

farm tore their wheat stocks to pieces to feed the horses and shot a cow but all they took was the cow bell."

### GRANDPA STOKES' BIRTHDAY PARTY

"The biggest event to that time was Grandpa's Birthday Party. I remember I was seventeen just the age to have a first class good time, with mother in the house to bear the brunt of things. Everyone who could walk came from all over, crowds came with teams, there were over 5000 there, that was a lot when there were no steam cars to come in. Uncle Billy Wilcox counted over 500 teams tied along the road, but this did not include the ones down by Catfish Creek where the real celebration was held. It was black with rigs down there. I don't know how many bands there were to play music for the doings. As for the tables to serve dinner, there were long long ones set under the trees on the creek flats, and loads of food too. There was no stinting in cooking in those days or lack of pies, cheese and fried chicken and cake like you don't see now. Those were the days, folks now a days don't know what good times are like. In those days a neighbor was a neighbor not standing on ceremony. Grandma Stokes and old Mrs. Oakes were the first settlers in here and when they were young women they never thought of such a thing as sending word if they were coming up for the evening or asking if it

was convenient. They didn't fuss up to go out. They were always welcome; pull the chair up in front of the big fireplace visit, crack hickory nuts and have some cider.

There lives were filled with important work spinning, knitting clothes, food for the winter, soap to make, soda to raise the buscuits and candles to light us to bed were all made by hand.

If people nowadays would just quit trying to keep up with the Jones' enjoy their own life and not be so concerced about what people think, how much better life would be."

Although a childless widow for many years she was honoured, and her memory revered by the children and teachers of New Sarum School, who enjoyed her gracious hospitality and kindly advice as long as she was able to manage her own home, a grand white brick house on the north bank of Catfish Creek, which is now occupied by Mrs. Ilene Elliott Tansley.

## WILLIAM AND HANNAH WADLAND

William Wadland, son of Thomas Wadland and Grace (Howe) Wadland was born in Devonshire, England (near Merton) on December 1st, 1849. He had one sister, Annie Grace, who died in St. Thomas, at the age of 23, and is buried in the Old English Cemetery, St. Thomas, and one brother, Thomas Howe, who settled in Hamilton, Ontario. His father died when William was 7 years old, before the birth of his brother.

He worked for a farmer, and when he became a little older, he entered plowing matches, which stood him in good stead many years later, after he retired, when he won several Ontario matches, plowing with horses. At the age of 20, he came to Canada to live with his mother's sister, his aunt Mrs. William Shepherd, 2 miles south of Yarmouth Centre on Concession 6.

He farmed for four years and then went to work on the Grand Trunk at Yarmouth Centre, now the CNR. Two years previous to this, his fiancée, Hannah Chudley, born October 1, 1852, came out with his sister Annie, arriving May 24, 1872 and they were married in First Methodist Parsonage, St. Thomas, June 27, 1872. Hannah Chudley, daughter of Thomas and Hannah (Sutton) Chudley, of Meeth, Devonshire, was one of 10 children, four of whom came to Canada. (James Chudley was a shoemaker in Yarmouth Centre in the early 1870's later moving to St. Thomas where he died in 1890). They had eight children, one dying in infancy.

He moved to Stevensville, Ontario, about 1877, as foreman of a railroad section, living there until he was moved to

Sarnia to help in the construction of the Sarnia Tunnel, then considered a most marvellous engineering job. He was a member of the Town Council, and also a member of the Sarnia Board of Education, besides being on the Church Board of the Queen St. Church, which became the Devine St. Church. The whole family were in church every Sunday twice a day, and all the children in Sunday School at 3. And everyone walked. Working hours were from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., no holidays, and general wage \$1.00 per day. However, by good management by them, a good garden and hard work by both of them, every child was well dressed, well fed and well educated.

In 1906, on the retirement of John and George Shepherd to St. Thomas, they returned to the Shepherd farm, son William, wife and children Gladys and Harold, son Fred and daughter Birdie accompanying. And when they had built a new house on the south farm, they were living on the same farm on which they started housekeeping 34 years before. In 1914, they moved to the cottage on Talbot St., now No. 3 highway,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Yarmouth Centre. They were both active members of Yarmouth Centre United Church, William being a member of the Session, and Mrs. Wadland was a life member of both the Woman's Association and the Women's Missionary Society. William died of a heart attack Nov. 4, 1933, after one week's illness and Mrs. Wadland died July 6, 1939, at the home of her daughter, Birdie (Mrs. Andrew Paddon) on Highway 74, 1 mile north of New Sarum. They are buried in the St. Thomas Cemetery.

