



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



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Smallpox Epidemic of 1924

By Kara Folkeringa

It is undeniable that COVID-19 has hit our community in ways we couldn't have imagined. While we haven't seen anything like this in recent years, this is not the first time illness has taken hold of Essex County. Before vaccines brought the end of smallpox, outbreaks were commonplace. Particularly, the epidemic of 1924 was devastating to our region. Ominously, right before the epidemic began, Dr. Fred Adams, the Medical Officer of Health, stated that he believed smallpox outbreaks were on the decline, but that continued vaccination was encouraged.ⁱ

It all started with Gordon Deneau, and his death on February 11, 1924. He had been a long-time resident of Malden, moving to Windsor only a few years before his death.ⁱⁱ There was a lot of speculation as to how he contracted the illness. His family believed it was from imported rugs that he unpacked at his workplace, A. J. Veale and Sons, but the owners and public health officers strongly denied it.ⁱⁱⁱ Regardless of how he became infected, no one (including his doctors) recognized it

as smallpox until it was too late.^{iv} His funeral held a gathering of "a large number of relatives and friends,"^v who thought he died of the flu. Some of the attendees were people who cared for him while he was sick and were unknowingly spreading the disease.^{vi} Ultimately, 67 cases emerged that were traced to Gordon Deneau, and sadly almost half (32) of those people died from it.^{vii} Of those 32 deaths, 19 were members of his family.^{viii}

When it became clear that Gordon Deneau's case was the start of an epidemic, panic rose throughout the county. The form of smallpox that was spreading was particularly bad, sometimes called "black" or "bloody" smallpox.^{ix} Public health measures came into effect, most public gatherings were banned to limit the spread.^x Rumours were circulating that Amherstburg was being quarantined from the surrounding communities and that the streetcar service was being cut off.^{xi} Neither of the rumours were true, but were reflective of and contributed to the chaos the town was feeling.

A tragic part of this epidemic was that it was avoidable. Not a single person who was vaccinated died of the illness; if they contracted it, it was a mild form.^{xii} As a result, an eagerness to be vaccinated rose in correlation to the number of cases; 50,000 were vaccinated within two weeks.^{xiii} The concept of



Photo courtesy of the author

vaccine passports feels so new to us, but it was something Windsor-Essex residents were well-familiar with 100 years ago. They had to produce paperwork to be able to do things like ride the streetcar and board the ferry to Detroit. If unvaccinated upon arrival in Detroit, Canadians were offered a vaccine right on the docks, or sent back to Canada.^{xiv} To attend school, students were being checked for vaccine marks on their arms.^{xv} The threat of this wave of smallpox had passed by mid-March and could be attributed both to the public health measures and high vaccination rates.^{xvi} Eventually, in-school vaccination programs were introduced which led to the eradication of the disease.

As history enthusiasts, all we can do is look at the past and glean what we can to give us insights for today.

What's Inside

Happenings at the Marsh.....	2
Collection Highlights.....	3
Upsetting the Hour Glass.....	4
Ancestral Lines.....	5
Joe & Hazel Lacey.....	6
The Wyandot School.....	7
Then & Now.....	8

For more on Dr. Fred Adams and sources for this article see Page 3.

Happenings at the Marsh

The office will be closed the week of December 27th.

Have a Happy Holiday Season!

In Search of Photos

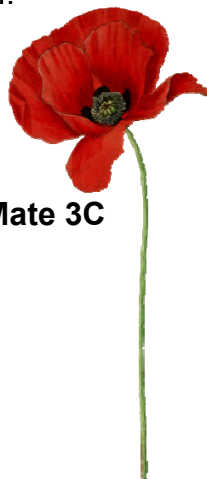
We are looking for photos of the following soldiers from Amherstburg who gave their lives in WWII:

Raymond Thomas Martin, Trooper
(1923-1943)
Son of Clevis and Marie Martin

William John Pettypiece, Carpenter's Mate 3C
(1902-1944)
Son of Stephen and Alice Pettypiece

