

# W. McCREDIE

MANUFACTURER OF

Glazed Tile, Brick, Sewer Pipe, Hardwood  
Lumber and Timber.

Sunday

Byons, Ont., Mar 9<sup>th</sup> 1896

Dear Alice

I did not write last week, as the time was so much taken up, I wrote a little to Lena when your pa went to York, mostly for your benefit if there yet, but you had your. I rec. your letter from Reabro, glad you got to your journey's end so safely, and hope you may like it. There and be a great comfort and help to Auntie Emily, she needs it. I do not like to hear of those nervous headaches, it is a sign of over work or overacting of some kind, save her all your care, & regard to the children. The <sup>low</sup> S. S. Convention at Mt Vernon last Thursday was a grand success. Pa & I went in the morning was at Le. Corless's to dinner & to Low Woolley for tea. Edith came down in the evening. Mr White of White Pass who was there with his guitar and his daughter, sang piece after piece, it was grand as Mrs S. G. Pettit said, just like heaven. Edith & I were going to the S. S. Convention on Friday but Woolley <sup>from Corless</sup> wrote that he & his sister were coming that day so we had to stay at home. They came just as we were done dinner, and stayed till after tea and we had a lovely time, I was so sorry they did not come before you went away so you could have met them.

181

Dear Mother

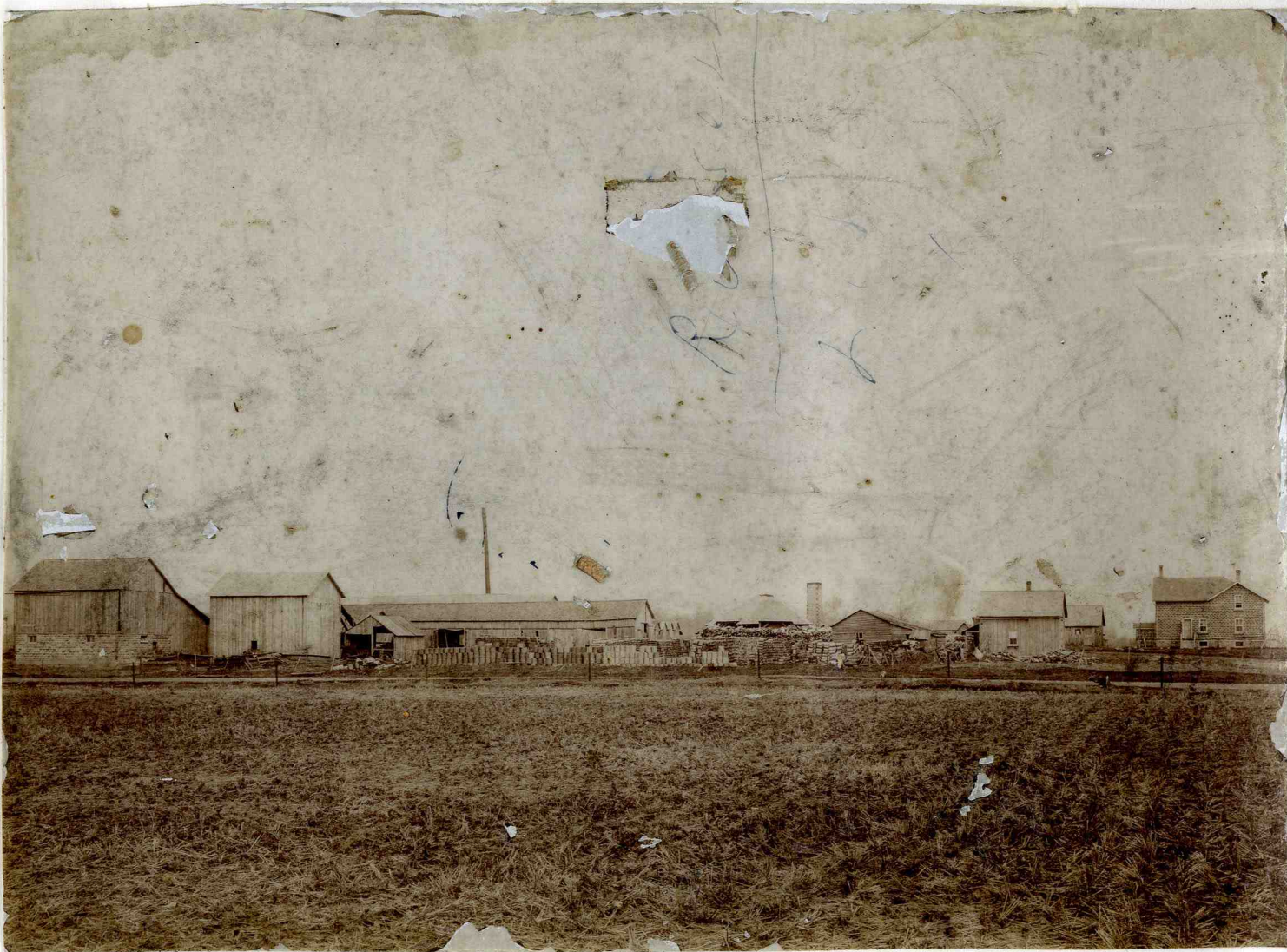
Black hair

She is a pretty sweet looking girl her name is  
 Laetta, he calls her Etta. She is about your size  
 is 19 yrs old but looks younger than Edith, her dress  
 are on the short-side almost to her shoe tops  
 He is fair about like Irvine one legged head the same  
 shape, quite tall and very lively, he has been organist  
 of the church for 12 yrs she takes his place when he is  
 away so we had music & singing. They are both Christian  
 like for you girls, Edith is going to visit them sometime  
 he went to London on acct for parliament, having  
 resigned, and another man is up. It was late when  
 they got home we had tea ready, Leberly, Marking  
 came after his own some hours before they got here. Edith  
 & all had tea together, it was after one when  
