

One of John Luton's sons (William) married a Faucett daughter and for a time they lived on the Faucett farm. Their son Charles lived on it after the parents were gone.

John Evert

In 1874, it was bought by John Evert, who had come, as a young lad, with his parents, from Germany, settling first in the Sparta district, before coming to this community, of John Evert worked this farm next, then his son, John, who married Laura Simpson and following them is Ross, their son, who is married to Marie, a daughter of Roy Legg.

John Evert

Passing back to the other end of the community,

David, Andrew, Henry Roberts.

In 1866 three Roberts brothers came here :- David bought the east hundred acres of what had been the Philip Ackert farm from James Brice. Andrew Roberts bought the farm across from it where Karl Wright now lives. Henry Roberts bought the next farm east of his brother David's place, now owned by Eugene Sweet. Henry Roberts was the township of Dorchester's first treasurer. When he built his house, the same house still used by the family on the farm, his office was at the front of the house, on the second floor. People used to come to his front door, mount the steps to his office and pay their taxes in cash. There seems to have been little anxiety of robberies in those days for often Mr. Roberts had large sums of public money in his house over night and even for days at a time.

David, Andrew, Henry Roberts.

Darius Appleford.

In 1875, Darius Appleford bought the David Roberts farm and it has remained in this family ever since. Darius Appleford operated the first threshing machine in the district, a very primitive affair, run by horse power, but even at that, a great improvement upon the flale.

Darius Appleford

John Grawburg

Ont the other side of the road, just east of the Andrew Roberts farm was John Grawburg, of Pennsylvania Dutch parentage. He bought the farm, did some clearing and built buildings before his marriage to Kathrine Barnum of Barnum's Gully. near Sparta. They came to their new home on a buckboard.

John Grawburg

Their family consisted of three sons and one daughter.

Like the other pioneer settlers, they made maple syrup in iron caldron kettles, storing cakes of maple sugar for their use, in an upstairs room on planks supported by horses.

John Grawburg was a clever herbist and for one who had no special training along this line, was a skilful veterinarian. No one was ever turned away from his door, hungry or in need of a nights rest.

At one time a camp meeting was held east of Lyons and Indians came to it.

For some reason, they stayed all night at the Grawburg home, the women sleeping on the floor in the front room and the men in the barn. On retiring, the women sang hymns in their native tongue.

John Grawburg was born 1811 and died in 1896 on the farm, where he had pioneered. His son William married and lived on the north fifty acres with his buildings on the ninth concession. His daughter Phoebe Jane Lale and her family lived on the homestead on the tenth concession. Two other sons, John and Edwin went to Michigan. The north 75 acres now comprise the farm owned and operated by Fred Booker whose wife is Sarah Kathleen (Grawburg) daughter of William .

James Ballah, just north of the four corners, who buifit the big 'Maple Leaf' House, married a daughter of Wellington Finch.

Edmund
Shepherd.

In 1843, Edmund Shepherd came from England. He was a scholarly man and taught school for a time at Merkhem. In 1848, he came to live in this community, settling on the tenth concession, where Roy Legg now lives. He also was a very religious man and became a pilar of the Church of Christ at Mapleton.

It those days, it was the policy of that church, not to have a regular minister. It was more a fellowship of Christian people. Duties now delegated to a minister were performed by laymen. Edmund Shepherd, very often was the 'Preacher'. Also he was the first municipal clerk of the township.

His son Edmund was a clever student and was on the staff of the 'Toronto Saturday Night'.

Following the Shepherds on this farm, came Andrew Finlay, an uncle of James Meikle. Both the Finlays and the Meikles came here from Ohio.

Following the Finlays on this farm, came George Legg from England in 1843. The home at first was where Henry Legg now lived. Later half the house was moved farther east to the present site of the farm buildings. A larger house was later built but the old frame remains at the back of the house. A son Charles took over the farm after his father. Their family consisted of six sons :- Frank, who died in early manhood, Jesse, now living in Aylmer. Roy, who lives on the homestead. Henry, who lives the next farm to the west, Thurman who lives on Highway # 73 north of Aylmer and Gordon a store keeper in Lyons

George
Legg

To the next farm west of the Leggs, came David Moore from Ireland. His son, David's first wife was a sister of Charlie Legg. She was delicate and died very young. His second wife, the mother of Arthur Moore and Annie, the wife of John Ferguson, was a sister of James Meikle.

