

When the pioneers settled here the land was covered with the choicest timber, which was cut, piled and burned, there being no sale for wood. The ashes were then gathered and made into black salts, which, at one time, was the only thing that sold for cash.

Wheat was then sown among the stumps, and harrowed with a rude harrow. When it was ripe it was cut with a sickle, and afterwards threshed with a flail and fanned with a blanket.

After some years a warehouse was built at Port Talbot, where wheat was bought and shipped. The people would take fifteen or sixteen bushels on a crude cart drawn by oxen, and make their way through the woods to Port Talbot. As there was no dock, the vessel would come as near to the land as possible, and then the wheat was sent out to it on flat boats. The price paid was three or four shillings a bushel.

Once a year Colonel Talbot sent his men in a canoe to Long Point (where there was a mill) and got wheat ground. The settlers got a small quantity of flour from him and ground the rest by hand.

The wants of the people were easily supplied, because they made their own furniture and clothing. Their summer clothing was made from flax and their winter clothing from wool.

It is uncertain when sheep were first brought here, but they were here in 1812-13, or there would have been no need of a shepherd to tend the sheep. They had to be well guarded to keep the wolves from the sheep. Mrs. Colonel Patterson rescued a lamb from a wolf. The ashes of corn cobs were used instead of saleratus. A hickory bark torch served as a lantern until the perforated tin lantern, with a tallow candle, took its place. This has given place to the oil lantern and lamp of the present day. A home scene on winter evenings, was a bright hard-wood fire in a large fireplace, the goodman of the house shelling corn on a machine made by driving a knife-blade into the end of a board, and sitting on the board to hold it down, as he shells the corn off into a washtub. Other evenings he prepares for sugar-making by sharpening wooden spiles with a jack-knife. The people in general were industrious, contented and happy. The gospel was preached in private houses and people walked miles to attend, and it was not an uncommon thing to see a man present with neither shoes nor coat on.

Before this section was set apart the settlers sent their children to school at Watson's Corners or to a school in what is now section No. 5. This school section was set apart in 1862. George Macbeth gave land for a site and a school house 22x24 feet was built the same year. The first trustees were Samuel Williams, John Tracy, sr., and Joseph Welsh. The first teacher was Charles Clay. The salary was \$216, which gradually increased to \$300. Until 1868, the teacher's salary was partly raised by rate bill, but since then the school has been free.

The following are the teachers in order as they taught: Cyrus Stafford, George Watson, Duncan McAlpine, Sarah Philpott, J.M. Glenn, who is now a lawyer in St. Thomas; Maggie Black, Christena Patterson, Peter McAlpine, Catherine Campbell, Mary O'Brien, Eliza Hunter, Lavina Kennedy, John McLellan, John Sutherland and Miss Florence Ross, Catherine McPherson, Mary Grout, Carrie Collard, Allison Sutherland and Miss Stafford. The trustees are Hannibal Burwell, Thomas Clear, John Lyons, Nathan Clark, William Church, James Sloan, John Tracy, jr., and Thomas Pearce.

School Section No. 14, Dunwich, is a somewhat irregular tract of land, bounded on the northeast by the town line between Southwold and Dunwich, on the northwest by the 9th concession, on the southwest by a line drawn from the western corner of lot 19, in the 9th concession, to a point one-fourth of a mile west of Talbot Creek. Its history dates from the time when in 1803 Colonel Talbot cut the first tree, at what is known as Port Talbot now. In the following year, 1804, he settled there, and immediately began the work of clearing off the woods and cultivating the soil.

Being a broken section of land, it was sometime before anyone (besides the Colonel and his attendant, Jeffrey Hunter) settled on it. However, about 1810, Colonel Mahlon Burwell came from Niagara, and cleared seven acres of land on the northeast bank of Talbot Creek, on the farm now owned by Talbot Macbeth, of London, and occupied by Mr. Rufus Campbell, and here was built the second house in the settlement. Here, also, he kept a Post office, affording great convenience to the people in adjacent settlements.

Following him came Robert Guernsey, who settled on lot C, in the 10th Concession, and, except for those who worked for Colonel Talbot, no others came for a long while, although the conditions offered by Colonel Talbot were very favourable, giving each settler fifty acres free and another 150 acres at \$3 per acre, if he would clear ten acres and build a house of prescribed dimensions. About this time Colonel Burwell began surveying the southern part of the western peninsula, and Colonel Talbot, to satisfy the growing needs of the whole settlement, erected a small sawmill and grist mill on the banks of Talbot Creek, thus giving the few settlers a chance to better their buildings, and get their grain grown without having to travel three or four days through the dense woods.

