



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



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The Dieppe Raid: 80 Years

By Kara Folkeringa

August 19, 2022 marked 80 years since the Dieppe Raid (Operation Jubilee). The details of this tragic battle are well-known in this region, as it was the first time the Essex Scottish Regiment fought in the war, and the regiment suffered greatly with 121 casualties.¹ In total, 907 Canadians lost their lives in Dieppe.² Though there are disagreements on whether the raid was senseless or if the lessons learned saved soldiers in future battles, there is no disputing that it was a devastating loss of life for Essex County (and Canada as a whole).³

Private Russell Dube, of Amherstburg, survived this battle and spent the following two and a half years in a prison camp. Many soldiers did not wish to speak of what they saw, but Dube took a different approach. He asked himself the question, if he didn't talk, "Who [would] speak for [those] who died in Dieppe?"⁴ Several times over his long life, he spoke publicly of his experiences. He tells a moving story about Dieppe, where he was lying on a beach bleeding and a nun was tending to him when two German soldiers became aggressive with her.⁵ Instead of cowering, she reached up, grabbed their faces, and pushed them to the ground.⁶ He said that this "spunky" nun inspired him to fight to live.⁷

Despite survival stories like Private Dube's, many men did not come home.

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Amherstburg lost four soldiers in Dieppe:

Private Charles P. "Red" Adams – October 3, 1907 – August 19, 1942
Private Adams was an excellent football and hockey player, well-known in town.⁸ His widow was Patricia Russello Prine, whom he married September 7, 1940.⁹

Private Ellis William Allen – July 10, 1910-August 19, 1942
Private Allen worked at the Lakeview Hotel until he enlisted and went overseas. His widow was Marion Lapierre, whom he married in November 1941.¹⁰

Private Desmond "Dessie" Sullivan – April 28, 1921-August 19, 1942
Private Desmond sent a letter home just before the Dieppe Raid that arrived after he was reported missing where he wrote that he was eager to fight after sitting idle for so long.¹¹ His brother Harold was also reported missing, but made it home after time in a prison camp.¹²

Private Roy Wigle – May 26, 1920-August 19, 1942
Private Wigle had mailed a letter home just days before the Dieppe Raid where he ominously wrote: "Say another prayer for me, Sis." The letter was not received until months later.¹³



Private Charles P. Adams¹⁴



Private William Ellis Allen¹⁷

Lest we forget.

See page 8 for sources.



Private Desmond Sullivan¹⁵



Private Roy Wigle¹⁶

Happenings at the Marsh

**Our office is now open Monday to Friday from 10-4.
Appointments are recommended but not required.**

Thank you, Nicholas!



This year, we had the opportunity to hire a summer student through the Young Canada Works program. Nicholas Robinson is a political science and history student, currently working on an MA degree in Political Science at the University of Windsor. Before working with us, Nicholas was already an active participant in the local history field. He worked as an interpreter at Park House Museum for many years. Back in 2015, Nicholas led the research for the Amherstburg Legion's 85th Anniversary video (a copy of which is available at the Marsh Collection).

During his time at the Marsh, Nicholas worked as a Collections Assistant, digitizing and cataloguing items from the Duncanson Collection (check out the Spring 2018 newsletter on our website if you'd like to know more about this Collection). He also helped out with inquiries from the public, conducting property research and answering other requests. Collections care is an important part of our role at the Marsh. Nicholas assisted with preventive conservation tasks and our map rehousing project. Thank you Nicholas for all of your hard work this summer!

**Thank you to the
Young Canada Works
program for making this
position possible!**



This project has been made possible by the Government of Canada. Ce projet a été rendu possible grâce au gouvernement du Canada.

Canada

What's In the Collection?

The Marsh Collection Society mandate is "to collect, preserve and encourage research into the heritage of Amherstburg and the lower Detroit River district."

The facility contains a large collection of photos, books, genealogical records, maps and reference files on a variety of historical topics, plus microfilm of The Amherstburg Echo from 1874 to 2012. There is also a small gift shop which contains various publications about local history.

Funding comes from various foundations and private individuals. While ADMISSION IS FREE, donations are most welcome. A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued upon request for any monetary donation of \$10 or more.

The Marsh Collection is open to researchers & visitors from 10am to 4pm Monday- Friday.

