



# Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection  
Amherstburg, Ontario



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## Fine Dining on the Amherstburg II

By A. Jackson

The entertaining article “Jerry the Cook” by Capt. John Burke in the last issue of Reflections, reminded me of my own memorable experience of “fine-dining” with McQueen Marine in the early 60’s.

I was working as a summer student for McQueen Marine as part of the “dock gang” on a very hot day in August of 1961. Shortly after lunch break my father, who was office manager of McQueen’s at the time, came down to the dock and informed me that I would be going on an emergency salvage job with Irwin Brush and we would be riding on the derrick scow AMHERSTBURG II. The AMHERSTBURG II was an old crane barge that belonged to the Department of Transport but McQueen Marine used it for buoy handling during daylight hours as it had no overnight accommodations and had to be towed by a tug. I remember my father saying he would tell my mother that I wouldn’t be home for dinner that evening.

Later we learned that the freighter BENSON FORD was in trouble on the St Clair River just below Port Huron. She had anchored in the river overnight due to heavy fog but unfortunately had backed over her stern anchor and looped the chain around her propeller. The FORD needed immediate assistance and in this emergency situation the Department of Transport’s old derrick scow AMHERSTBURG II was the only crane barge available at that time. We loaded all the necessary salvage equipment and diving gear aboard the AMHERSTBURG II and Irwin, who could operate the hoisting machinery, gave me a quick lesson on how to shovel coal into the boiler and maintain steam pressure for the derrick. Not a fun job on this sweltering hot day. The tug ATOMIC showed up late in the afternoon and was preparing for the tow when I was handed a brown paper bag with the words, “This is for you and Irwin.”

when swimming in the river or you would come down with some dreadful disease. Yes, we did swim in the river back in those days.

Anyway, not to worry, there must be something to drink in the brown bag but all we found was a loaf of white bread and a package of sliced bologna! So much for fine-dining on the AMHERSTBURG II! My mouth was so dry by that time I couldn’t even chew or swallow any of our brown bag meal. After a futile attempt of shouting and arm waving to alert anyone on the ATOMIC of our predicament, we decided that dying of thirst was not an option but we would have a drink from Lake St Clair once we were well past the sewage outfalls of Detroit. Just after dark we managed to quench our thirst with some refreshing lake water and thankfully we never came down with any “dreadful disease” that my mother had predicted.

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After leaving the dock and at the end of a rather long towline we were very thirsty but soon realized we had forgotten to put any drinking water aboard the old scow. Now I began to wonder how long we could hold out before dying of thirst or could we drink from the river and hope for the best. My mother always told me to keep my mouth closed



Amherstburg II & Atomic with a load of buoys MCS P1921

...Continued from page 1

At daybreak the next morning we reached the disabled FORD and during the morning the anchor chain was successfully cut away and her anchor was raised from the river bottom. The FORD went on her way to discharge her cargo at Detroit and eventually get a new propeller at a shipyard in Ohio. Irwin and I returned to the burg on the AMHERSTBURG II but this time made sure we had ample food and water from the galley of the ATOMIC.

The total time on this job was 32 hours and Ford Motor Company was billed \$ 4,114.00



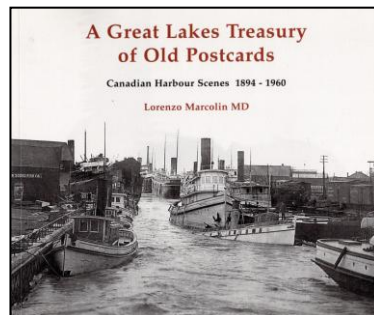
# Gift Shop



A selection of reproduction vintage **Christmas Cards**.  
\$1 each



**Sights along the Detroit River** captured by a local photographer.  
Unframed prints. \$5



**A Great Lakes Treasury of Old Postcards** \$35

## What's In the Collection?

The Marsh Historical Collection 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 and visitors from 10am to 4pm Tuesday through Friday.  
**CLOSED between Christmas and New Years**

Email: [research@marshcollection.org](mailto:research@marshcollection.org)

Website: [www.marshcollection.org](http://www.marshcollection.org)



## "McGREGOR NEWS"

Volume II  
The Next Fifteen Years  
1900 - 1915



**McGregor News Volume II**  
**The Next Fifteen Years**  
**1900-1915**

Read about the goings-on in McGregor at the beginning of the twentieth century in this second installment. \$25



# Upsetting the Hour Glass



1927/28

**December-** A box of stationery, nicely printed, makes a very much appreciated Christmas present. See samples at The Echo Office.