Birdie, the youngest of the family, married Andrew Paddon a son of William and Alice (Westlake) Paddon, Edgeware Road. One son, William was born to this marriage and he has been employed on the City Hall staff, St. Thomas for many years. He is the husband of Lois (Rose) Paddon who teaches school at S. S. # 12 Yarmouth. They have two sons, David and Robert.

STORY RECALLED OF TWIN FARM HOMES ON EDGEWARE ROAD

"Rhude and "Gilbert Hall" Link History of Ontario

With That of Ancient Devonshire.

The following interesting history of the Devonshire settlement in the Edgeware Road district and also of the two historic farm homes erected by Mathew and William Gilbert in 1870 has been written by Mrs. W. M. Davidson of Victoria B. C. formerly Miss Ethel Haydon of this city and a former member of the Times Journal staff. Mrs. Davidson whose late husband was editor of the Calgary Albertan has been spending some months with relatives and friends in this district and while here made this record of the Gilbert homes)

The rural roads of Ontario offer to the tourist with a taste for history the interest of a great variety of dignified old Farmhouses which bear the associations of more than a century of human habitation to enhance their architectural attractions. They stand for the most part in good repair and are as yet unspoiled by undue tasteless alteration which might impair their service as bearers of the stories of five, six, or in some cases seven generations of the families who created them. In their diversity they are memorials, for those with eyes to see, of the diverse heredities of the early pioneers whose descendants comprise the now standardized citizenry of this old province which has become a tightly coherent regional entity with its own distinctive ethos.

the building of fine arterial highways and the rapid urbanization of the population have often broken the human links of these interesting old homes with the families who created them, but not before at least four or five generations of the original families in unbroken succession put upon them the enduring stamp of both appearance and name--"old--place"--which persist in local usage defying new nomenclature Oddities of architecture fascinating in themselves often translate into documents of the remoter history of the founders of such homes.

For instance on the Edgeware Road just five miles from St. Thomas are two beautiful farmhouses which link the modern history of ancient Devonshire; they are twin houses exactly alike except for the invisible difference of two feet each way in their dimensions and they duplicate architecturally an ancient yeoman homestead called "Rhude" buried in the heart of Devon near the incredibly antique market-town of Holdsworth. One of these houses was for years called "Rhude" and the other "Gilbert Hall" after the founding family of Gilberts. Rhude has been rechristened Evergreen Lodge and has become the residence of the Robert Van Patter family; the other has lately become residence of Norman Martin.

Holdsworth ( often spoken locally of as Olesworthy and misnamed in "The Falbot Regime" as Holdsworth) by a variety of accidents contributed to this part of Ontario, a considerable portion of the original settlers of south Yarmouth. It is an obscure but ancient little market town in Devon--so ancient that not merely was it listed as an established village in the

Doomsday Book compiled for William the Conqueror, but was a centre of Christianity in the days of the Roman occupation of Britain.

### Long History

Its fine church has a veritable history from the latter part of the third century A.D. when the area was heavily garrisoned by the Romans to protect their exploitation of the tin mines from the depredations of the "savages" whom early Roman missionaries were converting to the new and still unofficial faith of the Empire. Under the Romans it had a succession of several rectors of known names and dates. Then with the departure of the Romans, British civilization decayed and for about 400 years there was no rector of Holdsworthy whose name is known today. But Irish missionaries then revived the faith some time before the Norman conquest and the rectorial continuity was never again interrupted down to the present day. On a pillar within the church all their names and dates are listed; and in the churchyard surrounding the present impressive parish church a visitor from Yarmouth might be startled to read upon the mossy tombstones many familiar Yarmouth township family names; Cole, Gloin, Gilbert, Penhale, Marlatt, Westlake, Maynard, Mills, Pincombe, Sanders, Shepherd, Paddon, Hayden, Taylor, Yeo, Yeandle, Curtis, Duncombe, and a score or so more.

