once the cry resounded through the woods and the Indians vanished, taking the wounded - possibly then dead - Chief with them. The manner of his death was as follows: An American had penetrated to near the tree behind which Tecumseh stood, the Chief wounded him and he fell. Tecumseh, with uplifted tomahawk, sprang to finish his fallen enemy, but had not reached the spot before a bullet from the pistol of his intended victim pierced a vital spot in his body and he fell to rise no more.

Watson, in his History of the United States, page 713, says: "As Harrison rapidly pursued, the British commander determined to meet him and accordingly posted his army on the right bank of the River Thames near Moraviantown. Here he was overtaken on the 5th of October by Harrison. The enemy, thrown into confusion, could not be rallied. The Indians stood firm and a desperate contest ensued between them and the mounted Kentuckians commanded by Colonel Johnston. Tecumseh cheered his warriors until he was shot dead by an unknown hand."

This is the true story of the death of the great Tecumseh. As soon as the Yankees returned after the battle, Captain Arnold, with a few friends, visited the field and buried the dead and assisted the wounded. Andrew Flemming, then a boy of 13, with his father, visited the scene of the conflict. Some Kentuckians were skinning an Indian, saying they were going to take Tecumseh's skin to make razor straps. When told that the skinned Indian was not Tecumseh, one remarked: "I guess when we get back to Kentucky, they will not know his skin from Tecumseh's." When the Americans returned to Arnold's mill, many of them had strips of this skin scraping it with their long hunting knives. One of them had a lower jew he was scraping, saying it belonged to Tecumseh. My Grandfather, Captain Arnold, afterwards discovered that it belonged to a squaw whom the Yankees had wantonly shot across the river four miles from the scene of the battle. A remarkable incident occurred at this time which I think worthy of notice. Mr. Arnold, apprehending that the Yankees might burn his mill, took one of the mill stones out to the woods and hid it. He then pointed out to them that the mill could not grind, hence it was useless. In this way he no doubt saved his mill from destruction.

When it is remembered that Captain Arnold knew Tecumseh well, having been with him at the struggles at the Maumee, that Tecumseh was at Captain Arnold's place and consulting with him during the whole night previous to the battle, and ate his last meal at the table of his white brother, who, as soon as the Americans had retired, visited the battle ground, and to the end of his days delighted to repeat the various incidents connected therewith to my father -- when all this is taken into consideration, it will not be wondered at that I place entire confidence

in the story of the death of Tecumseh as repeated to me by my father so often in times that are gone.

This narrative possesses one merit that is not to be found in many of the accounts written of this event in Canadian History inasmuch as it is firmly believed to be true by the man who wrote it.

The above was written by Thaddeus S. Arnold about the year 1901 and presented to the Kent Historical Society by Mr. S.B. Arnold in March, 1947.

THE METHODIST CHURCH
1804-1829.

Methodism began its career in Kent County in the year 1804. It was the expression of a religious revival which began in England in 1739 under the preaching of John Wesley, who, ordained a minister of the Anglican Church in England in 1728, in the meantime came under the influences of the teaching of the Moravian Brethren, unto whom, under God, he owed that missionary zeal and religious fervor which characterized his subsequent labors and produced such great evangelistic results.

> George Neal, a disbanded British soldier settled in the Niagara District, was the pioneer of Methodism in Upper Canada.

Philip Embury, an Irish local preacher, is the accredited pioneer of Methodism in the United States. In 1766, he preached his first sermon and formed a class in New York, twenty-seven years after John Wesley began his itinerant work in England. The work in Canada began as an overflow of that prosecuted in the United States. A local preacher named Tuffey, a soldier of the 44th Regiment stationed at Quebec, began preaching after his arrival in 1780, and, although no organization was established as the result of his efforts, he left several converts behind him, and is, therefore, considered the pioneer of Methodism in Canada. In Upper Canada, George Neal, an Irishman and a major of the British Cavalry Regiment in the United States, came to Canada as a disbanded soldier to take possession in 1786 of an officer's grant of land in the Niagara District. Here he exercised himself in the triple occupation of farmer, school teacher and local preacher and was successful in organizing a society and class in his neighborhood. These local preachers were followed in 1789 by the appointment to Canada by the American Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the first regular preacher to Canada, William Losee, a loyalist, who began the first regular circuit in the Bay of Quinte district. From these beginnings the Methodist Church continued to grow until it had become one of the largest Protestant Churches in Canada at the time of its entrance into that larger organization, the United Church of Canada, on June 10th, 1925, closing a period of 145 years of history in Canada. Its membership had reached a total of 1750 in other sections of Canada by the time the work was first undertaken in Kent County.

