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He went to Long Point to live and later in 1818 returned to his farm. His great great grand daughter Miss Anne Tufford is the present teacher of our Middlemarch School.

In 1816 the first Log school 15' by 20' in the Talbot Settlement was built at Watson Corners. It is well to mention here that the first registry office was built at Burwell's Corners and was marked by the Historical Society. Col. Burwell was the first master of the Masons in this district.

In 1817 Rev. Joseph Silcox of Wiltshire, England came to Canada and organized the first Congregational Church in the province of Ontario at Frome. He took up land from Col. Talbot, at the front of his land the church was built. His son W. G. Silcox was a volunteer in rebellion of 1837. Many descendants live around Frome to-day.

#### OUR DISTRICT:

In August 1939 Dr. James Curtis spoke of the Women's Institute at Late Mrs E. E. Lutton's home on History of our S. S. #. 14. He gave an accurate account of the owners of each lot and kindly presented each family with a much appreciated written record of their farm.

He told that in this section there are three farms whose owners are in possession of the crown land deeds handed down from Grandparents. These are the Lynwood Bogg Farm., belonging to his father John before him and to his grandfather George; the King farm which in 1815 Mr. Abraham King received, after him his son David, this land is still in the possession of descendants, Mrs L. Silcox and her children. Also the Miller farm. This farm belonging to Andrew Miller, had belonged first to Peter Miller who got it for service in the war of 1812. Part of the land is now a Government reservation. Dr. Curtis also told that at an early date the nearest grist mill was at Long Point a distance of 60 miles and grain was often carried on a man's back to be ground. Barter was the means of financing; a bushel of wheat being equal to a yard of cotton, or a dozen eggs. One of the first settlers of this district was David Mandeville, who came from Long Point in 1811 with four sons. He died in 1824 and was buried in Old English Cemetery. One son Richard was married in 1818 to Ann Smith. This was the first marriage recorded in St. Thomas. They settled on the farm now owned by C. S. Butler,

David Mandeville's son Abraham was the first settler of Lot 38. Then William owned the farm. He sold to Frank Hunt, father of Mrs. Salathiel Curtis and Mrs. G. King and later it became the home of A. F. McNiven; father of the present owner, John F. McNiven.

From a paper given to the Historical Society, St. Thomas, by the late Miss Hattie Robinson is this account: " About 1810, Lot 41 was settled by Dr. Thomas Rolph of Gloucestershire, England, taking land from Col. Talbot. Dr. Rolph built a log house near the road. In 1814 he died and was buried on the farm. At one time the English relatives wished to have his body sent back to England. The property went to Dr. Rolph's son John."

In 1817 John was instrumental in establishing the first Talbot Anniversary Dinner at Dr. Lee's Hotel. John returned to England, studied Law and was admitted to the Bar. He also took up Medicine at Cambridge. Then studied Theology, returned to Canada and the Talbot Settlement. He was active in Politics and was elected member for Canada West. In 1824 he, with Dr. Charles Duncombe established the first Medical School in Canada West, called the St. Thomas Medical School. Dr. Rolph taught Anatomy and Physiology. Dr. Duncombe taught Medicine. The only student was David Lee. In 1832 Dr. Rolph moved to Toronto where he established the "Rolph School fo Medicine" - afterwards the Toronto School of Medicine and Now University of Toronto Medical Faculty.

Mrs. McKnight who lately has come to live at Middlemarch, east of the Church in the old Palmer house tells a story of her grandmother. She, with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin French and the rest of her family came the long tiresome journey from Ingersoll to Blythewood by way of the old Talbot Trail. It seems just out of St. Thomas one of the children took ill, and at a log house near the Talbot Road they received Medical attention so that in a short time the journey was resumed. It may have been at the home of Dr. John Rolph, this kindness was shown them. Dr. Rolph sold this property to James Innes of Scotland about 1832 and shortly afterward built from bricks, burnt on the farm the quaint red brick house. It was built after a plan of his home in Scotland. It is probably the oldest brick house in the section and district. James Innes resided here until the death of a

relative, he became heir to a Baronetcy and went home to Scotland as Sir James Innes.

