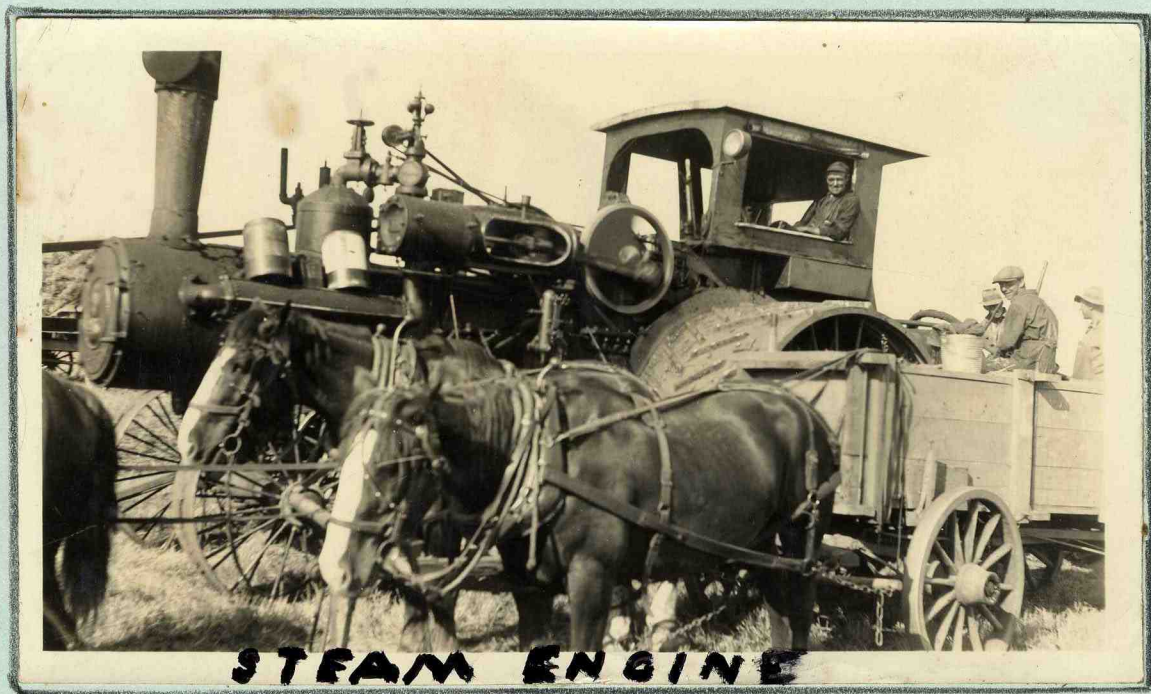




Odds and ends that make a cottage home

# FARM:



**STEAM ENGINE**

# HISTORIES:



**THRESHING.**

THE FRANK FINCH FARM

Lot 23 Concession 4 North Dorchester

Thomas Finch from England was the first known settler in Canada. His family was John Finch, Mary Ann Finch(Edison), and Lizzie Finch (Allen).

John Finch And Adelia Sheldon were the parents of the present owner Frank Finch. One other brother, Burt A. Finch of Beachville, was also born into the family.

One hundred acres comprises this farm which was just once removed from the crown deed. The first log house was built in 1840 just west of the present house. The first fourteen feet by twenty feet barn was built also of logs in 1841 on the sight of the present barn. The first known water system was a soakage well. In 1958, a bathroom was installed. The present large brick house was built in 1913 by F. H. Finch about eight rods from the road. Electricity was installed in it in February 1922. A telephone owned by the Belmont Co-op was installed in 1903. The present large forty by eighty feet dairy barn was built in 1940. Mixed farming with a special crop of canning peas has been cultivated on this farm since it was cleared. A twenty foot implement shed was added in 1959.

Taxes were as follows:

1800's - \$35  
1900's - \$67  
1925's - \$150  
1950's - \$300

F.H. Finch is the present owner of the farm.

FARM OF NELLIE M. GEORGE

Lot 1, Concession 5, Westminster Township

In 1873, James Henry Shaw died and left in his estate twenty-seven acres being the south part of Lot 1, Concession 5, Westminster Township, to his son, Leonard Odell Shaw. Later the same year, Leonard Shaw having apparently acquired additional fifty-six acres from one Daniel Shaw, sold the entire farm to Andrew Venning, a native of Cornwall, England, and his wife formerly Ellen Jackson of Yorkshire, England for the sum of Five Thousand, Seven Hundred Dollars.

Andrew Venning, with his parents came to Canada from England in 1847 and landed in Quebec. They migrated to Toronto and settled in Pickering Township. In 1852 they came to North Dorchester Township and settled near Mossley when the region was almost unbroken forest. Here Andrew Venning married Ellen Jackson on June 18, 1858, and remained near Mossley until 1873. The story is told that on at least one occasion Andrew walked to London for supplies and returned with a bag of flour on his back.

In 1873 the family moved to Westminster Township. At that time they had two daughters, Hannah Elizabeth, later Mrs. Hopkins of Brownsville and Emma, later Mrs. Culver Finch of Mapleton, and one son, Andrew Wesley. Later, a third daughter, Stella was born in Westminster Township. When he came to Westminster Andrew Venning had two farms in mind but chose the one he did because it was closer to church. The main farm house was of white brick with five bedrooms, front and back living rooms, dining room and kitchen and a back kitchen with a pump and sink. The bank barn was on a high brick foundation. The front lawn was enclosed by a very ornamental wooden fence. It was centred by a wooden slat side walk leading out to a circular driveway at the road and terminating in a wooden platform from which the ladies entered a buggy. The sidewalk was flanked by four spruce trees trimmed to appropriate size and cedar hedges enclosed the lawn inside the fence - a very pretty setting for the house.

At the time of purchase a second and frame house was located north of the farm buildings. It was moved down behind the residence and served as a woodshed. It was also used as a store house for pork, flour and other supplies. The remaining room was the small Stella's playhouse.

Beside this was a "dry House" where pork was cured. Nearer the barn, Andrew had a small blacksmith shop fitted with forge, anvil and bellows in which he made and repaired many articles in common use. Annie gave music lessons, driving to the homes of her pupils and also was church organist for many years.

When son Wesley married Loretta Watson of South Dorchester, the house used for storage was moved down the Townline (now Highway #74) about one quarter mile and located on twenty-five acres on the east side of the road. This also had been purchased and son Wesley farmed both places. In 1905, a telephone was installed in Wesley's home and later a private telephone line connected the two residences. This was installed by Wesley who was manager and Secretary-treasurer of the local telephone company.

The farm now had a fine apple orchard with about fifteen varieties of apples and a large raspberry patch kept in perfect condition by Andrew who had retired from active farming. Wesley erected a concrete silo, put in cement sidewalks around the house and in 1912 installed a water system in both house and barn fed by a large storage tank south of the house and filled by Windmill power.

Wesley and his family moved back to the Westminster house about 1909 having sold the twenty-five acres to Theodore Manning. Andrew and Ellen moved first to London for a year then to the village of Belmont where Ellen died about 1916 and Andrew about 1923.