Harold Wilson, Private
(1912-1943)
Son of William and Azalia Wilson

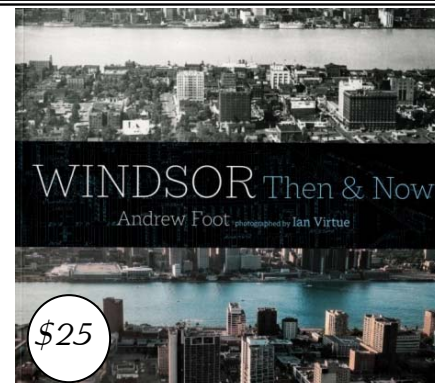
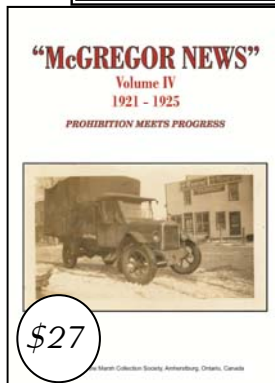
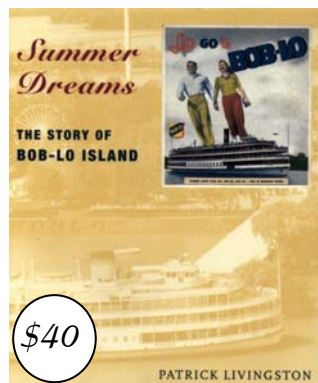
Please contact us if you have or know where to find photos of these men. Your help is appreciated!



Gift Shop

Local History Books & Prints

Curbside Pick-Up Available · No tax on gift shop items
-A full list of available titles can be found on our website-



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 and visitors by appointment from 10am to 4pm Monday through Friday.

Email: research@marshcollection.org
Website: www.marshcollection.org



The Marsh Collection Society has chosen to follow Covid guidelines set out by the Province and as such, we ask that you provide proof of vaccination, and government issued photo ID when entering our office. We are open by appointment only, in order to limit the number of people in the office at any given time. Masks are required. To schedule an appointment, please contact us by phone or email. Thank you for your cooperation.

If you are unable to visit us in-person we are happy to answer inquiries via email and phone.

Who was Dr. Frederick Adams?

Dr. Frederick Adams was born in 1884 in Malton, Ontario. He went on to study medicine at the University of Toronto. In 1919 he began his work in Windsor as the Medical Officer of Health, a role that he kept until his death in 1943. He brought great improvements to the community in terms of medical infrastructure, with new clinics and hospital improvements, which had a positive effect on the overall health of the community. In addition to his service to the community, he enlisted and offered his medical expertise to Canada's military for both World War I and War War II. Source: James Wilbert Brien, *Medical men of Essex County*, (Windsor: Essex County Medical Society, 1950), 30-31

Sources for Small Pox Epidemic of 1924

- ⁱ *The Windsor Star*, Feb. 7, 1924
- ⁱⁱ *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 15, 1924
- ⁱⁱⁱ *The Windsor Star*, Mar. 12, 1924; *Amherstburg Echo*, Mar. 7, 1924
- ^{iv} *The Windsor Star*, Feb. 27, 1924
- ^v *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 15, 1924
- ^{vi} *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 29, 1924
- ^{vii} D. M. Lebourdais, "Smallpox – A Sleeping Killer," *Maclean's*, Jan. 15, 1949.
- ^{viii} *Amherstburg Echo*, Apr. 27, 1983.
- ^{ix} *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 29, 1924.
- ^x *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 29, 1924.
- ^{xi} *Amherstburg Echo*, Feb. 29, 1924.
- ^{xii} *The Windsor Star*, Feb. 26, 1924.
- ^{xiii} Lebourdais, "Smallpox – A Sleeping Killer."
- ^{xiv} *The Windsor Star*, Feb. 27, 1924.
- ^{xv} *The Windsor Star*, Feb. 25, 1924.
- ^{xvi} *The Windsor Star*, Mar. 18, 1924.

Collection Highlights

By Emily Richard

The Canadian Red Ensign is a symbol of the country's connection to Great Britain, with a design based on the ensign flown by British ships. Recently donated to the collection by Stephen Brown was one of these flags, which previously belonged to his mother Eva Jean Brown (née Wood). The flag was signed "R J L Wood/ Malden Centre/ Ont" and was hung in the family's store at Malden Centre when it opened in 1913.