Email: research@marshcollection.org

Website: www.marshcollection.org



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

If you enjoy reading our newsletter please consider making a donation through our website:
<https://www.marshcollection.org/donate/>



COMING THIS NOVEMBER

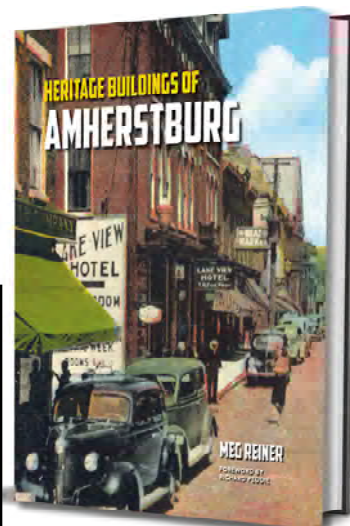
Heritage Buildings of Amherstburg

will be available for purchase across the street at the River Bookshop.

A portion of each sale goes to the Marsh Collection!

COLOURING BOOKS

will be available for sale at the Marsh this holiday season. Call or email us to add your name to the list!



110th Anniversary of the Livingstone Channel

By Ken Hutnik

This fall marks the 110th anniversary of the official opening of the Livingstone Channel in the Detroit River on October 19, 1912. In 1907, the United States Congress authorized funding a new channel to complement the existing Amherstburg Channel. The Livingstone Channel would provide a second shipping route through the river, rather than all ships having to navigate around Bois Blanc Island. Until this time, only smaller craft could use the river between Grosse Île and Stony Island, where spans of the Michigan Central Railway bridge had been removed after ferry service was permanently discontinued around 1890.

The work was done in four different contracts with two different approaches. The first method to dredge involved drilling holes into the limestone riverbed and blasting the rock. Dredges would then scoop out the loose rock out from under water. A barge with a long steel rail was then dragged across the area to ensure proper depth was achieved. High spots were

removed with further blasting if needed.

The second method was to excavate about 5750 ft. of the channel "in the dry." A cofferdam was created around a section of the channel and the water was removed using a combination of pumps and air lifts. The dam was the largest ever built at the time, using heavy clay with stone and gravel dredged from within the dam section and nearby areas. Once the water was removed, rock was then blasted and steam shovels scooped the materials into skips. Three cableway systems, each with two 100 ft. towers, raised the skips and dumped them out on the spoil banks. The towers moved on rails so they could be positioned along the channel as it was constructed.

Stony Island was used as the base of operations for the massive engineering project with supporting stores, pumphouse and small construction railroad. An entire village was constructed on the island including homes, a school and a hospital. No alcohol was permitted on the island. The island

continued to be used for industrial purposes, including Dunbar and Sullivan dredging which ceased operations in 1987. Remnants of life on the island and sunken vessels can still be found. Today, the island is part of the Pointe Mouillee State Game Area and Grosse Île Township.

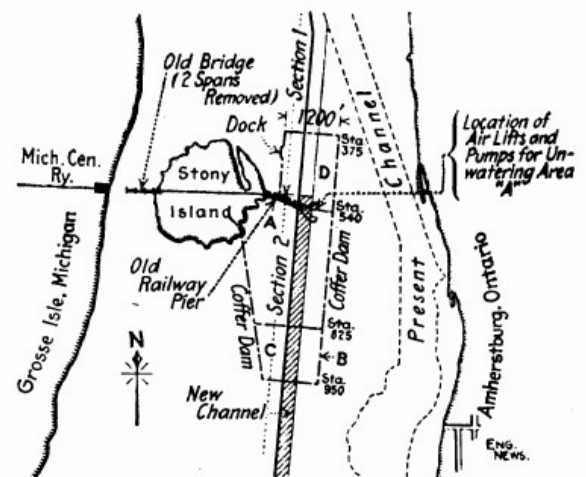


The Marsh Collection commemorated the 100-year anniversary of the channel with an exhibit. A special book compiled from the exhibit is available for \$10. The book chronicles articles from the Amherstburg Echo and includes pictures and postcards from the collection.



Stone scow working on the Livingstone Channel, circa 1910-11.

MCS P3971.8



Plan of cofferdam, etc., for excavating the Livingstone Channel in the Dry; Detroit River.

Source: *Engineering News* Vol. 60 No.25

December 17, 1908

Upsetting the Hour Glass



1932

September- A copperhead was found coiled up comfortably sunning himself on the verandah of the house occupied by James McBride on the Pike Road. The reptile was killed at once by a passing motorist, who took it off with him as a souvenir. It was about 36 inches long.

October- A rather interesting method of cutting the lawn was witnessed the other day while travelling along the Anderdon river front on King's Highway No. 18. A wide lawn mower fitted with shafts and a sort of seat was being drawn by a Shetland pony and driven by a young farmerette.

