

FIFTY ACRES, NORTHWEST QUARTER OF LOT 14, CONCESSION 6

Peter Ryckman's farm on Concession 6, Lot 14, Yarmouth Township, was bought on April 1, 1961 by Frank and Homiena Grietje (Mini) Vanderveen. Peter and his sister, Frances Ryckman moved to 34 Elgin St., St. Thomas.

The Vanderveen's had emigrated to Canada in October, 1953, and lived for 1½ years in St. Thomas, and after that in New Sarum until they bought the Ryckman farm.

Between 1961 and 1969, most of the feed was grown on the farm (corn and hay). In 1970, it became a cash crop farm and the crops were soya beans, corn and hay. The buildings on the farm have not changed only the regular upkeep.

The house was not changed other than upkeep. In 1973, there was white aluminum siding put on the house which gave it a different appearance, also the verandah was fixed up but the structure was not changed.

On October 10, 1980, this farm was sold to Martin Vandenberk and his wife Machtilda (Tilly) Vandenberk.

Frank and Homiena (Mini) Vanderveen have 5 children; Margaret (Grietje Homiena) was married to Tony Helder of June 8, 1963, Harrietsville, on June 8, 1963. They live at R. R. #1, Aylmer. Jan Hans Vanderveen born Dec. 30, 1942, and married Sandy Evans from Minndosa, Man. on May 5, 1973. They live at Russell, Ont. Hans Vanderveen born June 2, 1945, and was married to Anna Maria Ott from Clinton, on Dec. 17, 1966. They live at R. R. #3, Aylmer. Ina Vanderveen born Dec. 2, 1951 has lived in Toronto since 1970. Married Brian Robertson from Glasgow, Scotland, and they now live in Hamilton, Ont.

Arnold Vanderveen, born Dec. 2, 1951, has been living in Toronto since 1973.

All the family were born in the Netherlands.



Frank and Mini Vanderveen and Family

THE MATTHEWS FARM

Lot 15 Concession 6 Yarmouth

As you have read in the account of the Watson farm, Mr. Peter Baby was awarded several hundreds of acres of land in this area. On July 24, 1799 Mr. Baby received Lots 14 & 15 of Concession 6 of Middlesex County. Later the county was divided and this portion became known as Elgin County. Francis Baby, son of Peter, appears to have capitalized on his Father's honorarium. On Nov. 21, 1832 he sold the 400 acres to John Christie for £400. Eight years later Mr. Christie sold the 200 acres of Lot 15 to William Willox of Niagara Township for £250. On Aug. 4, 1848 Mr. Willox sold the south half of Lot 15 to John McVey (later spelled McVey) for £ 150.

On Nov. 7 of the same year Mr. McVey sold these 100 acres to James Fenlon for £150 and paid him £200 for the same farm three years later. Mr. McVey married Mr. Fenlon's daughter.

At some time a log cabin was built on a knoll just east and a little north of the present barn. I remember one of our most valuable cows died -- a pretty red durham named Beauty. Because of sentiment my Father--Wm Matthews--would not send her to the fertilizer plant so he dug a huge hole under a pear tree and interred her there. That tree must have been near where the log cabin stood. The pear tree was cut down recently. I am told there were many walnut trees on this farm but they were cut and sold for lumber. They called the soil "Walnut Loam."

In 1852 Mr. McVey decided to build a new house a nine room white brick with a frame back kitchen, woodshed and garage on the back. The house faced the concession to the south as there was no north and south road when the house was built. There was a barn built north of the house. That is why there is a well out in the field north of the house. Mr. John McVey died on Nov. 10, 1907 leaving the land to his two daughters Misses Katherine and Mary McVey. On April 6, 1909 they sold the 100 acres to my Grandfather Charles Matthews and his wife Lucy for \$7,010. The side road had been put through by now and Charles Matthews hired Ike Williams to help move the barn to a new foundation east of where it was--where the present barn is. The lane used to come from the concession along the east side of the house. Now it comes from the side road along the north side of the house. Mrs. Matthews died in July 1912. The same year their son--my father--William, married Aletta Walters daughter of Thomas Walters of the sixth Concession. Mother tells me that the telephone had been installed sometime before she moved to Lot 15. Charles Matthews married and moved to St. Thomas. Another

son, George, married Aletta's sister Hazel in 1914 so Charles divided the 100 acres in half and built a house and barn on the north half. There was a small woods on the north portion. This portion was worked for a time by George who enlisted in the army of the First World War. Charles Matthews sold the north 50 acres to Richard Walters brother of Aletta and Hazel in 1930. The chicken pen on the north half was moved from the 6th concession and several years previously had housed the Grandparents of Richard and Aletta.