The Red Ensign first became a symbol of Canada in 1868, even though it was never formally declared as a national flag. It is known for the Union Jack on the canton and a Coat of Arms on the fly side, which, on this flag, is surrounded by a maple and oak leaf wreath and placed under St. Edward's Crown. In the early history of the flag, the shield would show images representing each of the official Canadian provinces. The provinces represented on Wood's flag are, going clockwise from the top left; Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Considering that Manitoba was not an official province until 1870, any flag made before that year would not bear the province's symbol. However, when British Columbia and Prince Edward Island became official provinces in 1873, they would have joined the shield as well. Although this information leads us to believe that the flag was made between 1870 and 1873, it is also important to note that the creator may have taken some creative liberties. As the Wood's store was not built until 40 years later, the flag may have been made even after other provinces had joined the country.



It was Amos Wood, a farmer who originated from Kent County, who would build the store where the flag was hung. In 1902, he and his family moved to Malden when Reginald John Leslie Wood, his second eldest son and the flag's owner, was 15 years old. While most of Amos' sons began helping with work on the farm, Reginald, who suffered from a heart condition, was unable to. For this reason, Amos purchased four acres of land on the southeast corner of Highway 20 and the 6th Concession. Here, in 1913, he built a wood-frame structure so that Reginald could operate a grocery store.

It was at this store that Reginald hung the flag, hence the writing on the heading. He would keep it there as he continued running the store and, after marrying Rosa Beaudoin in 1920, would run it alongside his wife. However, his chronic heart condition worsened during the following year and on January 25, 1922, he passed away at the age of 35.

Following his son's death, Amos Wood sold the store and property to George A. Sellars. The store would continue to go through a series of owners for the many years following Reginald's death. Today, the land is occupied by Ure's Country Kitchen, in which the original store is still standing, over 100 years since it was built. The flag, however, would stay in the Wood family, which would ultimately lead to its recent donation to the collection.

Upsetting the Hour Glass

1931/32

December- Two alleged rum runners were wounded and captured by a coast guard crew early Friday afternoon after a two-mile chase in Lake Erie. There were 780 cases of beer and whisky aboard the 66-foot cabin cruiser. It was stated that one of the captured men had made his home on the river front below Amherstburg for nearly a year.

January- There will be a hockey game between Blenheim and the Amherstburg-Lasalle hockey team at the Arena Windsor, on Monday evening.

February- Workmen are busy this week installing a six inch watermain from the Brunner Mond pump house to the property of the Simrall Refining Corporation to supply the Company with raw water which will be used for cooling.

1941/42

December- Just to give the children of Amherstburg and district a sample of his generosity Santa Claus will pay a special visit to town Saturday afternoon. He will give each child who comes to see him at the Youth Centre a bag of candy and will take any orders for Christmas Eve deliveries.



January- One third of the population of Amherstburg, regardless of age, are reading books from the Carnegie Public Library and according to records each is reading over 33 books a year.

February- As an experiment, the Sandwich, Windsor and Amherstburg Railway, announces a new bus service between Amherstburg and Windsor which provides for 37 buses each way each day.

1951/52

December- The Teen Agers' Round and Square Dance Parties, sponsored by the Amherstburg Recreation Committee will commence this Saturday evening at the Brunner Mond Club.

January- The Amherst Pointe Association annual winter party will be held at Sunnyside next Sunday commencing with dinner at eight p.m.

February- In River Canard there are many cases of scarlet fever with the school children.

1961/62

December- The Town of Amherstburg will continue to do its banking business with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Canada. This decision was made Monday evening at the Amherstburg Council.

January- Strength of the

Anderdon Volunteer Fire Department has been increased by 12 new members. This brings the strength of the department up to 26.

February- It is expected that the new school building for the Roman Catholic School Section No II will be completed and ready for occupancy by next month. This is being constructed on the Townline Road, Anderdon Township. The new building will be a modern school with two classrooms, teachers' room, toilets, furnace room and other accommodation.

1971/72

December- The Amherstburg Goodfellows Club will hold its annual sale of Goodfellow papers on the Streets of Amherstburg Friday and Saturday, December 17 and 18.

January- Amherstburg Town Council has voted to provide a site on the south section of the Waterworks Park, Dalhousie Street, for the historic Park House. Ownership and control of the property will be retained by the Town.

February- The face of Sandwich Street is changing. Good progress is being made on the construction of the new Big V Drug Mart, east side of the street, north of the Utilities Centre, and on the large Medical Centre on the former Dr. E. M. Warren property, west side of the street, between Maple and Elm Ave.

