

Mary MacKay's Window on the Past

West Brant

Presbyterian Church.

The following article, written by Ted McCannel, appeared in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record in April 1958, fifty years ago:

Closed Fifty Years, Church To Be Reopened As Cemetery Chapel

The first masonry church in Bruce County, West Brant Presbyterian, one mile south of Cargill on the Elora Road, will return to service after half a century of vacancy. The old building along County Road 3 will be converted to a chapel for Douglas Hill Cemetery.

The sturdy stone building apparently is in as good condition as when it was built 93 years ago.

Records show James Hyslop was paid \$400 to build the walls. William Logan burned the lime and John Cameron was principal carpenter. Much of the labour was volunteer. The limestone came from a nearby quarry on the Saugeen River.

The early Presbyterians walked nine miles to 'Frame's Church', two

miles east of Walkerton. This log structure built in 1851 was the first church in Bruce other than missions for the Indians. As the number of settlers in the area increased, Presbyterians held services in

When the new edifice opened, the first minister was Rev. Dr. R. C. Moffatt. He also preached in churches in Hanover, Frame's Church, West Bentinck and Malcolm, at the annual salary of

Douglasses, Matthews, Eckfords, Wells, and Buchans.

In the pews also sat Clarkes, Dobies, Thompsons, Hoods, Halls, Turners, McBeths, Stevens, Cunninghams, Bairds, Hills, Bells, Murrays, Hunters, Parkers, McCoys, Youngstons, Hamiltons, Butchards, Fennels, Weirs, Carrs, Dawsons, McNaughtons, Hetslers, Paulis, Campbells and Cowdens to mention only a few.

Rev. Mr. Eckford and James Young gave the land on which the church stands. Originally it had been the plan to build the church within Douglas Hill Cemetery.

In 1902 a Presbyterian Church was built at nearby Cargill and the population was not sufficient to support both. In 1909 the West Brant and Cargill Presbyterian Churches were merged.

The West Brant Church remained closed until November 11, 1931, when it opened for a memorial service. It was very fitting that Armistice Day should be the date of this service, because Rev. Mr. Eckford's daughter, Janet, was the mother of Col. John McCrae, author of the poem 'In Flanders' Fields.'

Mary MacKay



The first masonry church in Bruce County now stands unused

Dunkeld School starting in 1856.

Rev. John Eckford, a clergyman from Scotland, conducted the early services. He also was school inspector for the Townships of Brant, Carrick, Greenock and Culross.

\$400.

The list of families in this little parish includes many who wrested early Bruce from the forests. They were the McCallums, Cargills, Trembles, Reeds, Mooneys, Johnstons, Chisholms, Youngs,

Secrets of the Treasure Chest

Treasure Chest Museum Archives

The word "archives" means a place where public records, documents, memorabilia, photographs are kept. At the Treasure Chest Museum, we have many of the above things. There are copies of the old Paisley Advocates, dating back to 1865, 1896 and up to the present. These papers are proving invaluable for people looking for their roots.

Also there are scrapbooks with many photos of Paisley and area and are a great past time to look at. They bring back many memories. In the past year, we have had queries of people looking for ancestors. This past month one such item crossed the desk from a chap in Surrey, England searching for a James Isard.

James Isard was a well known Cheesemaker in the Williscroft and Cantire area of Elderslie Township. Mr. Isard married Clara Sparrow of the 12th Concession of Elderslie.

They lived in a house on Lot 11, Concession 5, Elderslie which they rented from D.N. McIntyre.

In May of 1893, the Williscroft Cheese factory began manufacturing for the season. Mr. Isard was informed by letter that the cheese he

had prepared for the World's Fair in Chicago had been accepted. He won a first prize at that Fair as well as many other fairs including the CNE.

Another item from the Echoes of the Paisley Advocate showed that in June 1903, 2000 pounds more butter

made at the Paisley Creamery than in May 1902. Cream reaching the factory in better condition than ever before. The more general use of the cream separators is perhaps accountable for the improvement. One such machine is located at the Museum.

The Museum is going to display wedding gowns and photos of weddings from Victoria Day weekend to July 1. If you have a gown or photo you would like to share, please call the Museum at 519-353-7176 and leave a message. Beginning July 1 to July 19, the Exhibit will be "What Do You Collect" and again we asking for your help in showing what you collect.

Watch for upcoming programs for the summer. We will open weekends beginning Victoria Day weekend and then July 1 to Labour Day weekend 7 days a week but are available for tours by appointment. The hours are 1 to 4 p.m.

Friends of the Museum



Williscroft Cheese Factory - Con. 5, Elderslie Township