> Nathan Bangs from the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States was the pioneer missionary of Kent County.

The missionary who began this work was Nathan Bangs. Of necessity, he began his work in the Thames River Settlement as this was the only settlement in the County at that time. It will not be without interest to our readers if we quote verbatim his own description of the manner in which Methodism was first introduced in

Kent, written in his History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada:

"This year also (1804), Nathan Bangs solicited and obtained the appointment of a missionary to a new settlement on the River Thames in Upper Canada. This place had long been on his mind as a promising field for missionary labour and he had frequently offered to explore it in the name of the Lord but his presiding elder objected on account of the feeble state of his health and the unhealthiness of the climate.

His description of the annual epidemic of fever and ague.

Perhaps no part of our country is more subject to fever and ague, or "lake fever" as it was called, than along the banks of the River Thames, occasioned by the stagnant swamps which are formed a little distance from the river on each side and the unwholesomeness of the water which the people were obliged to use. The missionary arrived there in the month of August and in the month of September the fever began to rage; and during its progress, in almost every family more or less were sick and in some instances every member of a family was prostrated at the same time, though it seldom proved fatal. When the missionary first visited their houses, he was generally presented with a bottle of whiskey and urged to partake of it as a preventative against the fever; but he declined the beverage and told them they might if they chose drink their whiskey and he would drink water and tea and see who would have the better health; and when the fever commenced its ravages as above described so that he could visit scarcely a house without seeing more or less sick, he constantly travelled the country in health until about the close of the sickly season but by timely remedies he escaped with only three paroxisms.

The first service held - his own narrative of it.

While at the conference at New York that year, Nathan Bangs made known his desires and impressions to Bishop Asbury and he appointed him a missionary to that place. He accordingly left the City of New York in the latter part of the month of June, went into Upper Canada by way of Kingston, thence up the country, along the Northwestern shore of Lake Ontario to the Long Point circuit, and then on through Oxford to the Town of Delaware on the River Thames. Here he lodged for the night in the last log hut of the settlement and the next morning as the day began to dawn he arose and took his departure, and, after travelling through a wilderness of forty-five miles, guided only by marked trees, he arrived at a solitary log house about sunset, weary, hungry and thirsty, where he was entertained with the best the house could afford, which was some Indian pudding and milk for supper, and a bundle of straw for his bed. The next day about twelve o'clock, he arrived at an Indian Village on the North bank of the River Thames, the inhabitants of which were under the instruction of two Moravian Missionaries. While there the Indians were called to worship, which was performed in a very simple manner by reading a short discourse and singing a few verses of a hymn. The missionaries and the Indians treated him with great respect and affection and seemed to rejoice in the prospect of having the gospel preached to the white settlements on the banks of the river below.

About three o'clock in the afternoon he arrived at the first

house in the settlement when the following conversation took place between the missionary and a man whom he saw in the yard before the house. After the introductory salutation, the missionary inquired, "Do you want the gospel preached here?"

After some deliberation, it was answered, "Yes, that we do. Do you preach the gospel?"

"That is my occupation."

"Alight from your horse, then, and come in, will you?"

"I have come a great distance to preach the gospel to the people here and it is now Saturday afternoon, tomorrow is the Sabbath, and I must have a house to preach in before I get off from my horse."

After a few moments of consideration, he replied, "I have a house for you to preach in, provender for your horse, and food and lodging for yourself; and you shall be welcome to them all if you will dismount and come in."

Thanking him for his kind offer, the missionary dismounted and entered the hospitable mansion in the name of the Lord, saying 'Peace be to this house.' A young man mounted his horse and road ten miles down the river, inviting the people to attend meeting at that house the next morning at ten o'clock.

