

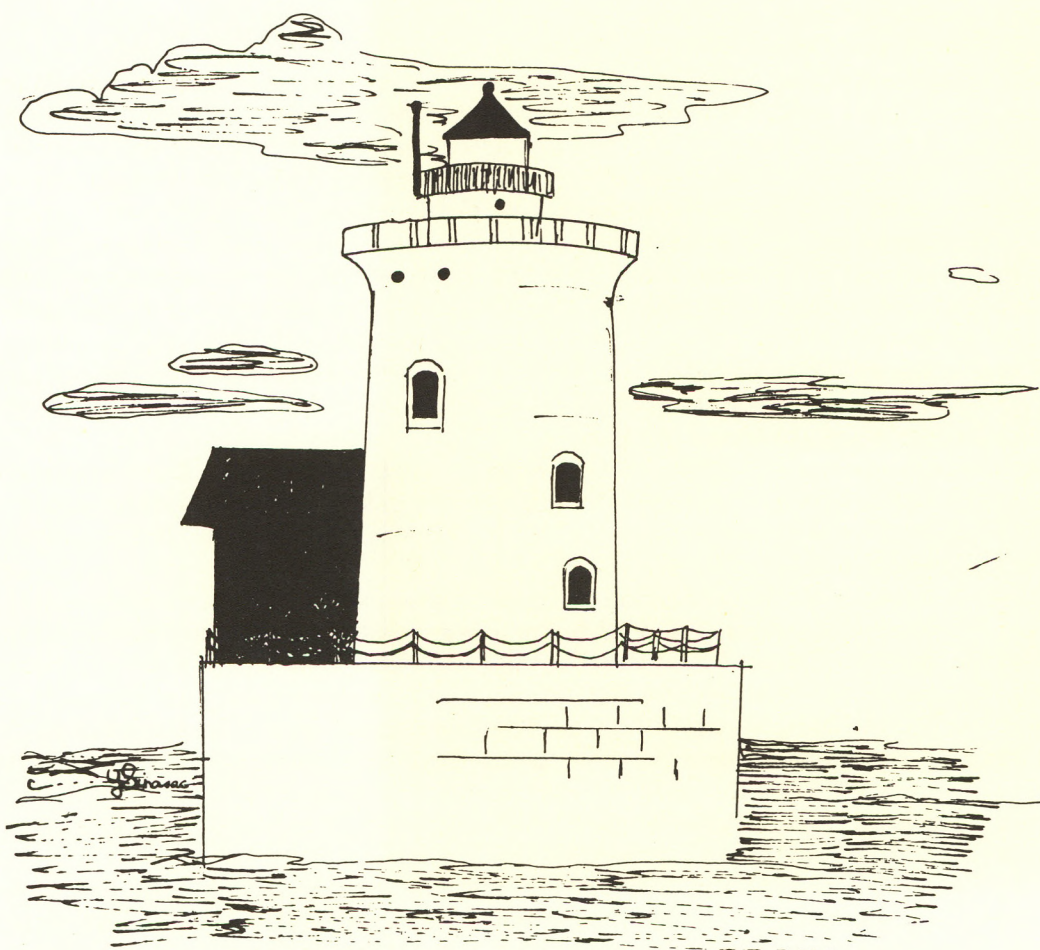
entered the Seaway at Montreal this season and it is no longer a novelty to see the flags of many nations passing Amherstburg.

One facet of Amherstburg marine history is the story of the wrecking companies who, especially in the older days, were frequently called on to render assistance to sunken or grounded vessels and presently represented by McQueen Marine, Limited.

A once familiar scene was the sandsuckers who came close in to shore and removed sand from the beaches for the use of city buildings. Elliott's Point, once a prominent feature of the view below Amherstburg has been entirely removed through the action of the sandsuckers.

A still familiar scene is the summer excursion steamers who for more than 60 years have come down from Detroit daily from Decoration Day to Labour Day to Bois Blanc Island. In this way some half million persons each summer add their bit to the shipping statistics of the lower Detroit. As opportunity affords many find their way over to Amherstburg where they are welcome visitors in the town's stores and at the museums of the Fort Malden National Historic Park.

1959



*Detroit River Lighthouse near Amherstburg*



## 13

### Friendly Neighbours Along the Lower Detroit River

The long era of peace, enduring now some 136 years, on the Canada-United States boundary is the repeated reflection of the neighbourly relations existing on the individual sections of the international border. And we, the dwellers along the Detroit have an especially long history of shared interests.

A common bond is family history — many of us have ancestors tracing through the early French to the days of the Indian when the Wyandot or Huron, the Pottawatomie, and the Chippewa hunted and fished along the Detroit. The strain of French blood runs like a golden thread through the woof and warp of the fabric making up the cosmopolitan city of Detroit, but in the Ontario county of Essex and in the Michigan communities of River Rouge, Ecorse, Wyandotte, Riverview, Sibley, Trenton, Grosse Ile, Gibraltar, and other places along the lower Detroit, it is substantially the web on which the whole population is based.

In the old days the Detroit was the common highway passed and re-passed by the parents, brothers, sisters and cousins as they visited back and forth. In summer the pirogue or dugout canoe, in winter the cariole or sleigh was the conveyance. In 1794, when the Jay treaty was negotiated whereby the British who held Detroit agreed to its surrender to the Americans, there were 442 farms on what became the United States side of the Detroit and a lesser number on the Canada shore. Thus it came about that when the international boundary, marked by the middle of the navigable water, was established, members of the same family found themselves owing allegiance to different countries, now that the invisible line made much difference in family connection, then or now.

With the American occupation of the former British Post at Detroit, it became necessary to the British to find another site for a fort and Indian Department depot. The new choice of location was made opposite the island of Bois Blanc near the mouth of the Detroit river in the township of Malden. The official name of the Fort and of the town which sprang up near was "Amherstburg", but from the fact the location was in the before mentioned township it was commonly called "Malden" and is so mentioned in the United States histories. Thus Amherstburg or "Malden" is the oldest town on the Canadian side of the river, and older than any of the American towns below Detroit.

The development of urban centers on the American side followed the building of a post road after the War of 1812. This road in part followed the "trace" marked out between Toledo and Detroit in that war. The American authorities shortly after the War of 1812 acquired, by treaty from the Indians, the unoccupied land between the River Raisin and Ecorse, and after a survey was completed the lots were offered for sale by public auction. Among the many bidders were some of the U.S. Army officers at Fort Shelby in Detroit, and one of them, Major Biddle, purchased a country estate on the banks of the Detroit just above Grosse Ile, and he named it,



"Wyandotte" in compliment to the Indians, who formerly occupied the spot. This later became the site of the city of Wyandotte. The home of Blue Jacket was still standing at this date in 1818 and it was occupied by one of the first settlers, a Mr. Clark. Nearby is the traditional site of the burial place of the celebrated Chief Walk-in-the-Water, who gave his name to the first steam boat to pass up the Detroit.

In the War of 1812 the Wyandots were divided by conflicting interests. They were under obligation to the British as allies in past wars, yet the majority of them had their homes on the American side of the river. Threatened by officials on both sides they at first determined to remain neutral, but finally, some of the chief persons among them made the choice of assisting the British at Fort Malden. So, saving what property they could and abandoning the rest, they made the short journey to Amherstburg where they were welcomed as allies and assisted refugees.

Subsequently, they settled in numbers in Anderdon township opposite the lower end of Fighting Island on lands reserved by the Wyandots in 1790 when the general Indian confederacy was headed by Tecumseh, the Shawnee. Their own immediate leaders were the brothers, Chiefs Roundhead and Splitlog, and Chief Warrow. Another leader of the Wyandots was Adam Brown, for whom the old settlement at Brownstown was named. He was a white man who had married a Wyandot woman, and had acquired so much influence he was a Council Chief. He, too, though an aged man, had made the removal to the Canadian side followed by his family, and he and his sons took part in the war.

Adam Brown was taken prisoner-of-war at the battle of the Thames at Moraviantown, where Tecumseh was killed, and was carried to Detroit, where he was about to be executed for his alleged participation in the atrocities at the River Raisin, when he was saved by the direct intervention of Brigadier General Harrison, the same Harrison who was later President of the United States.

It is interesting to note that among the prisoners-of-war taken by the British on the Detroit Frontier were both another future President of the United States and a presidential candidate. The future President was James Knox Polk, "Little Hickory", who was a very junior subaltern when he was captured with one or two others on the ice of Lake Erie while engaged in a reconnaissance. His captors were some officers of the 41st Regiment who took him into Amherstburg and gave him the freedom of their mess. The presidential candidate was Lewis Cass taken prisoner at the capture of Detroit, who was a candidate in the election of 1848, after being Governor of Michigan and United States Senator.

In 1837 the rebellion called the Patriot War broke out in Canada and in the initial engagements the Patriots were defeated. The leaders and principal participants to escape trial for treason and possible hanging, made their way to the United States, a number of them crossing into Michigan. By this date there were a number of settlements along the lower Detroit and considerable interest was taken in the self-exiles from Canada. Through public meetings in Detroit, men were recruited for a projected invasion of Canada, and on this border four engagements took place, two of them within the scope of this sketch. Despite the efforts made by Michigan's youthful governor, Steven Mason, and by General Brady, commanding at Fort Shelby, to prevent any violation of neutrality, a Detroit-based schooner, the Anne, sailed down the river and bombarded Amherstburg and Fort Malden for two days. That particular episode ended two evenings later when the Anne and its crew were captured.

Still later, an engagement took place at Fighting Island opposite Wyandotte. This battle was a long distance duel of grape and heavy shot, fought in the early morning darkness, and resulted in the dispersal of the Patriot force.

An interesting sidelight on the skirmish at Fighting Island was related many years later by Mr. J.S. Van Alstine, the first mayor of Wyandotte, at a session of the Michigan Historical Society.



He stated that when the cannons were heard a Mr. Payne and his hired man went out from the American shore on the ice of the river to get a view of the contest. Just then a cannon ball from the British guns on Fighting Island came rolling along the ice towards the hired man. Using a term in the game of cricket he exclaimed, "Here comes a Wicket", at the same time striking at the cannon ball with the axe he was carrying. Unfortunately for himself his blow was well-aimed and he connected, but the force of the ball was so great he was flung to the ice and injured. When the ball was recovered it was found to be still hot. This ball was presented as a relic to the Michigan Historical Society.

The lower Detroit's most enduring memory of neighbourly action was that extended to shelter and assist the fugitive slaves fleeing towards the North Star, and the freedom to be found in Canada. From very early years in border history the negro had made his way from Virginia to Canada, but after the passage of the restrictive "Black Acts" in Ohio, and the Fugitive Slave Act, by Congress the movement of slaves to Canada rapidly increased. The "underground" set up by the abolitionists to assist the slaves in coming to Canada had regular routes with way stations and terminals situated on the Niagara and Detroit frontiers. In time, agents of the southern slave holders watched these terminals so closely that it was found advisable to make a change and the last stage of the "underground" from Ypsilanti to Detroit was changed to a terminal at Wyandotte. It is stated that Major Biddle in the 1840's had often on his farm twenty to thirty fugitives waiting the opportunity to pass over to Canada.

Many of the early steam-boat masters were ardent abolitionists and they frequently picked up from the wharfs at Cleveland, Sandusky, Toledo, and the Detroit river ports, some poor trembling fugitive in terror of being returned to the South. These fugitives were disembarked at Amherstburg and then taken in charge by one of the several charitable organizations that maintained depots for just such persons.

CAPTAIN J.  
SLOANS

The venerable ruin of the Mathew Elliott home, built in 1784, one mile south of Amherstburg is locally known as "Eliza's Cottage" from its temporary use for a period by the fugitives, and thus called from the character "Eliza" who was united with her friends at Amherstburg, as told by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe in her book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" or "Life Among the Lowly". It is interesting to note that it is just a century ago that the book was first published.

Again, in the Civil War neighbourly feelings were shown by the large numbers of Canadians who enlisted in the Armies of the North. It is told of one such Canadian, a resident of Amherstburg, who was an officer in a Michigan regiment, that when his furlough came he had to be stealthily rowed from Grosse Ile to his Amherstburg home, as it was illegal to leave the States or enter Canada as an American officer, and when his furlough was over he was as secretly returned to United States Territory.

Another side of the picture in the Civil War was the departure from the United States of persons termed "Skedadaddlers", a slang term in vogue at the time, but in Canada many remained after the War to become respected citizens.

Another phase of the War was furnished by the "bounty jumpers". These were soldiers who had accepted a cash payment for enlisting, and who later deserted to enlist again under another name, and, of course, to receive another bounty. Amherstburg's position on the border gave these gentry a favourite place to escape after desertion, and a few, judging they had tempted fate enough elected to remain, a species of political refugee.

It was the zealous attempt of an American officer to apprehend one of these deserters that lead to international repercussions. From information received this officer learned that a certain deserter was working as a harvest hand on an Essex County farm, so taking a file of men with him, he crossed over from Detroit into Canada and set off to arrest the "bounty jumper". Passing through the little community of North Ridge, Squire Billings, a magistrate and Militia



officer there, learned the nature of the Americans' errand, and in the evening when the American party was returning with captive, Billings "threw the book" at the poor officer, and subsequently took the best efforts of the American Ambassador in Great Britain and a letter from President Lincoln to mollify ruffled feelings.

Another aspect showing the close community of interests on both sides of the lower Detroit is furnished by the pattern of industry. From about 1818, there was a development of the fisheries located chiefly on the east side of Grosse Ile, and at Bois Blanc and Fighting Island, but by 1880 the fisheries declined in importance. Meanwhile, the city of Wyandotte had developed around the Eureka Blast Furnace erected on the Biddle farm in 1852. It was followed by other furnaces and rolling mills. Soon a shipyard, building vessels from steel plates, was established with E. B. Ward and the Kirby brothers as building vessels and the Gibraltar yard was employing 300 persons in 1865.

The early mention of stone quarries worked before 1812 tell also of the lime kilns in connection. Quarries were later extensively developed at Sibley on the Michigan side and at Anderton in Essex County. In test borings in search of natural gas, which was to be used for a cheap source of fuel in the rolling mills, the extensive salt deposits of the Detroit river region were discovered. This proximity of lime and salt resulted in the "heavy chemical" industry now so prominently developed on both sides of the lower Detroit, and which has made this area one of the great "chemical vallies" of North America.

The Detroit and Toledo railroad was in operation in 1858, and this naturally gave an impetus to the growth of the small towns on its route. The period during which the Canada Southern crossed the lower Detroit, starting in 1872, brought Wyandotte and Trenton in closer connection with Amherstburg, and there was a considerable movement of population to those places. Grosse Ile and Amherstburg also had closer communion at that period and for one term an Amherstburg clergyman, Reverend Sidney Falls, served a Grosse Ile church.

River excursions were always a favourite diversion and early newspapers, starting with 1849, tell of church and lodge visits between Trenton, Wyandotte, and Amherstburg. Such visits have continued at intervals up to the present. For the past 50 years or more Bob-Lo Park opposite Amherstburg has been a well-known picnic spot and its facilities are shared by both Canadians and Americans.

To-day the airplanes from the Trenton Air Base are a familiar sight to Amherstburg district residents as they fly overhead in training flights, and many remember with gratitude that this American airport was one of those used to train British flyers in the days of the battle of Britain during the recent World War.

Thus from early days to the present there has been a succession of reciprocal acts and courtesies along this stretch of border.

In conclusion, we on the Canadian side of the Detroit in this year of the 250th Anniversary of the Detroit settlement, of which we are a part, invite our American cousins to again renew old acquaintances, and as a citizen of Amherstburg and Custodian of the Fort Malden National Historic Park we hope to have the pleasure of greeting you in the near future. 1951



## 14

### **History of Fort Malden National Historic Park**

The present-day Fort Malden National Historic Park at Amherstburg marks the site of old Fort Malden. For 63 years Fort Malden stood guard on Canada's south-west border and its place in border history, and the subsequent use of the site is the subject of this sketch.

Fort Malden was established in 1796 as a Military Post to replace Fort Lernoult at Detroit. In that year the Posts at Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, Michilmacinac, and Green Bay held by the British after the end of the American Revolution were surrendered to the government of the United States, through the coming into operation of one of the provisions of the Jay treaty negotiated in 1794 and finally accepted by Congress late in 1795.

When the British engineers sought a site for a new fort on the Canadian side of the Detroit River they selected a spot which had many natural advantages, in some respects superior to the fort about to be surrendered at Detroit. This new site was 18 miles downstream from Detroit on a point opposite to the head of Bois Blanc island. Lake Erie lays four miles to the south, and the only channel navigable at that date lay close along the shore between Bois Blanc and the fort.

Thus the cannon of the fort could sweep the channel and prevent the passage of any hostile ship. The island opposite would lend itself to defense, and later three block houses were erected on it for that purpose. A newly-established settlement composed of Loyalists, refugees from the former colonies in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, was located a dozen miles away along the shore of Lake Erie, and nearer still were other Loyalists, on land occupied by former officers of the British Indian Department, men like Caldwell, McKee, Elliott, and Simon Girty, men who commanded the respect and goodwill of thousands of Indians. All in all, the move from Detroit was advantageous.