Ancestral Lines

By Phyllis Chant

The McGregor surname may remind us of father and son, William and Gordon.

William (1836-1903) attended school in Amherstburg, and went on to work in real estate. He married Jessie Lathrup Peden, daughter of Amherstburg's Presbyterian minister, Robert Peden. They relocated to Windsor in 1870. William entered federal politics in 1874 as the Member of Parliament for Essex North.

Gordon Morton McGregor (1873-1922) was the middle son of William and Jessie, and was born in Windsor. He founded Ford (Motor Company) of Canada.

But the McGregor son who merits remembrance by Amherstburg is Malcolm Peden McGregor. He was born here in 1869. He studied law at the University of Michigan, and was called to the bar in 1890. In 1894, he married Eva Bartlett (1868-1946), and they lived in Detroit. In the 1900 United States Federal Census, Malcolm and Eva, both aged 31, had a two-year old daughter, Margaret, with the City of Detroit cited as their permanent residence. The McGregors had two more daughters, Jessie (1901) and Jean (1906).

This socialite family kept busy. Malcolm became the secretary of the Detroit College of Law and Vice-President of the Detroit District Golf Association, and the couple appeared on a regular



Malcolm McGregor
The Border Cities Star August 23, 1930
Newspapers.com

basis in the Society News of The Detroit Free Press. Travel was a large part of their lives. A whirlwind trip in 1922 trip included Japan, China, India, Egypt, France, Italy, England and Belgium.

Perhaps it was the hustle and bustle of their everyday lives that eventually saw Malcolm called home to the tiny town of Amherstburg.

In 1927, Malcolm and Eva purchased the building on the Fort Malden grounds that had been used as a residence for the doctor who oversaw the lunatic asylum there in the 1860s. The McGregor home was built around this residence. It was constructed on top of the old fort's southwestern berms.

"McGregor, a staunch Presbyterian of a Scottish descent, built the house on a Scottish theme and dubbed it the

'Bognie Brae'. He converted the moat outside the berm into a fashionable sunken garden." (The Windsor Star, February 22, 1982) [In Gaelic, Bognie Brae means something akin to "bog near a hill".]

A converted-to-DVD eight-millimetre film was donated to the Marsh Historical Collection. This 18-minutes-long film shows how much the McGregors loved their Amherstburg retreat. The footage shows family and friends enjoying the grounds throughout various seasons: boating, tennis and games. The highlight of the movie is the lavish wedding of their daughter, Jean, to John A. Dodds in August of 1929. Although the wedding made the Society page of The Detroit Free Press, it is the film that best depicts Jean's elaborate dress and bouquet, and her handsome husband.

In 1928, McGregor wanted to give back to the town he had grown to deeply love. His gift would be a children's swimming pool for the Town Park. By September of that year, a 30-by-60-foot cement pool had been constructed. The Amherstburg Echo stated, "The only thing McGregor wanted was to hear the joyful shouting of children as he passed the spot every day." [That shallow-depth children's pool remained in place in the Town Park for decades. Indeed, it was the site where generations of local children learned to swim.]

Sadly, McGregor died on August 23, 1930, at the young age of 61. He is buried at Rose Hill Cemetery. His wife lived at the mansion with her servants until her death in 1946..

Continued on page 6...

Continued from page 5...

Fort Malden Museum (now National Historic Site) purchased the property in 1958. By 1961, The Echo reported that the McGregor House “is intended primarily to serve as a centre for cultural exhibits and activities.” In the 1970s, Fort Malden was renting out the home; and, after that, it was used for storage. By 1982, Parks Canada decided that the mansion did not meet the mandate for the Fort’s historic purposes. By mid-November of 1982, the McGregor House was razed so that the Fort grounds could be restored to include the southwest bastion in its original configuration.

Although the mansion and the children’s pool are both gone, the memory of this giving and gracious citizen, Malcolm McGregor, should always be remembered. And perhaps that is the case. Whether cognizant of McGregor’s original contribution or not, the municipal government has always retained a “water feature” for children in the Town Park, even after the pool was eliminated. Currently it is the site of a much enjoyed “splash pad” for local youngsters. If Malcolm’s spirit was passing by the site on a modern-era summer day, he would no doubt still “hear the joyful shouting of children” – just as The Echo remarked of his desire in 1928.