 Pa & I went to the church yesterday evening  
 Walsh preached for Mrs Patience who is sick with Grip  
 We went to Mrs E Juvors for dinner, she &  
 are all coming. The ten nights in a row  
 is in the evening. Mrs Smith's baby was  
 buried on Sat. it leaked one day of being 4 weeks  
 old, Mrs Eva is not likely to get better, her baby  
 was born Tuesday, two weeks ago tomorrow morning  
 she got worse & they sent for Virigston  
 who was with her when she was sick but he  
 would not cure Baker would not unditch the  
 case out of Virigston's hands, so yesterday the board  
 of health took it up & sent for Sinclair, they say  
 blood poisoning has set in & that she will not live, but  
 we heard today that she is a little better  
 she was not back when the baby was born

she had to be carried into the house

THE McCREDIE TILE YARD

As a young man Willson McCredie was interested in mechanics and ceramics. Early tests had shown a rich source of pottery clay on the northwest corner of Highway 73 and the 9th concession of South Dorchester. On these 21 acres, in 1870 Willson McCredie founded "The McCredie Brick and Tile Yard, which served the surrounding district for the next 60 years.



THE TILE YARD IN WILLSON McCREDIE'S DAY  
"A PIONEER INDUSTRY IN LYONS, ONTARIO"

Donated by Russell Moore, grandson of Wilson McCredie.

2

THE McCREDIE TILE YARD

At first the clay was mixed by hand and placed in molds. Some of these first tile are still in use and can be identified by the flat bottom and the ridge along each side. Before kilns were built, the bricks were burned in piles about 30 feet long and about 10 feet high, so placed as to form a flue in the centre for the burning of wood. The tiles of bricks were mudded on both sides, so as to form a sort of oven. The brick sold for \$5 a thousand and can be seen in many house and barn foundations in this district.

As the business progressed Willson built large kilns and installed machinery powered by a stationary steam engine with a fly wheel 12 feet in diameter.



To build the top of a kiln like this one Russell is standing on, they started at the base of the circle with bricks and mortar, gradually decreasing as they ascended.