### Migrated to Yarmouth

The migration of all these to Yarmouth was a fascinating accident. Richard Gilbert was born to one of the ubiquitous Devon Gilberts near the end of the 18th century when England was bearing the ruinous economic burdens of the Napoleonic wars; and he grew up on the yeoman homestead of Rhude to marry a Martha Andrews who bore him four sons, the eldest, Richard born in 1819 and the youngest, Marwood, born in 1829. Those were the years when England wrestled with social problems culminating in the Reforms of 1837. But before that revolutionary culmination Richard and Martha in April, 1831, joined their resources with those of several friends to charter for a passage to North America the wooden sailing vessel the Calypso. The party comprised besides the Gilberts and their sons, Richard, William, Marwood, and Matthew, the families: Richard Penhale, his wife and three sons, Thomas, Matthew, and John, and two daughters (later Mrs. A. Miller and Mrs. James Cole); Simon Westlake, his wife and two sons, George, and Edmund and one daughter (later Mrs. E. Miller); and Richard Andrews and his wife and son, John. They sailed from Biddeford, Bay of Bristol, April 12, 1831.

Knowing little of the continent for which they were bound, they had prepared a cargo of equipment, tools, and utensils and clothing, and food for the voyage of unknown duration. Mrs. Gilbert industriously provided herself with 20 new dresses—she meant to be well dressed for the rest of her life whatever might befall! She also shipped thirty cheeses—an indication of the scale of the general food provisions. Richard, who had sold out Rhude, carried capital of \$3,500. half of it in silver coin packed in a "French basket the size of a pail: the other families also carried their cash assets in similar fashion.

### Eight Weeks Crossing

For eight weeks the Calypso battled the Atlantic, and

then in June 1831, nosed up the Bay of Fundy in a dense fog and landed at St. Andrews, New Brunswick. But the countryside did not please them after the mild airs of southern Devon (which is semi-tropical and presents flourishing palm trees and other exotic foliage not dissimilar to Florida) and the so-called "bracing" airs of Biddeford (which are no more bracing than Victoria, B.C.); and after taking on fresh water they put to sea again and touched land at Eastport, Maine, where their sojourn of ten days offered nothing tempting enough to detain them. They sailed on to New York. In Long Island Sound the Calypso struck Hellgate Rock and was stranded for several anxious hours, a misadventure which determined their final landing at that port.

What pleasure them might have had in the State of New York in 1831 was dissipated by the discovery that the customs duties of that port were so severe that they could not afford to bring ashore their considerable cargo and so dumped much of it into the sea. After that it was no part of their intention to give the state of New York the benefit of their baskets of silver, and they promptly left for Bethany where they saw the first steamboat in their experience and ventured upon it to Albany, from whence they journeyed by two boat for 325 miles to Buffalo, then a town about the size of Aylmer, with the intention of pushing overland or by lake boat to Ohio.

#### Directed to Talbot Settlement

But in Buffalo they chanced to put up at a tavern kept by a man named Miller, who, unknown to them was of a large connection of that name harshly ejected from their eastern locations because of their loyalist sentiments in the American Revolution, and relocated along the Canadian side of the Niagara river near Fort Erie. Although this Miller did business in Buffalo he was strongly attached to Ontario and interested in the news of its internal development sent by some miller offshoots who had recently penetrated to the Talbot settlement: and he now argued with the travelers from Devon: "Why not go into Canada and stay under the British Flag?" Gilbert retorted that he had "heard that Canada was so cold that they had to shoe the geese to keep their feet from freezing". But in the upshot Miller's advice prevailed and Miller engaged for the party the schooner "Niagara" under Captain Scott to take them along Lake Erie to Fort Stanley.

Arriving at the Port they were dismayed to discover only a warehouse and a tavern kept by Mrs. Whitcombe-but Whitcombe is a Devon name! The wild wilderness beyond discouraged them into a state of intense indignation with Miller who had got them into this. But the terms of their contract with Skipper Scott compelled a landing, the next day Gilbert and Westlake, with great hardiness set out to follow blazed trails to Fort Talbot to interview old Colonel Talbot about land on which to locate. From Colonel Talbot on Sept. 23rd, 1831 Gilbert purchased 300 acres of virgin land at 12 shillings and 6 pence per acre £127-10 in all, which was less than one third of his capital in hand and left him a comfortable margin for the hazards of the future. The portions were Lots 12 and 13 south and Lot 12 first range north on the Edgeware Road (a mere trail) indicated by blazes) Westlake made a similar purchase, The exact location of each were privately determined between Gilbert and

Westlake who flipped a coin to decide by chance whether each would have two corner lots or one of them would have four corners. Gilbert winning two throws of three, won all corner lots and Westlake took the next two east.