Ironically the chicken pen on the south 50 was a "lean to" moved from Charles Matthews Park Ave residence.

In 1916 the barn on the south 50 was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. My Maternal Grandparents walked the mile and a half to the fire. The Matthews hired Clarence Ralf to rebuild the barn on part of the same foundation. The lumber came from Preston by way of the London and Port Stanley Railway to White's Station on Concession 4 west of No. 4 Highway. The Matthews transported the lumber home with horses and wagons. Mr. Ralf worked from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. for \$1.25 a day plus dinner and supper. His helper Shep Ashford received 75¢ a day for the same hours and meals. Of course neighbours rallied round for the barn raising as they did for threshing grain and later, silo filling. The women prepared delicious "feasts" and the men took advantage by having a contest to see who could eat the most pieces of homemade pie.

On April 6, 1918 Wm. Matthews purchased the south 50 from his Father. There was a row of maple trees along the west and south fences from which my parents made many gallons of Maple syrup. The house was built on a stone foundation. The walls are three bricks thick and plastered on the brick. The large basement had a dirt floor and kept vegetables very well. A small room built under the jutting part of the 16 x 20 foot kitchen was called the milk cellar. It had stone walls and a brick floor which kept it reasonably cool in summer. My Mother made butter and stored it in this room along with milk, red cabbage and beet pickles in crocks and fresh bacon, fried and stored in its own grease in a crock.

The kitchen had two windows and eight doors. One could go from kitchen to livingroom, to hall, to parlor, to bedroom and back to kitchen. My Father told me that it was built that way so that if a wife became angry with her husband and went after him with the rolling pin, she couldn't catch him. There was an unused fireplace in the livingroom and only one closet in the whole house. There was an outside cellar way down which my Father carried many bushels of vegetables and apples - russet, king, spy, snow & greening - from the orchard east of the house. There were brick red shutters on the windows and bats in the attic. I slept alone upstairs and occasionally a bat would

get in somehow. I would cover my head and shout for Dad. He would come up armed with a broom muttering that I probably had frightened the poor bat Half to death. After a few misses with the broom he would finally knock the bat down. Sometimes in the attic he burned, with caution, a pan of sulphur to clear the attic of bats. Incidentally I slept upstairs a few winters without any heat in my room. I heated (on the coal stove) two of Mother's irons (used for ironing) and wrapped them in pieces of old sheets to take to bed with me. I slept in a very thick goose feather tick with lots of homemade quilts. I used to carry a coal oil lamp up to bed. The hydro came down the 6th concession but not down our sideroad. Finally in 1939 we got hydro. I wonder if you can imagine the thrill of flicking the switch for the first time. The possibility of turning the light on at the bottom of the stairs, ascending and then turning it off at the top was just unbelievable. Dad purchased a used radio. We listened to Edward R. Murrow and the news, "The Graig's" --the life of a farm family; "The Happy Gang" who played and sang the popular songs of the day; "The Shadow"-- a spooky play; "Gene Autry" and others.

There was a drinking water well at the north of the house. Dad used some of this to cool cans of milk in a tank. There was a cistern near the back door. We dipped the soft water from there with a pail for washing and had to strain it through a clean cloth to remove the little "wigglers" which I think would have become mosquitoes.

Mother told me how they used to make hard and soft soap. To make soft soap she saved fat and rinds and bones all winter. They also saved some hardwood ashes. They had a leech in the back yard. This is a 2 to 3 foot hollow log about 6 to 8 feet long standing on end on a platform. A piece of tin under the log was shaped to funnell the water into a pail. They packed the ashes into the leech and then poured in some soft water, a little at a time. They let it stand a couple of days to let the water seep through into the pail. The resulting liquid was lye! Then they put the lye in an iron kettle on the stove and added the fat etc and boiled it a few hours. The lye ate up the bones etc. In the morning they removed the pieces not eaten. This light brown jelly soap stayed soft and was kept in a crock. It was used for washing clothes, scrubbing floors etc.

Wm. Matthews sold the farm to the present owners, Mrs. Wm. Stafford and the late Mr. Stafford, on Nov. 12, 1946 for \$6,000. according to the deed but they moved there in March 1946.

During the past 25 years the Staffords have done extensive renovating. They put on new roofs painted the buildings, built 2 new chimneys and repaired the fireplace. They put in an oil furnace, closed in the side verandah, put in a bathroom and kitchen sink and cupboards, wired the barn, and built a new garage.

Mrs. Stafford says she thoroughly enjoys living on the farm although she lives alone. Keeping busy seems to be the key to happiness. She has the neighbours work the farm but she cares for about seventeen head of hereford cattle and looks after her big house and lawns. I hear she is adept with the hammer too.

