

Mrs. Murray McArthur

The History of West Magdala has been given in the records that we have received from Walter S. Lynn and also that left us from the writings of Mrs. Louise King. The following are just records of the farms, church, school and cemetery.

Lot #8, Con. #2

West Magdala Cheese Factory

Industry

In 1870 Martin Mugin leased 1/2 acre of land from Samuel Lynn for the purpose of erecting a cheese factory. This factory was built in 1871. Mr. Warren Warner was the owner for a few years and in 1878 R.R. Cranston bought the factory and he owned and managed it until 1922. Many cans of milk were manufactured into cheese during his ownership. Cheese from this factory took first prize at the first Chicago World's Fair. In 1922, Mr. Andrew O. Imlay bought the factory and owned and operated it until Sept. 1951 and made butter noted for its excellent quality throughout Elgin County. Mr. and Mrs. Imlay made their home in the house beside the factory. They had two daughters, Doris, (Mrs. John McNaughton) and Lois, (Mrs. Grant Simpson). Mr. Imlay died on Oct. 15th, 1951 and the home burned to the ground on Jan. 4th and now after 82 years of continuous service to the farmers of this community, the wheels are still and the Imlay family is missed as they were very active in church and community affairs.

Lot #8, Con. #2

Present owner Murray McArthur

Malcolm

✓ The first owner of this land was Isabella Hill of England. She willed it to her niece who married Saltern Givens. In 1849 William Lynn bought this farm and in 1866 built the house in which they now live. Samuel Lynn sold the farm to Peter McNeil and in 1891 Peter McNeil sold to A.C. McArthur. The present owners are Murray McArthur and sons Malcolm and Donald. The oldest son, Archie is a chemical engineer with Canada Packers in Toronto.

Lot #8, Con. #2, East

Present owner Murray McArthur

Donald

✓ The first owner was Isabella Hill, then in 1856 Robert Lynn bought this farm and in 1869 sold to Warren Warner. In 1876 Peter McNeil bought the farm and lived there until his death in 1895. He had four daughters, Mrs. A.C. McArthur, Misses Margaret and Flora, and Jennie, who married Archie Turner and lived on this farm until their death, after which Murray McArthur, grandson of Peter McNeil bought the farm.

Lot #7, Con. #2

Present owner Fred Bogart

The first owner was Isabella Hill, then Peter Milligan and in 1853 Hugh Lynn was the owner (his son Walter Lynn wrote the letters on West Magdala included in our history) Robert Aiton was the next owner. Then J. C. and Mrs. Telford

✓ until 1927 Fred Bogart bought this farm and he and Mrs, Bogart still live on this farm. Lyla and Dean lived here until their marriages. In 1929 the house burned and the new one was built that year.

Lot #6, Con.#2

Present owners-McIntosh Bros
Webster Bogart

✓ In 1856, Hector McGeachy owned this farm. Daniel McIntosh was the next owner and Charles McLeod then Alex McDougall, Mrs. McDougall, Marguerite (Mrs. Arthur Oldham) and Henry lived here until Mr. McDougall died and they sold to Webster Bogart. He is still the owner of the West half and McIntosh Bros. own the East half.

Lot #8, Con. #3

Present owner Dean Bogart

✓ The owner in 1856 was D. McKillop, then Alex Martin, then Alex and Mrs. Campbell and the present owner Dean and Mrs. Bogart, Deanna and Maxine, their two daughters and their son, Allen. & Gordon.

Lot #7, Con.#3

present owner Harry Killins

✓ The farm was owned by Wm. Meek in 1856 then his son John Meek owned it until 1912, when John Meek of Shedden bought it and lived there until 1928. His daughter, Marguerite, married Harry Killins and lived on this farm until they retired in 1951 and their son, Jack Killins lives on this farm now. *Since sold to J. Hughes.*

Lot #6, Con. #3

Present owner Donald Turner

* This farm was bought from Amasa Wood in 1860 by John Turner and has been in the Turner name ever since. Donald Turner, grandson of John A. is the present owner.