David
Moore

The homestead of the Moore farm is where Walter a son of Arthur now lives.

On the tenth Concession, east of the quarter road, the first farm on the north side was part of the original 'Brown' farm. Isaac Appleford bought the south end. His son William followed, then William's daughter (Minnie) and son-in-law, R.J. Ferguson. Then it was sold outside the family and has changed hand more than once in a short time.

The next farm on the same side of the road was taken up by Ben Sherk, after him, came Lightburns, then J.D. Thompsons, then Salem Herbert, then Orlando

Charlton, then Gordon Legg, then H. Smith and now Gordon Pettit.

Across from this home was the Jake Sherk farm. Jake Sherk married Lottie Luton

After them to this farm, came Henry Roberts, Then Robert J. Ferguson and now Kenneth Summers.

East of them where Kenneth Cartwright lives now, lived John Sherk, who married a Gilbert.

Across from them lived Dave Sherk married to a daughter of David Wellington Finch.

As near as can be learned, the pioneer on the land on the north side of Con-

James

Mc.Creadie. cession Nine, South Dorchester fronting on the 'Centre Road', now known as

Highway # 73, as far west as the 'Merritt Brown' farm (Lot 14) was owned by James

Mc.Creadie. While still owning this land, he obtained land at Orwell, the south-

west corner of where the village stands and went there to live. Two of his

children came back to this community - a daughter, as the wife of Merritt Brown

Wilson

Mc.Creadie. and a son - Wilson, who had been born at Orwell in 1849, the son of James Mc.

creadie and Submit Tisdale. His interest, as a young man was in mechanics and

ceramics. Early tests had shown a rich source of pottery clay on the corner of

his father's land on the Ninth concession. In the year 1870, Wilson Mc.Creadie

established the Mc.Creadie brick and Tile yard here. and it served the surrounding district for the next 60 years.

At first the clay was mixed by hand and placed in moulds. Some of these first

tile are still in use and can be indentified by the flat side and a ridge along

one side. Before kilns were built, bricks were burned in piles about 30 feet long

and 10 feet high, so placed as to form a flue in the centre for the burning of

wood. The brick piles were mudded on both sides, so as to form a sort of oven.

These bricks sold for \$ 5.00 per thousand and can be seen in many barns and

houses in this district, particularly in their foundations. As the business progressed, Wilson built large kilns and installed machinery, powered by a stationary steam engine, with a fly wheel, twelve feet in diameter. He employed several men and to have year round employment for them, and further service to the community, he established a grist mill and a saw mill on the same property. Usually he followed his timbers from his mill to barn raisings, scaling the rafters with amazing speed, even in the most dangerous positions.

In 1873, he married Ellen Crossley, a teacher at York School. She was born at King, Ont. a sister of Rev. H. T. Crossley (the Evangelist), who in those days was teaching school at Culloeden and had assisted in getting his sister the position at York school. The Mc. Creadie's raised a family of four - Allie, Austin, Edith and an adopted girl (Bertha). Diaries reveal a lifetime of service and hard work. Homes were built at the Tile yard for married employees, but the single men became part of the Mc. Creadie family, increasing tremendously the housework, in a day of home baked bread and laundry, when all the water had to be carried from the pond.

Besides the Tile and Brick business and the mills, Mr. Mc. Creadie farmed extensively. He sold many gallons of maple syrup every season. He had a unique means of boiling down his sap, utilizing the steam from the engine at the plant.

The unusual round barn attracts much interest. In 1908, Wilson bought fifty acres on the east side of the road and built a home of his red brick and also the 'round barn'. The barn is 60 feet in diameter, with fourteen inch thick hollow brick wall, twenty five feet high to the roof. A silo, fifty four feet high, stands



in the centre of the barn. When Mr. Mc. Creadie retired, a nephew, James Reid took over for a time, then a grandson, Russell Moore carried it on, until the supply of pottery clay became exhausted, in 1930. Business, along with daily family worship occupied six days of the week for the Mc. Creadie family. The Sabbath was devoted to Crossley Hunter and Lyons churches. They attended two services and devoted Sunday afternoon to teaching in the Sunday School. The girls used their musical talent in the choir. At the age of seventy five, when most men would be content to enjoy their quiet fireside, Wilson Mc. Creadie spent six months travelling alone in the United Kingdom and France, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland. He returned from his tour, vigorous in health and drove his own car, wherever requested to share his experiences with others, in lectures and pictures.