The settlement progressed favourably under the able management of Colonel Talbot, until in 1812 the war broke out between Britain and the United States, when the Americans made two attacks on Port Talbot, on the first occasion taking Colonel Burwell prisoner, and the second time they came up through St. Thomas, and marched to Robert Guernsey's, where they camped for a night, using all his grain and straw to feed their horses, thus leaving him destitute for the winter. Next morning they marched up to Colonel Burwell's house, and burned it down, next the mills shared the same fate. They had turned towards Colonel Talbot's house, but as he noticed them coming, he hastily hid what valuables he had, and ran down into the woods. One of the enemy perceiving him, raised his gun to shoot, and but for the presence of mind of Colonel Patterson, a friend of Colonel Talbot's, who said it was only a shepherd, he would undoubtedly have lost his life. Another of those near, a Colonel Wilson, was sought, but escaped by hiding in an oven. The house was serched, but nothing being found in it, they did not burn it, and after they had gone the Colonel regained it in safety.

The loss of the mills was a severe blow to the settlement, as Colonel Talbot had expended a great deal of money on them, and as there was no mill nearer than Long Point, many had recourse to the old system of mortar and pestle, rather than go such a distance through the forest. Colonel Talbot had a canoe, and sent once a year to Long Point for provisions, but these had to be doled out very sparingly, and consequently were very dear. Some idea of the relative value of things may be gathered from the fact that a pound of tea cost six Halifax shillings, while a yard of cotton cost about four. It also related that one of the early settlers wrought a whole year for a pair of boots, and for his wages next year received fifty acres of land. Indeed money was scarce, and self used, food or clothing being the general equivalent for it. When dealing with one another, or in case of service rendered to Colonel Talbot or the government, land was mostly given as remuneration.

Colonel Burwell, for his services surveying the country, received 400 acres of land in the township of Southwold, and 200 in Dunwich. In the year 1814 he removed from Port Talbot to Southwold, and there kept a post office and registry office, on the site of which is now built the house of the late Mr. Chester Henderson. Here he lived quietly for a few years, and as considerable intercourse was exchanged between him and Colonel Talbot, the old foot path was no longer sufficient for use, and in 1816 a four rods road was made between the houses. This road was the same as the present Talbot road, with the exception of the crossing of the creek ravine, which was changed a few years ago.

The settlers began to come in rapidly now, and the land began to be worth more than before, whereas, while at first they got land for nothing, now it was leased to them for a term of years. William Ross and a Mr. Huntly were the first ones to buy land, and the rest leased theirs. Thomas Lumley took the farm that Robert Guernsey had,

and Michael Hatton, in 1846, took the one adjacent to it. Following them came John Tracy, who settled on Lot A, in the 10th Concession, and William Breen took up land on Lot 13 in the 10th concession. Then Robert Welch settled on lot 23, and his brother Joseph on lot 24; also William Allen took up part of lot 24. The Lumleys then left and gave place to a man named Winn, and he in turn gave place to Samuel Williams. Most of these settlers came from Ireland, with the exception of Ross and Huntly, who had lived in Southwold, as well as Samuel Williams. About this time Colonel Talbot, wishing some one to inherit his lands, sent for his nephew Colonel Airey to come over and live with him. Considerable difficulty was encountered in getting him out of the army, but at last he obtained his discharge, and came to live at Port Talbot, which place, with most of the surrounding land, except a farm given to Jeffrey Hunter's widow, and a little more reserved for himself, Colonel Talbot settled on him. The two, however, could not agree, and at last Colonel Talbot left and went to live at Hunter's. Here he lived for some time and Colonel Airey remained on the farm.

In the meanwhile Colonel Burwell had been prospering, and had been elected member of Parliament for Elgin and Middlesex (then all Middlesex) and had also once represented London in that capacity. Having therefore found means he started a brick yard on his farm in Dunwich, and here were made all the bricks for the chimneys around in the neighborhood. He also made enough brick to build a house on this farm, and engaged William Singer, Fingal, to do the work, which he completed, and the Colonel once more removed to Dunwich, where he lived till his death in 1846. Shortly after this there came new settlers. John Clark settled on the farm now occupied by his grandson, John W. Clark, on Lot A, in the 11th Concession, while further west on the 10th Concession came Kellog Gaylor, Higgins, Lewis Burwell and others. Most of these devoted their attention to lumbering and farming, except Gaylor, who made soap for the community.

As there was a large tract of land unsettled, comprising and surrounding what is known as the Beaver meadow, Colonel Talbot leased this to parties in Southwold for the purpose of making maple molasses and sugar. These men came and camped in the woods for two months in the spring, and made large quantities of sugar. Indeed the whole section was noted for the large thrifty sugar bushes.

After this movement Colonel Talbot went over on a visit to England, taking with him a young man named Macbeth, whom he had adopted. On his return Macbeth was drowned at Buffalo, and the Colonel took in his place his brother George Macbeth, who inherited the Colonel's property, when he died at London in 1853. Colonel Airey meanwhile had become tired of Port Talbot, and had a sale which lasted over two days, then left for England, leaving his property in the hands of a London lawyer, with instructions not to sell to George Macbeth. However it was sold afterwards to a man named Saunders, who eventually sold it to Macbeth. Part of it was first sold to Dr. Gustin, of St. Thomas, who in turn disposed of it to George Waite, and he, after carrying on a small fishing industry, sold it to Talbot Macbeth for the purpose of having access to the harbor, where he wished to build a dock, to ship wool.