At Port Stanley, Penhale and Andrews parted company with these two. Penhale opening a blacksmith shop--but later he too bought land on the Edgeware. Andrews, who was a well educated man and a Baptist preacher found employment as a teacher in the first grammar school in St. Thomas.

### EARLY HARDSHIPS

The Gilbert and Westlake families made their way to St. Thomas by wagon through almost unbroken forest a journey of great hardship to their inexperience the women were left for two weeks in the small settlement while the men pushed on to their allotments and set up rough log huts for their temporary accommodation. The back breaking labors of clearing the land might hve been discouraging but for the evidence of the success of earlier settlers and by winter they had four acres under wheat or ready for potatoes and could turn their attention to long range planning for permanent establishments, which Gilbert hoped to create in a close imitation of lovely Rhude in beautiful Devon.

To Gilbert coming from England already poor in timber-- its maples had been used up long since to fuel for glass making introduced by Henry VII and Devon oaks went into battle ships in the late wars--there was nothing but extreme tragedy in the common practise of Yarmouth settlers in burning magnificent oak, walnut, maple, ash, hickory and the rest just to get it out of the way, of cultivation; he talked constantly to his eldest son, age eleven of how this could be conserved to create Rhude in Yarmouth. Next year they built a more comfortable house. And in 1835 he bought Lot 13 north range from the Canada Land Company through Burwell for £112-10; As time went on Gilbert came to understand and he reconciled to the unfamiliar balances of the economy which the local conditions dictated, and the four families began to write to their neighbours in Devon the kind of glowing descriptions which are aparently the characteristic habit of new settlers everywhere. A few immigrants from Devonshire had located in the Talbot settlement now and again earlier in the century: but as the outcome of a successful adventure of this particular party settled together on the Edgeware there followed over the next ten years a migration from the town of Holdsworthy such that almost every family name prominent in the ancient Holdsworthy records now began to appear in Yarmouth.

### Devon Transplanted

C. O. Ermatinger in the Talbot Regime says that Yarmouth enjoyed a period of unusual tranquility in this period and its prosperity was such that by 1840 there were 23,000 acres of land under cultivation, many established orchards, and 10 sawmills and five grist mills. The transfer of so many of their neighbors must have been gratifying to the Edgeware "colony". Early in their operations it is related, their worst fright had been from the appearance of a Highland Scot Family of McIntyre who paused at their farm one night en route to a location in North Yarmouth



with a request for hospitality, the McIntyres spoke Gaslic, no communication by language was possible and to the Devon families they appeared altogether strange and "foreign" In the mutual district, Gilbert offered and they accepted shelter in a new sheep house which Gilbert had just put up, a situation which gratified both parties--the McIntyre's were probably equally disturbed by the Devon speech!

The ten saw mills inspired Gilbert to conserve the magnificent timbers of his estate which it had been breaking his heart to burn, he shrewdly set apart the best stands to preserve as woodlots against the future building of a new Rhude in Yarmouth and he started a family habit which endured for three generations, of selecting the finest logs for home seasoning. His first good house built apparently before 1840, was to be succeeded by two others before Rhude was achieved. This first permanent house was a massive building of heavy hand-hewn oak beams, which may be seen in specimen in the half of it which moved later to another location, exists today as the renovated residence of Lot 13 Edgeware south owned and occupied by John Van Patter. Two subsequent constructions one of frame and the second of brick which followed were eventually incorporated into the handsome brick house which was the final realization of the ambitions of the family to recreate their Devon home in Ontario.