I hope that future generations who live on Lot 15 Concession 6 will have a heppy and fruitful life and will be rewarded with fond memories such as I possess among my souvenirs.

Greta (Matthews) Chase,
February 1971.

"FAIRVIEW FARM" *George & Alma Flintoft*

Lot 16, Concession 6, Yarmouth

"Fairview Farm", lot 16, concession 6, the home of George and Alma Munroe Flintoft, was taken from the crown in 1850 by one David Minard, a Quaker brother, who sold it to John Minard in 1854.

To bring our story up to date, we must go back to the year 1843 when the good ship "Spermacity", captained by Captain Moon, sailed from Devonshire, England, on a tedious two month voyage. Among the passengers bound for the new land were the Shepherd, Millman and Gloin families, all pioneers of our township. William Shepherd and his wife, Anne Howe, and little George, then two years of age, took up lot 16, concession 7. Two years later a second son was born, named John.

The Shepherd family lived the life of the average pioneer; sturdy, thrifty and anxious to work. They soon acquired plenty of means to build a beautiful white brick residence, which still stands at the end of the drive which is lined by two rows of beautiful hard maple trees. It was when the boys grew to manhood that the family purchased the Minard farm, deeding it to George.

John married Minnie Stanfield and remained on the home farm with the parents until the time of their death. John and Minnie had no family. John took a keen interest

in agriculture, church, politics and good work horses, the oats being measured in the dish given him by his mother when a very young man, until the time of his retirement. He was a just money lender, always known to give the poorer man a square deal. Eight years prior to his death, John retired, passing his farm on to a cousin, William Wadland of Sarnia, and moved to St. Thomas.

George Shepheard, remained a bachelor. He was interested in affairs of state, an active conservative, a member of the township council for many years, filling his office with ability and faithfulness.

Associated with Benjamine and James Marlatt, Mr. Shepheard organized the first Sunday School at Yarmouth Centre where he taught for many years. He did much to further the cause of temperance, infact was known as The Father of Local Option. He crossed the Atlantic to attend Queen Victoria's Jubilee and also attended the Quebec Tri-Centenary. A quiet man, admired by all who knew him for his amiable disposition, he passed away at the home of his brother John, 46 Hincks Street, on February 22, 1913, after a long illness.

William Wadland Sr., his sons, William Jr. and Fred, were at this time engaged in farming on both the Shepherd homes. William Wadland erected the fine red brick residence on the south farm, lot 16, concession 6, which he sold

DONALD MCINTYRE

in 1914 to Walter Flintoft and his wife, Lydia Zoller Flintoft.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Flintoft and son, George, have operated this fine farm, first as a dairy and general farming project, and after the death of his parents, George, who was an only son, and his wife Alma Munroe Flintoft, have converted it into one of the better known cash crop farms in the community.

George married Alma Munroe, daughter of William and Grace Overbury Munroe, in 1921. Four children were born to this marriage. Dorothy, Mrs. Wilbur Jagoe and Jean, Mrs. Morley Brown, both of St. Thomas, Ruby, Mrs. William Eden of Woodstock and Robert who, with his wife Jean Johnston Flintoft, resides on the home farm; Robert's children, Kimberley and Catherine, being the fourth generation of the family to reside on this fine homestead, Fairview Farms.

..... by Mrs. Clara Axford.

LOTS 7 AND 8, CONCESSION 7, YARMOUTH

- by Mrs. Angus McKenzie- (1956)

Grey Manor Farms, the home of Angus Grant McKenzie and Son at lots 7 and 8, concession 7, Yarmouth has been in the family since 1882.

The first deeds to this property were lost or destroyed, and the first record available is 1877, when Wm. and Catherine Hilborn and their two sons, Ira and Samuel W. were owners.

On March 19, 1877, Wm. Hilborn deeded to his son Samuel W. Hilborn, bachelor the north fifty acres of the east half, for the sum of \$1500. On the same date, he deeded to Ira Hilborn, the south forty acres, and the adjoining ten acres of the south-east half, also for \$1500.

On November 14, 1881, Ira feeling the urge to be free of any encumbrance, sold to his brother Samuel his fifty acres for \$2500.

874 On September 2, 1882, Samuel sold the said lands to James Chisholm McKenzie for \$6800. Ira's wife Emma selling her dower for \$100. to her brother-in-law Samuel, and receiving receipt for the same.

James Chisholm McKenzie and his wife, Isabell Henderson McKenzie and their two children Donald and Mary, then 6 months old moved from their home in Paynes' Mills and took up residence in their new home on Concession 7, Yarmouth.

Records show the first tax slip issued on the property to be \$26.50 including \$1.00 dog tax. This is understandable, for when the District Council decided it needed more money, for the