**January-** Those who wanted snow for Christmas got it for New Year's Day, but not all of them came to church to thank God for it.

**February-** A dance will be held in the Malden hall under the auspices of the Ladies Guild of St. Alban's Church, Wednesday February 15<sup>th</sup>.

1937/38

**December-** Branches of Christmas trees are being hung on the poles in the business section. It gives the town a real yuletide appearance and stimulates the Christmas spirit.

**January-** A tragedy was narrowly avoided New Year's Eve when a motor car missed going into the Detroit River at the foot of Gore Street by a few feet.



Ad in The Amherstburg Echo  
February 14, 1936

**February-** Last week, the Fort Malden Management Committee received from Ottawa the first sketch of the museum which it is proposed to build on the Fort property, Laird Avenue.

1947/48

**December-** A Christmas community sing will be held in the Liberty Theater, on Sunday evening, December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**January-** New lights have been installed in the public library. This is but one of the many improvements made in the building by the board.

**February-** Friday night was again basketball night at the Parish Hall where the "black and gold" of General Amherst High met the "green and gold" of St. Rose's.



Ad in The Amherstburg Echo  
February 12, 1932

1957/58

**December-** Members of the Ladies of Rotary and several guests enjoyed a Christmas dinner party at the Tea Garden.

**January-** Fish and chips dinners to take out are 50 cents at the Bluebird Restaurant on Sandwich Street.

**February-** Brunner Mond Club Dance on Saturday, February 8 at 9:00 p.m. Admission is \$1.50 a couple.

1967/68

**December-** The large fir tree north of the public library has been strung with coloured lights. The library board has given permission to the Columbian Squires to erect their Christmas crèche on library grounds.

**January-** Tons of snow were moved off Amherstburg over the weekend. The town plow worked all day Saturday and most of Sunday until the studs on the front wheel broke.

**February-** Valentine luncheon at the Christ Church Parish House on February 13, at 1 p.m. Cards- Door and Table Prizes.



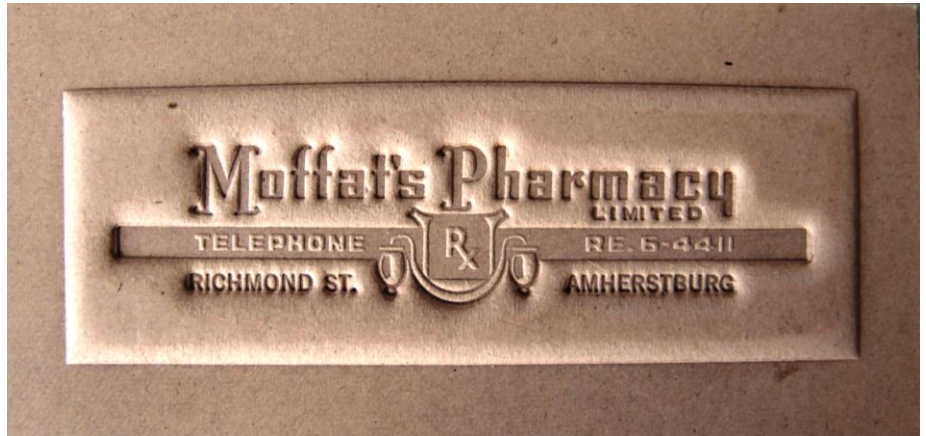
Ad in The Amherstburg Echo  
February 9, 1934

# Collection Highlights

## Paper Printing Plate & Receipt Moffat's Pharmacy

Moffat's Drug Store (later Moffat's Pharmacy) was established on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1929, at 53 Richmond Street when Thomas W. Moffat bought out J.E. Theobald's Store. Thomas W. Moffat was born in Tilbury, Ontario in 1906. He graduated from the University of Toronto Pharmacy School in 1927 and afterwards completed a four-year apprenticeship at Pond's Drug Store in Windsor. He married Winnifred Pearce on September 25, 1928 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Windsor. The Moffat's lived in Amherstburg on Sandwich Street and later Laird Avenue with their daughter, Helen.