In 1871, The west hundred acres of the James Mc. Creadie land was sold to Mr. Nicholas Brown for \$ 4,250.00. It was just the land, no house, barn, fences or tiling. This land is still owned by Merritt Brown, a lawyer in Toronto (1951) who although ninety six years of age, is still bright and active. Dr. Leopold Brown, a retired veterinarian living in Aylmer is a brother. Mrs. (Dr.) Brown was a charter member of the Aylmer Women's Institute and very active in the early days of the Institute. Merritt and Leopold Brown are sons of Nicholas Brown.

Chapter VII - Pioneer Life.

The life they led, in this pioneer community, probably didn't differ from any other community of that day. There were no luxuries or even conveniences. Everything was done the hard way. Every member of the family worked hard, early and late. There was little money in circulation. The method of exchange was mostly barter.

A travelling shoemaker went through the community, stopping at each home, long enough to measure feet and make up enough boots and shoes for the family requirements. A broom was simply a hickory stick, shaved at one end, from the outside to the centre, with the shavings bound back in place by a stout string. Wool was carded and spun and often woven into blankets and cloth in the home. The weaving was usually done by some skilled person, who made it their main occupation. All articles of the family wearing apparel was made up at home from the homespun material.

The clearing of the land, the preparing of timbers and lumber for the farm buildings, the disposing of limbs and stumps was a tremendous task. Robert Brown had been a skilled sawyer in Scotland, a little south of Crossley-Hunter Church, on his farm, he had a sort of pit; and here with the help of one man, he prepared, with a whip saw, the timbers that went into the bridges of the first road built between St. Thomas and Pt. Stanley.

Probably to a greater extent than in other communities, the pioneer instinct has been preserved. Some things that were done, from necessity, in the old days, are still being done from choice. In many of the homes, home made bread and even home made butter come on the table, every meal. The soap shortage of the war years didn't affect these families. They make their own soap. Some even scorn to use the lye, which comes, concentrated, in tin cans, preferring the old way of leaching it from wood ashes.

Braided and hooked rugs that would delight the eye of art collectors, materialize every winter, in the various homes, as a matter of course. Beautiful quilts and beautiful pieces of knitting compare favourably with stored away treasures of grandmother's days.

Aside from retaining pioneer thrift and skill in handicrafts, not usually to today's living, one observes an unusually tender sentiment toward their forebears and a cherishing of tradition. In nearly every home, one may see carefully preserved heirlooms - shawls, dresses, bonnets, pieces of china, glassware, pottery, cutlery, hand made lace, pieces of fine needlework, quantities of precious old black walnut furniture, old documents, other than the crown deeds, so discoloured by age, that they are scarcely readable and so fragile, they will barely bear touching.

Mrs. Roy Learn has her grandmother's and Grandfather's wedding certificate.

It reads :- "April 10th, 1835, Robert Brown and Elizabeth Bell were married at Avenbridge, Scotland, by John Craigie."

This general characteristic was probably fostered by a few of the pioneers, who lived to a great age, remaining bright and active to the end. They kept alive the past, by recounting to children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, the amazing experiences of their early days.

In August 1928, an afternoon reception - a community affair, was given in honour of four very old ladies - Mrs. Rachael Ackert, Mrs. Jane Learn, Mrs. Elizabeth Appleford and Mrs. Margaret Ferguson. Their combined ages at the time, were 344 years and they all lived a number of years after that day. They had all been born here, had attended school together, had married and made their home here, raised their families at a ripe old age, had passed to their reward, all within the circle of this little neighbourhood.

Standing :-Mrs.Rachael
Ackert,Mrs.Jane Learn.

Seated :- Mrs.Elizabeth
Appleford,Mrs.Margaret
Ferguson.

August 12th,1928.



Recalling an earlier remark that nearly every family in the community, is related to one or more other families, through intermarriage, it is interesting to note that in this instance, both Roy Learn and his wife (Stella Mc.Gregor) are related on their own side of the family, to all four of these old ladies.

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Copy of a Crown Deed, as used in 1848.

Clergy Sale

Grant

to

Henry Roberts

200 acres

Township of South Dorchester

District of London.

Recorded 19th September 1848

Lib - BW Fol 328

R.A. Tucker - Registrar.

Province of Ontario.

Victoria by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith :- to all whom these presents shall come - Greetings.

