

Sat. Sept. 26, 1964

Shortly To Be Demolished

House Has Link with War of 1812

By CLAIR BALFOUR

A little old field stone house, the home of only two families since the war of 1812 will soon pass from the Western Ontario scene because it does not meet the requirements of modern living.

It is believed to have begun its life beside what is now Highway 2, about three miles west of Thamesford, as an army post and served as officers' quarters during the war of 1812. It has been demolished once before, when American raiders, probably members of MacArthur's bands roamed much of this area of the province.

But Stephen Teeple restored it and lived there with his bride who bore him five children in the little cottage.

Stephen himself was one of 11 children of Peter Teeple, a United Empire Loyalist of Dutch descent who had fought Washington while a member of the New Jersey Volunteers, a cavalry regiment, in spite of the fact his three brothers supported the American cause.

After the revolution, Stephen's father had emigrated to New Brunswick where he became master of a trading ship on the coast, met and married his wife, the daughter of a Quaker refugee from New York.

But word came to the little maritime settlement of greener pastures in Western Ontario after a cousin of Peter's had returned from a fur-trading trip in this area. So Peter Teeple and his in-laws moved west in 1793. They settled at Turkey Point where the sailing, soldiering, pioneer became one of the first magistrates in this area.

The year was 1800, Peter was 38 and the seat of justice was a house-cum-tavern owned by James Munro. Shortly after this appointment, local historian Charles S. Buck notes that he became one of the founding fathers of the first Baptist church in the district.

The family spread out.

Son Stephen moved to the Thamesford area and restored the little house, which still

shows, in two walls, what are believed to have been firing slits. Perhaps the house was not completely destroyed by the Americans. Or again, Stephen may have reinstalled them for his family's security.

Whatever the case, these two scars are the only remaining signs that the cottage has not always been a peaceful farm house. The interior and the television antenna on the roof disguise that part of the past.

Stephen died in 1877 and was buried in the 7th line cemetery. His father's grave, near Beachville, is now a cow pasture.

The house was left to one of Stephen's daughters but her brother Samuel lived in it, and it witnessed the birth of his three children too.

But the wheel came full circle. In 1884, Samuel and his family, descendants of a man who fought the Americans in

the revolution, moved across the border to Texas after selling the farm to Samuel Taylor, a local farmer who never lived in the house. There are many Teeple descendants in the U.S. and Mrs. Norman Copp and Lloyd Teeple, both of Woodstock, are direct descendants. Mrs. Copp claims there are several in the St. Thomas-Aylmer area. Her brother lives in Parry Sound and there is another branch in Toronto, she says.

In 1908 Taylor sold the farm, now called Willowbrook, to William Henry Payne and it has been in the Payne family ever since. William's son, Roy, lived in the cottage with his wife and their three children who were all born there. Now his son, Kenneth, and his family occupy the one-time garrison and operate the farm.

But time moves on and the

old building, with its history, its memories and its quaint charm will soon pass from the Western Ontario scene. A structure that has taken part in a battle, has been the home of three generations of Teeples and the same number of generations of Paynes, has witnessed the birth of 11 children is no longer required.

It is not adequate for the installation of modern lighting, plumbing and heating and has been replaced by a modern ranch-style house behind.

But it won't die.

Some of the stone that has seen people come and go for over a century and a half will be used in a fireplace in the new house—serving as a reminder to probably at least one more generation of Paynes of the history of Western Ontario, and indeed of Canada.



Allan Payne, 13, points out a walled-in area, at the back of the 152-year-old house near Thamesford, which is believed to have been a gun emplacement. There is another smaller one at the front.

When a Movie Show Cost Five Cents...

By D. J. A.

Thirty six years ago citizens of Galt and district paid five cents to see a two reel feature movie at Galt's first theatre.

It was some 14 years after the development of motion pictures before Galt had a theatre, but in the earliest days the movies were so crude it was no wonder it took time for them to penetrate to the smaller communities.

Probably the first local man to become interested in motion pictures was Alex Fraser, who now operates a Galt taxi agency. He recalled that Galt's first theatre bore the glamorous name "The Star"

and was located on main street where Barton's men's wear store is now situated.

The theatre had a capacity of 156. Admission was five cents and Mr. Fraser began working in the theatre by singing songs which were illustrated on the screen by appropriate pictures.

In 1909 Mr. Fraser bought the business, and in that year the hit was a two reel feature showing Mary Pickford, under the name of Gladys Smith, in *The Lonely Villa*.

In 1909 Galt had another theatre when the Lyceum was

opened in a former barn on the site of the present Royal Bank by Howard Phipps and Dick Freeman. The same year Jack Green began to show pictures in the old curling rink.

Competition had suddenly become lively. The Star closed early in 1910 and Jack Green's show house had a life of about three months.

The next Galt development in the theatre business came shortly after 1913 when The Temple was built by extending a residence located where the Grand Theatre was later constructed. The Temple changed hands in 1918, was closed and

reopened as the Regent which operated until May 1930 and then closed, to be followed by the opening of the Capitol in June, 1930.

The Capitol, the first building erected in Galt for the purpose of showing motion pictures, operated alone until December 1938 when the Grand Theatre opened and then in September 1939 the Palace Theatre was opened.

In 1944 Galt had three modern theatres with a total seating capacity of 2,420. Today, 20 years later, Galt has but one movie theatre, the Capitol.