Maybelle Fatcher of St. Thomas had seen the grave of a relative of his in the Old English Churchyard. I visited it recently and found it to be one of the earliest stones of the Churchyard and a beautiful plain slab of marble with a foot stone marked with the initials H.I. near the front gate.

The inscription reads as follows:

SACRED

To the Memory of

Helen Innes

daughter of Sir John Innes, Baronet  
of Edengight, Banffshire, Scotland

who died Sept. 7, 1839, Aged 37 years.

Dr. James H. Coyne who was present at the Historical meeting when Miss H. Robinson gave the above paper, said that ~~as a~~ small boy he had met Dr. John Halphe. Miss Robinson told that the Innes property was sold to George Brewer, whose wife Miss Clark of Yarmouth outlived him and married Thomas Treadwell. On their decease the property was left to their children. Charles, Mary and Fred. who sold to George Lawton, who later built the frame cottage on the property and lived there. On his death the property was sold to Jack Ferguson.

Some of the interesting dates of our district were given in a school paper written by Rosa Hendershot now Mrs Albert Welter of Montreal, while a pupil at the Middlemarch school when Miss Etta Curtis, now Mrs Etta Campbell was the school teacher. This account of our S. S. as well as stories of many other S. S. of Elgin. had been kept by Miss Hattie Robinson in her scrap book of Elgin County. We find an account of a giant who lived in our section. He was Charles Freeman, a son of Leonard Freeman who settled on Lot 42, the James Begg farm now owned by Stanley Lyle and Sons. The giant was 7' 4" tall, called Canada's giant. All the children in the neighbourhood were afraid of him. He died in England. Some residents remember Mr. James Begg telling them of the giant and his wonderful strength.

In 1817 the property now owned by Miss M. Wardell, John Westerhout, and Mrs Abbott was settled by R. D. Drake. He had taken part in the war of 1812<sup>13</sup>~~14~~. He originally came from Jersey, N.Y. in 1797 landing at Hamilton later living at Port Dover. From Port Dover he came to his new home bringing into this district the first wagon drawn by a team of oxen. In many places they had to hew down trees in order to get through. Later his wife came from Port Dover by canoe. A son Daniel Drake lived on this farm, later living in St. Thomas.

The first bank in this district was built about 1834 by Kisson Woodward an Englishman. This was the first bank between Amherstburg and Hamilton. The building also served as his residence and though to-day over 110 years old is the frame part of the Old Fatcher house. Fovant Farm. There was also a town bank built at the top of St. Thomas hill. It was a frame building and the name Agricultural Bank was printed in large letters, Though so long ago this lettering can still be faintly seen by Mr. Stanley Lyle for this building is one of his buildings on his <sup>home</sup> farm. Mr. Woodward rode to the village bank each morning on horse back and back in the evening to his country bank, the money being taken in a valise. Sundays and holidays he was at his country home. In the room used for banking business was

at one time an old fashioned fire place; A story is told that a large number of notes just received from Toronto. were sent up the wide chimney when a customer opened an outside door on a windy March day and the notes on the table were swept into the fire place and burned. The outside door and fireplace were both closed and customers used the front door later. Mr. Woodward later conducted a grist mill at Port Stanley and afterwards returned to England. Before going to Port Stanley he sold the farm in 1840 to Thomas Fatcher Sr. Thomas Fatcher, his wife, daughter Sarah and two sons Thomas and Robert had come to Canada in 1834 from their home at Fovant, Wiltshire, England. Robert the small boy died during the long voyage and was buried at sea. They made their home in coming to Canada at Johnstown and New Sarum. In 1837 they returned to England and stayed until 1840, when they returned to Canada and bought 200 acres of land from Mr. Woodward of Delaware calling it Fovant Farm; Thomas Fatcher Jr. Married Susan Northwood, attended the Academy on the Longwood Rd, now called, Highway no 2. Later to the frame part of the house at Fovant Farm, a brick part was added. This farm is now owned by Alex Lyle and Sons. The boys represent the