In preparation for the building of the new fort cedar was brought from the islands in Lake Erie, and pine was ordered from the "Pinery" on the St. Clair River. A woodyard was established to prepare the pickets and timbers and log huts were erected for winter shelter. In July, 1796, the British soldiers left Detroit and made the shore voyage to the new location. By winter time a small rectangular palisade marked out the lines of the fort, and in the following season a shallow ditch was thrown up around the base. That winter in the absence of a powder magazine, the "LORD DUNMORE" one of the vessels in the King's service on the Upper Lakes, was pressed into service for that purpose. A roof was erected over the deck but in the Spring it was found that the precious gun powder was damaged by water from the failure of the pumps during the frost of winter. In the meantime, a town-site had been projected adjoining the fort and this received the name of "Amherstburg" in honour of Jeffrey, Lord Amherst, who in 1796 was made a Field Marshal for his past services to the Empire in America and Great Britain.



Captain William Mayne, a youthful officer of the Queen's Rangers, was the first commander at Amherstburg. In 1797 he was succeeded by Captain Hector McLean of the Royal Canadian Volunteers. Under McLean's direction the fort was whipped into a state fit for defence, but it never attained the size originally projected. Eventually, the fort and parade ground were cleared of forest to the extent of 300 acres. Some of this acreage was acquired from the Wyandots in the treaty of 1800. By 1804 the establishment included a navy yard, a rope walk, school, hospital, commissary, guard house, and a stone, iron-roofed powder magazine. A wooden walk joined the fort and town, and every second week or oftener the chaplain, Reverend Richard Pollard, held services in the Indian Council House. The Indian Department had also been relocated at Amherstburg, and annually thousands of Indians came in to receive goods as payment for services rendered in the past, and as a token to ensure their services to the crown in the future. This policy paid off handsomely when the War of 1812 came along.

As the years passed Fort Malden was to be aroused periodically from its usual routine. In 1807 and 1808 when relations between Great Britain and the United States were strained, Fort Malden was put in a state of defense and there was considerable scouting to ascertain the feeling of the Indians in the Mississippi valley. However, this feeling subsided without war breaking out.

The next excitement involving Fort Malden was in 1811 when the Indians of the Ohio country were provoked to attack the Americans at the present-day town of Battlefield in north-east Indiana. The Indians were led by the "Prophet" brother of the already noted Tecumseh. Tecumseh himself was not present as he was in the south rallying the Indians to his scheme for a great Indian Conference. The battle was a drawn affair, the Americans involved making a retreat but later the cornfields of the Indians were destroyed so that many fled to Fort Malden to obtain food. Here they were quartered on Bois Blanc Island and the resources of the Indian Department were pressed to supply their needs.

When the War of 1812 broke out Fort Malden was again hastily prepared. An American attack was anticipated but fortunately the British had news of the outbreak before Governor Hull of Michigan had received his notification and the Fort Malden troops were able to intercept a small American schooner bound for Detroit carrying despatches and supplies, and make it captive.

One of the amusing side-lights arising of this incident was that of Governor Hull sending an officer under a flag of truce to Fort Malden demanding the release of his new uniform which was aboard the captured schooner. Colonel St. George at Fort Malden did not see the necessity of complying and so Hull had to do without his "regimental".

The fact that the Indians had received aid when they needed it the previous winter now gave the British considerable support among Indian residents on the American side of the boundary.

The Americans invaded Canada and occupied the site of Windsor, and made preparations for an attack on Fort Malden. An advance was made down the river and first contact was made at the River Canard bridge where a party of Indians and a sergeant's guard successfully defended it. Meanwhile the British and Indians crossed the Detroit River in their turn and in two skirmishes succeeded in disrupting the American line of supplies between Ohio and Detroit. The guns of Fort Malden sealed the water communication to all except small boats.

Fort Malden received further re-inforcements from the local militia and their efforts were joined with that of the Regulars in making Fort Malden stronger. The curtains of the moat were covered with pointed stakes and the palisades repaired. In a few days additional troops arrived from the east and plans were made to attack Detroit. By this time the American troops had returned to their own side of the border. Tecumseh was new on the scene and Detroit had been thoroughly scouted at his direction. The plan of attack suggested by Tecumseh was



1812-13  
accepted by Major General Brock and the attack was successfully carried out.

The British were fated to hold Detroit for about a year. In the interval Fort Malden was the base for several attacks against points in Ohio. The winter attack at the River Raisin, and the two attempts at Fort Meigs are well-known events in border history. But after the naval battle of Lake Erie September 10, 1813, when Barclay's fleet was defeated by Commodore Perry the British, to save men and munitions, prepared to make a retreat to Burlington on Lake Ontario where the main British force was concentrated.

The fort buildings were burned, together with the palisade, portable stores were gathered and the retreat commenced. Tecumseh and his Indians formed the rear-guard. In a few days the American horsemen caught up to the straggling column, and the final and decisive battle was fought near the Moravian Mission at Fairfield in Kent county on the River Thames — the Battle of the Thames in American history, and Moraviantown in Canadian texts. In this battle Tecumseh was killed and with his death the prospect of independency for the Indians collapsed.

For the remainder of the War, American forces occupied Fort Malden. The Americans rebuilt the fort on a smaller scale by drawing in the north and east moats. New moats were dug on those sides and the old moats deepened. Log huts replaced the burned buildings. Nearby on the southern outskirts of Amherstburg a second earthwork was thrown up and strengthened and this was named "Fort Covington" for the Governor of Kentucky, and this became the headquarters for Shelby's Brigade of Calvary. The war came to a close with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, and Fort Malden was returned to the British, July 1st, 1815.

In after years the Fort was in a dilapidated condition, but gradually the log huts of the American occupation were replaced by brick and frame buildings. It is interesting to note that the British used the smaller American edition upon which to build, and it is the remains of this American plan which the visitor to Fort Malden Park sees today.

In 1837 the political pot in Canada boiled over and the subsequent rebellion brought four battles to the Fort Malden area. The first was an attack on Fort Malden and the town of Amherstburg by a schooner carrying a small cannon in January 1838. The schooner and its crew were captured. This action was soon followed by a skirmish at Fighting Island opposite Wyandote, and a more serious encounter on the ice of Lake Erie about a mile off the shore of Pelee Island. The fourth and final battle was the attack on Windsor in December 1838 and this was still another defeat for the Patriots. Troops of Fort Malden and the Essex County militia participated in all four battles. On each occasion the patriots operated from American bases and were assisted by men and funds from American sympathizers, but in a few short months the excitement subsided and Fort Malden resumed its usual routine.

In 1851 as a measure of economy the Imperial troops were withdrawn from Fort Malden and were replaced by a Body of Enrolled Pensioners. In the 55 years past many famous regiments had detachments stationed at Fort Malden — we have mention of the 24th, 32nd, 34th, 41st, 43rd, 66th, 68th, 70th, 79th, 89th and 100th Regiments, and detachments of the Royal Artillery. The Enrolled Pensioners stood guard for eight years and then the Fort was discontinued.

Fort Malden now became the property of the Province of Canada and its buildings and grounds were immediately utilized as a Lunatic Asylum, and as the Malden Lunatic Asylum it functioned until the close of 1870 when the Asylum was transferred to new buildings at London, Ontario. About 260 inmates from western Ontario were cared for by a staff of 33. During the Asylum days of Fort Malden some 60 acres along the riverfront were laid out in pleasure gardens.

In 1875, after standing abandoned for a number of years, the Fort Malden Lunatic Asylum property was auctioned off. Streets and lots had been laid out through the Old Parade Ground



and these lots were eagerly purchased. The lot containing most of the buildings of the Old Fort was purchased by the local lumber firm of Park and Borrowman, and for forty-five years their Mill operated in the Laundry building of the former Asylum, while the barracks and Mess Hall were used as storage for the finished lumber.

About 1920, F. A. Hough, Amherstburg barrister and former Mayor, purchased the property and re-modelled the buildings into houses. One of the remaining Barracks of the Old Fort was moved to adjoining lots close by and made three residences. The Mess Hall was converted into still another attractive residence, while the former laundry building of the Malden Lunatic Asylum, and erstwhile Planing Mill was transformed into a gracious Georgian mansion.

Following the First Great War there was renewed interest in old Fort Malden, but this time it was to preserve it as a memento of Canada's past history. Under the guidance of the late Major Arthur McNally, the Amherstburg Historic Sites and Monuments Association was formed. This Association soon had plaques mounted near the various historic spots in Amherstburg and a number of these referred specially to various aspects of Fort Malden. The civic fathers had the opportunity to acquire a portion of the old Fort moat and bastion, and in 1935 the Dominion of Canada accepted this for development as a National Historic site.

In 1939, a stone Museum was constructed, and opened in 1941. The Museum soon acquired an interesting array of objects illustrating the phases of history in this area. In 1945 the adjacent Hough Estate property was acquired, and the Museum facilities expanded in the former Asylum laundry building.

In these two buildings the Museum houses a Collection divided in four main departments — the Indian, the Military, the Pioneer, and the Great Lakes, Here the interested visitor will find relics to remind him of the past events and personages along the border, souvenirs of the historic past.

1952

DAVID P. BOTSFORD WAS 1ST CURATOR



## 15

### A Link with the Fort Malden Pensioners

An interesting chapter in the story of the old Fort Malden and the town of Amherstburg is supplied by the Enrolled Pensioners who were brought to Amherstburg in 1851. Their coming made a permanent imprint on the town and marked a stage in the development of Amherstburg from a garrison town to an important commercial center on the Detroit River.

In 1851 the last Imperial troops, the three companies of the Royal Canadian Rifles had been withdrawn from Fort Malden, and in their place from the ranks of the Enrolled Pensioners a monthly guard was selected to watch over the old Fort and its outposts on Bois Blanc island. This condition of affairs lasted until Fort Malden was abandoned altogether as a military Post in 1859 when it was turned over to another department of government and the buildings were converted into the Malden Lunatic Asylum, which, too, was removed.

Who were the Pensioners? In short they were old soldiers who had been honorably discharged from the Army and were recruited chiefly in England and Ireland from the ranks of those old soldiers for further occasional light military duty in Canada as part of an emigration scheme designed to make further provision for their comfort and well-being.

Most of the Pensioners were approaching middle age, and were men with families to provide for. They had entered the Army as youths, but as the time of enlistment was much longer than is customary now they were no longer young when they received their discharge. In nearly all regiments of Foot the term of enlistment was 21 years, though in the 100th Regiment, raised in Canada, it was only 10 years, or 18 in case of war. Longer service was not uncommon and earned the soldier a large gratuity on discharge and an increased pension.

As the Scheme applied to Fort Malden and Amherstburg it provided for the sub-division into streets and "Cottage Lots" of the greater portion of Fort Malden Parade Ground and Military Commons. The Pensioners' tract took in nearly 200 acres and is now a portion of the Third Ward of Amherstburg being that part of the municipality north of Richmond street and east of Sandwich street. Apparently some of the streets were not named immediately for their names refer to the Crimean War fought a few years later in 1864 and '65 — Balaclava and Alma Streets were named for major engagements in that conflict and St. Arnaud Street for the French General, the commander-in-chief of the Allied enemies. The remaining streets of the tract were called Fort and Victoria.

Along the streets within a year of their arrival some 80 frame cottages were built. The cottages were all of one pattern — three rooms and a lean-to kitchen. Later two, more pretentious, residences were built and occupied by the sergeants. The builders were local contractors and carpenters and the houses were erected at prices as low as 40 pounds. Among the names preserved of those who built the cottages are William Bartlett, Mr. Derrowman, and Andrew Botsford.



In addition to the cost of erecting the cottages further sums were charged against the old soldiers' pensions for fencing. Rails were used to divide the lost and "Fancy Fencing" fronted the streets. In an old account preserved at the Fort Malden Museum the signature of many of these old soldiers may be seen resenting to these stoppages against their pensions. In quite a number of cases the soldier merely made his mark. Irish names predominate for Ireland was then the great reservoir from which Britain drew soldiers in the expansion of the Empire. One finds such first names as Patrick, Michael, Dennis, and Bernard repeatedly on the lists, and such surnames as Delmore, Maloney, Tansay, Sullivan, Brady, Flynn, O'Madden, O'Rourke, Corbey, Finucan, Pollard, Curley and O'Connor.

In the same account book one may trace the route the Irish Enrolled Pensioners took as they were gathered at Cork for the voyage to America. Nearly all the Pension Districts in Ireland are represented — The Barony of Clare, Dublin, Belfast, Galway, Kilkenny, Trelso, Waterford, Limerick, Castlebar, Clonmel, Tullamore, Marybore, Ballymore, Armagh, Charlemont, Ennis, and Cork. By jaunting car, coach, railway, and canibus, the soldiers and their families made their way to the wharf at Cork where the ship "Hope" awaited them. The "Hope" had sailed from Tilbury with some 32 soldiers and families gathered from points in Great Britain, and when set off across the Atlantic she had 36 additional families aboard.

From the date various ships Stores were issued on can deduct that the "Hope" sailed from Cork about the 9th day of May, and from a gratuity to the cook we can similarly surmise that the ship arrived in the St. Lawrence about June 21st. From other sources July 4th is recorded as the day the Pensioners arrived at Fort Malden. In 1854 others arrived on the ship "Arabian".

Until the cottages were ready the soldiers and their families were accommodated in the Barracks of Fort Malden, which could accommodate about 250 in the two large barracks which had been built in 1838. The old Brick Barracks of 1829 was used as a Mess Hall.

A number of the Pensioners collected their pensions and purchased farms. Among them were the Harlings, Crimmins, Delmores and Hectone. A few bachelor Pensioners were boarders in local houses. In many ways the Pensioners made their presence in Amherstburg felt. Some became shop-keepers, hotelmen, masons, farmers, lime-burners, and many other trades and callings. At first the Pensioners children were taught by Sgt. Meek who maintained a school on the upper floor of the old Artillery Barn, but later when public and separate schools were established in the town they attended those. During his term as Schoolmaster, Sgt. Meek was paid 50 pennies annually. He acted also as clerk to the Paymaster at Quarterly Pension day.

The Pensions varied from 6 pence to 8 shillings, 3 pence daily, according to rank and service. The maximum "stoppage" for advances to purchase the cottages and fencing was one third so the old soldiers were assured of a sum in cash each quarter. They had a burial fund, or more properly a "make fund", which they had the Staff Officer assess against them each pay day. When an old soldier died, which happened with increasing frequency as the years passed, this fund was available to purchase a keg of liquor, tobacco, clay pipes, and cheese, as entertainment while the old comrades sat around and recalled old scenes of camp and field. Regardless of denomination all the Pensioners accompanied the body to the church, and assisted at the graveside.

Quarterly pension day was a holiday in Amherstburg for many of the old pensioners were in a mood to celebrate and the local bars were the gainers. Merchants did a thriving business too as old scores were settled and new accounts opened. The local constabulary was augmented by a Town Sergeant to see the Celebrants did not get too far away from the paths of peace and order.



April 4th, 1884, was the last date on which the Pensioners were paid in person by the Paymaster. The last paymaster was Major Heskith, who retired in that year. After that date they were paid by mail from Halifax. By that time the original 116 Pensioners had dwindled to 34, and the expense of sending a Staff Officer was no longer warranted. Instead, each of the survivors was furnished with an "Identity" containing a recital of his service, pension rate, and physical description. One such document is on exhibition at the Fort Malden Museum, and is that of Bernard Finucan. It records that he was entitled to a shilling a day, that he was then 78 and 2 twelfths years of age, and in the space reserved for colour of hair it states that this hardy old pensioner's was "turning grey". By 1892 only two or three remained and this included Mrs. Bridget Horan who had been a nurse with Florence Nightingale at the Crimea, and was one of the later Pensioners and the only woman to earn a pension by personal service. Incidentally, a number of Pensioners, and a good many of the Pensioners' sons served in the Crimea War and also in the American Civil War.

The Pensioners had long since passed on. Indeed, nearly all the sons and daughters have followed their parents to the grave. However, the son of one Pensioner is still hale and hearty at the age of ninety years in the person of Alexander Bonnett, one of Amherstburg's best known citizens.

Alexander Bonnett was born March 21st, 1858, on Bois Blanc island, opposite Fort Malden. His birth place was the Pickett House where his father Col. Sgt. John Bonnett had his residence as one of the Enrolled Pensioners. Col. Sgt. John Bonnett had charge of the detail which manned the three Block Houses on the island, these being the out posts of Fort Malden. Alexander Bonnett was the youngest son in a family of ten, and is now the only survivor. His oldest brother, William, left home at the age of 15 when Alex Bonnett was only three days old. William enlisted in the 100th Regt. and returned ten year later on furlough to marry his childhood sweetheart. He died in the service at Gibraltar.

John Bonnett, the father, was born in 1809 at Wickhambrook, Bury St. Edmund's, Suffolk, England. On April 18th, 1827, at Boston, England, he enlisted in the 69th Regiment of Foot. He accepted three pounds bounty of which only 10 shillings was in cash, the balance being charged against him for "necessities", these ranging from braces to a ball of blacking.