Whereas the lands hereinafter described and granted are part of the lands which have been from time to time, according to the provisions of the law in that behalf, allotted and appropriated, are commonly known as 'Clergy Reserves' and whereas by an act of Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, passed in the 8th year of the reign of the late King George IVth, entitled an act to authorize the sale of a part of the Clergy Reserves in the Province of Upper and Lower Canada and by another act of the said Parliament, passed in the 3rd and 4th year of our reign, entitled an act to provide for the sale of the Clergy Reserves in the province of Canada, and for the distribution of the proceeds thereof, power and authority is given to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor or person administering the Government respectively, as well as of the said Province of Upper Canada and of the said Province of Canada, with the advice of the Executive Council, to sell, grant, alienate or convey all or any of the said Clergy Reserves.

And - whereas in pursuance of the power and authority given in and by the said acts or by any one or other of them, a contract hath been duly entered in for the sale and conveyance of the lands, tenements and hereditaments hereinafter mentioned being part of the said Clergy Reserves unto -

Henry Roberts of the Township of South Dorchester in the London District, Yeoman, his heirs and assigns at and for the price and sum of 112 pounds, 10 Shillings.

Now know ye, that in the consideration of the £ 112, 10 S, to our Commissioner appointed by us to superintend the sale of the said Clergy Reserves to and for our use, well and truly paid, We have granted, sold, alienated and conveyed and by these presents do grant, sell alien and convey unto the said Henry Roberts, his heirs and assigns, all that parcel or tract of land, situate in the Township of South Dorchester in the County of Middlesex in the London District of our said Province, containing the admeasurements - 200 acres, be the same more or less, being the Clergy Reserve Lot Number 15⁶ in the Ninth Concession of the said Township of South Dorchester.

Together with all the woods and water thereon lying and being. To have and to hold the said parcel or tract of land hereby granted to him the said Henry Roberts, his heirs and assigns forever.

Saving nevertheless unto Us, Our heirs and Successors, all mines of gold and silver

that shall or may hereafter be found on any part of the said parcel or tract of land hereby given and granted as aforesaid.

Given under the great seal of our Province of Canada. Witness - Our right trusty and well beloved cousin - James, Earl of Elgin and Kincardine K.T. Governor General of Bristish North America and Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over Our Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Island of Prince Edward and Vice Admiral of the same etc, etc, etc at Montreal this 23rd day of August in the year of our Lord 1848 in the 12th year of Our reign.

By order of His Excellency in Council:

M. Malbray.

Cert. Comm. Crown
Land No. 7835

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The above is an exact copy of the original deed of the farm, one mile east of Crossley Hunter Church and School. This old document is still in wonderful state of preservation and easily readable. It is being held at the office of Lawyer W.E. Haines at Aylmer.

On Page 23 of the Crossley Hunter History find further comment on Henry Roberts. He didnt settle here until 1866. but according to the above deed, he purchased the land in 1848.

In time his son William Roberts inherited this farm.

On November 6th, 1911 Robert Leur bought it.

On February 10th, 1913 J.C. Dance bought it.

On March 1st, 1914, E.L. Sweet bought it and following his marriage to Aleta Dance in August, the same year, they came there to live and lived there until March 1st 1950 when they moved to the G.L. Ackert farm and Rinze Poortinga, a Hollander and his family worked the farm on shares until March 1st 1954 when they bought it.

George Pettit.

George Pettit and Christiana Smith were married at Binbrook, Ontario and later moved to the Ninth Concession of South Dorchester. They had five children

Aaron and Belle Pettit - Kansas, U.S.A. (Deceased)
One son - George

Samuel and Jane (Walker) Pettit - London, Ontario.
Two sons and two daughters.
Walker and Edna Pettit - Brantford, Ontario.
George and Ethel Pettit - Adrian Michigan.
Ella and Lester Lankin - London Ontario.
Lois and Herbert Brownlee - London, Ontario.