Photos: (top): Residence prior to McGregor renovations, *MCS P2057*
(bottom): McGregor House, taken from the east, just beyond the brick barracks (visible in the foreground), *MCS P695*



Joe & Hazel Lacey

The Marsh Collection Society wishes to thank the Joe and Hazel Lacey Memorial Fund and The Windsor Essex Community Foundation for a recent donation. We sincerely appreciate this generous contribution to our organization.

The Windsor Essex Community Foundation, founded in 1983, “is dedicated to making our community an even better place to live, work, learn and grow by strategically connecting donors to community needs and opportunities.” One such Donor is the Joe & Hazel Lacey Memorial fund, established in 2009 by their children to celebrate their parents’ years of community involvement.

Joe Lacey passed away on November 2, 1989. He retired as a mail route carrier for Canada Post in 1978, having delivered mail on his route in Malden Township for 31 years. Hazel passed away December 20, 2008, after living her whole life in Anderdon & Amherstburg. She retired from Richmond Nursing Home in 1983. Together, the couple owned and operated Lacey’s Esso Service and Hazel’s Snack Bar in Malden. We pulled a few mentions of this business from the newspaper:



The Amherstburg Echo December 22, 1955

1949- “Joe and Hazel Lacey sold their house on Sandwich Street to Mrs. Theodore Marontate, and bought the “Country Grill”, river front, Malden.”

1953- “-For Sale- Christmas Trees. Apply Hazel’s Snack Bar, Highway No. 18, Malden.”

1964- Advertisement for Sale- “Hazel’s Snack Bar- 5 miles south on Hwy. 18, lot 100’ x 200’, garage, confectionery, marina and living quarters- 400’ dock with utility bldg. 6’ x 10’. Imperial Esso products both sides of Highway. 18 in restricted area. City water, school bus, gas hot water heating system. Garage 30’ x 30’ with hoist, tools and minnow tanks.”

1968- “Joe and Hazel Lacey sold their business of 21 years, “Hazel’s Snack Bar,” Front Road, Malden. The new owners are Mr. and Mrs. John Harrick and Mrs. Ethel Johnson.”

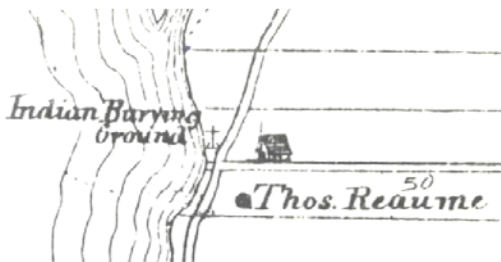
1974- “Guy Esposito of Toronto has bought John’s Convenience Centre (the former Joe and Hazel Lacey’s place) on the river front in Malden to take possession May 15. Mr. and Mrs. John Bendick are the present owners.”

The Wyandot School in Anderdon

By Meg Reiner

With thanks to Doris Gaspar for her research & contributions

Education was important to the Wyandot and soon after the establishment of a Methodist missionary school on the Wyandot reserve at Sandusky, Ohio in 1821, several families on the Anderdon Reserve sent their sons and daughters to be educated there. Commencing in 1828 and for a decade thereafter, the Roman Catholic church considered establishing a school on the reserve but these plans never came to fruition. In 1829 a Methodist school existed on the Anderdon Wyandot reserve, but its location is not known.



Map of Anderdon Township, 1881, showing the location of the school building on the north side of County Road 10.

A new school for the children of the Wyandot of Anderdon was built circa 1846 by members of the Band. It was located on land within the Reserve on Concession 1 Lot 19, more specifically described as the north side of County Road 10 near Front Road North. The original building was a log structure measuring approximately 20 ft square. The space also served as a meeting place for the Wyandot Council. The costs of building, maintaining and staffing the school for the Wyandots were paid for from their own funds. Teachers were hired

by the Wyandot and subsequently approved by the Indian Department.

A report by the Indian Department in 1858 gives a positive review of the school: "the progress made by the children is very good indeed." A teacher's salary of \$200 was paid by the Wyandot and average daily attendance was noted as 5 or 6 students. Early reports show that while the school was primarily attended by indigenous students, non-indigenous children from local families also attended the Wyandot School.