John Bonnett's regiment, the 69th Foot, was raised in 1776 and at times was used as Marines. The regiment served with Admiral Hood in 1782 in the West Indies, and again in 1793-94 at the siege of Toulon, and won the battle of honour "St. Vincent" being with Belson at that Spanish defeat. The 69th served under Wellington at Waterloo when Napoleon was finally defeated. During John Bonnett's 22 years and 99 days of service the regiment crossed the Atlantic seven times. His first trip abroad was to the West Indies where he landed February 6th, 1832. It was while stationed there he was promoted to corporal on October 22nd, 1836, and to sergeant, October 8th, 1838. The regiment was next sent to New Brunswick where he landed March 18th, 1839. Here he was married to the daughter of another soldier, Margaret Bonery, an Irish colleen being his bride. Their wedding took place at Carleton, New Brunswick on December 8th, 1839.

In John Bonnett's regimental account book the listing of his first five children is found. Their birth-places are scattered as the regiment continued to move from place to place. William, the eldest, was born at Grand Falls, New Brunswick, on March 6th, 1842. The regiment landed in Ireland on September 17th of the same year, and a year later Alice, the second child, was born at Ronconson. Henry, the third child was born at sea on board the troop-ship "Resistance", April 29th, 1845. A fourth child and second daughter was born April 17th, 1847, this was Sarah. Her birthplace is not stated but she died August 29th, 1848, at Malta. On December 13th, 1847, the regiment landed in Malta, and there another daughter was born March 3rd, 1849. John Bonnett had been promoted to Col. Sgt. October 1st, 1848, while stationed in



Ireland, and this rank with his long service entitled him to a pension of almost 2 shillings a day. Accordingly, he received his honourable discharge, dated at Malta, April 11th, 1849.

His character was listed on the document in the space provided as excellent and he received a gratuity for meritorious service. He reached England in July and was furnished by the war office with a further document addressed to Church Wardens and Constables certifying to his honourable service and trust-worthy character.

The Bonnetts settled in Galway, Ireland where another child, a son, Joseph was born April 5th, 1851, shortly before John Bonnett as an Enrolled Pensioner, set sail for Fort Malden and Amherstburg. This child died at Bois Blanc, April 7th, 1856. The four remaining children of the family were all born at Bois Blanc in the years between 1853 and 1860. The four of school age were rowed over to Amherstburg each morning to school, and one family tale of that time tells how Alice and Henry rescued from drowning the occupant of a capsized sail boat, Alice holding the nearly-drowned young man above the surface of the water by the hair of his head while youthful Henry rowed him to shore.

The family in mature years scattered far and wide. The American West became the home of some. Alex Bonnett states that after the Pensioner Force was disbanded his father resumed a trade he had learned as a youth, that of malster and brewer, and was employed in an Amherstburg brewery. John Bonnett, the father died in 1875 at Amherstburg.

Alex Bonnett as a young man became a sailor like so many Amherstburg boys of that day, many of them Pensioners' sons like himself. Some were cooks and some were Captains but all loved the lakes and made the name Amherstburg a familiar one on great lakes vessels. The families of Hagen, Jarmin, Hutton, Pocock and Tobin furnished some noted captains. In some cases the second and third generations are now plying the Lakes.

Like other sailors Alex Bonnett had some narrow escapes. On one occasion the tug on which he was sailing blew off a cylinder head, and their barge in tow almost rammed them before the lines were cleared and the barge veered off. In 1885 he enlisted in the Amherstburg company of the 21st Battalion raised for service in the Riel Rebellion but the trouble was settled so quickly he only had camp experience at the annual reviews. He and Walter Botsford are the last survivors of this 1885 company. In later life Alex Bonnett was for many years the town night-watchman and his old billy is one of the exhibits at the Museum.

His marriage was to Elizabeth Hancock, also of Pensioner stock. Four daughters and one son were born to them. Mr. Bonnett makes his home with his eldest daughter, Mrs. J. E. McGee. Daily he may be seen taking his walk downtown, and on Sundays going on to Christ Church where he has been a life-time worshipper.

All honour to him for a long life well-spent, a worthy son of an honoured father, a living link with Amherstburg's historic past.

1948



## 16

### History of Bob-Lo Island

Bois Blanc Island is situated in the Detroit River near the entrance to Lake Erie. It is slightly over 200 acres in area and lays off the Canadian mainland about one half mile opposite the town of Amherstburg. Its upper end is opposite old Fort Malden while its lower end some two miles distant is across from a point on the mainland known as Elliott's Point, the site of what is probably the oldest house on the Great Lakes, the homestead of Mathew Elliott built in 1784.

In 1784 the Wyandots granted the Indian Department officers at Detroit the river frontage across from Bois Blanc down to Lake Erie. Mathew Elliott became the occupant of the former Bois Blanc Mission site and on the abandoned farm he set some 60 slaves to work and soon had the fields cleared of underbrush and again in crop. By the 1790's some 200 acres was under crop by Elliott.

Captain Mathew Elliott succeeded to the Superintendency of the Western Indian Department and his homestead on the site of the Bois Blanc Mission became, in a sense, "the capital" by which the Indian affairs were administered over a vast stretch of territory extending from Kettle Creek, Lake Erie, on the east to Spanish territory on the Mississippi on the west. It is to be remembered that the British on the conquest of Canada inherited the good feelings generally existent among the western Indians during the French days. So it was that in the summer thousands of Indians would come to Elliott's to meet in Council and receive presents. At such times while waiting attendance to their wants they camped on Bois Blanc Island.

In 1796, when the British had to leave Detroit and give up their 36 year occupancy of that side of the river, a removal was made to the mouth of the river Detroit. The new Post was erected across from Bois Blanc at a point where cannon could command from high ground the only deep water communication between the lower and upper Great Lakes. At this time the British commander at the new Post trespassed on the Indian domain of Bois Blanc by erecting blockhouses at either end. These blockhouses were designed as temporary fortifications until such time as the new Post on the mainland could be completed. Apparently, they were afterwards neglected and allowed to decay for we find that in 1839 they were replaced by three other blockhouses and a picquet house manned by a small detachment from the fort at Amherstburg.

In American border history there is a long and torturous story of successive Indian wars. In the latter phase of those wars affecting the settlement of Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana occurred the campaigns headed by the Shawnee Prophet and his brother, the illustrious Tecumseh. One of the decisive engagements of that war was that of Tippecanoe in 1811 whereby Prophet's town was destroyed and the Indian cornfields burned.

The hard core of those Indian malcontents fled from further expression of American wrath and came to Fort Malden in the late autumn of 1811. Here the officers of the Indian Depart-



ment placed the refugees on Bois Blanc island where they were maintained at the expense of the government throughout the winter. Twice weekly there was issued to them by Clerks of the Department, 600 pounds salt beef or pork, the same of flour, cornmeal, beans or peas, and two fresh beeves.

Tecumseh was absent in the deep south in 1811 and was enroute home when the battle of Tippecanoe was fought. When the War of 1812 broke out he was active in aligning the American Indians on the side of the British and came to Fort Malden. His stopping place was at the Indian Department Headquarters at Colonel Elliott's. Tradition asserts he slept in the Indian Department warehouse despite the fact Colonel Elliott desired that he be a guest in his own home. It is said Tecumseh did this as a compromise not wishing to offend the sensibilities of other older chiefs not so invited.

At this time on Bois Blanc island hundreds of Indian warriors were assembled under Chiefs of various tribes. The names of some of these chiefs appear again in later history. Present were Black Hawk whose name is given to the campaign of 1832 in which Abraham Lincoln was a volunteer; Shabbona, who later was a noted friend of the whites in the settlement of Indiana; Sagonash or "Captain Billy" the Indian son of Colonel William Caldwell, one of the first settlers at Chicago but died a chief of the Pottawatomies near Council Bluff, Iowa; and Miera or Walk-in-the-Water who gave his name in 1821 to the first steam vessel to traverse the Great Lakes above Niagara.

The War of 1812 had one of its first engagements in the channel of Bois Blanc when the American vessel the CUYAHOGA carrying the United States regimental band, wives and children of the officers, baggage, mail and military despatches was captured by a row boat sent out from the Naval Yard dock accompanied by some Indian canoes. The capture was made without bloodshed and as a signal of victory the band was required to play "God Save the King". When the despatches were examined, Hull's disposition and strength were made known and the British and Indians pursued the plans which shortly after resulted in the capture of Detroit.

In 1835 as a result of persistent demands the government of Upper Canada embarked on a program of providing aid to trade and navigation by building harbours and lighthouses. In the January 5, 1836 issue of the Canadian Emigrant of Sandwich the specifications for a lighthouse and cottage to be built on the south end of Bois Blanc island were listed. The lighthouse was built of limestone brought in ballast from Kingston, and local tradition asserts the architect was Andrew Kemp, attached to the Royal Engineers, Civil Branch, at Amherstburg. Kemp as a boy of 15 had accompanied his father also in the Engineers on the retreat of the British from Fort Malden in 1813. He served as Lieutenant in the Engineers on the Niagara frontier for the remainder of the War. As the lighthouse neared completion there was much speculation as to whom would receive the appointment of Lighthouse Keeper.

Francis Bond Head, the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, was making a horseback tour of the Provinces. In Amherstburg he was a guest of the Searle House, the leading hotel and which hotel furnished him with a carriage. In taking a turn about the town his eye fell upon a beautiful specimen of the Newfoundland dog in the yard of Mrs. James Hackett. The Lieutenant Governor inquired if the dog could be purchased. Mrs. Hackett replied that they were much attached to him and could not sell the dog, but if the Lieutenant Governor would appoint her husband Lighthouse Keeper she would give him the dog. Bond Head agreed to her condition and James Hackett was appointed.

This bit of innocent bribery began what must be unique in Canada — a tenure of over a hundred years as successive generations of Hacketts tended the Bois Blanc light. James Hackett was succeeded by his youngest son, Andrew Hackett. On the death of Andrew Hackett his widow was appointed, and she in turn was succeeded by her youngest son, Charles Hackett,



who had the appointment as long as the Lighthouse was manually-operated.

The Lighthouse structure was 40 feet in height and with the elevation of the island land added gave a lamp height above water of 57 feet. The light was visible in clear weather for 18 miles. At first the Lighthouse was a 10 lamp oil burner with eight of the lamps facing toward the lake and two upstream. Down through the years various improvements were made — acetylene gas replacing the oil lights, and later electric. In the fall of 1954 vandals broke in and set a fire which destroyed the lamp house top structure. This had been replaced by a utilitarian frame work — much less romantic than the lamphouse kept clear by three generations of Hacketts.

HAVE  
OIL PRINT  
OF THIS  
LIGHTHOUSE

One of the exciting episodes of the Hackett tenure was the capture of the island by the Patriots in January 1838. The Patriots had come down river from Detroit in two vessels laden with arms and Patriot sympathizers to attack Fort Malden. The Patriot force first occupied Stoney island just above Bois Blanc and the next day followed up that exploit by driving off the small military picquet on Bois Blanc. Hackett and his family withdrew with the soldiers. Meanwhile, from time to time, the Patriot schooner ANNE circled Bois Blanc island and each time the vessel passed downstream a few shots from the two cannon aboard were fired into the town. The Hackett women and children, along with many others fled into the country back of Amherstburg where they were accommodated in the few farm homes found there. Finally, the ANNE was put out of action and quiet restored. When the Hacketts returned to Bois Blanc they found their pen of hogs had fallen prey to the appetites of the Patriots, but suffered no other material loss.

Succeeding years saw no military operations though the Picquet house and Blockhouses were manned until 1851 by the Regulars. When the Regulars left Fort Malden they were replaced by a Reserve Force of Enrolled Pensioners. A few families took residence on Bois Blanc but in 1859 the Pensioners in turn were withdrawn and Bois Blanc ceased to be a Military Outpost of Fort Malden.

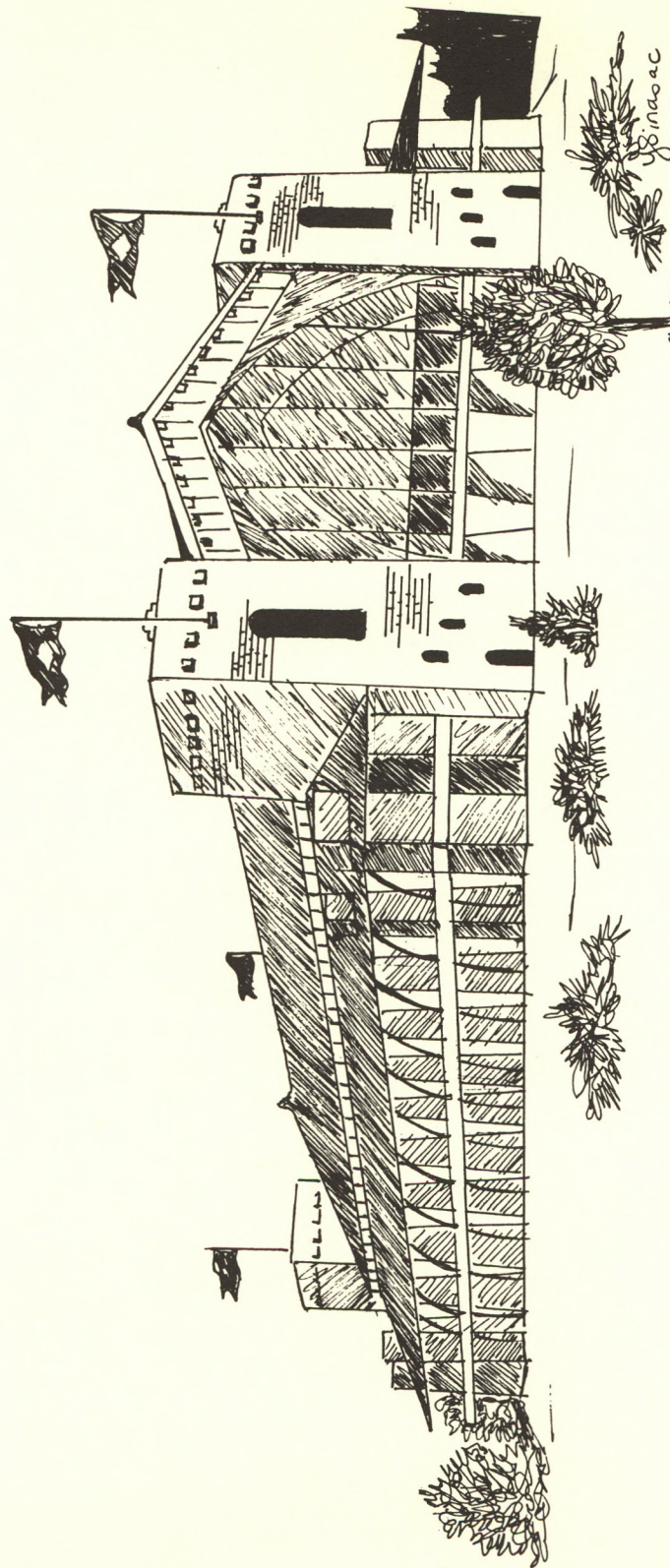
In 1869, McKee Rankin, a son of Colonel Rankin, became the owner of the property. McKee Rankin was an actor on the American stage and married to the New York actress, Kitty Blanchard. They transformed Bois Blanc into a gentleman's estate. The farm was stocked with purebred and ornamental stock ranging from Jersey cattle, Shetland ponies to deer and peacocks. There in the summer months the Rankins took their ease. A small steam yacht, the KITTY B ferried their guests to and from Amherstburg.

A series of unfortunate investments induced Rankin to turn over the title of his property to his wife. Mrs. Rankin mortgaged the property for \$13,000 to a local capitalist, Napoleon Coste. In time Coste acquired title and he sold the property to two Detroiters, Randall and Atkinson, for a sum variously stated as \$40,000 and again as \$100,000, either sum being a large increment on Rankin's original investment of \$40,000.

Atkinson and Randall had been close personal friends as well as business associates but a quarrel developed between them and their Bois Blanc purchase was divided. It was found that the property line ran where one of the partners had a home partly erected. The owner of the house offered to purchase the additional land on which part of his house stood, but the other former partner refused to sell and demanded that the house be removed. When this was not done, a gang of men proceeded to the scene one night and pulled down the framework making what became known in the Amherstburg area as "Randall's wreck".

In 1896 the Detroit, Belle Isle and Windsor Ferry Company became interested in extending their ferry routes. Besides the cross river ferry service between Detroit and Windsor, they had commenced about 1885 to run ferries to Detroit's new park at Belle Isle. This was a very popular service and they conceived the idea of running a similar line to Bois Blanc island. At first they leased a few acres near the middle of the island and proceeded to develop it as a





The Pavilion at BOB-LO (Bois Blanc Island) Detroit River.  
Used for dancing week days and concerts on Sundays.  
Built 1912-13.



pleasure resort. A dock was built and a dance pavilion erected and the first excursion was made June 20, 1898.

As the venture seemed to point to a profitable future most of the former Atkinson-Randall property was acquired by the ferry company for a reputed \$250,000. The Bois Blanc island resort became a favourite one for Detroiters. The river ride, in the days before automobiles became common, enabled the city dweller "to get away from it all" and was heavily patronized. The company found it necessary later to adopt the name of Bob-Lo for the park as many, unfamiliar with the French pronunciation, were referring to the park as "Boys Blank". Incidentally the name refers to the white barked species of poplar still to be found on the island, the French meaning being "white wood".

