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Mrs Gooding's mother, Mrs Mary Mills lived with the family, she being an early pioneer of the Mills family in Sparta, and even at the time of her death, at the age of 86, retained her sense of humour and cheerful disposition. She attended one of the first schools of this school section.

On November 26, 1926 Mr and Mrs Fred Ingram were appointed keeper and matron. During their term the present steel barn was built in 1935 to replace the one destroyed by fire. There was also a deep well bored and the old ice refrigerator was replaced by an electric one being built in 1936, also hardwood floors were laid in the Institution. Mr and Mrs Ingram had one daughter Dorothy who received her public school education at S. S. #. 14 and is now on her second year teaching school at Eden. She also teaches music at the school. Her school mates will always remember the wonderful layer cakes she used to bring to the Valentine parties as a gift from her mother, to the pupils and teacher of the Middlemarch school. Mr and Mrs Ingram proved very efficient and after 16 year's service, resigned and moved back to their farm west of Aylmer.

In the early spring of 1943 Mr and Mrs J. G. Turnbull were appointed keeper and matron with Mr and Mrs Fred Herman as assistants.

Mr and Mrs Turnbull moved from Corinth where Mr. Turnbull had lived all his life, they have three children, Mrs Herman,

(Violet) with them at the Institution and Mrs Burwell (Margaret) living in Toronto. Ralph who joined the R. C. A. F. on Nov. 5 1942 and is now stationed at Trenton. They also have 4 grandchildren, Jim and Bob Burwell and Bonnie Lyn Turnbull and Freddie Herman. Mr and Mrs Herman have one child Frederick James (Freddie) who was born on July 31 1943. Freddie is the first child born of parents while holding position at the Institution. Mrs Herman taught school for a number of years in East Elgin before coming to the Institution. Mr. Turnbull was warden of Elgin County for the year 1941. The Inspectors of the Institution were late Mr. William McKay and Mr J. D. Thomson our present Inspector. *Mr. D. W. McPhail, Mr. Dugald Turner & Mr. Alex Turner, Mr. Kenneth McRay.*

The Physicians appointed were-

Dr. Luton in 1875, Dr. Guest Nov 24 1911, who went overseas in the first Great War.

Dr. Ewin on Nov 29 1919 as Physician and assistant for the four years previous. He has been making his weekly visits for thirty years March 5 1945.

Mr. Fox preached for 19 years.

Rev. Mr. Poulter of the Fingal, Middlemarch Circuit has just begun his duties as minister.

The first telephone in rural districts of Elgin was in this Institution. no 119.

Note. - Mr. Gordon Turnbull died May 18, 1952.

The name "Elgin County Home," has now been given in place of House of Industry, which is a more suitable one, for many of the inmates are pensioners.

At present there are 37 inmates, 21 men and 16 women.

Mrs Gordon Turnbull.

Mrs. Myrtle White Turnbull

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OCTOBER 8

1969

OFFICIAL OPENING — Officials were many at the opening of Elgin Manor's new 60-bed wing Wednesday afternoon. Shown above at the ribbon cutting are (left to right) John Yaremko, Minister of Social and Family Services; Victor DeGraw, Reeve of Rodney, who served as chairman at the ceremony; Miss Margaret Lyle, donor of \$5,400 worth of landscaping; Mayor E. O. Fanjoy; and John Wise, Warden of Elgin County. (T.-J. Photo).



YAREMKO SPEAKS — John Yaremko, Minister of Social and Family Services is shown above as he addressed the crowd assembled for the opening of Elgin Manor's new addition yesterday. In the left background the new wing can be seen. (T.-J. Photo).

The Frome Congregational Church

You are all familiar with the present church that is situated at Frome. We are including this old church in our Tweedsmuir Village History because (1) it is a very old church with an interesting history (2) many descendants of the original families live near by (3) we want to preserve the records of old land marks that are adjacent and have influenced our own community.

Did you know this is the site of the second oldest church in the Dominion, the oldest being in Nova Scotia ?
The ~~present building~~ ^{This}, a church and school house combined, ~~that~~ stood just below the present site, where the church shed now stands. The first church was organized and planted in the wilderness in the year 1819, by Rev. Joseph Silcox who came from Wiltshire, England, near the town of Frome in 1817. This is the time that settlers were taking up land along our own Talbot Road.