November- Heavy rain on Wednesday has put a stop to tilling operations on several farms in Malden township. Every year more farmers are draining their land, thus making it possible to more profitably grow the crops common to this district.

1942

September- The Fort Malden Branch of the Legion arranged for members of the families of Essex Scottish soldiers to get to Windsor on Monday evening to hear Ross Munro, Canadian War Correspondent.

October- The S.S. No. 2 group had their cross quilting bee at the home of Miss Mabel Brush on Thursday.

November- Every Canadian must consider it his duty to shop early for Christmas this year because, unlike any other Christmas season, there is a great shortage of man-power. Merchandise will be hard and often impossible to get.

1952

September- The local police force has been checking on children on the streets after nine o'clock at night and is enforcing the provisions of The Children's Protection Act passed in 1950. Chief Constable A. B. Duby states that several warnings have been given to parents but, as yet, no charges have been laid.

October- Monday was moving day for 170 pupils of the Anderdon Township public school system when they moved from their little red school houses into the new large, modern central school located on the Middle Sideroad near the third Concession.

November- Construction has started on a new store, Richmond Street east of the Moffat Pharmacy, for Copeland's Book Store and Frank Williamson's Men's Store. The building will be 40 x 60. Granite Construction Company has the contract.

1962

September- The Malden tomato throwing gang is at it again.

October- An Anderdon resident was given two months in jail for keeping liquor to sell in his home.

November- Over the weekend someone heaved a pop bottle through a small window on the lower floor of the Echo office.

1972

September- Edward Kemp of the Amherstburg Fire Department has been awarded the Fire Services long service award for 30 years as a municipal fighter.

October- The Amherstburg Senior Baseball Team won the County Championship. Jerry Lucier managed the team to victory this season. This is the team's first win in 26 years of participating.

November- Hazen Price and his Rotary club committee are to be complimented on the progress that has been made in the restoration of the historic Park House.

AMHERSTBURG has a great many war veterans who have seen exciting, thrilling and appalling incidents in France. Among these are those who are really soldiers by tradition. For generations the men of the family have been in the service. One of these is W. S. Duffield. Touching on the scenes behind the lines, in the hospitals said he believed that the soldiers deserved all the credit they had received for their never failing bravery, but that there had been others fighting battles for the allies who had not received their proper share of applause. These were the young women who dropped everything and went to work in the emergency hospitals and fought to save the lives of the fellows who had been sent back from the front wounded. The allies would have certainly been handicapped without the aid of the women who were fighting for Liberty as well as the men in the trenches.—G. L. W.

The Amherstburg Echo November 25, 1932 →

A Record Trip to Amherstburg 145 Years Ago

By Ken Hutnik

If you power up your favourite navigation device and plan a trip from the St. Thomas Railway Station to the Amherstburg Yacht Club (site of the former Canada Southern / Michigan Central Railway Stations at Gordon), you could do the trip in about 2 hours. However, in 1877 there were no such roads nor highways to travel on. Rail was the way to go, and it was very fast for the technology at the time.

This year marks 145 years since a famous train run from St. Thomas to Amherstburg on Sept 13, 1877. Clergy and leading members of Detroit society were eager to have their Bishop Borgess return from the east earlier than scheduled trains for a reception in Detroit. A special Canada Southern train was chartered to retrieve the bishop from St. Thomas to Amherstburg and then on to Detroit by crossing by ferry to Grosse Île.

The special train pulled out from St. Thomas at 5:27 P.M. A grand hurrah from the crowd on the platform signaled the departure of the anticipated speedy express to Amherstburg. Engineer Macomber was at the throttle, Conductor Crawford directed the train which also carried officers of the railway. As the train accelerated out of town, one could not simply use your electronic device to get your speed, passengers timed the distance between telegraph poles with pocket watches and marvelled at the speeds being attained.

The train steamed in to the Amherstburg / Gordon Station in only 1 hr and 49 min, including a 4-minute stop for the steam engine to take on water. An overall average speed of 61 mph / 98 kmh, covered the 111 miles in 109 minutes. A speed of 65 mph / 105 kmh clocked at one point. In today's world that does not seem fast, but at the time it broke the speed record for all of North America.

The Detroit Free Press article of the fast ride on the Canada Southern was re-published in "all the leading newspapers of the country – daily, weekly, scientific, professional, and class journals..." Papers all-over Canada and the United States carried the sensational headline of "111 Miles in 109 Minutes, A Train That Left a Whirlwind In Its Wake" for a month afterwards.