At the time appointed the house was filled. When the missionary rose up, he told the people that whenever a stranger makes his appearance in a place the people are generally anxious to know who he is, whence he came, where he is going, and what his errand is among them. "In these things", said he, "I will satisfy you in a few words."

He then gave them a short account of his birth, education, of his conversion and call to the ministry, and the motives which induced him to come amongst them, and concluded in the following manner:

"I am a Methodist preacher and my method of worship is to stand up and sing, and kneel in prayer; and then I stand up and take a text and preach, while the people sit on their seats. As many of you as see fit to join me in this method, you can do so; but if not, you can choose your own method."

When he gave out the hymn, they all rose, man, woman and child. When he kneeled in prayer, they all, without exception, kneeled down. They then took their seats and he stood up and gave out the text,

> "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

He preached as he thought, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. Having concluded his discourse, he explained to the audience his manner of preaching, by itinerating through the country, his doctrin and how supported, etc. He then said:

"All you who wish to hear any more preaching, rise up."

Every man, woman and child stood up. He then told them they

might expect preaching there again in two weeks.

The opposition met with by this first missionary.

Such a commencement in a strange place he considered as a token for good. He then sent on appointments through the settlements along down the river, which he filled in a manner similar to the above, and was everywhere received with great cordiality. He continued among them about three months when he left them for the Niagara circuit. He was succeeded the next year by William Case, who was instrumental of great good to the souls of the people. Societies and a regular circuit was formed which have continued to flourish and increase to the present time."

But it must not be supposed that Nathan Bangs, when laying the foundations of Methodism in Southwestern Ontario, met with but easy achievement and no reverses or failures. In his itineraries he visited not only the settlers along the Thames River but those also on St.Clair and Erie Lakes, and those also at Fort Malden, Sandwich and Detroit. In these places he found himself preceded by missionaries representing the Baptist and Congregational Churches, from one of whom he seems to have received a glad welcome but from the other considerable opposition. The difficulties he faced have been described for us by one of their early church's historians:

"The moral condition of the settlers was indeed lamentable. They had no means of grace, and little desire for any, loving drinking, dancing, horse racing and other sports. A Baptist exhorter from the United States, used to have meetings occasionally but was highly prejudiced against the Methodists and brought the people to have similar feelings. On his first visits a number of houses were opened for him to preach in; but, through the Baptist, they were soon closed again. A rich man had opened his house for preaching and afterwards turned the preacher out of doors in the presence of the congregation - when taking out his handkerchief, and lifting his feet, the preacher "wiped the dust off as a testimony against them." A few months later the affairs of this man began to reverse. He learned to drink and became a drunkard. His wife went off with another man. His children ran to ruin. In years after he wandered about as a vagrant, indebted to friends for daily food. In 1833, he was visited by the preacher on the Cosfield circuit, who found him on the verge of the grave with no preparation and no desire for it. His mind was weak and his body enfeebled by disease. He lived in ignorance and disobedience to God, and so he died."

The first circuit was established in 1809 and named the Detroit Circuit.

When an organization was first effected in this section of Ontario by the Methodist Episcopal Church, it was established under the name of the Detroit Circuit, and included the settlements in that territory covered by the itinerancies of Nathan Bangs - Detroit, the settlements on the Thames River from Moraviantown to St.Clair Lake and along Lake Erie especially in the Townships of Cosfield and Colchester. This took place in 1809, Joseph Sawyer being the first presiding elder and under him William Case as the missionary on the field. At the end of the first conference year of the circuit, the total enrolment recorded was seventy-eight members, which had increased to one hundred and thirty-four at the time of the outbreak of the war in 1812. The

effect of this war upon church progress may be gauged from the fact that for the next five years after this there was an increase of a total of only six members throughout the length and breadth of the whole field. From that time forward, however, progress was steadily made.

The Thames River separated from the Detroit, an independent circuit, 1817, Henry Ryan, presiding elder.