Lot #6, Con.#1

Present owner Basil Daugherty

✓ The owner in 1856 was Archibald Turner and his son Peter Turner owned this farm until it was sold to Basil Daugherty, the present owner. *Sold in Jan. 1964. McCart*

Lot #7, Con.#2

✓ The owner in 1856 was Alex Campbell. The present owners are the family of Duncan D. Campbell. *John Carder*

Lot #6 Con.#2

✓ James McDougall owned this farm in 1846. It was owned by the McDougall family until it was sold to Arthur Hutchings the present owner.

Lot #8, Con.#1

Present owner Ed Turner

✓ The Killins family moved to this farm 75 years ago. They lived first at the cheese factory. Mrs. Killins died here. Duncan Turner bought this farm from W.D. Killins and lived there with his wife, the former Jennie McArthur until his death, and Edward Turner, with his wife, the former Edith Beecroft, are the present owners.

McArthur's Cemetery

Cemetery { The first burial ground was on the Dan Turner farm across from S.S.#3. In 1880 land was purchased from Colin McArthur and the present beautifully kept-McArthur cemetery came into being, and the bodies from the old cemetery were transferred there.

Southwold Church

Church { The church at Southwold was built in 1880, just past the base-line on the Lawrence road. The first minister was Reverend Griffiths. It was moved to its present location in 1918.

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Miss Lou Miller

Lot 14--1st Con.

✓ This lot was onw of the three 200 acre lots that the previously mentioned Abram Crosson took up for his three sons. This one went to his son, David, who was married to Catherine McKay. Here, their family of seven sons and two daughters was raised. The first frame house he built on this farm was done with lumber he got from Ingersoll and floated down the Thames river to the townline between Dunwich and Southwold where it was taken out. Upon Mr. Crosson's death the farm passed to his son, David, who is the present owner.

Lot 15--1st Con.

This lot was first held by one John Ulman, the same as who had Lot 11--2nd Con. He lived at Niagara-on-the-Lake. According to information that has come down through the family, a man by the name of Forester borrowed money from Ulman to be able to come and settle on both lots, and gave a mortgage for the same.

✓ Shortly after he died, his wife went to Niagara and gave the land over to Ulman. In 1803 when Ulman's daughter, Jane, married John Miller, he wanted them to come up on the land, but they refused and nothing was ever done about the land until 1854 when Ulman's grandson, Henry Miller came to Southwold to this land through his mother. In the meantime so much tax debts had piled up against the two lots that Lot 13 went back to the government. It was afterwards taken by Hugh McCallum who first settled near Port Stanley on coming to this country. It was held by his sons John and Alexander until sold to Peter and John A. Campbell and at their deaths was purchased by the present owners Elgin and Lewis Biddle. - *Harwick*

Lot 16--1st Con.

✓ This lot was first occupied by a Mr. Salmon who went on without registering for it. He was known as a "squatter" and was so put off. A company in Toronto learned that it had not been registered so put in a claim and got it. The east half they sold to Alexander Campbell and is now owned by his son, John A. Campbell of Detriot

Lot 17--1st Con.

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✓ This lot was owned by the same Toronto company that got Lot 16. They sold it as well as the west half of Lot 16 to two brothers, Duncan and Mungo McNabb when they came from Scotland in 1848. Duncan took the south half which is now owned by his grandsons Duncan and John McNabb. The north half Mungo took and passed on to his son, David, who sold it to James Milton and has since passed on to other hands. *The Nabbs Century Farm*

Lots 15-14--2nd Con.

The north half of lot 15--Con.2 was settled by one Archibald Campbell who with their five sons, Peter, Colin, Duncan, Matthew and Alexander from Scotland.

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✓ The son Peter got the north half of Lot 14--2nd Con next to his father, settled there with his wife Catherine McLean but who was no relation of his mother. While still a young man he was thrown from a wagon and was killed, leaving his wife with seven young children, the oldest fourteen years. The farm eventually came to his two youngest sons, Peter and John A. (known as Pat). Upon their deaths it went to their nephew Matthew McNaughton from whom it is now held by his son, John McNaughton.

Lot 15--2nd Con.