The trip was quite the experience: "The wires on the telegraph poles swung up and down from the movement of the train. The bushes on the side of the ditches shook as if swept by a hurricane. A thin line of smoke stretched interminably in the distance. The impetus of the train increased the vehemence with which it rushed forward created a vacuum that apparently took nature some seconds to overcome, and the spirits of the passengers were exhilarated by the unprecedented speed at which they moved through space."

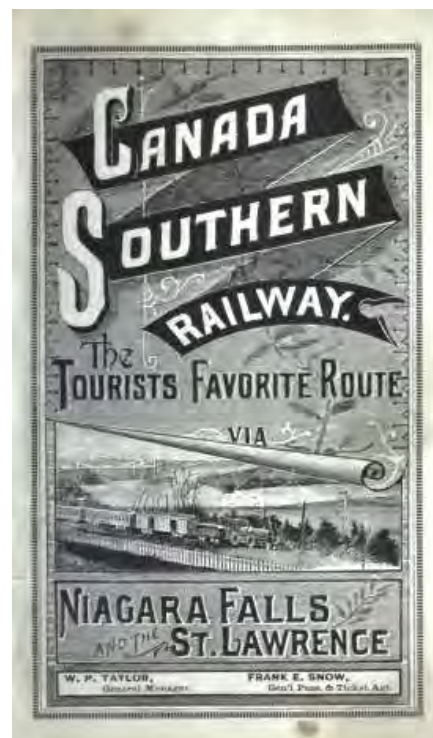


Figure 1: The cover and images from an early tourist brochure that featured the Detroit Free Press story, as well as descriptions and sketches of Bois Blanc, Grosse Île and Amherstburg along with other Canada Southern towns.

Ancestral Lines **Rev. Edward Palin “Ted” Gatfield**

By Phyllis Chant

This beloved priest was the fifth child of John S. (1878-1934) and Maude (nee McEvoy, 1882-1954) Gatfield. Fr. “Ted”, as he was better known, was born in Amherstburg on October 4, 1921. His life, however, took a number of interesting turns in his first 28 years.

Growing up in the Amherstburg area, Ted Gatfield, like most teenagers, worked different jobs on Bob-Lo Island. By 1942, he was the manager of the roller rink, and made \$4.50 a day. John Gatfield passed away in 1934 at the age of 55. It was at this time that the family moved to the McEvoy family home at 186 Dalhousie Street. Ted Gatfield attended Assumption High School in Windsor. After graduating, he started the Engineering program at Assumption University (the predecessor of the University of Windsor). In the spring of 1943, Ted Gatfield enlisted for WWII with the Royal Canadian Air Force. On October 5, 1944, Sergeant-Pilot Edward P. Gatfield graduated as a pilot. Next, he was sent to Quebec for commando training, but the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 (and the subsequent end of the war) put an end to his military career, and he returned to Essex County.

Following the war, Ted Gatfield operated a photography business with his friend, Norm Harrison. Flying and photography fell by the wayside in September 1949 when Edward Gatfield found his true calling and entered St. Peter's Seminary in London to begin his

studies to become a Roman Catholic priest. On June 4, 1955, Rev. Edward Palin Gatfield was ordained at St. Peter's Cathedral.

His first mass was at his home parish, St. John the Baptist Church, Amherstburg. For the next 50-plus years, he served several churches, along with being the Chaplain of Mount St. Joseph Mother House in London and the director of the Holy Family Retreat House in Oxley. For 17 years, he was also the pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Harrow.

Also very important to Fr. Ted was being a part of the Knights of Columbus. He was a member at the 3rd and 4th degree, the Faithful Friar of the Dean Wagner Assembly in Windsor, and the Chaplain for the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 338 in Colchester. Although he retired in 2005, he went on to write a book with Fr. M. Prieur about the history of the Holy Family Retreat House.

On February 20, 2014, Fr. Ted Gatfield passed away at the age of 92. His funeral mass took place at the same church where he had celebrated his first mass almost 60 years earlier: St. John the Baptist Church, Amherstburg. Fr. Ted was a beloved priest and friend to many.

GATFIELD COLLECTION

We are in the process of digitizing the photos, records, and ephemera in the Gatfield Collection. If you wish to access these materials please call or email to schedule an appointment.



Ted with friend “Bill”, 1940. Can anyone help us identify Bill? MCS 2014.019.020



In his R.C.A.F. Uniform, 1944
MCS 2014.019.009.40



At St. John the Baptist Church, circa 2005.
MCS 2014.019.