In the beginning Sally Pattenden was Moffat's only assistant. The following is a quote from a piece by Moffat published in the Amherstburg Echo on March 15, 1972: "When Moffat's Pharmacy opened, Dr. James Park still practiced medicine in his office in the now famous "Park House" on Dalhousie Street. The S.W.A. street car stopped right in front of our door. We not only dispensed prescriptions, but made up numerous veterinary preparations in use at that time." In an advertisement announcing the opening of his new store, Moffat writes: "In stock are complete lines of drugs, medicines and toilet requisites. Your prescription will be promptly and accurately compounded in accordance with the doctor's order." Moffat is remembered for his high ethical standards and for being an active member of the community. He was one of the five pharmacists that founded the Green Shield drug plan. In 1972, the Big V Pharmacy bought out Moffat's and the store closed on March 17<sup>th</sup> of that year.



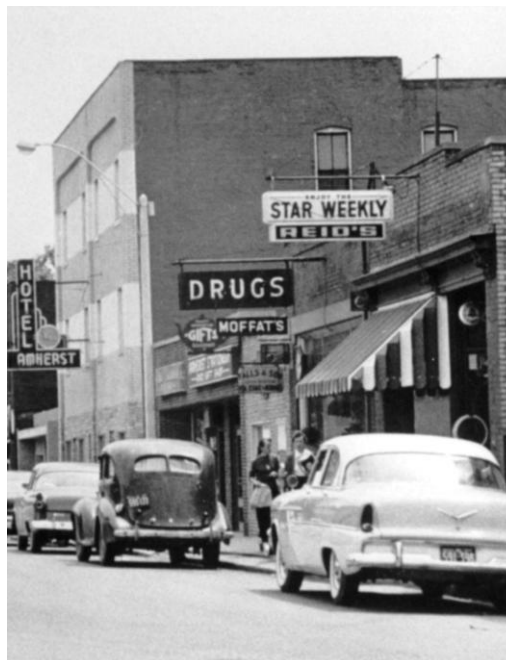
Paper printing plate for business cards c.1950s Moffat's Pharmacy



Thomas W. Moffat,  
c.1935

MOFFAT'S PHARMACY Limited	
Phone RE. 6-4411	
AMHERSTBURG, <i>May 28, 1960</i>	
M. <i>J. Park</i>	
1	
2	<i>By Cash 19.80</i>
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	<b>45</b>

Receipt  
Moffat's Pharmacy  
May 28, 1960



Richmond Street, c. 1950s  
MCS Photo P172



# Sold by All Responsible Druggists

Remedies Advertised in The Amherstburg Echo

## HYOMEI

(PRONOUNCED HIGH-O-ME)

**CURES CATARRH, ASTHMA,**  
Bronchitis, Croup, Coughs and Colds, or  
money back. Sold and guaranteed by  
B. L. Kitchen, Amherstburg.

(May 27, 1910)

**NYAL**  
Stone Root Compound

Gentle in Action      Promptly Effective  
Relieves Backache, Rheumatism and Kidney Troubles

**J. E. THEOBALD, Phm. B.**  
THE PRESCRIPTION DRUGGIST  
AMHERSTBURG, ONT.  
—WE'LL BE GLAD TO SEND IT—

(May 11, 1928)

### How to Cure a Headache

To attempt to cure a headache by baking a "headache powder" is like trying to stop a leak in the roof by putting a pan under the dripping water. Chronic headaches are caused by poisoned blood. The blood is poisoned by tissue waste, undigested food and other impurities remaining too long in the system. These poisons are not promptly eliminated because of sick liver, bowels, skin or kidneys.

If the bowels do not move regularly- if there is pain in the back showing kidney trouble- if the skin is yellow or disfigured with pimples- it shows clearly what is causing the headache.