To understand the back ground of this church we must go back to England, to Wiltshire, to the village of Horningsham a few miles from Frome and away back to the year 1566. There, at Horingsham stands the oldest Congregational Church in the world, and its beginning or formation is very interesting. In 1566 a titled gentleman, by the name of Sir John Thynne, who owned the estate on which the church stands, decided to build himself a home, that would be one of the "Palaces of England,". To secure the best workmanship he

he engaged a group of Scottish artisans. These men met by themselves in the woods for praise and prayer. As they objected to the Church of England worship, They were therefore called nonconformists, which name was later changed to Independents. Their employer respected these sturdy Presbyterians and when they asked him for help in their worship, he gave them the land on which the chapel now stands. We have pictures of this old church, with its thatched roof, and old stone walls and it is still a place of worship after nearly 400 years. From this setting came the Rev. Joseph Silcox in 1817. He had preached his first sermon in this old church in England and thus the church at Frome is a child of this oldest Congregational church in the world and the Silcox's called the settlement Frome after their home, Frome, in Wiltshire, England. Wishing to make it a community church he called it by the lofty name of "The Independent Presbyterian Prince of Peace Society". He rode on horseback over the townships of Southwold, Dunwich and Westminister preaching in the homes and in log barns. He organized a church at Port Stanley and another in the woods where London now stands.

The second church at Frome (the land on which it stands was given by Rev. Joseph Silcox as it is the front of the old Silcox farm) was a frame structure, which served the community until the year 1888, when it was replaced by the present brick church. The frame building was bought by

Tom Firth and still stands to-day as an addition to his barn, being used as an implement shed. The Firth farm is on the first rise to the west of Frome and is now owned by Roy Leeson,. Unfortunately the early Records of the church were not kept and the earliest books I had for reference were dated 1855. The Penmanship in these old books is beautiful, a real work of art. most of the records were signed by the minister and in their annual meetings is given their accomplishments of the year. We read in one place of a scourge of diptheria in the community. It entered the minister's home taking away some of his loved ones. In another place it tells of a committee being appointed by the membership to interview a candidate for church membership and examine him as to his fitness for such. Prior to the building of the brick church in 1888 were months of preparation and effort - lumber and labour donated with enthusiasm. The church cost around \$3700.00 and was opened in Nov. 1888 with special services and dedicated to the worship of Almighty God. The highlight in the life of this church was the 100th anniversary services in 1919. It is extremely interesting that the centenary sermons were preached by the Rev. J. B. Silcox D.D. one of the ablest preachers in America and a grandson of the founder Rev. Joseph Silcox. Dr. J. B. Silcox planted Congregational Churches in Toronto, and Winnipeg so we can link up H^Urningsham England with Frome, Toronto, and Winnipeg. His sermons were indeed masterly that day, as he paid tribute to the pioneer families of the community and

urged those living to re-dedicate their lives. After the morning service the people gathered in the cemetery where a decoration service was held and the hymn "Faith of our Father's" was sung.

But a church is an inanimate object - a brick building, and by itself, can accomplish nothing, It is its membership of devout, earnest christians, that is really the church, so, to round out the story of this church, we should consider some of its faithful supporters.

The Silcox's have made a wonderful contribution to the community in both religion and education. They were scholars, educated men, when many in the neighborhood could neither read or write,. Another grandson of the founder was Rev. E. D. Silcox the father of Percy Silcox who lives next to the church to-day. Another grandson was Dr. Sidney Silcox, a noted educationalist and who was principal of the Normal School in Stratford.

Claris is another old pioneer name. William Claris was pastor of the Frome church in 1888 when the present church was built. This family came from Switzerland and ^{are} ~~all~~ of Huguenot stock. The old Claris farm is the corner farm, the high knoll on the road leading to Southwold Station.