✓ Being the family homestead it went to the youngest Campbell son, Alexander who kept it during his life and was then sold to William Agar and passed on at his death to his son J.C. Agar, who resides there. - *Bought by John Agar 1961.*

Lot 16--2nd Con.

✓ The first owner we have trace of was a Mr. Smith who died in early life. His wife, two sons and two daughters lived there for a number of years, until she was a real old woman when she went to St. Thomas where she died with a granddaughter. One daughter married a Mr. Salmon and the other Mr. S. Hamilton. The sons moved to other parts and the farm has changed hands a number of times. First to Alexander Campbell then to his son Archibald then to George Carroll, to his nephew William Carroll, afterward to his wife and her father Mr. Lodge and is now owned by Gordon Agar.

Lot 17--2nd. Con.

The first settler of this lot is not known but Mr. John Ibbetson who settled on it in 1847 did not get it from the crown, so some one must have had it previously. Mr. Ibbetson, his wife and six children came from Nova Scotia in that year. They came by boat to Boston, Mass. They rented rooms there for two weeks until they could make arrangements to come on to Canada. One of their daughters told in later years, they had their first taste of tomatoes there, so it was likely in that summer. They came on to St. Thomas, which was a village then, and rented a house on the flats of Kettle Creek and lived there some weeks, then on to this lot on the townline between Southwold and Dunwich. After they were there ten years Mr. Ibbetson made enough brick on his farm to build a house, which is still standing. He also, made brick for several houses in Iona. When it became known that Mrs. Ibbetson could spin and weave, she got all the work she could do from her neighbours and old settlers at Iona. Three more sons were born to them after getting here. They both lived and died on their farm which went to their son, Thomas. At his death it was sold to Duncan and John McNabb, the present owners.

by Frederica Beecroft

Fourteen hundred acres of beautiful wooded and farm lands surrounded on three sides by the Thames River, situated in the North West corner of the present Southwold Township was not surveyed until a few years after Southwold Township became a noted part of Elgin County. It was known as the Commissary lands until taken into the Township, and then was called Thames River Siding. James Orr, one of the earlier settlers nick-named it Muskoka and this name has stuck throughout the years and is still spoken of as Muskoka by its settlers and their intimate friends.

Settlers along the Routh Road, starting at the farthest point along the Thames River before the railway went through were Mrs. Ware, now Wm. Beecroft's farm. Mr. D. Doust, now Jas. Beecroft's farm. The Johnson farm, now Webbers, was covered with dense woods. The Smuck Company cut off the lumber, and during this time a little village sprung up on the Johnson farm. Mr. J. and T. Orr's farm is now owned by Mr. Lock. Mr. A. Cobban's farm is now owned by Mr. Wilson also the Jas. Plain homestead. Mrs. Ware owned all the land from what is now Jas. Beecroft to the side road. Mr. A. Wooley's farm is now owned by Ronald Watson.

Mrs. Ware sold the farm known as Smoky Hollow to Mr. John Beecroft shortly before the railway went through, the other farms all remaining under same ownerships.

In 1871 the Canadian Air Line, a branch of the Great Western from Glencoe to Buffalo U.S. came through on Lot 8, Routh's Survey in the Township of Southwold. The river Thames was spanned at this point by a handsome timber bridge, eight hundred and twenty feet in length, consisting of three spans of Burr truss, each one hundred feet (over the bed of the river) and about two hundred and sixty feet of trestle work on each side. It was about seventy-two feet high containing about six hundred thousand feet of (B.M.) timber and cost about twenty-five thousand dollars. This bridge still stands.

The coming of the railway was a great help to these early settlers as many of them had been taking their produce to St. Thomas. The settlers not only enjoyed this new mode of transportation but were able to sell their woods to the railway Company. A pump house and tank were built on Mr. Jas. Plain's farm. Mr. John Dodd was the first pumper. When he moved to Middlemiss Mr. Ace Forbes became pumper. A new house was built on property owned by the railway which was bought from Mr. John Ibbitson. Mr. Farrington followed Mr. Forbes as pumper and held the position until the pump house was moved to Tillsonburg.

The water tank was moved from it's first location to the side road opposite Mr. Amos Ibbitson's farm in 1900. It was finally torn down in 1935.