"Fruit-a-tives" cure headaches because they cure the cause of the headaches. "Fruit-a-tives" act directly on the three great eliminating organs- bowels, kidneys and skin. "Fruit-a-tives" keep the system free of poisons.

"Fruit-a-tives" come in two sizes- 25¢ and 50¢. If your dealer does not have them write to Fruit-a-tives Limited, Ottawa. (January 22, 1909)

## HOUSE WORK



Thousands of American women in our homes are daily sacrificing their lives to duty.

In order to keep the home neat and pretty, the children well dressed and tidy, women overdo. A female weakness or displacement is often brought on and they suffer in silence, drifting along from bad to worse, knowing well that they ought to have help to overcome the pains and aches which daily make life a burden.

It is to these faithful women that  
**LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S  
VEGETABLE COMPOUND**

comes as a boon and a blessing, as it did to Mrs. W. Barrett, of 602 Moreau St., Montreal, who writes to Mrs. Pinkham:

"For years I was a great sufferer from female weakness, and despite every remedy given me by doctors for this trouble, I grew worse.

"One day a friend advised me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I did so, and am thankful to say that it made me strong and well."

(February 19, 1909)

### Irritable People

People are often irritable by reason of exasperating skin disease which destroys comfort and good humour. Salt Rheum, nettle rash erysipelas, pimples, scald head, etc., are of this nature; they arise from bad blood and can be cured by using Burdock Blood Bitters according to directions.

(Nov. 1, 1889)

### Brave Men Fall

Victims to stomach, liver and kidney troubles and feel the results in loss of appetite, backache, nervousness, headache and tired, run-down feeling, but, "Electric Bitters are just the thing for a man" writes J.W. Gardner, of Idaville, Ind., "when he is all run-down, and don't care whether he lives or dies. It did more to give me new strength and good appetite than anything I could take. I can now eat anything and have a new lease on life." Only 50¢. Every bottle guaranteed by C.M.S. Thomas, druggist.

(April 20, 1900)

### Wood's Phosphodine The Great English Remedy



The Wood Company  
Windsor, Ont. Canada  
(November 12, 1897)

# On The Shelves



As we come to the holiday season, most of us have the pleasure of gathering with family members of multiple generations... and many people, now, are striving to explore their family histories beyond their living relatives. The popularity of many genealogy-related television programs also indicates that tracing one's personal heritage has become an increasingly common interest.

But where to begin the process?

The Marsh Historical Collection provides an ideal, convenient and affordable opportunity to

set off on your family's historical journey.

Our office has an extensive data-base of local surnames, tied to a number of documented source materials in print and electronic formats.

Among those, we have specific family histories and "trees"; marriage, baptism and burial grounds dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century for a number of local churches; municipal government records and city directories; shelves of local history books; and the pages of The Amherstburg Echo newspaper (1874-2003) on microfilm.

Our indexing of the local books and searches through The Echo can sometimes even help us to find anecdotal stories about your ancestors- perhaps even photos of them.

Track your local ancestors at the Marsh Historical Collection, and then our staff can even give you some tips to extend your search into even more distant points in time and geography.

Your genealogical journey begins with the Marsh Historical Collection.

## Bricks-N-Beams

### The Sloan Homes

*With thanks to Doris Gaspar for her in-depth research on these properties.*

The original owner of the homes described in this article has been recorded in historical sketches as a prominent and honourable citizen of this region. Captain John Sloan was a former Royal Navy officer who came to Amherstburg in the 1830s. In town, he took on the role of merchant, innkeeper, and vessel owner. He was also a quarry-owner in Anderdon Township in partnership with William Burnell. Sloan was a Justice of the Peace and the first Reeve to represent Anderdon on the district Council. He was an abolitionist and along with Roland Wingfield operated a small integrated

private school on his lands in Anderdon. While in the Royal Navy, Sloan was dismissed for protesting the form of execution administered to certain native rebels<sup>1</sup>.

On September 21, 1836, the government held a public sale at Sandwich to dispose of vacant lots in Amherstburg. John Sloan was unable to attend the sale personally, and in his stead sent Francois Lesperance who was residing with him at the time.