In 1817, the settlements on the Thames River were established an independent circuit, and reported in that conference year an enrolment of one hundred and sixty members, or twenty-four more than there were in the whole Western District, including Detroit, at the outbreak of the war. Henry Ryan was now the presiding elder with Elijah Warren as the missionary in charge of the field.

Remarkable Religious Revival followed the first Canadian Conference in 1817.

The next step in advance which concerned the Thames River Circuit in conjunction with all the rest in Canada, was the establishment of a Canadian Conference in 1824. Hitherto the different circuits in Canada were a part of the Genesee Conference which in 1817 was made up of eighty-two ministers of whom sixty were in the United States and twenty-two in Canada. Twice this conference had met in Canada, once at Elizabethtown in 1817, and again at Niagara in 1820. A remarkable event occurred at this first conference, a great revival of religion, awakened by the sermon - preached by the chairman of the conference, Bishop George, and which eventually spread throughout the whole of the Methodist Circuits especially in Western Canada. It is thus described by one of the members:

"Throughout the whole sitting of five days, the word was delivered with much freedom and power; and so great was the revival which followed that it is believed more than one hundred persons were awakened at the conference. Conversions now became frequent. The power of God was displayed at most of the meetings. The deist and the drunkard, as well as the moralist and children of ten years, found one common place at the altar of penitence; and calling on the Lord for mercy, were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. Whole families were made the subjects of saving grace; and not a few who had declined in their religion were reclaimed and restored to their first love. The neighboring Townships now took flame. From attending the preaching at the conference, the people returned to their homes with great seriousness and earnest prayer for the divine blessing."

The total increase of membership resulting from the revival initiated at the conference meeting has been estimated as being not less than fourteen hundred. The Thames Circuit was travelled that year by Elijah Warren and he reported a mighty impetus, resulting in a large increase of the membership of that circuit, created by this conference revival.

The general effect of this Revival described.

Writers have not been wanting who have given us a description of its general effect on the communities in which it made headway. "A great impression was made on the public mind," one has said, "by the strange, sometimes wonderful, change of character and of life in so many

persons and in so short a time. The young had forsaken their frivolities and were now serious, fond of the Bible, and seeking knowledge to make them useful. Those indifferent to religion, lovers of pleasure and not lovers of God, were now zealous for the truth, and lovers of the Sabbath. The quarrelsome had learned, in meekness and love, to bear with evil ones and to forgive. Many drunkards had substituted a resort to the house of God for the tavern, the psalm and the hymn for the song of Bachus, and cleanliness and sobriety for strong drink. Rude companies and neighborhoods loved the devout assembly of the saints, spent their Sabbaths in the House of God, and became orderly, civil and hospitable."

"The awakening and converting power of God has appeared frequently at these sessions, but at none, of which there is any record, where the divine power was so greatly manifested and with such great results. The Gospel received now a mighty impetus, and, from the year 1817, for a number of years, there is scarcely ought to record in the Methodist annals but progress and increase.The most favored last year (1819) were the back settlements of Augusta, Rideau and the settlement on the River Thames." (Report of the presiding elders, Henry Ryan and William Case, to the General Conference, 1820.)

Period of controversy followed resulting in the establishment of two independent branches of Methodism in Canada.

Unfortunately, this season of revival and progress was followed by the outbreak of controversies, rivalries and disunion arising from two sources -- the one, from the movement to establish an independent Canadian Church, and the other from the presence on the same field of two Methodist Missionaries representing two different conferences - the one the English and the other, the American. The evils arising from this dual work were overcome by amicable settlement between the two conferences whereby the territory covered was divided, the American Conference having supervision over the work in Upper Canada and the English, Lower Canada. But the other movement was not so easily brought to an amicable solution. The American Conference in 1824 established all the circuits in Canada into a new Conference, giving the Methodists in Canada the direction of their own work, yet under the superintendency of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. This, it was thought, would be a satisfactory solution to those who were looking towards an independent Canadian Methodist Church. But it was not to procure greater efficiency in the prosecution of the church's distinctive work wherein lay the motive behind this movement towards independency. The movement was political, rather than spiritual. There began to grow an increasing dislike among Canadian Methodists to the rule of an organization situated in and a part of the United States of America, a spirit which was increased by the War of 1812-1815. Murmurings of discontent began to be circulated that the preachers sent to them were not only American by birth but American in sentiment. It was in vain that the officials in the United States pleaded for unity, pointing out that the Methodists were not only one body as between Canada and the United States but one body throughout the whole world. The demand for separation increased. The leader in the separatist movement in Canada was Henry Ryan, the presiding elder over the Western district which included the Thames River Circuit. Mr. Ryan was a man of amazing physical strength and of a courage and alertness equal to his strength. Although born in Connecticut, of Scotch and Irish parentage, he was an ardent Britisher, especially after the war and the invasion of