#### Reproduce the Old Home

But when Rhude of Devon was eventually initiated-- in 1870- it turned out to be twins, two houses opposite corner lots, and the twins were built not by old Richard, but by two of his sons, Matthew and William, who had been four and ten years of age in the year of migration. William had now married Elizabeth Tansley who had made her advent into this world in 1826 on an emigrant ship in New York harbor while it was docking. Their children, John and Elizabeth (later Mrs. James Westlake) were husky teen-agers in the year of the raising of the twin Rhudes and old enough to take an interest in many of the details of the operations.

Matthew on Lot 12 south and William on Lot 13 north engaged a contractor named Auckland and developed a certain rivalry in the realization of Richard's dream such that while the houses were almost alike William's came out two feet larger in each dimension. Matthew, however, pre-empted the name Rhude and William's place was nameless until the family of his son John who eventually inherited the property fancifully dubbed it "Gilbert Hall" out of misty literary conceptions, rather than any memory of English baronial nomenclature. As it happened there had been a Gilbert barony in Devon that of the renowned Sir Richard Gilbert, navigator and explorer in the days of Queen Elizabeth and only a little less famous than his half brother, Sir Walter Raleigh: but this celebrity had lived in the Dart neighborhood and Ontario Gilberts have no record of any connection with him by decent, direct or collateral.

#### Designed from Memory

The twin Rhudes, although designed only from the family memory of the architectural ancestor came out with a close resemblance of all the principal features, the builders taking the pains of

importing from as far away as Kingston such essential materials as dressed and carved stone for the beautiful round-headed arches with carved keystones and corbels over the windows and main doors, which are a conspicuous distinction and importing stained glass, engraved with the date of construction, for the fan lights. Brick from St. Marys made the solid walls. But they differ in some practical respects--The Gilberts had learned from their experiences of before 1840 and of 1857 the impracticality of fireplaces for heating in the harsh Ontario climate, no matter how beautiful the carved and molded mantels and they planned to be warm in the new houses with practical Canadian stoves but they built the chimneys with the proper handsome panelling and with coping stones of a weight of 800 pounds. By reason of the wealth of seasoned woods which the family had accumulated from their own farms, the interiors were probably more richly done than in the Devon ancestor. The countryside was scoured for the finest craftsmen to convert the choice walnut, oak, birdseye maple, pine, etc. into beautiful wainscot, handsome heavily panelled doors, intricately turned balustrades and ornately molded door and window casings combining light and dark woods for the embellishment of the interior.

### Beautiful Wood Work

Unique features imitative of Rhude in Devon were the circular stairway of walnut and the round arched doors of the hall, the carved medallions showing lion's heads in bas relief above the doors, and elaborately carved walnut lambrequins over the windows--fine details which made the two houses outstanding in their time and place and worthy of public preservation as "museum pieces" of this countryside for the connoisseurs of later generations. The Devon Rhude could not have had the birdseye maple in which the twin Rhudes parlors were finished, but it undoubtedly had the upstairs drawing-room daintily done in white for "the ladies".

Finally when the twin Rhudes had been brought to structural completion, the Gilberts engaged an expert cabinet maker and his apprentices for many weeks to create on the spot from their own timber the appropriate furniture for all the many rooms. Guided by their pattern books from England (and probably Germany) these men applied their skills to cut and carve and mortise and dowel out of lumber of the trees from the two farms a huge ornate walnut sideboard, side and serving tables, an extension dining table huge in itself and capable of expansion to seat twenty persons, handsome commodes, bedsteads, dressers, centre tables, etc. all reminiscent of the Devon ancestor. It is unfortunate that the names of these craftsmen have passed out of memory, for their work might not improperly be described as Canadian Biedermeier and was seldom inferior to the authentic Biedermeier recently became the craze of sophisticated collectors. They were in the tradition of such craftsmen in that along with the fancy pieces they turned out also a complete equipment of wooden kitchen utensils (a rolling pin is still in use in the family) and did not disdain to make a full complement of kitchen tables, stools, cupboards and sturdy rush bottom chairs for "rough use" in the enormous kitchen.

Although these furnishings have now been scattered among the various descendant families thus depriving the twin houses of the feeling of unity and completion which they had in the 19th century, the houses themselves stand as fine examples of the crafts of old Ontario and exemplify the continuity of the traditional

cultures of Devonshire in Yarmouth, effected by the transplantation in the decade of the middle nineteenth century of so many adventurous representatives of one single little English market town to a new and formidably strange township in Ontario