Improvements to attract additional customers were made from time to time. A large dining hall with a capacity of 250 diners was built out over the river. The dock was roofed and the dance hall enlarged. While the bicycle "craze" was still at its peak a third-mile cinder track was constructed to accommodate the bicycle racers. An athletic field, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, boat livery, bath house and beach, photograph gallery, children's play house and women's rest house were early features. Still later a merry-go-round, the first of many rides, was installed <sup>and</sup> for electric lighting. In 1913 a large new dance hall was built of Kelly island limestone. It remains the largest dance hall in Canada and at the time of its building it was reputed to be the largest in the world.

A second dock was built opposite downtown Amherstburg in 1902, and a more frequent local service inaugurated. This local service, to Amherstburg was extensively used by Detroiters patronizing the island until immigration restrictions imposed by the United States government caused its curtailment. It was suspected that aliens desiring to enter the States illegally did so by the Bois Blanc route as no immigration inspection was made when the excursion vessels docked at Detroit though the vessels had cleared from Amherstburg, a Canadian port.

At one time in the mid 20's the Amherstburg ferry service was suspended, much to the distress of Amherstburg's feelings. However, a compromise was brought about when officers of the Port of Amherstburg proceeded to examine every picnic basket landed by the excursionists at Bob-Lo. On that particular day it took hours to unload the passengers. As a result the Amherstburg service was resumed but this time with an American Immigration Service inspector on the Amherstburg dock. This somewhat anomalous situation still exists — Canadian residents enroute to Bois Blanc, a Canadian island, undergo the scrutiny of an American officer.

The 50th anniversary of the opening of Bob-Lo park was celebrated in June 1948 by delegations dressed in by-gone fashions dancing to music provided by one of the island's early orchestras. Down through the years many churches, plants, and societies have made it a tradition to have the annual picnic at Bob-Lo. Some of these special days are known far and wide and looked forward to by county residents, a notable example being the picnic of the Detroit St. Andrew's Society observed as an unofficial holiday as Scotsmen's Day.

As a new summer season is approaching Detroiters and Essex County residents will look forward to renewing their acquaintance with Bob-Lo park and Bois Blanc island. Many will be second and third generation visitors making a pilgrimage to the shrine of their youthful memories.

1955

DANCED TO LORENZEN'S  
& ZICKEL'S ORCHESTRAS





A view of BOB-LO island in the early 1900's.  
On the left is the cafe and on the right,  
the original main dock.



## 17.

### **Municipal Beginnings in Township of Malden**

The first steps towards municipal government in these parts were made in 1788 when the District of Hesse was set up. Among the civil officials appointed on that occasion were eight Justices of the Peace. When sitting as a court in the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, they had the conduct of certain municipal functions as well as their prime duty of administering petty justice. Detroit was the seat of government. It was not until the Constitutional Act of 1791 had come into effect that the counties and their townships were designated. The County of Essex and the Township of Malden were given their names by John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant-Governor, soon after he arrived in the Province. Owing to the sparse population several counties were grouped together into Districts. Our area became known as the Western District and included the counties of Essex, Kent and Suffolk. This last name has disappeared but it referred to an uninhabited tract where the west half of Elgin County is situated.

The eight persons appointed as the first Justices of the Peace were officers and gentlemen then prominent on the Detroit frontier. They were Alexander Grant, Guillaume La Motte, Adhemar dit St. Martin, William Macomb, Joncaire de Chabert, Alexander Maisonville, William Caldwell and Mathew Elliott. The two last were residents of the Malden riverfront where they had settled in 1784. Caldwell's farm lane became the nucleus of the Pike Road, while the extensive tract known as the Caldwell Grant acquired by two of his sons and laying along the Lake Erie shore on either side of the Big Creek has long been a prominent feature of Malden topography. Caldwell and Elliott had served in the Indian Department during the Revolution and their Malden lands had been given to them by the Wyandot Indians. These Indian grants were confirmed to them later by Crown grants made after the McKee Treaty of 1790 by which the Indians had ceded most of the land now in Kent and Essex Counties.

Brief mention of the other Justices appointed in 1788 is merited. In point of seniority Alexander Grant held the honors. He had come to Detroit in the 1760's where he was in charge of the naval operations of the Provincial Marine on the Great Lakes above Niagara. He was popularly known as the "Commodore". He built a Navy Yard on the Rouge near Detroit which operated at that point for twenty-five years until it was removed to Amherstburg when the British evacuated Detroit in 1796. At Detroit Grant married the daughter of a French merchant and established his home on a farm at Grosse Pointe. When the government of Upper Canada was set up in 1792 Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe appointed him to the Legislative Council. In later years, as the senior member of the Council, he occasionally acted as Administrator of the Province even though he retained his residence at Grosse Pointe on what had become by then the American side of the border. Grant died in 1813 and was buried in St. John's Churchyard, Sandwich.



The other members of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace either were or had been merchants at Detroit engaged in the Indian trade. Macomb is remembered as being, with a brother, the first white proprietor of Grosse Ile. Maisonville, among other enterprises, operated a windmill on the shore above Windsor where grist and flour was ground for the settlers. Guillaume La Motte in the Revolution was a Lieutenant in the Detroit militia in the expedition to Vincennes and was taken prisoner there by George Rogers Clark. He was one of those confined in irons at Williamsburg, Virginia for some months before being released and allowed to return home to Detroit. His later years were spent as an interpreter and he died about 1799. The Joncaires de Chabert during the French regime had been active in the Iroquois country, later coming to Detroit. A memo book of Adhemar St. Martin is in the Fort Malden Museum and has entries commencing with 1777.

The Municipal ordinances this first court dealt with were pretty well confined to the Town of Detroit where complaints of faulty chimnies, obstructed roadways and straying animals were dealt with.

In 1796 when the British left Detroit the new seat of justice was established at Sandwich though it had once been in contemplation to make Amherstburg the center for the District. Amherstburg and Sandwich both became active centers and by 1802 we find mention of a number of new names among the appointed Magistrates. Those residing at Amherstburg were Prideux, Selby, of the Indian Department, Dr. William Hearffy, Surgeon at Fort Malden and Amherstburg's first physician and William Caldwell and Mathew Elliott previously mentioned as original members. Records of the operations of the Court of General Quarter Sessions are not complete for the early years but from about 1817 the Minutes are available.

One of the later Magistrates was Charles Stuart who became a Magistrate sometime before 1820. He became interested in anti-slavery work and was probably the person instrumental in making Amherstburg the goal of many former slaves when the fugitives escaped from bondage in the southerly States.

After the troubles of 1837 there was a general feeling that the people nearest to the scene were best fitted to judge the needs of the community. As an expression of that feeling the Legislature enacted the "Local Municipal Authorities" bill which came into effect January 1st, 1842. This gave extended power regarding the appointments of local officials to elected Councillors in the District who were to assume all but the judicial duties of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace. From this time on that Court has been strictly a court and not a legislative body.

The Township of Malden, containing the Town of Amherstburg, sent its first representative to Sandwich in the person of "Squire" Robert Reynolds. The first District Council organized itself February 14, 1842. Representatives from the organized townships in the Counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton were present. In 1843 Malden had an additional representative allotted to it and Robert Reynolds and George Bullock were the members. Bullock was an Amherstburg tavern-keeper in the building now occupied by the Union Gas Company and the T. Eaton Order office. In 1844 and 1845 George Bullock and Lewis Gordon were the representatives for Malden. Gordon was a commission merchant and private banker in Amherstburg. In 1846 Gordon and John McLeod shared the honors. McLeod was a vessel owner and distiller, later becoming a member of Parliament. In 1847 and 1848 George Bullock and John McLeod served together, while in 1849 Bullock had a new partner when joined by Henry Wright, a Malden farmer of the Third Concession.

In 1850 a revision of the Municipal Authorities Act brought a change in local government by extending local government to the townships direct, the township councillors then electing from their number a Reeve to represent them on the District Council. Malden Council elected Henry Wright as the first Reeve. In 1851 Amherstburg became a municipality separate from



Malden and its first Reeve was Alexander H. Wagner, while Malden re-elected Henry Wright.

In 1852 and 1853 Daniel Botsford was Reeve and he was followed in office by Henry Wright for 1854. In the next two years the Reeveship went to Michael Maloney and in 1857 to John Caldwell. In 1858 it again went to Mr. Maloney, while in 1859 a new man appeared in the person of Samuel Atkin, while he was followed by Napoleon A. Coste, who was Reeve through 1863.

In the early years the Malden Council had met at various points — in blacksmith shops, schoolhouses and taverns, until the resolution was taken to build a Town Hall. This was carried to fruition and the Hall then built served for almost a century. May this new Town Hall be a worthy successor. 1962



## 18

### **This Historic Development of Farming in Malden Township**

The story of agriculture in the lower Detroit River area covers a period of more than two centuries. In Malden there is a farm on the riverfront known locally as the Reaume Farm which may be the oldest continuously-farmed acreage in the Province of Ontario. In the Dominion Atlas published in 1881 there is mention of this tradition. The local story has it that this particular plot was used as a corn field, the farmer leaving the protection of the fort at Detroit in the spring, and returning there for the winter after his crop was harvested.

Another early farm was that connected with the Bois Blanc Mission. The Mission was on the mainland on a point opposite the lower end of Bois Blanc Island. It ministered to the Wyandot or 'HURON' Indians, and along with spiritual guidance performed other services for the Indians maintaining a blacksmith shop, trading store beside the farm. From disturbances in the Ohio valley, and the passage through the Detroit River of pagan Indians from the north proceeding to the scene of the war, the Christian Indians of the Mission were in some danger so the Mission was abandoned and re-established at Assumption in present-day Windsor in 1748. There, near and opposite to the Fort at Detroit, it was better protected and the Malden Mission farm given over to Nature.

However, in 1784 a number of former and active members of the British Indian Department were presented by the Wyandots with the tract of land now comprised on the Detroit River frontage of Malden Township and the present site of Amherstburg. The frontage was then surveyed by Mr. Fry on orders of Lieutenant Governor John Hay at Detroit. Still later, after the McKee Treaty of 1790, the Indian grants were confirmed by the issuance of regular Crown grants. The portion of the river front formerly in the Bois Blanc Mission fell to the portion of Captain Mathew Elliott.

It is a matter of record that Elliott had a flourishing farm by the early 1790's. Elliott's home was often the stopping place of travellers who have mentioned the fact in their writings. Thus it is a logical surmise that the large farm he had under cultivation in the comparatively short period of his occupancy could best be accounted for by the assumption he had no forest to clear but only second-growth, small trees and shrubbery that would have grown in the interval after the Mission farm had been abandoned.

From this period there is frequent mention in old records of the crops and animal husbandry so we have a good idea of the course of agricultural development from that time.

The first staple crop was corn. It was in demand especially by fur traders as a ready-built portable food supply in the form of meal or on occasion, parched whole kernels. No doubt, the early pioneer's acceptance of this native American food helped dispose of a good portion of the corn growth.



Wheat, in the form of spring wheat, was another early crop. Some of this became flour for from an early day windmills were established along the banks of the Detroit for grinding flour and grist. By 1817 there were two mills of this description in Malden, one operated by Mr. Barron near Bar Point and another in present-day Amherstburg but then a part of the township of Malden. This latter windmill was located on the waterfront on a lot between Richmond and Murray Streets and is depicted in some early Amherstburg views. It was a vantage point utilized by the defenders of Amherstburg during the Schooner Anne attack on Amherstburg during the Patriot troubles in January 1838.

Distilleries of the area also absorbed a certain amount of the grain grown, as in the form of whiskey it was readily saleable and transportation difficulties were minimized. The McLeod Steam Mill and Distillery was one well-known establishment but it has been out of existence for a century since its destruction by fire.

Along with corn and wheat there is mention of animal husbandry. Oxen, as throughout the early pioneer period elsewhere, were the main draught animals being preferably used for clearing operations in the bush and for plowing in stump land. Horses were mainly raised for saddle use for some time to come. Hogs were raised along with corn and Simon Girty was an early complainant when someone stole his pig. Indeed, pork either fresh or cured by salt or smoke was the main domestic source of meat for many years. Compared with beef the production of pork was simpler in pioneer days. Fencing and winter shelter were provided easier for the hog than for cattle. Pasturage was in the woods and the hay for winter was obtained by 'wild' grass growing in open spaces along shallow water courses or margins of the marshes.

Travellers often commented on the abundance and quality of the yield of field and garden. Captain Mills, one of the early Lake Erie navigators, is mentioned as providing fruit trees for plantations.

Another crop grown in the early days was hemp. It had become a source of anxiety to the Navy Department that its supply of hemp for cordage depended on the American states as formerly during Colonial days. It was decided to provide a local source. The Legislature of Upper Canada was induced to offer a bonus to those who would undertake the cultivation of the southern crop. Accordingly, hemp seed was obtained in Kentucky and the crops sown. How successful the experiment was is something we cannot state but it is known that Gilkinson and Mills applied for space on the Military Reserve for two rope walks in 1804. These walks were 350 yards long and one was parallel with present Rankin Avenue and the other with Sandwich Street, Amherstburg. The Navy Yard was adjacent to this area so we may presume that the rope made was supplied to the government ships built there.

Still another southern crop grown in the early days was tobacco. The early tobacco was cured by tying the wilted green leaf in small 'hands' and suspending them by twine from the pole rafters of the barn. It was not until the later 1820's that tobacco was exported from the area. It was packed in casks and shipped to Montreal where it was in competition with American tobacco grown in the Connecticut valley. Some local commission merchants made a few attempts at exportation overseas to Ireland but found the excise taxes too heavy a burden. The Virginia-type culture and curing methods were later introductions and never flourished in Malden as they did in Anderdon, Colchester, Gosfield and other Essex County townships where soil conditions were different.

The first mention of sheep in Malden was when a flock of Merino sheep were temporarily pastured at Mathew Elliott's en route to Baldoon, the Earl of Selkirk's settlement in the northern part of the Western District near present-day Wallaceburg. In the very early days cloth was imported but by the 1830's both woollens and linens were being made locally implying that sheep-raising and flax culture had become established.



DAVID K. WALTER

MY FATHER

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About this time the original farms along the riverfront were all occupied and the back concessions began to open up. One of the first of the 'back' farms was Lot 25, Concession 3, Malden which was jointly settled by Daniel Botsford and Henry Wright in 1831. The lot was later divided into two farms and the north half became the homestead of Daniel Botsford. It is still owned in the Botsford family, Walter Botsford, now aged 91, being a representative of the third generation still residing there along with his son and grandchildren.

Daniel Botsford was one of the projectors of the first Agriculture Society in this area. It is related in the Minutes of the Society that it was organized in May 1844 by several discussing the project "while seated on a log near the steam mill". In June 1844 at a public meeting called for the purpose, a Constitution was adopted and the Society began to function. The Society thus organized endured for over 80 years only going out of existence in 1925. It early adopted the policy of holding an annual Exhibition and the Fair of the Society was long a social event eagerly anticipated each season and held in fond remembrance after its passing.

A fair picture of the agriculture problems as seen by the Pioneer can be deduced from the policy and acts of the Society. One of its first concerns was the introduction of better stock to improve the 'native' breeds. Among the improved breeds there is mention of Durham and Ayrshire cattle and Leicester, Southdown and Merino sheep. In the annual Fair premium list the improved breeds were in categories separate from the 'native' breeds. The Society itself purchased improved bulls and rams and arranged for the use of improved stallions. Incidentally, tradition gives some account of the origin of the native 'French Pony', and its first improvement. It is said the white stallion of Braddock was taken to Detroit after Braddock's defeat in 1755 and its Arabian blood lines became widely disseminated in the small horse then prevailing along the border. Tough and long-lived it was used for saddle, cart and plough all through the settlement.

At the first Fair held in 1844 Malden artisans and craftsmen had on exhibition samples of their work. Machinery shown included two horse-power threshers, a straw-cutter, root-cutter, corn and cob grinder. Among the implements was a 'Canadian' plough, harrows, a horse-drawn hay rake, a wagon and cart. Horse harness for both farm and pleasure use was shown along with sole and side leather and a calf skin. Still other awards were given for a bedstead and a patent beehive.

Mr. James Dougall, the Windsor merchant who had recently built 'Rosebank' as a country home near Amherstburg, had also established a nursery for the propagation of fruit trees. He was the most consistent winner in the Horticulture department. Out of this particular Township Agriculture Society grew a County Agriculture Society with an annual Exhibition and also induced other townships to form their own local units. Some of these Societies still function.

One of the first steel share plows was made in Malden by George Thompson in his shop on Lot 96. The maker was a fugitive from slavery who first entered Canada in the Province of Quebec but subsequently came to Malden. He was an expert blacksmith and was the instructor to the young Pillon brothers whose later shop was long a landmark on the Pike Road. It is related that the first Township Council met for organization in the Pillon shop.

However, commencing in the 1850's and well established by the 1860's was the production of farm implements and equipment by large industrial firms thus marking the passing of the local artisan. The local agents did much of their business on credit and there were but few farmers that did not have at one time or another a machine note to pay after harvest. Here and there through Malden can still be found samples of farm equipment made by three Amherstburg iron founders, Haynes Brothers, George Middleditch and Alex Jones.

In the life-time of people yet living there has been a remarkable evolution in the implements used and the methods pursued in production.



At one time the emphasis was on the production of wheat. In the early years spring wheat was the type grown but later fall sown wheat became the standard. After threshing the wheat was bagged and delivered to the dock side at Amherstburg where schooners transported the grain to destinations further east, Buffalo, Oswego and Montreal. Tales are told of the long wait involved when dozens of wagons were lined up for delivery.