fifth generation of the family. Of the Futcher family of 7 sons and 1 daughter, one son John Futcher, now over 80 lives with his son Robie on his farm opposite the Middlemarch church. About 1820 this farm was owned by Joseph Smith. Later by several Mr. Conns also Thomas Casey. South of this farm on the side road is the farm where about 1841 Mr. Salathiel Curtis and his wife came from Devonshire, England bringing their oldest son John. They bought this farm from Joshua Wardell. They first settled in Yarmouth. The frame house which still stands on this farm had replaced the first one made of logs. Mr. Curtis's son John later lived on Talbot Road in the house now occupied by his grandson James Curtis. Humphrey Sydam had been an early settler of this farm. Mr. Salathiel Curtis also lives on the east part of this farm. Our Institute is indebted to two great grand daughters of Mr. Salathiel Curtis for work done for this book. Miss Carolyn Curtis of St. Thomas who designed the cover and Miss Norah Curtis of Middlemarch who did the typing of these chapters.

Peter House lived in the early days on the farm just west of the Curtis home now owned by Mrs Arthur Carroll and Sons. Oscar Welter having lived there

several years ago. The farm now owned by Mr. Peter McCurdy was settled by Peter House. This farm had been owned by Mr. Edward Burton for many years. The farm to the west of the McCurdy farm was settled by Alexander Hamilton. It has been the home of Dowler family since they came from Ireland many years ago. Opposite their farm is one owned by Ross Tufford. This was settled by Hugh Ferguson, but in 1830 Neil McAlphine and his wife Mary came from Argyleshire, Scotland, and called their home Kilmartin Farm. They had 11 children. One son Hugh lived here until he sold to Mr. Noble Tufford father of the present owner. To the east of the farm is the home of J. Robinson Fletcher which had been one of Mr. McAlphines farms. To the east of this farm is the house of Mr. E. Bowlby. This farm was in the early days used for a pottery by Christopher Long, later was home of Isaac Welter. Lot 30 north of Talbot Rd. owned by Alex Lyle was settled by Hohn Welter who came from Pennsylvania. soon after the war of 1812. Later Robert Webb and his Sons owned the farm. Farms owned by John Stubbs, Barnes Brothers and James Stanton belong now to David Lyle his own home long known as the Anderson farm being on the side road north of Middlemarch.

Mr. Albert Stinchcombe is one of the oldest

residents of Middlemarch. He is the post-master also with his son Trevor is store-keeper as well as owning the black-smith shop. These were built by G. Jones and owned later by Thomas Hatherley. Mr. Stinchcombe on ~~his~~ first coming to Middlemarch lived in <sup>the</sup> home now occupied by Clarence Smoke and the home of Belbert Smoke was one of the early buildings of 1834. This was owned for many years by George Stanton and was a Hotel.

Lot 35 known as the Wardell home is now occupied by Mr. Travers was allotted to Benjamin Fuller. He sold it to Joshua Wardell in about 1825. He was a United Empire Loyalist and verteran of 1812 war. Settled first in Niagara. The first home was of logs then the frame house which still is used. After Joshua Wardell's death his daughters Josephine and Sally lived in the home. Many residents of Middlemarch remember their beautiful treasured possessions. It is recorded that Joshua Wardell was present at General Brocks' funeral, under whom he had served. His son Edwin lived on the side road opposite the Curtis home. He had been a lieutenant in the militia. In 1848 he married a daughter of Col. James McQueen, a native of Southwold. <sup>England</sup> Walter Wardell is a son. Mr. Wardell has many valueable books one is the "Illustrated Historical Atlas" of the County

of Elgin printed in 1877. Mr. John Fitcher, Mrs. Salathiel Curtis, Mrs. G. King & Mrs. D. Smoke<sup>so</sup> are owners of similar books. The Edwin Wardell farm is now Mrs Frank Joiner's á great granddaughter. On the Honor Roll unviold to-day we notice the name of Donald Travers, great great grandson of Joshau Wardell. Mr. Kelly's home near Mrs. Joiner's was for many years the Sanders home and was early settled by George Ballantine.