Bricks-N-Beams Western Secondary School



By Meg Reiner

The Essex County Board of Education purchased property on the southwest corner of the Sixth Concession and North Townline Road in February of 1970. This would become the site of the Board's first vocational school, named Western Secondary School. By the end of July, tenders were advertised in the local newspapers. The building was designed by Brand, Langlois, and Wills, architects and engineers of Windsor, and the contract for construction was awarded to Collavino Brothers, Contractors Ltd. Costs for the new school amounted to \$2,656,314.

In addition to: "10 regular classrooms, [a] Library Resource Centre, Seminar Rooms, Science Lab and Science Room, Art Room, Remedial Reading Room, Driver Education Room, Double Gymnasium and Cafetorium," the *Echo* reported the following shop facilities were also included in the new building: "Auto Body and Painting, Auto Service, Building Construction, Trowel Trades, Horticulture and Landscaping, Janitorial Service, Metal Fabrication, Upholstery and Power Sewing, Hair Dressing, Home Management, Hospital Services, Typing, Retail Merchandising, Restaurant Services, Short Order Cooking, Catering, [and] Food Processing."

The new Western Secondary School opened in September of 1971, to 441 students and 38 teachers lead by principal J.C. Zangari. 51 years later, the building officially closed its door and students were transferred to the new North Star High School.

Then & Now



Northwest corner of Richmond & Dalhousie, post-1915
(Post Office and Echo Building)

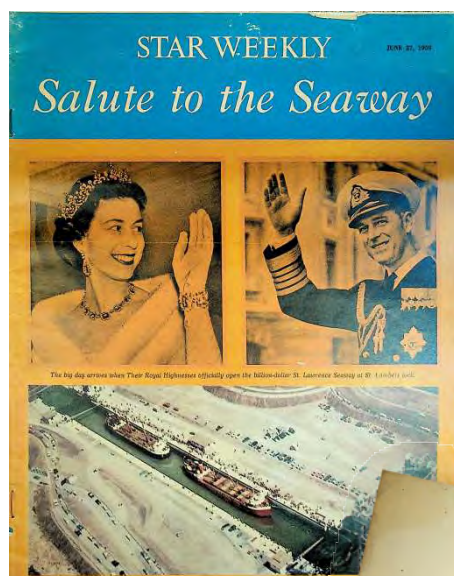
MCS PC 226



Present-day.

Collection Highlights

Items relating to Queen Elizabeth II
1926-2022



Star Weekly June 27, 1959

1953 Coronation Booklet
distributed by jewellers



Weekly Road Bulletin of Ontario May 9, 1953



Star Weekly May 9, 1953

BUSES ARE BACK!



Since bus service between Amherstburg and Windsor has returned, we thought it would be appropriate to share a photo from the first trip on March 21, 1938. The men posed in front boarded the Ford 25 passenger bus for an inaugural trip to Harrow. Contact us if you'd like the names of these men. MCS P25

SOURCES FOR THE DIEPPE RAID: 80 YEARS

- ¹ "The Essex Scottish," *Veterans Affairs: Government of Canada*, Oct. 5, 2021, https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/second-world-war/dieppe-raid/essex_scottish
- ² "Disaster at Dieppe," *Canada: A People's History*, CBC Learning, <https://www.cbc.ca/history/EPISCONTENTSE1EP14CH1PA3LE.html#:~:text=But%20casualty%20lists%20provided%20a,in%20the%20disaster%20at%20Dieppe>.
- ³ "The Dieppe Raid," *Veterans Affairs: Government of Canada*, July 29, 2022, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/wars-and-conflicts/second-world-war/battle-of-dieppe>
- ⁴ Roberta Pennington, "Spunky nun revived veteran's will to live," *The Windsor Star*, Aug. 17, 2006.
- ⁵ Pennington, "Spunky nun revived veteran's will to live."
- ⁶ Russell Dube, "France to recognize bravery of a selfless nun from Rouen," *The Windsor Star*, Apr. 16, 1996.
- ⁷ Pennington, "Spunky nun revived veteran's will to live."
- ⁸ "Private Adams," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 17, 1942.
- ⁹ "Private Adams," *The Amherstburg Echo*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹⁰ "Private Allen," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹¹ "Brothers," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹² "Kin of Released Prisoners Entitled to Smile," *The Windsor Star*, Apr. 14, 1945.
- ¹³ "Private Wigle," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹⁴ "In memory of Charles Peter Adams," *Canadian Virtual War Memorial*, Aug. 30, 2022.
- ¹⁵ "Brothers," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹⁶ "Private Wigle," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.
- ¹⁷ "Private Allen," *The Windsor Star*, Sept. 16, 1942.