Somewhat later production turned to corn and hogs for 'cash' income. In the beginning of settlement most of the corn grown was a quick-maturing type, either 'flint' or 'gourd seed', but later when fencing was better and birds less a problem the heavier producing 'dent' varieties came into general use. However, some farms continued to grow a small quantity of flint corn for domestic use, it being preferred for meal and hominy.

With the growing of corn came the production of pork and as long as there was a demand for salt pork and lard, Malden farmers prospered even if prices were low. The practice was to raise spring litters, slaughter them in the winter and deliver the frozen carcasses to Windsor packers and shippers. Generally, a number of farmers would arrange to make delivery together and the convoy of teams and sleighs would start out on the 20 mile trip about 4 a.m. and return in the late afternoon with empty sleighs but 'cash' in their jeans.

The change from the lard-type hog to the 'bacon' type commenced in the early 1900's when it became Agriculture policy to encourage the sale of Canadian bacon on the markets of Great Britain. It was soon found that the corn-fed hog produced a soft fat undesirable in bacon so hog production, which had been the mainstay on most Malden farms for a generation, lost its place. Corn, however, sold as grain still continues in heavy production.

Mention may be made here of some lesser crops which have disappeared from the local scene. At one time hops were grown in some quantity in the area, chiefly by the Bailey family. Broom corn had a short tryout before growers decided prices were too low. And until comparatively recently, sorghum 'cane' for the making of the well liked pioneer syrup was an annual crop in some sections of the township. Also a short-lived attempt to establish cheese production on the 'factory' system was made in the first decade of this century but for a number of reasons failed to attain a permanent place in Malden economy.

The First Great War marked a transition in methods. Farm labour was in short supply and there was a need for the greatest production possible. Tractors became common and improved roads made the use of cars and trucks practical throughout the year. There had been a period, still remembered by the older among us, when in the spring roads were all but impassable to wheeled traffic.

With the coming of tractors to Malden came major changes in farm implements. Implements specially designed for use with tractors lessened the hours formerly necessary to produce a given crop. The end result has been that what can be handled by one farmer is greatly increased. The most significant change has been the passing of the pioneer 'bee', no longer necessary when implements and work are geared to one-man or a man and helper operation. With the passing of the 'bee' there has been a certain social loss — less acquaintance with the neighbours' views and problems.

In recent years new crops have made their appearance. Soy beans and cannery crops, tomatoes, corn, peas and asparagus are the chief items in this category. Turkey farming is still another specialty with some Malden farmers. Beekeeping is another.

Another major change has been new methods of weed-control and fertilizing. Present Malden practice gives ever greater emphasis to manufactured fertilizers and soil-conditioners.

The fluid milk market first developed with Detroit dairies about forty years ago but later with the rapid growth of Windsor, that city absorbed all of the Malden milk. At first the milk was delivered by interurban electric cars to Windsor but now and for some thirty years, the milk is gathered at the farm dairy by truck. The observation made by Father Hennepin in 1679 when



he passed Malden with LaSalle that . . . "Those who will have the good fortune to possess the lands of this agreeable and fertile strait will bless those who made smooth the road" has been amply fulfilled and reflected in the development of agriculture in Malden. 1958



## 19

### The Settlement of Malden

In 1742 the Huron Mission moved from Detroit and settled in Malden. While the Mission was referred to as the "Bois Blanc Mission" I believe there is ample evidence that the Mission was located on the mainland and not on the island we know today as Bob-Lo. Descriptions refer to the crescent-shaped bay at the site of the Mission and we can identify that with one side of the point of land known later as Elliott's Point which point jutted out from the mainland opposite the lower end of Bois Blanc Island. This point has disappeared in the past century, initially, by the removal of sand and gravel for sale to contractors and subsequently, by the erosion of the point by increased current in the Detroit River induced by the channel improvements. The Bois Blanc Mission served a village of some twenty dwellings. The villagers were Christian "Hurons" or Wyandots.

In 1747 Orotany or Chief Nicholas residing at Sandusky, a pagan and under English influence rebelled against the French at Detroit and caused so much distress that the Mission was again moved, this time to a site opposite Detroit where the present University of Windsor is now located. A brief return was made to the old site in Malden but in 1751 the Mission was finally abandoned and the up-river site again occupied. This became the nucleus of the later Parish of Assumption when the French of Detroit themselves began a settlement on the east side of the Detroit which became known as the Petite Cote Settlement. Its first grants commence with dates in 1747.

In 1783 Jacob Schieffelin secured a grant from the Ottawa Indians for a tract seven miles square at the mouth of the river. He registered this gift with a Detroit notary October 16, 1783. Immediately protests were made by various persons at Detroit which were addressed to the Governor at Quebec and the grant was cancelled. Schieffelin was a merchant at Detroit.

In 1784 another group of Indians, some Hurons, granted the same area, now comprised in Malden, to officers and men of the Indian Department who had served with them on the frontiers during the Revolution. A running survey of the riverfront was made and lots assigned. It is apparent that the prime movers in securing this grant were three men, Alexander McKee, William Caldwell and Mathew Elliott. To prevent opposition the names of other persons influential in government were included as recipients to share in the division of lands. Among these was Captain Byrd, commanding at Detroit, who secured a lot now part of the town of Amherstburg. It was also held out as an inducement of official sanction that the proprietors, if successful, would grant lands to Loyalists and discharged soldiers. In the end, instead, the Loyalists and discharged soldiers were settled in 1790 on land now composing the townships of Colchester and Gosfield, and Alexander McKee settled in another Loyalist settlement on the Thames in present Kent County.



Actual permanent settlement of Malden commenced with the summer of 1784 with William Caldwell, Mathew Elliott and Captain Byrd starting to clear. Byrd hired Edward Hazel, a Loyalist to do the hewing and slashing on his plot and on it by 1796 there is a record of two houses erected and occupied and sixteen acres cleared.

William Caldwell's lot lay immediately south of a little stream that entered the Detroit about opposite the middle of Bois Blanc Island. Its present-day designation is the Conklin Lumber Yard and the Pike Road was the lane along the north edge of Caldwell's lot.

Mathew Elliott had the wisdom to select for his lot the land formerly occupied by the Mission farm and had only to clear off underbrush that had grown on the Mission fields abandoned thirty-three years before. Accordingly, with the aid of some 40 or 50 slaves he soon had a flourishing establishment. His residence erected in 1784 stood until some time in the early 1900's. By the mid-1790's travellers have recorded that Elliott had 700 or more cattle on his farm. He had a tannery to make leather from the skins. The beef was salted and was an article in the Indian trade and for the supply of Government Posts. In 1797 he received a Government grant for 3,000 acres in Malden thus regularizing to that amount the Indian gift of 1784. Elliott was appointed Deputy Agent in the Indian Department in 1790 and in 1796 made Superintendent at Amherstburg. His immediate superior was Colonel Alexander McKee.

The McKee lot lay on the riverfront between that of William Caldwell and Mathew Elliott and was not occupied by McKee himself. In 1791 he permitted a large party of Moravian Mission Indians, mostly of the Delaware tribe, to settle there. However, their stay was only for a year as the missionaries decided that a better place for their purposes was a tract on the Thames River near present Moraviantown and the Indians removed there. The Moravian Mission Indians had suffered much in the Revolution. On one occasion 97 of their men and boys were herded into their church in Ohio and massacred by a party of Kentucky militiamen. Since that occasion they had many removals. During their short stay in Malden the Moravians built a school and church.

In 1796 the British had to evacuate Detroit where they had been for 36 years and hand over that place to the American government. The necessity of that removal had been foreseen for a number of years and in the various surveys of the Malden front a place of 2,000 yards was reserved for government. The site included the lot that had been assigned to Colonel Byrd in the 1784 gift from the Indians. Because of this reservation by the government and the irregular method by which the Indians had made the gift, Colonel Byrd was unable to receive any compensation for the expenses he had made in clearing. The Royal Engineers found some 16 acres of forest cleared and a crop of wheat sown where it was decided that a new Post was to be built to accommodate the Government Departments coming from Detroit. Edward Hazel, the tenant of Colonel Byrd, for the loss of his crop received some rum from the Government Stores. Hazel thereupon removed to Mersea township where he commenced another farm.

When the British military establishment left Detroit a good many of the Detroit merchants left also. A few settled at Sandwich and the remainder came down river to be near the protection of the New Post. The merchants built log shops and homes along the waterfront where present Dalhousie Street is now and within the first year occupied the space between Richmond and Caldwell's lot. The commander of the Post was a young Captain, William Mayne, only 20 years old. He was very conscientious and had warned the merchants that they were squatting on land reserved by the Government and had reported the matter to Headquarters at Quebec. Back came an order to remove the merchants. The question was where? Already all the land in the vicinity was claimed by someone, Indians or settlers. Colonel McKee then offered a the lot he owned a half mile lower down. Captain Caldwell also laid out a paper town on his lot which he expected to sell lot by lot except for a site for a District Court House which he would donate. The merchants, however, were not without influence and they made representations



as to the losses they has sustained in moving from Detroit and a second removal in the depth of winter would be a harassment. Consequently, the area of the proposed Fort was reduced and the commander of the Post directed to give licences of occupation to all worthy applicants. By 1799 there were three streets occupied called First, Second and Third. In the early 1800's deeds were issued to the lot holders, the streets re-named and the lots re-numbered. Richmond Street was the north limit of the town and by 1820 side streets were laid out as far back as Victoria Street to the present day.

Along the riverfront below the town other farms were occupied early. Two interpreters in the Indian Department, Simon Girty and Charles Reaume, commenced farming operations before 1790. The first record of a marriage in Malden was that of Simon Girty and Catherine Malott who were married "at the mouth of the Detroit River" in 1790 by Reverend Augustus Frederick Weizbach. (Weizbach was an applicant for a Loyalist grant in Colchester that same year.) There is an old tradition that the Reaume farm was cropped annually before 1784 by a resident of Detroit who went there each spring to plant corn and after the harvest returned to the protection of the Fort at Detroit for the winter and, that the farm is the oldest continuously-cropped farm in the present Province of Ontario.

The War of 1812 stopped settlement for a number of years. The merchant houses in Amherstburg experienced a great drop in the fur trade after the War as the American government fostered American fur companies with agents in Toledo, Ypsilanti, Detroit and Saginaw that shut off the old trade with the Wabash country. Emigration from Great Britain was only a trickle by the time the Detroit border was reached so it was not until the 1830's that the back country of Malden began to fill. When trade revived attention was turned to new lines. The packing of fish and pork for sale in eastern markets, square timber in the shape of oak and walnut found a market in Quebec for eventual sale overseas, and tobacco with a limited sale in Ireland are some of the items mentioned.

One of the first farms to be occupied back from the Detroit River was Lot 25, Concession 3 on the Big Creek, which was settled on by Daniel Botsford and Henry Wright. A third man, Stephen Hubbard, built a tannery. All three were brothers-in-law having married three daughters of David Kemp of the Royal Engineers at Fort Malden. The date of the occupation was 1832. Lots 22 and 23 immediately east of the town and Fort were laid out in small "Park" lots and were sold mostly to speculators.

DAN B -  
MY GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER

About 1828 a causeway was built across the Big Creek to join with the old Indian trail that ran up from Oxley. This was made at what soon became the Pike Road when Caldwell's lane was extended to the east boundary of Malden. About this time the rear concessions of Malden were surveyed and opened for settlement. The first farms were along the Pike Road and the Big Creek and lake shore. Sometime prior to 1849 a causeway and bridge had crossed the Big Creek at Hutchins and part of the old Indian trail was closed.

Gradually the original grants to Mathew Elliott, William Caldwell and Alexander McKee which had extended back from the river to the present 6th Concession were sold off in farm lots. The 2nd Concession Road was opened in 1863 marking the end of the breaking up of those large tracts. By that time the back of Malden was occupied. The Malden-Colchester Town Line was chopped out in 1851 and graded in 1854. The Malden-Anderdon Town Line was still in bush as late as 1856 when steps were taken to sell the timber, but in the early 1860's it was cleared, graded and bridged where necessary.

The route of present Highway 18 east from the river was ditched and graded in 1862. The Big Creek was bridged just north of the present highway in 1861. The Collision Side Road was being cleared in 1865. In 1867 a fence was ordered to be removed that was erected across the 7th Concession. About the last part of the township to be settled on and cleared was the north-east corner. The Long Marsh was bridged at the 9th Concession in 1862 and on the 8th Concession in 1878.



Lots 72 to 81 inclusive and Lots 90 to 94 inclusive were "Clergy Reserve" lands and the proceeds of sale were applied to the support of certain Protestant denominations. Because the town lots of Amherstburg were so early settled on, no provision was made in the town plot of Amherstburg for the Reserve for Clergy. In later days, when it was necessary to set aside the one-seventh for the purposes of the Clergy Reserve, it was done by adding to the Deed of the Amherstburg lot so many square feet of a part of one of the Clergy Reserve lots out in the township of Malden, sufficient to make up the one-seventh deficiency in Amherstburg.

In 1844 we have a record of schools open in Malden. These were the Big Creek School, the Pike Road School, the Atkin Settlement School, the Lake Shore and the Union School at Vereker. The Union School was attended by coloured children and the name "Union" indicated that the Union section embraced the same area as other school sections attended by white children. In Amherstburg in 1844 there were four schools — one Catholic, one coloured and two Common schools. Amherstburg was still part of Malden until 1851 when it separated and was incorporated under a special charter as a town though deficient in population for that status. It became a full-fledged town in 1878.

The population of Malden in the 1880's was derived from three main groups—emigrants from the British Isles, native Canadians of French ancestry and descendants of fugitive slaves.

When Mathew Elliott established himself on the Malden front he had the aid of some 40 to 60 negro slaves. These he had acquired on a raid in Kentucky during the Revolutionary War, his share of the booty. A few free negroes were among the Loyalists seeking lots from the Detroit Land Board. The greater number of negroes came into Canada, many of them at Amherstburg, following the War of 1812. It is said that the American officers had negro servants and when these servants returned to Kentucky they spread the word that slavery was abolished in Upper Canada, and any slave could free himself by following the North Star. In the 1837 Rebellion more than 100 fugitives were in one company of the Militia and served on the frontier through the schooner ANNE affair to the Battle of Windsor. In Amherstburg the negroes founded two churches and in Malden another. The neighbouring township of Colchester had several others at Gilgal, New Caanan, Gesto, Mount Zion, Pleasant Valley and Central Grove still remains along with several more recent churches.

The native Canadian of French origin that helped people Malden were for the most part descendants of those French families that had settled on the Detroit between 1701 and 1760. Most of them had ancestors and relatives that had first lived in Essex County in the old settlements of Petite Cote and Assumption.

Among the emigrants from the British Isles were a number of old soldiers who were brought to Amherstburg in 1851 as part of the Pensioner force. (In 1851 the Regulars were removed from Fort Malden where they had stood guard for 65 years and were replaced by a group of Pensioners who had already served 21 years in the Army. The Pensioners themselves were disbanded in 1859 and some of them became settlers in Malden and Colchester, most though, remained in Amherstburg where they resided on lots laid out on the Military Reserve in that part of Amherstburg north of Richmond Street and east of Sandwich Street.)

A few Malden settlers had their origin in families that left the United States during the Civil War, the action of that country's government not meeting with their approval. Other Malden settlers were Canadians who were originally from the Maritimes, Quebec and eastern Ontario, and who moved westward following the tendency of the times. Malden itself contributed to this tendency when various families moved westward into Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and Kansas during the 1870's and 1880's and again to the northwest right up to the First World War.

From about 1910 and the coming of the automobile the development of the river and lake shore beaches as residential areas separate from farming or fishing has been a feature of Malden. Originally strictly a seasonal transfer of residence during the hot months, more and



more the tendency has been for year-round occupancy and so the "summer people" have become permanent settlers. This is part of the urbanization that is taking place everywhere in modern Ontario.

The municipal boundaries of Malden have remained unaltered since 1851 when the town of Amherstburg was set off. The same can be said for Anderdon but it is evident that soon the annexation to Amherstburg of abutting lands will be very much in agitation. The balance of the good and bad factors is a decision that will be conditioned by the fact that Malden's beginnings of two hundred years ago is but a small dot lost in the blot of urban sprawl, and that this old earth is being populated at a rate that will double itself in the next thirty years. 1966



### Early Settlers of Malden Carved Fine Homes from Forest Areas

The early days in Malden date back with certainty to 1784 when the officers of the Indian Department procured farms for themselves from the Indians. There is a tradition that the Reaumes had corn fields along the river bank before this time, but lived there only in the summer time, and perhaps some others did the same. On an old French map of the Detroit region the residence of one Marcon is marked near the mouth of Big Creek. This map is dated 1760. In this connection there is also a tradition that in the early days there were other French settlers along the Lake shore and one Sunday morning when attending mass at a chapel nearby the land subsided so that on leaving the church the lake waters were ankle deep over the fields and remained so that the land was abandoned. The date of this occurrence can only be conjectured but as in past centuries some severe earthquakes have visited Canada it is likely one of the earthquakes years was so marked locally.