Of all the accounts of the early settlers the first mention of a shoe-maker is in 1820. He was Peter Graves and he came from Pennsylvania . He worked at his trade as well as did farming on the farm now owned by Ernest Monteith. The farm was also owned by Peter Graves' grandson Charles Welter. Along with Peter Graves came also in 1820 Elijah Mann. His home became the Frank Curtis home. His son also, Elijah Mann owned this farm. He was one of a family of 16. He sold this farm to Isaac Welter of Copenhagen. Frank Curtis, also owns a farm where stood the first blacksmith shop. William Lyle owns the north part of this farm. It had belonged formerly to Calvin Witt who came from Oxford, Oakland, Michigan in 1820. He had also a large log hotel there where

Col Talbot held many of his anniversaries. Auction sales were also held here. and it has been rightly said that history repeats itself for when Mr. Charles Jackson owned this farm many sales were held. Mr. & Mrs. G. McCaig who live in their cottage on this farm tell many interesting stories of the great sales they looked after for Mr. Jackson.

The farm owned by the George Casey family for many years then by Lawrence Kruppe had been settled very early by Robert Cornwell, as well as the land now owned by George Carroll, which had been formerly James Potticary's then his son George's.

Tyrell Begg's farm was formerly owned by his father Charles and had been settled very early by Simon Nicol.

Don Begg's farm known for many years as the Siple farm, was formerly a Nicol Farm. His grandfather came to Southwold in 1846, from Glenbucket, Scotland settling on the James Begg farm, his grandmother being Margaret Currie of Argyleshire, Scotland. Mr Begg was prominent in many municipal offices in the township. It is recorded in 1840, the school of this section was on the farm now owned by Ales. D. Lyle. It was made of log.

The farm of James Yates was the Albert Nicol farm settled early by Harry Mandeville. The farm long known as the Ernest Luton farm was for a few years

Gordon Lyles now belonging to Stanley Lyle and Sons ~~were~~ settled by John Lodge. On the map of 1877 it is marked as the Colonel Cole farm.

The first settler of the farm where Harry Dubber lives was John Dyer who sold to Robert Blackwood, another owner was John Walker later George Lawton. Grandfather of Harry Dubber who now lives there.