Canada by the American Army. With characteristic vehemence he threw himself into the movement, and, after a considerable period of controversy, he withdrew himself from fellowship with the brethren in the United States in 1827, and proceeded with others to organize the Canadian Wesleyan Church. In the meantime, to offset this movement and to prevent a schism in the Canadian Church, the American General Conference granted independence to the Canadian Conference so that from this time forth, any official connection of the American and Canadian Conferences ceased. Yet, notwithstanding this concession, Elder Ryan continued his work of organizing a new branch of Methodism in Canada, the establishment of which was finally effected in 1829.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1926 and extracted by the Kent Historical Society 1947.

This Chapter is a reprint from the narrative sketches prepared by Mr. McDonald in 1882, who, in turn, was indebted to James Soutar of Chatham for much of his material, supplemented by the corroborative information supplied him by the immediate descendants of these first settlers. Though much of the material dealt with in this chapter will be referred to in other chapters in this volume, a good purpose it is thought will be served by reproducing the story of these early settlements in Mr. McDonald's own words.

CAMDEN TOWNSHIP

The Township of Camden includes within its bounds two incorporated villages, Thamesville, situated on the North bank of the Thames; and Dresden, on either bank of the Sydenham. The original Township of Camden West (there being another Township of Camden in the County of Addington) embraced but a small gore-shaped territory lying between the Thames on the Southeast, the Chatham Township Line on the West, and the line which bounded the original Indian grant on the North, forming also the Northern limit of Camden. The line referred to, running due East and West from the Thames to Lake St.Clair now forms the division between Camden proper and the Gore of Camden, so called probably because it bears not the slightest resemblance to a gore. The so-called "Gore" is an oblong shaped piece of territory stretching about twelve miles from East to West and four from North to South.

The fitness of things has been utterly disregarded in the naming of these two sections of the Township; for, while the shape of the so-called gore attests the inaccuracy of its nomenclature, the balance of the Township is really a gore in shape, and the combined circumstances justify the conclusion that when the names of Township and Gore were decided upon, their bestowal was decided by lot with a result the reverse of what it should have been.

Camden extends on the East almost to the intersection of the line before alluded to, with the Thames and Gore of Zone intervening, Zone forming its Northern boundary till the Gore of Camden is reached; Dawn, in Lambton County, lies immediately to the North; the Township and Gore of Chatham to the West; and the Thames to the South or Southeast. The Gore of Camden also extends about half its length to the West of Chatham Township line, its Westerly portion being bordered on the South by that Township. The surface of Camden is fairly representative of the general level which distinguishes the entire County. Its Southern portion is marked by an entire absence of streams, with one or two insignificant exceptions, but the Gore is traversed diagonally by the Sydenham which enters its borders on the Northeast corner at Florence and pursues a remarkably tortuous course to the Gore of Chatham border. The banks of this stream are very fertile and highly cultivated, which remark applies with equal justice to the banks of the Thames. Great natural fertility likewise marks the greater part

of the balance of the Township but lack of drainage prevents its utilization in some localities remote from the rivers named.