Mathew Elliott, Caldwell, Hazel and Simon Girty of the Indian Department were the first settlers in Malden. Their grants from the Indians were finally confirmed by the Detroit Land Board, but not without the title being disputed by some French gentlemen of Detroit who also laid claim to the lands. Colonel Byrd, the commandant at Detroit during the Revolution, sought for himself lands where the town of Amherstburg now stands. Though his original title was as good as Elliott's and Caldwell's from the fact that it was necessary for the British to evacuate the military post at Detroit and the site of Byrd's lot opposite Amherstburg was the best possible situation for a Fort as the channel ran so near and so commanded the river traffic Byrd could not get his grant confirmed. Long after the fort was constructed Byrd's widow was still trying to get some recompense for the loss of the land, but unsuccessfully.

All the first grants fronted on the Detroit River and reached back in most cases as far as the 5th Concession. The Pike road as far as the Busy Bee corner was the lane of the Caldwell farm.

Hazel lived on the farm fronting on Callam's Bay. He was a soldier in the War of 1812 and when the British lost command of this area he was forced to remain in hiding. In the day-time he would remain in the woods and at night enter his own cabin by a trap door. On one occasion while in the cabin he had to hurriedly hide as a former companion arrived to break the news to Mrs. Hazel that her husband had been killed! Eventually, he found the means to rejoin the army at Niagara and later his wife and her sister made the long trek through the wilderness to join him there.

With the building of the fort former residents of Detroit came to the new town which sprang up below the fort. First, Second and Third streets corresponding to our present Dalhousie, Ramsay and Bathurst streets were laid out with lots and on a certain day sold at auction. The Michles, the Kemps, and the Botsfords, all former employees at Detroit either in the Navy



Yard or the Engineers were purchasers in 1796 of some of these lots.

No settlement was made in the rear lots of Malden for a good many years. The "New Settlement" along the Lakefront of Colchester and Gosfield townships absorbed all the settlers, but in 1826 the Canada Company was organized in England as a colonization company and they acquired much of the land to the rear of the original grants in Malden. As fast as roads were opened and lots surveyed the farms were taken up. Some of the new settlers were sons and grandsons of the Loyalists who had settled in Colchester and Gosfield, others were French families from the upper reaches of the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair.

Not all the Malden land was owned by the Canada Company as some was retained by the Crown for the maintenance of the Established Clergy. The income from the sale of the Clergy Reserve lands was a fruitful source of political disputes and was one of the grievances that led to the Rebellion of 1837. In the end all denominations shared the income.

Some of the early French families of Malden were the Deslippes, Barrons, Goodchilds, Graveline, Langlois, Marentettes, Morin, Lapierres, Lepains, Ouellettes, Pillons, Reaumes, Robidoux, Bastien, Beaudoin, Richards, Meloches, Amlins, Brodeurs (Brothers), and others.

The officers at the Fort also contributed their quota to the permanent settlers. The Hunts, Duffs, Caldwells, Ironsides, Elliotts, all were connected in some way with the British establishment at Malden, some were officers in the Commissary, some in the Indian Department and all married locally and their descendants are numerously represented here today.

Up to 1830 the bulk of the population of Malden was concentrated in the settlement around the Fort. However, the various colonization schemes got underway and soon families from overseas were coming in to hew new homes from the solid bush. The early settlers had the wolf, the bear and the fox to contend with. The scanty livestock, especially the farmer's winter store of bacon in the form of "hog on the hoof" was the favourite morsel of old bruin. Other tales are told of encounters with wolves. Once a pioneer's wife returned to her cabin after a short absence to find wolves had gone in the open door while she was gone. Not a bit abashed, but rather angry at the destruction being wrought inside she grasped an axe and standing at the cabin door despatched each wolf as he sought the safety of the woods. Nothing heroic about such exploits, just the usual run of pioneer incidents. The deer were still plentiful, and there are a few yet living who have hunted the deer on land which has long been claimed as the sole domain of domestic stock.

Among the early settlers who were descended from the earlier Loyalists of Colchester and Gosfield are the families of Brush, Mallott, Harris, Cornwall, Dowler, Tofflemire, Wright, Wigle and Fox.

Early arrivals from Ireland were the Atkins, Gotts, Goldens, McGee and Sellars. From Scotland came the Andersons, Borrowmans, Callams, Cousins, Gibbs, Campbells and McLeans. From England came the Armitage, Atkinson, Bailey, Bratt, Edgar, Honor (originally Huguenot French), Martins, Lanes, Parks, Pigeons, Squires, Waters and many others.

Later emigration from the States brought other families still represented here. Two families who came during the American Civil War were the Ongs and the Spenciers.

The fact that British dominions were free from slavery attracted many fugitives from the southern states and as was pointed out in a recent Echo article many of these folk were Malden settlers.

The blood of the aborigines is not all lost to its native haunts as many a pioneer family have somewhere in the background of the family tree a *courier de bois* who wedded a dusky maiden of the forest who gives to her distant descendants a grace of form and beauty of face that always is admired.



To the new settlers from Central Europe the old settlers extend a hand. In a generation or two the new stream will mingle with the old and the new race of Canadians will face the horizons of the future with the same confidence the pioneers tackled the tangle of the forest and hewed themselves a nation. 1940



### **Old Amherstburg Landmarks Have Colorful and Romantic Background**

Two links with old Amherstburg's historic past are in process of disappearing. One case is the wrecking of the former Grammar School on Park Street east. This structure has been so long occupied as a dwelling that many have forgotten its original use as a school building. The school was a fountain of knowledge to the Amherstburg youth of a century ago who had aspirations to an education higher than the common schools provided.

Another severance with the past occurs through the action of the town council in disposing of the residence on the Park Farm, Dalhousie Street south. The building is to be either removed or wrecked. The house is a good deal past the century mark in age, and like other wooden houses of the period is "French-framed". Many of the posts and beams are black walnut. The land on which it is situated was granted in 1784 by the Indians to Captain William Caldwell, which grant was later confirmed by the Land Board of the District of Hesse. The old residence connects Amherstburg with the days when slavery existed in British territory for either as the builder of the house or else as an early occupant was one John Stockwell, a slave owner. John Stockwell was the son of the Loyalist of the same name. The younger Stockwell married Polly Botsford, eldest daughter of Henry Botsford, who was a Loyalist from Connecticut. The slaves were a heritage from earlier Virginia days when some of the Southern Loyalists with their livestock, household goods and slaves made their way through the forests to Detroit (British territory until 1796).

The best-known of the early slave-owners was Mathew Elliott, whose original house, built about 1785, stands a mile below Amherstburg on the bank of the Detroit River. Without doubt the old Elliott house is one of the oldest houses within a radius of several hundred miles, but it is being destroyed piece-meal at the hands of thoughtless vandals. The site of Mathew Elliott's farm had been formerly the corn fields of an Indian Village, and accordingly required but a short period to clear off the brush that had grown up, a task speeded with the aid of sixty slaves he brought from Virginia. In a few years he had several hundred acres under cultivation. In the Revolution Elliott had become an officer in the Indian Department where he attained great influence, partly through his marriage to an Indian woman, who became the mother of two sons. When past middle age he married a second time and by this wife, Sarah Donovan of Boston, he had two more sons who in later life were prominent in local affairs. Part of Mathew Elliott's duties were in connection with the annual distribution of supplies and money to the Indians. Though the Department of Indian Affairs was distinct from the Navy and Army Departments the Commandant at Fort Malden sought to control Elliott's activities. As a result of this a quarrel broke out which resulted in charges being made that ended in Elliott being ousted from his office. His petitions to the Government were all in vain until the War of 1812 broke out when the authorities were glad to make use of his influence with the Western Indians.



Elliott participated in all the local battles in which the Indians were engaged and was in the retreat to Niagara. He died at Burlington in 1814 from the effects of his exertions. After the War ended Elliott's widow and sons returned to Amherstburg and once again brought the farm to a prosperous level. The Elliotts had the reputation of treating their slaves very kindly but it is said that when slavery was abolished throughout the Empire in 1833 William IV they neglected to inform their slaves of the event and nearly a year had passed before the news percolated to the recipients of the King's manumission. 1939



### Plowing Matches Were Once Big Events at Amherstburg Fairs

Many from this community journeyed to St. Thomas to view the recent international Plowing Match, and there marvelled at the skill and dexterity displayed.

A good deal of comment was heard regarding the practicableness of duplicating such nicety of work on the home farm. When one sees plowmen going up and down the furrows on their hands and knees making precise the lay of every cloud of up-turned earth it requires some inquiry whether the effort is worthwhile. Certainly no farmer with acres to prepare for seeding could afford the time the plowmen at the International Match expended on a single land.

In the ages since man first turned from following the roaming herds and became a raiser of cereals it has been an object to efficiently turn the earth in preparation of the seed bed. Plowing being the primary operation in the cycle of agriculture procedure the art of plowing well has come to be a symbol of a fundamental. Thus, one must remember that the type of plowing seen at a great Plowing Match bears about the same resemblance to ordinary field plowing as ceremonial drill in military affairs bears to squad drill. The basic elements are the same but precision and nicety are lacking in the one and carried to the quintessence of perfection in the other. No rookie is expected to perform in ceremonial drill, and only those who are high priests in the art of plowing can hope to win an award in an international Plowing Match.

One of the novelties of the Match which attracted a huge gallery of onlookers was the appearance of a team of oxen. Their driver manipulated a plow said to be 125 years old. With hundreds of rubber tired tractors purring in an adjoining field and airplanes soaring overhead emphasis was given to the contrast of the old way and the new. However, the press of the crowd was so great no effective plowing could be done, but the spectators were satisfied to see even that much of a link with pioneer days. Here and there were old-timers who as boys had handled oxen, and who stoutly maintained that for plowing and work in the bush oxen were superior to their supplanter, the horse. Though the plowmen driving teams were there in numbers, more and more each year are given way to tractors. No doubt the day will come when a team of horses will be the novelty the oxen provided at this 1940 Match.

In the old days when Amherstburg had a Fall Fair, Plowing Matches were sometimes held in connection. In the minute book of the Malden and Anderdon Agriculture Society (organized in May, 1844) a record has been left of a Plowing Match held October 1, 1846. The Society had 25 pounds at their disposal for the awarding of premiums and set 30 shillings of that amount aside for three awards to plowmen. The winners of this match, held 96 years ago, are given as, 1st, Thomas Horsman; 2nd, John Paten; 3rd, Chas. Sageman.

In 1847 the contest was enlarged by adding a class for boys under 18. The judges appointed were Mr. Atkinson, Mr. William McGee, and Mr. J. Maloney. The date of this contest was October 15, 1847, and the winners in the Mens' class were, 1st, Mr. Lovell; 2nd, Mickle; 3rd,



Graveline. A third year found the Agriculture Society again sponsoring a Plowing Match, but this time it was held in the spring on April 20, 1848. There were now three classes listed as "Scotch Plough", "Canadian Plough", and "Boys". The judges were Joseph Graveline, Sr., William Mickle, and James Mason. The events were decided as follows: Scotch Ploughs, 1st, Lovell; 2nd, Bailey; 3rd, Thomas Horsman. Boys: 1st, Canadian Plough, Mickle. Boys: Scotch Plough, 1st, Bailey, 2nd, Maloney. In 1849 the Match was again held in connection with the Fall Fair. For that year the judges were Mr. Turk, Mr. Archer, Mr. Ridsdale, William McGee, and Patrice Barron. No record is left of that year's prize-winners. Most of the above mentioned names are still familiar in the community.

In 1850 as the result of a new Act of Parliament the various township agriculture societies then in existence were re-vamped and a county society organized in each electoral division. Because of this no Fall Fairs were held by the local Society until 1855. Again the Plowing Match was to be a feature and judges were appointed as follows: John Bell, George Vollans, John Davie, John B. Ouellette, and Henry Wright. John S. Ridsdale, John Bailey and Daniel Botsford were appointed a committee to procure a suitable piece of ground. From some cause not disclosed no competitors appeared and from an examination of the Minute Book no other effort was ever made to hold a Plowing Match in connection with Amherstburg Fall Fairs. However, in that same month of October, 1855, two plowmen took part in a match in connection with the County Fair held at Windsor. The 1st prize went to John Waters, and the 2nd to J. Hodgins.

From occasional entries in the Essex County Society's Minute Book one gathers that the Plowing Matches were still held annually for the following decade, but despite increased premiums and special prizes there were few competitors. A final, uninspiring, Match was held at Kingsville in 1867 which caused the following fulmination to appear in the Directors' Report of that year: "Various reasons are adduced why more interest is not taken in such things but we think the true solution of the difficulties are cowardliness and pride, love of pleasure, and constitutional laziness. Fear of being beaten may prevent some from trying but it is a notorious fact that the majority would rather be mere spectators and on-lookers than take part in a good and commendable enterprise." The above language is likely the composition of Alexander Bartlett who was secretary at that period.

Judging from the size of the throng at the Plowing Match just past, we moderns, like our ancestors, prefer to be "mere spectators and onlookers", content to view the greatest spectacle of its kind on earth. 1940.



## 23.

### Anderdon, Past and Present

The township of Anderdon extends along the Canada shore of the Detroit River for five miles above the town of Amherstburg. It extends back from the river in Essex County some seven miles. The upper portion of the Detroit River frontage of Anderdon is featured by the mouth of the slow-moving Canard River and its extensive marshes, while nearer the town of Amherstburg the banks are higher and from a wide-spread view is obtained of the beautiful lower Detroit River with its many islands and busy marine traffic. Formerly in a state of nature and the haunt of the Indian it is now highly developed with areas of farms, industry and suburban homes supporting a population of 3,382.

Anderdon was a portion of the tract along the lower Detroit described as seen by Father Hennepin in 1679 as being an earthly paradise — “the banks are vast meadow and the prospect is terminated with some hills covered with vine yards, trees bearing fruit, groves and forests, so well disposed that one would think that Nature alone could not have made, without the help of Art, so charming a prospect.” There in the opening among the forest trees the Indians had their carefully-tended gardens where they grew beans, melons, pumpkins, corn and tobacco, while their huts were disposed along the Indian trail now part of Highway 18.

In early historic days the Indians were an Algonquin group known as the Neutrals, but after the inroads of the Iroquois into south-western Ontario in the mid-17th century the Neutrals were either killed or dispersed among neighbouring tribes in Ohio and Michigan and their former hunting grounds were slowly occupied by other Indians who filtered in, largely from the north. Among these later Indians was a band of Wyandots or “Hurons” as they were called by the French. They had come in considerable number after Cadillac was established at Detroit, and eventually established villages at points on the Detroit River, the Lake Erie shore and the Maumee valley in Ohio.

The Wyandots were the remnant of the Huron Nation destroyed by the Iroquois in the mid-1600's. Dispersed from their former site along the south part of Georgian Bay they had fled in stages to successive sites westward, finding temporary homes at Green Bay on Lake Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie and it was only after two generations of wandering that their steps were turned southwards to the lower lakes. There their influence was to be an important factor in Indian relations for the next century. They lived among or had as neighbours the Chippewas, the Ottawas, the Pottawatomies and not far away were villages of their ancient enemies, the Senecas. As confederates of the Chippewas, the Ottawas and the Pottawatomies, they became the Keeper of the Council Fire and meanwhile their own ancient records were preserved along with their language and tribal organization. They were of the Arendharenon Clan, a name meaning “Rock People”, probably an euphoniam for “Snakes”. This name Arendharenon is conjectured to be the source of the name “Anderdon” now



applied to the township — a white man's modification of the original Indian pronunciation.

The Christian religion was brought to the Wyandots along the Detroit by the Jesuits who ministered to them at churches established especially for them. One of these<sup>a</sup> was first located at or near Bois Blanc Island and later re-established nearer Fort Pontchartrain at a site near the Canadian end of the Ambassador Bridge at Windsor. About 1749 white men became neighbours of the Indians when a tract laying a few miles to the north of Anderdon was granted by the French King to a number of former residents of Detroit. It is significant that a good share of these early grantees were then or later, connected with Indian affairs as traders or interpreters, and some of them had Indian relatives through marriage. The first white settlement became known as Petite Cote or facetiously as "the Misery Side" of the Detroit River as life to the settler was more primitive than the older settlement on the Detroit side of the river. The Petite Cote is now comprised in the present town of LaSalle and the nearby garden district of the township of Sandwich West.

Following the War of the Revolution and the influx of Loyalists the need for more land for settlement arose, and the British Government which still retained the Detroit area instructed the officers of the Indian Department to ascertain the opinions of the Indians respecting a surrender of the lands along the north shore of western Lake Erie. Subsequently, in 1790 at Detroit, a treaty was signed by the Indians of the area surrendering most of the land requested. The Wyandots were among the signatories. However, it specifically reserved for the Wyandots their claim to lands around the Wyandot Mission in Windsor, and the area now known as the township of Anderdon.

In 1796 the British evacuated Detroit and as a result two new towns were established on the Canada side of the Detroit River. One at Sandwich, now a part of Windsor, became the seat of the District Court and local government, and the other 18 miles down river just past Anderdon became the site of the new Fort Malden, while nearby the merchants who had left Detroit settled on a town-site laid out by the Military engineers which became the town of Amherstburg. The former government departments at Detroit were re-established at Malden. These included the Navy Yard, Commissary and Indian Department. One of the first demands was for a road communication across the Indian lands of Anderdon so access to the older settlement at Petite Cote and the new District seat could more readily be obtained. Another demand of the new settlers was for more space for a town-site at Sandwich. So a new treaty was in contemplation. The Indians on their part had complaints. During the building of Fort Malden the soldiers had trespassed on the Indian lands cutting down trees for fuel. To reconcile the settlers and Indians a new treaty was negotiated and signed in 1800 whereby some 1,300 acres of Wyandot lands were surrendered for a sum paid in goods to the value of 300 pounds Quebec currency.