Eleanor and John Robertson - London Ontario
Two sons and One daughter
Gladys Robertson (Deceased)
Athol and wife - Alberta, Canada
Myron and wife - Tilbury, Ontario

Celesta and Charles Dean - London, Ontario
One son and one daughter
George Frederick and Evelyn May Dean - Windsor Ontario.
One son - Charles Frederick.
Christina Doris and George Edward Clements - London, Ontario
One son and one daughter:
George Dean Clements
Doris Edna Clements

Lorne and Lura (Hagan) Pettit
One Daughter
Florence May and Eugene Anger - St. Thomas
Four children.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES

of

KINGSMILL

Compiled by

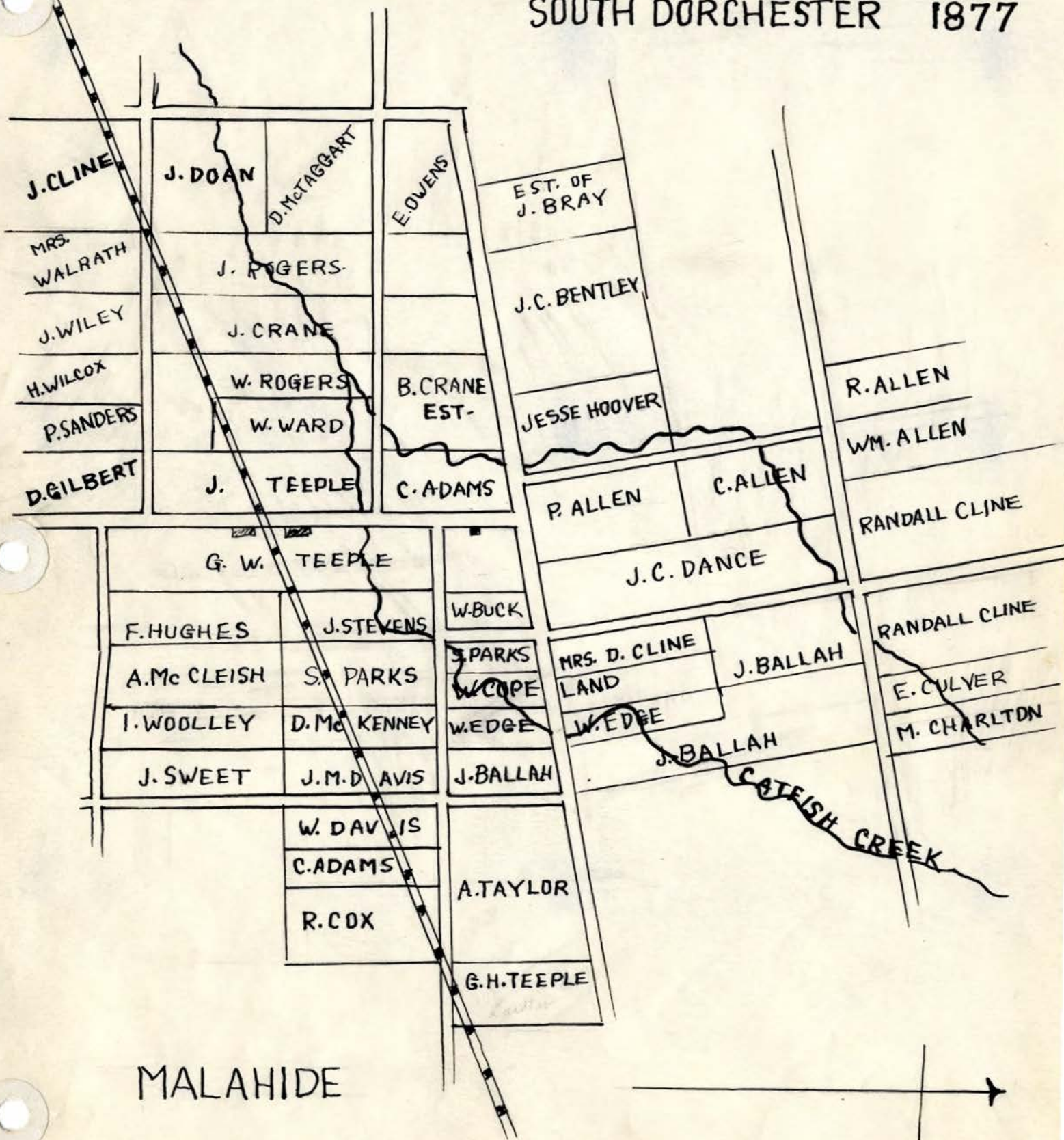
Mrs. Carlton Dance

1946.

Typed in 1952 by
Mrs. E. J. Sweet and
Mrs. Hugh Duncan

YARMOUTH

SOUTH DORCHESTER 1877



MALAHIDE

Map by
M. Appleford