Camden, in common with the Townships to the West, received its first settlers about the close of the last century when the altered relations between Great Britain and her former thirteen colonies induced the removal of so many Loyalists to Canada. Of the representatives of that class who came into Kenty County but very few found their way to Camden, which Township remained almost unsettled until flourishing communities had been formed along the River Front of the neighboring Townships. About 1796, however, or soon thereafter, Joshua Cornwall located lot Fourteen of the River Front. He was a United Empire Loyalist from Connecticut who had come to this locality directly from Detroit, at which point many of the pioneers of Kent "rendezvoused", and others resided, prior to making their onslaught upon the forests of the Thames. Mr. Cornwall's descendants still living cannot locate the exact date of his arrival but it was certainly prior to the year 1800, which was the date of the birth of his son Nathan, a native of Camden, the first white child born within its limits, and from 1834 to 1841 a member of the Canadian Assembly of Kent as his father had been from 1812 to 1816.

Others among the early residents of the River Front were Absalom Shaw, whose descendants are now quite numerous in the Township, and Lemuel Sherman, a Connecticut Loyalist. who located Lot Fifteen, where Thamesville now stands, in 1805 or the following year, his house being situated just South of the present village on the river bank. This was about the extent of the Camden Settlement until after the War of 1812-15, when a new resident came to the Township in the person of Lieutenant Knight who took up a location about a mile East of Kent Bridge. He had served in the British Army during the then recent unpleasantness and soon after its close had married a daughter of William Baker (who had superintended the Government ship-yard at Chatham), after which he settled down to a pioneer's life on the bank of the Thames, Lot Three, Camden. Some of this gentleman's descendants still reside in the County.

The most important settlement following that on the Thames was effected along the Sydenham between Dawn Mills and Florence about 1820, the pioneers being parties who had previously settled on Old Talbot Street in Harwich, whence they removed to accept grants in this locality on discovering the land occupied by them in Harwich to have been already deeded to other parties. Among those who thus located along the stream named were John and William Tiffin, Job Hall, and a family named Boulton, they forming at that time the first settlement on that river Southwest of Strathroy or East of Wallaceburg.

The locality of Dawn Mills was first settled in 1830, the pioneers being William Taylor and James Smith, who built a grist mill on the South bank of the Sydenham. Prior to the construction of that mill the settlers were obliged to go to Detroit in Canoes to have their gristing done, the only mills nearer that point being on the Thames, between which stream and the Sydenham was as yet a pathless forest. These two gentlemen wielded great influence in shaping the destiny of their locality; being upright, intelligent, industrious and enterprising, their efforts were soon marked in the development of the surrounding section. During the rebellion, Mr. Taylor was commissioned a captain and raised a company in which Mr. Smith served as lieutenant, their property being thus left to take care of itself until the welfare of the state was secured. Mr. Smith married the eldest daughter of the

captain, soon thereafter succeeding to the sole control of the mill. He took an active part in municipal affairs after the introduction of that system, was many years Reeve of Camden, and eleven consecutive years Warden of Kent County.

A village gradually clustered around the mills erected by Messrs. Taylor and Smith, to which was accorded the name of Dawn Mills, for what is now the Gore of Camden was then part and parcel of Dawn, hence the name. By the provisions of the Municipal Act of 1850, however, the township limits of Camden were extended Northward to the Sydenham, and later to their present location on the Lambton County line. Another of the early residents of Dawn Mills was Charles Pringley who officiated as miller in Smith's mill for many years, establishing thereby a wide acquaintance among the residents of that region. A. P. Baxter father of Lieutenant-Colonel Baxter of Chatham, located there soon after 183[illegible] with his sons, one of whom, Charles, was then known to manhood. Mr. Baxter was a partner in the first store in Dawn Mills, it also being the first in the Township, opened about 1[illegible] with Mr. Taylor, before named, as the other partner; and among other early residents, David Wallace deserves mention.

The banks of the river below Dawn Mills did not become settled until some time after the establishment of a considerable village at that point. The Sharpe family were the earliest to locate on the south side about midway between there and the present Village of Dresden, while nearly opposite them, on the North side, were a family of Traxler, and on Lots Four and Five, Concession Five, just in the Northern limit of Dresden of the present, Abram Devens chose a location about 1[illegible]. Below Dresden, John McDonald settled on Lot Three, Concession Three, among the earliest residents of the South bank, and a similar distinction in regard to the North bank is due to William Boyd.

The above is information compiled by the late Rev. Hugh Cowan about the year 1916 and extended by the Kent Historical Society 1947