In 1876, *The Amherstburg Echo* reported that funds from the Wyandot for their school in Anderdon would be used for general repairs and for taking down a partition to make the school room much larger. This was in order to accommodate more children and for the convenience of public meetings. Several meetings of the Temperance Society were held at the school in the following years.

In 1878, *The Echo* reported "A new school section is to be formed on the Front Road, in union with the Wyandotte school, which is very desirable for the convenience of the children residing on that road. At present the schools are so far distant that it is almost impossible for the children to attend school, although their parents pay their school tax all the same. The Wyandottes have made a reasonable offer for the establishment of a good

school in connection with theirs and it is hoped the negotiations will have a successful issue."

No further discussion of this new section was printed in the newspaper until 1882, when it was reported that residents on the front of Anderdon were applying to the Township Council for the establishment of a school section for their district. A meeting of ratepayers was held two months later and it was decided to open a new school section known as S.S. No. 10. Langlois, Sunderland, and Clarke were appointed Trustees. As there was insufficient enrolment of Wyandot students to justify the continuation of a "Wyandot" school, the Band granted this new school section the use of the Wyandot school house so long as the public school trustees looked after repairs and maintenance to the property at their own expense. A report on the condition of Anderdon schools in 1885 noted that S.S. No. 10 (also known as Clarke's) used the old Wyandotte Lodge for the schoolhouse. "There are very poor furnishings, but an increasing attendance and good progress."

On November 2, 1892, to facilitate a final disbandment of the Wyandots, remaining portions of the reserve, including the school lot, were surrendered to the Crown in Trust for the Wyandot Band. In 1894, a meeting of the Wyandot Council was held, authorizing the department to make disposition of these lands.

Continued on page 8...

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The following resolution was passed by members of the Wyandot Council: "Moved by Alexander Clarke seconded by Alvin Clarke, that the grave-yard lot and water lot and school-house lot be patented to Joseph White, Joseph Warrow and Thomas Warrow, as trustees, members of the Band." The Trustees were to hold the property for school purposes as long as a child belonging to the Band attended the school. By this time, most of the Wyandot had moved elsewhere after giving up their Indian status and receiving a partial payout of their share of the assets of the Band. The appointed trustees were never issued a patent and Wyandot children no longer attended the school.

In 1894, it had been expected that the school trustees would eventually enter into an agreement to purchase the Wyandot school property but no offer was ever received. In the ensuing decades, Public School Section 10 continued to enjoy the use of the school house property rent free, acting as if they already

owned the property. By 1907, this had become a problem as the school house lot and Wyandot grave yard were the only remaining unsold properties on the reserve. The Wyandot were very anxious to receive a final distribution of their remaining assets and to enable this to happen, the school house property would have to be sold.

Possibly to goad the school trustees into action, Joseph Warrow submitted a request to A.H. Clarke, M.P., asking to purchase the property himself. He indicated that there were no longer any indigenous children in the area to attend the school, and therefore no longer a reason to hold to the property for school purposes. As a result of Warrow's offer, the Department of Indian Affairs requested a report on the status of the property.

This report was completed by William Nesbit, Indian Agent, and describes the school as follows: "There is also on the lot a small school house about 20 ft wide by 30 ft long and on the outside about 10 feet high to the eaves sided with lap siding and painted a

reddish brown colour with a good sized entry or ante room over the door which is in the end of the building and which serves as a porch. The building has an old appearance and has been built at two different times." According to the report a 10 ft. frame extension was put on the south end of the original log structure by S.S. No. 10 in 1892. The agent valued the property at \$200.

Following this report, the Department of Indian Affairs decided to offer the property for sale to the trustees of S.S. No.10 for \$200, excepting the part of the lot in the northeast quarter comprising a Wyandot (Protestant) Cemetery. A patent for the school property was granted to the Trustees of Public School Section Number Ten on March 18, 1908.

A new brick school was constructed on the property in 1912 and the original Wyandot schoolhouse sold to J.N. Richard. Further research is required to determine what became of this historic building. The new S.S. No. 10 still stands today.

Then & Now

174 Sandwich Street South



Gulf Service Garage & Gas Station, 1975, while under the proprietorship of Glen Butcher and known as "Butch's Gulf"
Photo by Reverend Buchanan, MCS Photo 2019.036.039



Present-day House of Mario Barber Shop