Lesperance purchased seven of these lots. Terms of the sale required that houses be built on each of the lots purchased at the auction. Four of these houses originally erected for John Sloan are still standing: 258 King Street, 220 Brock Street, 295 George Street and 222 George Street.

The fact that Lesperance purchased the lots caused some issues in the following years. While Lesperance transferred the lots to Sloan in 1837, Sloan had to continue

<sup>1</sup> Botsford, David P., *At the End of the Trail* (Windsor Print & Litho Ltd., 1985), 175.

making payments under Francois' name. Despite numerous letters to the land board explaining the situation, and requesting deeds to be made out in his name, he was ignored. The patents were eventually issued in his name, but none before 1840.

As discussed in the last Bricks-N-Beams article, the Sloan Homestead was on the 1<sup>st</sup> Concession (Front Road) in the stone building that later became the Brunner Mond Office. This structure still stands today. As such, the four houses discussed in this article were never occupied by Sloan himself, but were either sold or rented.

### 258 King Street

In a letter to the land board on May 15, 1839, Sloan enclosed a certificate indicating that a home measuring 18ft by 24ft had been erected on the property. This home was in the Borrowman family for a number of years. Elizabeth Borrowman, spinster, purchased the property in 1856 and it would appear that her father James, a hatter, and mother Margaret, resided there for a time. From 1882-1896 William Botsford (a carpenter) lived in the home with Elizabeth. William was Elizabeth's nephew. When she died in 1903, she passed the house to William who lived here for two years before moving to Alberta with his wife and son.

### 220 Brock Street

The structure of this house may have been a copy of 258 King Street. It was built between May 16, 1839, and July 11, 1840. One of the notable owners of this home was John Cunningham, a captain in the 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment.

The lot was conveyed to him in 1843. By 1845 the Cunninghams were residing in Anderdon. Captain Cunningham had begun acquiring land along the second concession in Anderdon in 1840 and served as Reeve and a member of the District Council in 1845-46 and 1847. Cunningham Corners (the crossroads of Texas Road and the Second Concession) was named after him.

### 295 George

This house was built between September 21, 1836 and July 2, 1840. Sloan, abolitionist, rented the home to Hezekiah Davis, a black labourer, who resided there from 1853-1870. Following Sloan's death in 1860, the Davis' continued renting through his widow Ann Marie, who was left the property in his will. When Hezekiah passed away, his widow Ann remained the tenant until 1870. In 1873, Griffen Booth purchased the property. He was a mason and plasterer and one of the trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada. Booth rented this house to tenants.

### 228 George

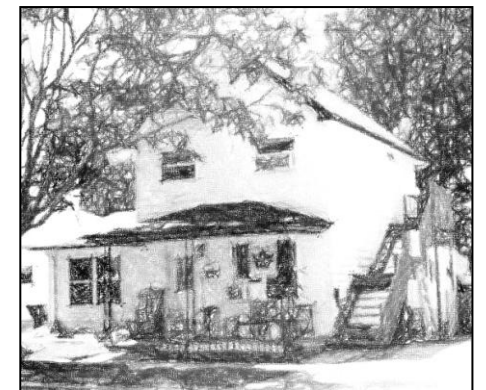
This house was built between July 2, 1840 and July 22, 1844. It was a rental for several years until it was purchased by Jeremiah Madden in 1876. Madden was a Pensioner who spent 25 years in military service. He resided here until his death in 1889.



295 George Street



228 George



220 Brock Street



258 King Street



# Then & Now - 269 Ramsay Street



Duby's Furniture, 1981 LACAC Photo Collection



Duby's Home Centre, present

## Christmas Mails Reach All-Time High in Amherstburg

Christmas mails in the Amherstburg postoffice reached an all-time high during the past week, Postmaster J.C. Brandie, told the Echo on Monday. He stated there has been an increase of about 10 percent in both incoming and outgoing mails.

The Christmas mail rush started early this year and began in earnest the week beginning December 15. The volume kept increasing to a point where it was necessary to work on Sunday, December 21. The following day the mails continued at a peak.

Due to extra service by the postoffice staff post office customers didn't experience much delay in being served.

*The Amherstburg Echo*  
December 25, 1952