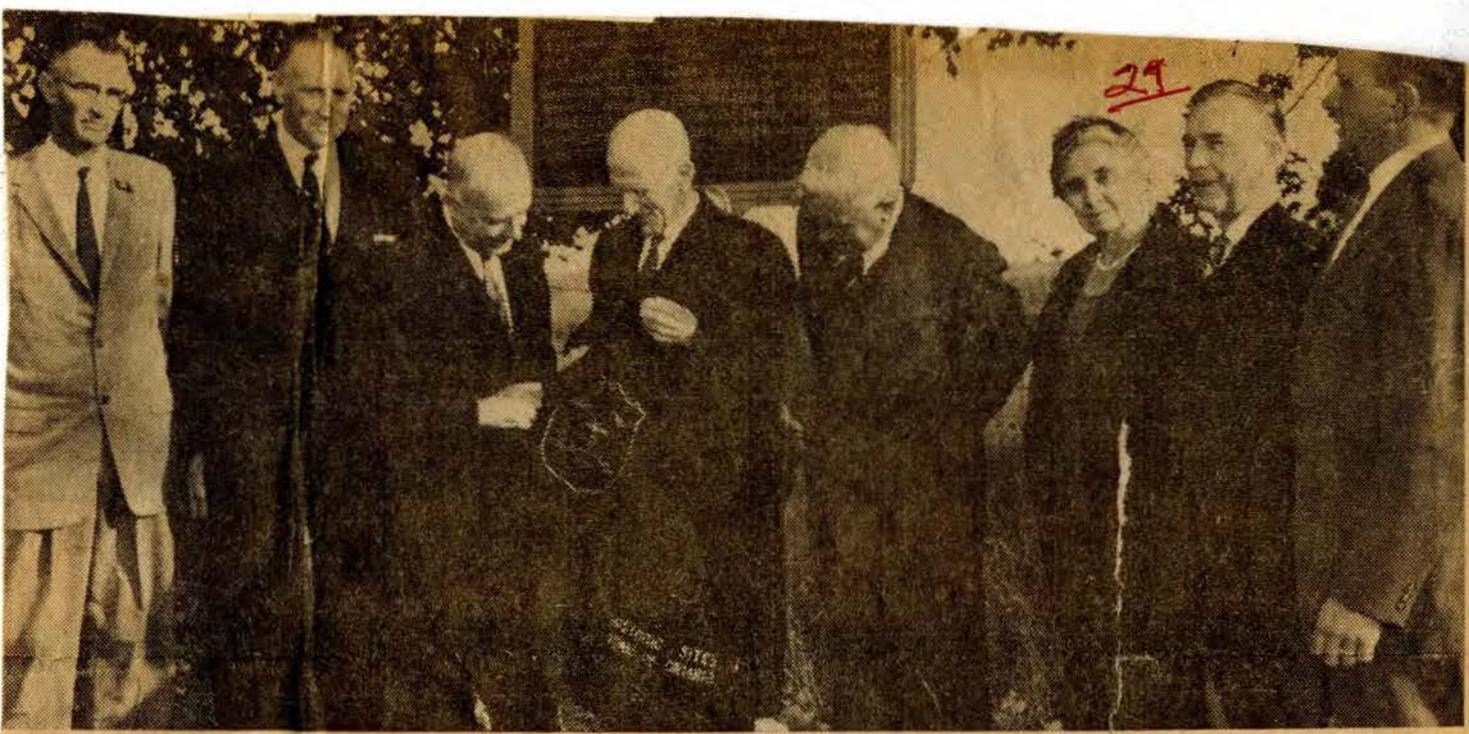
A farm that has an interesting story is that owned by W.<sup>r</sup> G. Lyle. It ~~was~~ at one time a Clergy Reserve; as also was Mr. Charles Locke's farm on the Edgeware Road. Former owners were James N. Fatcher and Herbert Fatcher.

In 1871 Jabel Robinson bought the farm known as Linslade, now owned by his grandson J. Robinson <sup>& his sons.</sup> Fatcher. Jabel Robinson came to Canada with his wife and one child Hattie Robinson in 1856. They lived in St. Thomas where Mr. Robinson was a carpenter, later dealing in lumber. There were four sons and three daughters.

To-day after recalling the coming of the pioneers of Middlemarch district we are reminded of their sacrifice, their strength of character, in the face of perils and want; and are justly proud of those who have