Mr. John Ibbitson bought lot two from the Crown. The railroad bought the north corner eight acres in 1873, and Mr. Faggan bought twelve acres.

Mr. Jas. Batton owned the land where the Free Methodist Church

now stands. This church was built in 1885.

Mr. Malcolm McBride owned the triangle which Mr. Pat Campbell later bought and is now owned by Mr. Mat. McNaughton.

The land opposite originally owned by Mr. A. Turner is now owned by Biddle Bros. of Lawrence Station.

In 1880 the Free Methodists held meetings in the school house. Miss Hagell, Miss Thomas were the Free Methodist Ministers.

In the year 1881 a Wesley Methodist Church of modest dimensions was erected on the corner of Mr. Jas. Plain's farm. Mr. John Miller conducted services here every Sunday afternoon for a few years but the church was finally deserted.

The first school was built in 1878 having as it's trustees Mr. White, Mr. Jas. Plain Sr. and Mr. Johnston Orr. Mr. Dougald Decow became it's first teacher. This school was burned on May 5th, 1909. Miss Apperley was the teacher. The present school was built immediately.

These early settlers would hardly recognize their homelands if they were to return today. Mr. Jas. Beecroft and Mr. A.J. Plain are it's oldest citizens and still bear the name of its earliest settlers. In 1894 there were one hundred and twenty-five inhabitants and now there are only thirteen families.

The land remains productive and gravel is being taken from the Beecroft farms and spread on roads fifty miles distant. Another new industry is tobacco growing.

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LAWRENCE STATION'S INTERESTING HISTORY; HOME OF FINE FAMILIES

Picture main St. 1907

Sat. Dec. 20, 1947.

Lawrence Station gets its name from the late William Lawrence who owned the land (part of his farm) on which Lawrence stands. When the Grand Trunk went through in 1872 the railroad was going to erect a station at the river, but in 1873 Mr. Lawrence gave the railway ten acres of land as a site and there the station was built. The Lawrence farm had been a part of the farm received from the Crown by the late Isaac Crosson's father.

Picture of Hotel

The late Mr. Lawrence was a carpenter and soon erected a fine frame hotel near the railroad. His wife's good cooking was known for many miles around. A few years later, however, Mr. Lawrence sold his hotel to the late Alf. Widdifield and erected a house back by the Hall where he and his wife resided until their passing early in the 1900's. Their son, James and family, and ^{James} their son William, and family, resided there until William's death in 1924, thus three generations resided there ere it passed to strangers. This house was destroyed by fire on February 3 of the year 1947. The late William Lawrence's work still remains and many pieces of his handicraft are still in use in this district. The staunch old walnut furniture has stood the test and served better than the more modern factory-made furniture.

The Grand Trunk R.R. was leased by the Wabash R. R. in 1897 and used jointly by the G.T.R. and the Wabash. Early in 1900 the Wabash operated 10 to 12 passenger trains daily through Lawrence and the G.T.R. operated four local passenger trains every day except Sunday. In 1917 when the United States entered the First World War, the Wabash carried many U. S. soldiers through Lawrence. *Also sealed cargoes of silk.*

In 1920 the Grand Trunk was taken over by the Canadian National.

In the early days the late Hon. T. W. Crothers, M.P. for Elgin County, succeeded at Ottawa in getting a local passenger train. This was tabbed the "Tommy Special." The first train from London to St. Thomas via Lawrence was in charge of Conductor Dan O'Connell and later in charge of Dan Murray. Bob Ingram was the last conductor when the train was taken off in 1926. The last Wabash trains No. 1 and 6, were taken off in 1931.

The first station agent at Lawrence was the late Tim Murray, he and his wife lived on the second floor of the first store by the railroad until a residential section was built in connection with the station. The late Mr. Murray was agent for 25 years and was succeeded by Hugh Turner followed by the late James A. Pollock, the late John A. Murray, T. B. Gardiner, now C.N.R. agent in St. Thomas, the late F. A. Malcolm, Red Reichheld and the present agent Donald Graham, Arthur Simpson, a town boy, was the night operator for many years.