The country being so well settled, it was necessary that there should be a school. The children had previously attended the Southwold schools or another called the Hollow Road School, situated between Iona school section and No. 14, and attended by both, but this being removed, a meeting of the section was called, the result of which was that a frame school-house was erected at a cost of \$224. Three trustees were appointed viz: Joseph Welch, Samuel Williams and John Tracey. Samuel Williams was made secretary-treasurer, which position he held until he removed to St. Thomas. The trustees have changed every year, the present ones being Thomas Pearce, James Sloan and John Tracy, a son of the former trustee. Being somewhat poor they thought they could not afford to engage a teacher for a whole year and they accordingly hired Charles Clay for six months at a salary of \$20 a month. Cyrus Stafford then taught for three months, and that was all the first year. The opening of the next year George Watson taught for three months, and Duncan MacAlpine was engaged for the remaining nine months and the following year. The following is the order of teachers till the present date: Peter McAlpine 1865-1866; Miss Philpot 1866-1867; Miss Paterson one half year and J.M. Glenn, one and one-half years; Miss Black 1869-1871; Miss Campbell 1871-1873; Miss O'Brien 1873-1875; Miss Hunter three months, and Miss Kennedy two years and nine months; J. MacLennan 1878-1880; J. Sutherland 1880-1881; W. Sutherland 1881-1883; Miss Ross 1883-1884; Miss Macpherson one half year and Miss Grout one half year; Miss Collard 1885-1888; Miss Sutherland 1888-1889, and the present teacher Miss Stafford has taught the last six years. At Colonel Burwell's death, the post office was kept by Mrs. Burwell for a time, and was

then removed to John Clark's, and then transferred to Port Talbot. John Clark, who had been councillor for Ward 4 for a few years died, and his son Nathan in 1870 erected a cheese factory, which he operated for four years and then sold the machinery to William Bobier of Wallacetown. The only grist mill and sawmill in the vicinity was kept on the Hollow road or the 9th Concession, by Jonah Clark and Cogan Lumley, and on its removal to Iona, John Clark started a brick and tile yard on the farm now occupied by George Nott, in the 11th concession. This he wrought for two years, and then Nathan Clark bought the place and made brick for one year. He afterwards sold the farm to Talbot McBeth.

In 1881, Talbot McBeth built a dock at Port Talbot, and the following year erected a saw mill at the mouth of the creek, and here he shipped wood and lumber for a few years, but lately the mill and dock have fallen into disuse. Later again, in 1889, a John Macpherson, of Southwold, built a dock in Dunwich, and for several years shipped wood and bolts to Detroit and Buffalo, but the land being sold, he disposed of the pier to William McLandress, Iona. At present men are at work opening up the rest of the townline to the lake, so that the boundary of the section will be complete. The principal occupation of the people of this section is that of farming. Several times travelling saw-mills have given employment to some, and others have taken to various small jobs, as burning lime or making charcoal, etc.

Of the churches, there is but one, an Episcopal Church, built in 1871, out of a fund of money left by Colonel Burwell, and on a plot of 10 acres donated by him for that purpose. For some time there was no regular preacher, till the Rev. Andrew Miller was placed, and remained till 1879, when he was succeeded by the Rev. James Chance, who, in 1894 was incapacitated through illness, and gave place to the Rev. Mr. Freeman, the present pastor.

Of the cemeteries there is but one, which contains the remains of Col. Burwell and his wife, who died in 1870. This is part of the glebe of the church, and contains about an acre of ground. In other places are a few graves together, where some of the early settlers have been buried, but these are few, a great many having been buried in other cemeteries. It may be said of the prominent men of this section, that Leonidas Burwell, son of the Colonel, removed to East Elgin, where he was elected M.P.P., while the others of his brothers who live are in good circumstances. George Watson, a teacher went to the States and became prominent as a professor and astronomer there, while James M. Glenn, another teacher, is now a prominent lawyer in St. Thomas. Most of the old settlers are gone, with the exception of Mrs. Tracy, who still lives with her son, John Tracy, on lot A. John Breen, a son of William Breen, still lives on the farm which his father settled. Samuel Williams, who died in St. Thomas some time ago, sold his place to Thomas Pearce, his son-in-law; he still occupies the old farm. Of the three brothers, James, William and Thomas Sloan, the latter two are dead, while the former still lives on the place where he first settled. Others came, and took the places of some of the old settlers who moved out, and a great many of the present population are of recent immigration. Roads have been made, bridges built, woods cleared off, land cultivated, handsome residences erected and on the whole School Section No. 14 is an instance of what industry and perseverance can do, to wards the making of a country.

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*Mrs. Art Derrough, Part Stanley
Donald Graham & Ross Carswell - both St. Thomas*

PAGE 16--DUTTON ADVANCE--WEDNESDAY--SEPTEMBER 28--1994



ATTEND SCHOOL REUNION — All set to cut the special cake are, from the left, Dorothy (Hyde) Derrough, Donald Graham and Ross Carswell, organizers of this event. A good turnout was on

hand for the very successful S.S. #5 Dunwich School Reunion held at Iona Community Hall on Saturday.