There was always danger of it slipping. Clarence

Tanner had figured out how they could escape in case of emergency. Once it did: Russell Moore's elderly grandfather had climbed to the top to inspect it, as it neared completion, and down it went. Russell and Clarence leaped but all they could see of his grandfather was his straw hat. Then came his voice from under the hat and rumbled, "IS ANYBODY HURT?"

Clay was scooped up and dumped into a pug mill.

One of these horses slipped on the wet slippery clay and its leg went into the opening. It was so mutilated by the machinery the horse had to be destroyed. This was about



1929. Warren Faw was working there that day.

THE McCREDIE TILE YARD

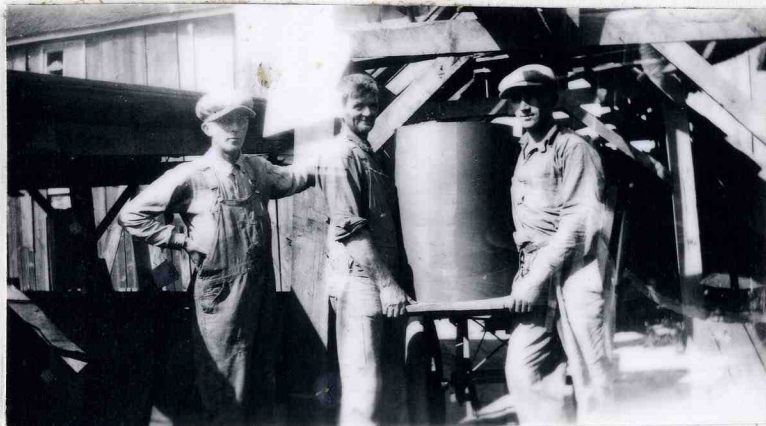


Coal for the kilns was bought by the car-load from Pennsylvania to the MCR station on Highway 73 and trucked from there. When the kiln was filled with cured tile, a doorway of brick was mudded shut and fires of coal

started in the several pockets. A pyrometer registered the heat inside the kiln. At a certain stage it was a night and day job to keep the temperature at the required level.



Piles Of McCredie tile



Tile-making had its problems too. This tile, one of the largest ever made there, being wheeled into the drying shed, is useless because of the limestone spot on it.

THE McCREDIE TILE YARD



Jack Tuff, Elmore Martin, Claude Chalk, Bert Davenport, & Lorne Martin pose by a cartload of wet tile.

To have year round employment for the men and better serve the community, McCredie established a grist mill and a sawmill.



Jim Berdan, Joe Paget, Bill Hopkins, Jock White, Neil McCallum and Bob Paget.

Above: Bill Maker, Jim Berdan, Lloyd McCallum, Jim Reid, and Neil McCallum.

Willson usually followed his logs from the mill to the barn-raising, scaling the rafters with amazing speed until he reached

OTHER MEN EMPLOYED  
AT THE TILE-YARD

Earl Bentley

Henry Cowal

Clarence Fishback

Clare Appleford

Clarence Tanner

George Tanner

A Mr. Palmer

An Indian Family

In the spring, farmers came for big loads of cull tile to fill muddy lanes. They paid about 50 cents a load.

## THE McCREDIE TILE YARD

the highest and most dangerous position.

Diaries and letters reveal a lifetime of service and hard work. Homes were built on the yard for married employees but the single men became one of the family, increasing tremendously the amount of housework in the days of homebaked bread and washboard laundering. Besides all the water had to be carried from the pond.

Along with the tile and brick business, Mr. McCredie farmed and sold many gallons of maple syrup each season. He had an unique system of boiling down the sap by utilizing the steam from his steam engine.

When Mr. McCredie retired, a nephew, James Reid, took over for a time. Then McCredie's grandson, Russell Moore, carried on the business until the supply of clay was exhausted in 1930.



This ditching machine for laying drainage tile was owned and operated by James Reid.





This ditching machine for laying drainage tile was owned and operated by James Reid.