The surrender included most of the "Huron Church" Reserve at Sandwich, together with a strip along the south boundary of Anderdon 500 yards in width (where the soldiers of Fort Malden had cut a few loads of wood) and sixty foot wide strip along the Detroit riverfront across Anderdon for a road. Captain Thomas McKee signed for the King and 19 Indians, representative of the Chiefs and Principal Warriors of the associated Chippewas, Potawatomies and Wyandots signed on behalf of the Indians. Among the witnesses were 15 whites including the officers then stationed at Fort Malden and the four interpreters — Simon Girty, T. Alex Clarke, Charles Reaume and John Martin.

In the War of 1812 the Anderdon Indian population was increased when many of the Wyandots formerly residing on the Michigan side of the Detroit River were induced by Colonel Mathew Elliott, then head of the British Western Indian Department, and Tecumseh to throw in their lot on the side of the British. This decision was a fateful one for after the battle of Lake Erie when the British fleet was destroyed, the commander at Amherstburg resolved to save what he could and made preparations for a retreat. He was opposed by Indian opinion headed



by that of Tecumseh. However, despite the protests of the Indians the retreat commenced and a few days later the retreating column was overtaken by the troops of Harrison and in the rearguard action Tecumseh was killed. As a result of this defeat the Indian leaders most forward in supporting the British cause were unable to return to their homes in Michigan so Anderdon became the seat of the Wyandot Council Fire.

After the War of 1812 there was a short period of depression followed by a surge of emigration from Great Britain. There developed an agitation for the opening up of the Anderdon Reserve to white settlers. This was resisted by the Indians under the influence of the old war chiefs, but an opposite party grew up which finally prevailed in 1836 and the Anderdon Reserve was ordered to be surveyed into concessions and farm lots. When the surveyors commenced work they were followed up by those in opposition and the survey stakes were pulled up. Finally, the surveyors were escorted by a party of soldiers and the survey was completed.

Meanwhile, the old Chief of the War party journeyed to the Canadian capital then at Quebec to lay his grievance at the foot of the throne through the Governor-General. The influence of the Indian Department was decisive and the old chief's protest was passed over. Each Wyandot male received a farm lot of 200 acres and others were sold for their benefit. The Chippewas, though non-residents on the Reserve, were given the proceeds of one block for their own use on the representation they had been prior occupants before the coming of the Wyandots.

It was about this time, around 1836, that the old chiefs held their last Council. The old log tepee Council House which stood on the riverfront had already been demolished and the land on which it stood ploughed over, but the Chiefs met in the house of the oldest chief, Splitlog. Here they held their last feast and dance and forever turned their backs against the hope that the old ways could prevail. The Wyandots still residing in Michigan made a partial surrender of their lands in 1836 and the remaining part in 1848. Most of the Wyandots had been removed by the American government to Kansas. Some of the Anderdon Band had gone to Kansas with them taking with them the old wampum belts and parchments. In the 1860's an endeavour was made to recover them and return to Anderdon but most of them were already lost.

The Wyandots by this date had become farmers and most of Anderdon was settled either by Indians or whites, though a few fugitive slaves had also found refuge there. When the Western District Council first met in 1842 Anderdon was represented by its elected Reeve, John Sloan. Sloan had in early life been an officer in the British Navy. He built a home on the Anderdon riverfront which is now the main office of the Brunner Mond Canada Company. For a number of years he leased the Anderdon Stone Quarry from the Indians and stone from that quarry furnished the building material for many buildings in Detroit, Windsor and Amherstburg. The best known is the Mariners' Church in Detroit which was built in 1849. Commencing in 1869 Thomas B. White, a son of Chief White, became Reeve and he was re-elected no less than eighteen terms. He became owner of the Anderdon Quarry and operated it taking out building block stone and stone for burning into lime. The lime kilns were located on the river bank and the channel nearby acquired its name of "the Lime Kiln Crossing" from this fact.

In 1872 the Canada Southern Railroad had reached Detroit from its origin at Niagara Falls. It passed through Anderdon and crossed the Detroit River from its Canadian terminus at Gordon Station into Michigan at Slocum Junction. The first part of the passage was by ferry to Stoney Island, from thence by bridge to Grosse Ile and by a second bridge to the mainland. The building of the railroad and its later operation brought Anderdon an increase in population. A few years later a cut-off was made to Windsor and the Gordon terminus became a Branch line station.

STONE



Among the new residents in Anderdon after the coming of the railroad was an element of "roughs and toughs". A small settlement which sprang up around the C. W. Thomas Saw Mill was known as "Hell's Corners" from the type of social life emanating from the tavern located there. On the same road nearer the riverfront was another tavern, the Cottage Tavern, and it added the name "Texas" to this local nomenclature from the number of shootings that occurred there. This name "Texas" was also used as a pen name by Dallas Norvell who lived in the vicinity and who wrote Nature sketches for the Detroit Free Press. The wharf in front of his place was a regular stopping place for the early Detroit River steamers and it too was known as "Texas."

Anderdon contributed a pair of bandits who for some months made headlines in newspapers of the United States and Canada. They were the Biddle brothers, sons of a respectable Anderdon family. From a few minor escapades locally they moved the scene of their operations to the United States, culminating in the shooting of a grocery man during a burglary. Captured and jailed in Pittsburg, the handsome and debonaire bandits made love to the jailer's wife so effectively she provided the means of their escape and eloped with them. They were pursued and in a gun battle they were wounded and re-captured. The public excitement was intense and promoters capitalized on the feeling and a number of books and plays were written with the Biddle "Boys" as the central figures.

In the Sport's world Anderdon provided a number of well-known personalities: one of the best-recalled was "Nig" Clark, the long time pitcher of the Cleveland Indians. It is said the name "Indians" was first bestowed on the club because Clark was a descendant of the Anderdon Wyandot Indians.

The prosperity of present-day Anderdon dates from the construction of the Brunner Mond Canada Company plant for the manufacture of soda ash and allied products in 1918. The basic supplies of salt and lime stone required in the Solvay Process are underlaying Anderdon in abundant amounts and the final product is itself so widely used in other industries that the plant operates continuously, night and day, the year round. Nearby other plants are located that make use of the basic soda ash in their own processing — calcium chloride and baking soda plants.

Politics have always been a feature of Anderdon's civic life. Probably no other township exhibits such a keen and careful scrutiny over its elected representatives. Anderdon elections have often featured brawls and contestants for civic honors in the past sometimes had to literally fight their way to victory.

Anderdon of the present is a township of homeowners. The built-up areas near Amherstburg are the Duff sub-divisions and Brunner Avenue on the site of the old Fraserville, while further north along the river bank is the beautiful Edgewater district. Sharing with adjacent townships Anderdon has on the north the Canard Church settlement and on the east boundary the village of McGregor. The people are of all races but the old French families prevail as the solid core of past and present growth. Over the past fifty years quite a large number of Italians have settled in the Anderdon Quarry district. Several fine new schools have been erected in recent years so the children are well served. More and more city-dwellers are making their homes in Anderdon to take advantage of its low taxes, country life and river scenery, as evidenced by the many fine homes built in Anderdon in recent years. Anderdon is a good place to live. 1957



### **The Origins and Settlement of Some Early Essex County Families**

Among the counties of Ontario, Essex was first to be settled. The origins of the settlers was most varied, so on a reduced scale like many places elsewhere, Essex County is a “melting pot of nationalities”. The facts of geography and history have made it so.

The first settlement in the area was that which grew around Fort Pontchartrain — the Detroit settlement. Fort Pontchartrain was a French fort and owed its being to the economics of the fur trade. It is true other interests were represented in the development of Detroit. The influence of the Church was always strong at the French court so we find the church was co-existent with the fort, and thus the Indians of the region early received the ministrations of the missionary fathers. The location of the Missions had a bearing on the pattern of settlement in Essex.

The French regime on the Detroit covered the span of years from 1701 to 1760 and, as was to be expected, all the early settlers were French. They were drawn almost entirely from two groups. The first group were former soldiers, both officers and men who were disbanded or received their discharges at Detroit and remained to become farmers, minor officials, craftsmen and merchants. The other group were participants in the fur trade. They were the canoe men engaged in the carrying trade between Montreal and Detroit and the more venturesome men who penetrated the Indian country trading for furs. Most of those in the fur trade were natives of Canada with former homes along the St. Lawrence, while the former soldiers were for the most part directly from Old France. Both groups were to contribute to the settlement of Essex County.

The town of Detroit was palisaded and its buildings clustered closely around the fort, with the spire of St. Anne’s church visible for miles up and down the river. The site was about the location of the present Federal building in downtown Detroit. The farms of the Detroit settlement were at first all on what is now the United States side of the Detroit River. Each farm had a frontage on the water and a depth of several miles back from the river into the forest. Commencing in 1734 the owners were granted the farms in perpetuity in return for annual token payments in grain. In a few years the farms extended along the shore up to Lake St. Clair and on the other side of the Fort down the Detroit as far as the Pottawatomie villages near the mouth of the Rouge River.

About 1747 permanent settlement began on the present Canadian side of the river and we enter on the actual settlement of what became Essex County. This came about from the fact that the farms on the Detroit side were becoming too distant from the town and the protection of the Fort. The nearest available land was used and this was that near Turkey Creek. The new settlement’s location was governed by the location of the Indian settlements above and below. Lower down the river in what was later the townships of Anderdon and Malden were lands occupied by the Wyandots or “Hurons” with the Mission of Bois Blanc as a center opposite the



island of the same name, while above near the present east side of Windsor was a village of the Ottawas. Just about this time the Mission of Bois Blanc was temporarily abandoned to be re-established at what was later the town of Sandwich. This was on account of the passage through the Detroit of bands of pagan Indians who annoyed the Christian Indians of the Mission. The Sandwich location of the Mission was, of course, nearer the Fort at Detroit and safer from attack on that account. A year or two later the Indians returned to the old Mission site only to again abandon it and make permanent the location at Sandwich. The Mission at Sandwich became the nucleus of the present parish of Assumption.

Officially, the new settlement near Turkey Creek became known as the Petite Cote in reference to its lesser extent of coast as compared with that on the Detroit side, Petite Cote being on the inside of the curve of the Detroit River. This name endured until recent years when two other names emerged, that of LaSalle and Ojibway, towns which grew out of the old settlement. Ojibway is, it appears, to disappear as three adjoining municipalities are at the present contending for its annexation.

Here in Petite Cote the first road in Ontario was laid out. It is now over 200 years old and is designated King's Highway No. 18. The first settlers along its length were the ancestors of many who today farm and garden on the original homesteads. Other descendants dwell elsewhere in the county. The names of these first settlers are familiar on both sides of the river — we have these listed, BEAUDOIN, CAMPEAU, CHENE, CHAMPAGNE, LAJEUNESSE, MELOCHE, MORAND, MARENTETTE, REAUME, PILLETTE, SEGUIN, ST. AUBIN and TREMBLEY.

When the river frontage in the Petite Cote settlement was taken up, settlement proceeded above the Huron Church at Old Sandwich towards Lake St. Clair. This newer settlement was generally referred to as the Assumption settlement and was on land ceded by the Ottawas to Baron Longueil and confirmed to the owners by a grant from the French Crown. The first settlers appear to have been JACQUES PARENT, LAURENT PARENT, CLAUDE REAUME, JOHN B. LEDUC and JOHN B. OUELLETTE.

By 1790, we find many other family names still familiar as residents along the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair — ANTAYA, BARRON, BEAUDOIN, BELANGER, BELPERCHE, BENITEAU, BERTHIAUME, BERTRAND, BEZAIRE, CHARRON, BISSONETTE, COTE, DELISLE, DESROSIER, DROUILLARD, DUMOUCHELLE, GAMELIN, GOYEAU, HEBERT, JANISSE, LABADIE, LABELLAN, LADORE, LAMARSH, LANGLOIS, LESPERANCE, MAILLOUX, MAISONVILLE, NANTAIS, NADEAU, PARE, PELTIER, RENAUD, SEGUIN, SOUILLIER, THIBAUT, TOURNEAU, TOUSSAINT and TRUDELLÉ.

Doubtless the ancestors of still others were then resident in the county for we find by examining old accounts that in 1808 the following french families are named: AMELLE, BABY, BASTIEN, BAUMIER, BELCOURT, BEAUSOLEIL, BELAIR, BENOIT, BERGERON, BERNARD, BONDY, BOUFFARD, CARON, CHAPUT, CLOUTIER, DEQUINDRE, DESNOYER, D'HETRE, DUBOIS, DUCHARME, DUFOUR, DUPUIS, FORTIER, GUILBAULT, GOUIN, GIRARD, GIGNAC, HUNEULT, JEANETTE, JANISSE, JOLI, LAFERTE, LAFRAMBOISE, LAFONTAINE, LAMIRANDE, LEDUC, LEMAY, MARTIN, MARCOTTE, MAIVILLE, MENARD, MENY, MONFORTON, NAVARRE, PAJOT, PLANT, PINAUD, PIQUETTE, POUGET, PRATT, PRIMEAU, RIOPELLE, ROBIDOUX, ROCHELEAU, ROY (KING), ST. ANTOINE, ST. DENIS, ST. LOUIS, ST. MARTIN, ST. ONGE, SEMANDE, TELLIER, TROTIER and VIGNEAUX.



It will be recognized that many of these names were once found on the Detroit side, but if less prominent there now it is only because they have remained to become but a small fraction in the present huge population of the city of Detroit. In Essex County it is different. F. X. Chauvin is the authority for the statement that there are 30,000 French-speaking persons in the county, and that the population of French extraction is at an all time peak.

An interesting element in the racial origins of Essex County is that derived from the native Indian. In the 1700's many men of the before-mentioned French families, particularly those who came early or were engaged in the fur trade, married Indian women and these daughters of the forest contributed not a little to present-day blood lines. The registers of old St. Anne's at Detroit record a number of these marriages with the bride's name and identification being shown simply as, for example, "Mary Catherine, a savage". Thus it happens that there are those in Essex County who can trace to a Pottawatomie, Ojibway, Ottawa or Wyandot ancestry.

This practical recognition of the equality of races was of considerable advantage to a trader in obtaining favour with the Indians, and the off-spring of these early union were, in later years, a factor in the pacification of the Indian country back of Detroit, — the trading area covered by the present states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. From this mixture of French and Indian came most of the Interpreters and the minor officials of the Indian Departments successively operated by France, Great Britain and the United States in that region. They were the guides of the later explorers and the history of the mid-west is sprinkled with their names and exploits. Thus, along the Wabash, the Wisconsin, the Missouri and further afield in Oregon and California one can find family connections with Essex County families, descendants of a common ancestor in the fur trading days.

Though the French regime came to an end in 1760 when the Fort and settlements of Detroit were surrendered to Major Rogers, the first British commandant at Detroit, the English-speaking element in Essex County's population did not become a factor until after the close of the American Revolution in 1784. At that time the present township of Malden began its permanent settlement. The first settlers were from a group composed of former officers and men in the British Indian Department who have been active partisan leaders of the Indians and Loyalists against the Continentals on the frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Indian Department group was headed by Colonel Alexander McKee, who had been at one period the Indian Department Agent at Fort Pitt and later, during the latter part of the Revolution, Superintendent at Detroit. Associated with him in the Malden purchase were three other former residents in the vicinity of Fort Pitt — Captain Mathew Elliott, Captain William Caldwell and Simon Girty, Interpreter, together with a Detroit group who also had been in service under the Indian Department — Captain Joncaire, Adhemar St. Martin, Duperon Baby, Isadore Chene, Captain La Mothe and Captain Charles Reaume.

The land was obtained by private treaty with the local Indians, Ottawas, Pottawatomies, Chippewas, Wyandots. The government had not as yet acquired the cession of the Indian lands and as a matter of policy did not recognize such Indian deeds, but the Civil Governor at Detroit, John (Jehu) Hay, acquiesced in the purchase and cut himself in on the deal by instructing the surveyor, Philip Frey, when laying out the frontages to ~~serve~~ <sup>set</sup> for Hay and Sir John Johnson, farms of four arpent frontage. Sir John Johnson was then the Superintendent-General of the Indian Department and this reservation for his benefit was no doubt to secure his influence with the authorities at Quebec. In the end this plan must have been successful for when the lands on the north shore of Lake Erie west of Kettle Creek were acquired by treaty with the Indians made at Detroit in 1790, the Indian Department officers were not disturbed in possession. William and James Caldwell, sons of Colonel William Caldwell, later received by government grant a tract of marsh lands on either side of the Big Creek and comprising 3,050



acres, and this is the "Caldwell Grant" that is still shown on the assessor's rolls.

However, the first great inflow of settlers into Essex County after the Revolution were disbanded soldiers, mostly from Butler's Rangers, together with a few civilian Loyalists who had been dispossessed of their property by the successful American and had come to Detroit as refugees. Rations were issued to them by the Commissary at Fort Lernoult at Detroit, and they with their families were quartered on Belle Isle, except for the few who found employment among the shops or on the farms of the Detroit settlements.