The Horton family came to Upper Canada a few years before the Rev. Joseph Silcox. They are descendents of a Barnabas Horton who came from England in 1633, with other Puritans, and built the first settlement on the eastern end of Long Island and called it Southwold after their English home. A grandson

of Barnabas was one of the signers of the Pledge of Independence in 1775 and his grandson, Samuel came into Elgin County about 1812, settled about seven miles from St. Thomas and called the land Southwold after his ancestral home on Long Island. Thus our township got it's name. The old Horton Farm lies almost across from the Firth farm, an old red brick house close to the road. The son of Samuel Horton was Andrew, my grandfather, and one of the pillars of the early Frome church. He led the singing of the congregation with a tuning fork, and was Superintendent of the Sunday School for 40 years being absent two or three times in all those years. His daughter Ida, the present Mrs Sam Down has followed in her father's footsteps and has been an inspiration to all in her church work. She has taught a class of young boys in the Sunday School for over 60 years and has given unstintingly of her time and effort to church and community work. Her husband Sam Down a carpenter by trade, has given his services gratis to any need of the church, looking after the fires in cold weather and repair work for many long years, free of charge.

Allworth is another old name of the community. They came also from Wiltshire and were induced by their friends the Silcox's to come to the new land and better their fortunes. I am indebted to Mrs Salathiel Curtis for this information as I found it in an old scrap book of her father's the Late Squire Frank Hunt, and it is intensely interesting. We think we have travelling difficulties to-day, with gas rationing and

poor times, but listen to the story of their journey. In 1830 the Allworth family sailed for the new land. After 5 weeks and 3 days on the ocean, they landed at New York. Mrs Allworth had been terribly seasick during the crossing, and here they stayed for 2 weeks until she was able to go on. Then they travelled to Buffalo via the Erie Canal, which took seven days. Buffalo was then a small town, the size of Aylmer. From Buffalo they went by row boat to Fort Erie and from there by schooner to Port Stanley. But on Lake Erie they ran into misfortunes-they were becalmed for several days and then contrary winds took them off their course. After two weeks on Lake Erie, they landed at Port Burwell in an exhausted condition, as their provisions had run out and they had been without food for several days. They came on to Port Stanley by row-boat where they found a road had been chopped through the woods to St. Thomas and travelled by wagon the rest of the way and settled on a 100 acre farm near the Silcox's. Money was scarce in those days. You could travel through Yarmouth, Southwold and Dunwich and not find \$5.00 in cash. Allworth at one time, received a bill of exchange from England. No settler near him could cash it. He walked all the way to Little York (Toronto) to exchange his note for cash. A. J. Allworth was a son of the first pioneer. At the age of 14, he worked in Edward Ermatinger's general store in St. Thomas, then owned a store of his own under the name of Begg and Allworth, and later was one of the first managers of the Southern Loan.

We cannot close the history of the Frome Church and community without mentioning the Daugherty family. They intermarried with the Silcox, Horton, and Claris families. Many of them were very musical and possessed splendid voices, which added much to the social life of the community. Most of you will remember George and Clarence Daugherty and their sister Enid, Percy Silcox's wife. The present organist at Frome was Julia Daugherty, another sister. George Daugherty's first wife, Fanny Silcox played the organ for many years.

It is fitting to close this history with some sentences from the sermon of J. B. Silcox, preached on the 100th anniversary day in 1919; I quote;

"There are to-day on the membership of this church young men and women who represent an unbroken membership of five generations (there would now be 6). A nobler ancestry no settlement ever looked back to, with reverence and affection. Their forefathers were loyal to the flag of England and devoted to the church of Christ. They did not possess great wealth, but in those strenuous days they set apart their hard-earned money and built a meeting house. Every family that has ever lived in this community has been bettered and benefitted by what those men and women did. We must pledge ourselves to continue what they began, so that the light they kindled on the altar of God, should never go out. May this church forever stand, for the ever-lasting realities of religion and for community and

national righteousness. May there be preached here a gospel,
 ample as the needs of men,^a broad as the love of God, and all-
 embracing as the cross of Christ." (end of quotation).

This has indeed been a community where the spirit and energy
 of the pioneer with his fervent devotion to the Church of Christ,
 has been richly blessed. May they live up to their great
 heritage.

Dorothy Horton Fitcher.

Mrs. J. Robinson Fitcher.

Note - Feb. 1971.

The old church still stands and
 in 1969 celebrated its 150th Anniversary.
 The special speaker was Dr. M^cClure,
 Moderator of the United Church of
 Canada - Hundreds attended the
 anniversary coming from great
 distances, D.F.