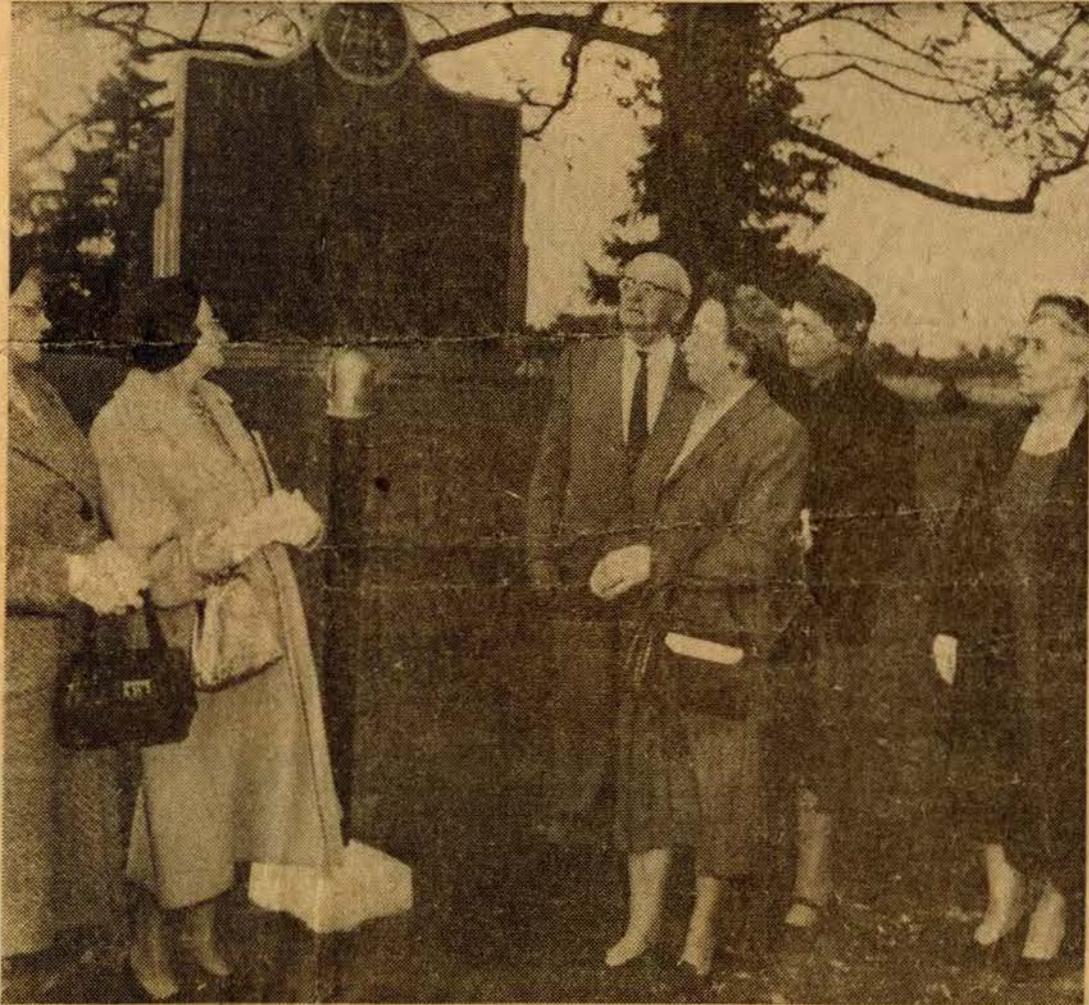
carved from the forest primeval homes and fertile fields as our heritage. Bravely may we face what lies before.

*Jessie Fatcher Lyle.*  
( Mrs Alex Lyle.)



**DR. JOHN ROLPH HONORED**—At a Sunday ceremony in front of the Rolph homestead on the Talbot road a plaque commemorating John Rolph, early Canadian physician and lawyer was unveiled by Dr. J. D. Curtis, representative of the Elgin County Medical Association. About 75 people attended the ceremony which opened in the Middlemarch Women's Institute Hall. Following the unveiling of the Rolph plaque a second unveiling took place at the site of the Talbot road memorial. In the above picture a group that

played a prominent part in the proceedings are, from left to right: Warden Harvey Liddle, of Elgin County; James A. McBain, M.P. for Elgin; Mayor V. A. Barrie, St. Thomas; Dr. J. D. Curtis, Dr. Wilfrid Jury, Curator of the University of Western Ontario Museum; Mrs. J. R. Futcher, chairman of Elgin County Museum and a member of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of the Department of Travel and Publicity; Rev. George Johnstone, president of the Elgin County Ministerial Association and Ron K. McNeil, M.P.P. for Elgin—(T.-J. Photo).



**PROUD OF TALBOT ROAD**—Residents of the Talbot Road turned out in large numbers on Sunday to take part in a dedication ceremony in which plaques commemorating the important highway and Dr. John Rolph, one of its early Canadian settlers were unveiled. In the above

picture Mrs. Harry Dubber, Mrs. Alex Lyle, Dr. Neil Munro, Mrs. Stanley Lyle, Mrs. Neil Munro and Mrs. J. R. Futcher study the memorial. The Talbot road plaque is situated in front of the Munro home just west of the Fingal hill.—(T.-J. Photo).