Here they remained until the land the Government had promised to Loyalists was forthcoming. Each Loyalist, head of a family and each son and daughter when they attained the age of 21 or married, was entitled to 200 acres of land, and the privilege, now treasured by their descendants, of employing the letters "U.E." after their names "to indicate their adherence to the principle of "Unity of Empire".

As the Loyalists straggled in from the east, the Detroit commandant of the time furnished each arrival with a "location ticket" consecutively numbered, but these tickets were practically valueless until surveys of unoccupied lands were made. To assist in the settlement of the Loyalists, a Land Board was set up at Detroit to examine the Loyalist claims and to allocate the lots they were entitled to on the strength of the "location tickets" presented. It was early determined that the Loyalists would be settled on what is now the Canadian side of the river, in anticipation of the time when the British-held military Posts on the south of the Great Lakes would have to be surrendered. There were many delays, — the cession by the Indians had to precede the survey, the survey itself took time and so, some hundreds became weary and returned to the States. A petition forwarded from Detroit to Quebec in 1791 stated 100 able young men had left. In the end however, the Land Board, before it was dissolved in 1794, succeeded in locating several hundred along the Thames River in Kent County and in the "two Connected Townships" now the townships of Gosfield and Colchester in Essex County. It is with the last-mentioned we have now to deal.

Surveyor Patrick McNiff located in his first survey in 1791, 97 lots fronting on Lake Erie commencing at "a certain small creek" and thence westward to the Indian Department officers' lands, and in a later survey 15 additional lots eastward of the first survey. The present Division Street in Kingsville marks the boundary between the two surveys. Here along Lake Erie our Essex County Loyalists at last found a resting place. At first there was considerable trading and selling of locations but by the time the War of 1812 came along the settlement was stabilized.

From old Militia Paylists is compiled a record of families still represented by descendants in that general area today whose ancestors were serving in the militia in 1813. — ARMSTRONG, AUGUSTINE, BALDWIN, BORING, BRUSH, BRUNER, BUTLER, DOWLER, ELLIOTT, FERRISS, FOX, FULMER, GIRTY, HALSTEAD, HUFFMAN, ILER, KLINGSMITH (SMITH), KNAPP, LEVERGOOD, LITTLE, LOCKHART, LYPPS, MALOTTE, McCORMICK, McLEAN, MICKLE, MUNGER, NEVILLE, QUICK, ROACH, SCRATCH, SHAY, STEWARD, STOCKWELL, TOFFLEMIRE, ULCH, WIGLE, WILKINSON, WILLIAMS, WHITTLE, WRIGHT and YOUNG. Other early Loyalists families long resident in South Essex are the ARNERS, ARNOLDS, JULIANS and LOOPS. In later years other Loyalist families came into Essex from prior locations further east so the list of families of Loyalist descendants is now a long one.

The first towns in Essex County were Amherstburg and Sandwich, established in 1796 when the British had to give up Detroit by the terms of the Jay Treaty signed in 1794. Amherstburg grew as a garrison town just below Fort Malden which was established to replace Fort Lernoult at Detroit. The Fort and town were built opposite Bois Blanc Island on a plot sandwiched between the unceded land of the Wyandots to the north, the "Huron Reserve", and the Indian Department officers' lands to the south. Sandwich grew around the Court



House and Gaol established on the south shore opposite their former situation in Detroit. Both towns received among their early settlers those merchants of Detroit who chose to remain British subjects and left that place in consequence. Other early residents included craftsmen, tradesmen, shopkeepers, inn-keepers and labourers both from Detroit and the eastern colonies who as Loyalists drew town lots in preference to farms.

In Amherstburg we have descendants today of the following lot-holders of 1799, — BARON, BERTRAND, BOTSFORD, BOYLE, CORNWALL, DROUILLARD, GIRARD, LABELLAN (BENITEAU), MARTIN, MICKLE, POUGET and REAUME. Principally in Windsor are a number of families descended from other Detroit Loyalists, among them descendants of the ASKIN, BABY, McKEE, REYNOLDS and GRANT families.

The next large group of population came from the extension of the Talbot settlement along the Talbot Road which in Essex County commenced about 1820. Most of Colonel Talbot's emigration efforts were further east in Elgin and Kent counties and as long as he lived he personally examined every applicant for land to ascertain their lack of sympathy for republican institutions. He had a horror of the United States and Americans, consequently nearly all the Talbot settlers were from Great Britain and Ireland, though some came in from eastern Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The survey of the Talbot Road in Essex County followed the high land back from the shore of Lake Erie and then diagonally across the county towards old Sandwich. Originally this had been the old Indian trail and is now Provincial Highway No. 3. Among the families along the Talbot Road were found the following, — HAIRSINE, HICKSON, WIGFIELD, SETTERINGTON, IMESON, COLLISON, COULTIS, RYAL, ORTON, UPCOTT, BILLING, McCREERY, THORNTON, HOPGOOD, AMBRIDGE, McGAW and TRUAX.

In 1828 another road was surveyed through the county. This was midway between the Talbot settlement and Lake St. Clair and from its location came to be known as the Middle Road and now Highway No. 98. The settlers along its length were largely emigrants from the Old Country. In the 1840's successive crop failures in Ireland caused a heavy migration from that country and Essex County received its share. Along the Middle Road and up toward Lake St. Clair the "Irish Settlement" grew and there we find the families of O'CONNOR, BYRNES, MAHONEY, O'NEIL, McCARTHY, HALFORD, SCULLY, O'CALLAGHAN, FARREL, FARROW, SHANAHAN, TRACEY, GALLAGHER, COSTIGAN, MULLEN and other good Irish names. The village of Maidstone was the center of the Irish community.

Further east on the Middle Road was a small colony of Germans developed around the nucleus of the families of KNISTER, KLIES and HEDRICKS. They were political refugees from the disturbances in Germany over the attempts to liberalize and set up constitutional government in the German states.

Along the lake shore between the Puce and Pike Creeks was what was called the "Scotch Colony" from the preponderance of families of that race in the area. The best known of these families are the WALLACES, PATTILOS and MARTINDALES.

Now we are to speak of a group that came to Canada as social refugees — the Fugitive Slaves from the southern United States. From Essex County's location projecting far down into the States it was the easiest point to reach for a slave escaping from Kentucky or Virginia. In the 1840's this movement, which had gone on since 1820, increased in volume and from lists at the Fort Malden Museum it is certain some townships in Essex County had hundreds of coloured residents, and in some they constituted a majority, as in Colchester. In the townships of Malden, Anderdon, Sandwich and Maidstone, and in the towns of Amherstburg and Sandwich there were concentrations of former slaves. In the country a number of the settlements had such picturesque names as Gilgal, Pleasant Valley, Mount Pleasant, New Canaan, Haiti and Marble Village.



The slaves were sometimes assisted in their escape by agents of anti-slavery societies and upon their arrival at Amherstburg or Sandwich, they would be outfitted with fresh clothing and provided with rations until they could fend for themselves. A warehouse or depot for that special purpose was maintained in Amherstburg by a philanthropic society from the eastern States. A list of their names sounds like calling the roll of the Southern aristocracy for among them were the names of WASHINGTON, RANDOLPH, FAIRFAX, LEE, HARRISON and so on. In Essex County the fugitives became small farmers, craftsmen, traders, shopkeepers, labourers and sailors. As time passed many descendants of the fugitives went to the States so that now there are comparatively few in Essex County, and those few largely residing in three communities of Harrow, Amherstburg and Windsor.

In the next few decades the "back concessions" filled with settlers. Many of the settlers were descendants of earlier residents in the county and the balance were drawn from emigrants from Great Britain, Ireland and the United States. At this time began a movement from Essex County directed to the western States and the Northwest which movement at times was substantial, but never to the extent as experienced by some other sections of Ontario where whole populations removed from some sections.

In 1854 the Great Western Railway connected the Detroit frontier with the east and Essex County was fairly entered on its modern days. Windsor, which had grown from a small cluster of buildings around the ferry landing opposite Detroit, became the terminal and forged ahead of all the other urban centers in the County. By that date Leamington, Kingsville and Harrow had made enduring starts. Essex, the town, was still in the forest not to emerge until the Canada Southern was constructed in 1872, while other places, then respectable villages, have disappeared.

Here we will leave the subject. All honour to them "who hewed and endured", who living in the close confines of Essex County harmoniously mingled despite varied origins of race, religion and cultures. On their efforts and with their blood still flowing in Essex County veins, succeeding generations have a solid base for continuing prosperity. No Date



## 25

### Education on the Detroit Frontier

The settlement on the Detroit River was an isolated one in the 18th century. It had its origin in 1701 in the fur trade when Antoine Laumet de La Mothe Cadillac established Fort Ponchartrain on the present site of Detroit. Detroit's "neighbour" was Michilmacinac, a tiring five days voyage to the north while Montreal to the east was three times more distant.

Villages of three nations of Indians, the Pottawatomies, Ottawas and Chippewas were in the area when Cadillac came and were soon joined by a large band of Hurons who were settled at first near the new fort. These Hurons were descendants of the Huron who had escaped from the Georgian Bay area in 1648 when the Iroquois had nearly decimated that nation. They had spent two generations at various sites in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan before coming to Detroit.

Europeans were few until after 1730. The records of St. Anne's Church, Detroit, show that in the first twenty years there were only ten marriages and twenty-eight burials. Baptisms numbered 183, however nearly all were of Indians and many of them baptisms of adult Indians. It is evident that few children except those of Indians were to be found.

On coming to Detroit, Cadillac had left his eldest daughter behind at a convent in Quebec to be educated. Cadillac was himself well-educated as can be deduced from the reports he made to the French Court and his conduct of his controversies with government officials. Cadillac's other children at Detroit with him, were presumably taught in his own house either by Madame Cadillac who was convent-educated or by himself.

Commencing in 1728 the Catholic Church established a Mission to the Hurons congregated at Detroit under Reverend de la Richardie. Classes by catechists were regularly carried on, necessarily by rote. About 1742 the Mission was removed from Detroit and re-established 18 miles lower down the Detroit River near the present site of Amherstburg. The classes in religious instruction were continued and this is almost certainly the first instance of organized instruction on the Canadian side of the Detroit.

In 1748, owing to the Indian disturbances in the Ohio country, the Mission was again moved, this time nearer the protection of the fort at Detroit at a village of the Hurons opposite Detroit. In 1762 the parish of St. Anne was divided and the Mission to the Hurons was erected into the parish of Assumption, now the oldest parish in the Province of Ontario.

Reverend Father Potier, the second priest of the Huron Mission, compiled a manuscript of the Huron language combining features of a dictionary, grammar and geography. This was first published as a Report of the Ontario Archives for 1918-19 a century and a half after the text was written.

The French regime came to an end on the Detroit in 1760 when Major Rogers arrived from Montreal to take over for the British. The British were to hold the post at Detroit for 36 years



until they in turn lost control of what had become American territory.

During the British regime there is increasing mention of education on the Detroit frontier. From about 1730 some seven or eight miles of river frontage on either side of the Fort had been occupied by settlers and in 1747 the opposite shore on what is now the Canadian side began to be settled. Soon after the close of the Pontiac Conspiracy troubles in 1763 "English" merchants came from Albany to engage in the fur trade. During the Revolution the Albany middlemen transferred their operations to Montreal.

Illiteracy was the general condition. A study of the Marriage Register of Assumption Church as it appears in Appendix VI of the WINDSOR BORDER REGION for the period from 1760 to 1781 shows that only 79, contracting parties and witnesses, out of 183 named therein, could sign their names.

The first lay teachers on the Canadian side of the Detroit River were the Misses Adhemar and Papineau who succeeded in establishing a boarding and day school in a building provided by Father Dufaux next to the Assumption Church. Miss Adhemar was a granddaughter of Robert Navarre (1709-1791). Navarre had come to Detroit in 1734 with the appointment of Sub-Intendant and had full charge of all civil matters at that place until the end of the French rule. Under the British he was continued in those offices and capacities he had been exercising not inconsistent with the new regime.

The instruction in the school was in French though two of the boarders were daughters of a Scottish merchant of Detroit, William Macomb. All those scholars were girls, Father Dufaux teaching twelve boys in another apartment. Finances were precarious as only three girls were able to pay the full fee of two pounds per month, "some paid what they could" and some paid nothing.

The next school of record was the first Protestant school on the Canadian side conducted for just one year about 1790-91 on the McKee farm just below present Amherstburg. This was conducted by the Moravian missionaries who had removed from Ohio in consequence to the border wars between the Indians and the advancing American settlers. Most of the scholars were Indian children (Delawares) of the Mission but a few children of the white settlers in the neighbourhood also attended. A few instances of drunkenness and bad behaviour among the Mission Indians induced the Moravian pastors to move the Mission site further from the fleshpots of Detroit. The new site, 70 miles east of Detroit, saw the school re-established on the banks of the Thames River where it was the first school in present Kent County.

When the British evacuated Detroit in 1796 the government installations were divided. The purely military, the garrison, Navy Yard, Commissary and Indian Department were moved down river to the "New Post at the Mouth of the River" opposite Bois Blanc Island, while the civil aspects of government were moved directly across the river to the parish of Assumption. At Assumption a Court House, Gaol and Registry Office were provided.

The "New Post" in 1797 was named "Amherstburg" and the town site at Assumption became "Sandwich". Among the cares of the commanding officer at Amherstburg was the task of allotting building sites to the Loyalists who chose to leave Detroit and one lot was set aside for school purposes. This was Lot 16 on Second Street, present Ramsay Street, 60 feet wide and 120 feet deep. It is uncertain that a school was actually built on this lot as in later years mention of schools in Amherstburg is always in reference to private schools kept in the teacher's residence.

One of the early teachers in the Detroit, Sandwich and Amherstburg area was John Goffe. Another was Mathew Donavon. He was a native of Ireland and had found his way to Detroit by way of Boston where some of his family were born. At Detroit he was a tutor in the family of John Askin, merchant, until dismissed for drunkenness. His daughters became the wives of merchants engaged in the fur trade at Amherstburg. Elizabeth married Jonathan Nelson;



Margaret married Robert Innis of the firm of Innis and Grant; while Sarah became the wife of Mathew Elliott who headed the Western Indian Department at Amherstburg. Mathew Donavon died in Amherstburg July 1809.

Mrs. Racicot who had come to Amherstburg as a Loyalist from Detroit taught a "dame's school". Her peculiarity was that she insisted that boys learn knitting as well as the girls she taught. Her residence in Detroit in 1789 was appropriated for the first Court Room when Judge Dummer Powell was appointed. She continued to teach until she was well along in her 80's.

In the 1790's the Loyalists who had congregated at Detroit were accommodated by land grants along the Thames River in Kent County and in "the Two Connected Townships" the present Colchester and Gosfield townships along the Lake Erie shore below Amherstburg. Among them were some families from Pennsylvania who were of German ancestry. The first school teacher to settle among them was an Irishman named McMurray. He had come to Detroit in 1796 in the army of General "Mad Anthony" Wayne. He was of limited education but was destined to teach for 54 years. In the 1840's when a system of examining the qualifications of teachers came into effect he was called before the Board of Examiners and he informed them that he had but a common English education and was unable to answer their question concerning grammar! Nevertheless, he was granted a certificate and he continued to teach until a sprinkling of pupils of the fourth generation began to appear in his classes. He had remained a bachelor until the age of 75 when he married, his wife being 65. He died at the age of 87 in 1854 beloved and respected.

One enduring result of "Master" McMurray's career was his insistence that the surnames of his German pupils be anglicized. As a result, "Kratz" became "Scratch", "Weigele" was transformed into "Wigle", Stoffelmeyer" became "Tofflemire", "Fuchs" to "Fox" and so forth.

The first attempt at higher education along the Detroit frontier was the construction at Sandwich in 1808 of an Academy which from the name of its first teacher became known as "Pringle's Academy". It was both a boarding and day school and apparently attended by boys only. The contractors were the McGregor brothers of Sandwich and Amherstburg. They had wide-spread connections in the fur trade in the Wabash valley and among the boarders at Pringle's school was young DeRicherville, grandson of Little Turtle the Miami chief. The site of the school is now that of Brock Public School in Windsor opposite St. John's Church. During the War of 1812 Sandwich was twice occupied by American troops and the Academy and church were used as stables by the invaders. Pringle was made prize-master when the British captured Detroit in 1812 and when the fortunes of war changed he accompanied the troops on the retreat. He settled his accounts as prize-master from Kingston after the war and his subsequent career was in that area.

The building of the Academy at Sandwich spurred Detroit into making an attempt to do likewise. The town of Detroit had attracted quite a number of new residents from the eastern states following the American assumption of the area in 1796. In 1805 a fire completely destroyed the old French town and the authorities took advantage of the opportunity to lay out a much enlarged and imaginative city plan. All the holders of lots in the old French town were accommodated with donation lots in the new town plan and the fire hardly interrupted the growth. Father Gabriel Richard took the lead in advocating that an institution of higher learning be provided on the American side of the river. Richard had introduced the first printing press to Detroit and had published its first newspaper. However, this advocacy was premature and it was not until after the War of 1812 that the idea was revived. Then, in company with the Reverend Monteith, a Presbyterian minister and graduate of Princeton, they jointly laid plans for a University. Some funds that had been donated by Montreal and Michilimacinae citizens for the sufferers of the fire in 1805 which had never been applied to that use were now given to