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Compiled by Dr. James C. Curtis 116
(Dr. J. D. Curtis)

BOYHOOD NEIGHBOURS ALONG TALBOT ROAD

The pioneers who cleared the forests and built homes in this section of Talbot Road have passed on. It is my desire to preserve in a small way their names and accomplishments from oblivion.

Jabel Robinson was born in Surrey England. He married Caroline Barnwell of the same place in 1850. They came to Canada in 1856 and settled in St. Thomas. Their home was near the Easterbrook farm.

It did not take him long to establish himself in the building business. There are several houses in St. Thomas that he built and are still inhabited.

In 1871 he bought the two hundred acre farm Lot 29 South on Talbot Road, from Dan McIntosh. Talbot creek started as a small ditch just west of the Talbot yards and made its way through the woods crossing the side-road south of Middlemarch and flowed through several farms including the Robinson and King farms. This caused all these farms to be covered with water part of the year. About 1875 the Government drain was dug, so that the farms could be drained. Mr. Robinson was not long in taking advantage of the drain. He began tiling the farm and it was not many years before his farm was one of the best in the neighbourhood. His wonderful crops of wheat became famous. The farm is now owned by a grandson--J.R. Fletcher.

Mr. Robinson was a solid well built man. He had a remarkable personality. His opinions were decided, he abhorred liquor and tobacco and was not afraid to express his opinion when the occasion arose. He was a great worker and despised any one who was not. He was strictly honest and conscientious. As a speaker he was fearless and very much to the point. He did not like long speeches. When he was a member of the Dominion Parliament he became tired listening to the long political speeches. On one occasion he remarked that those long political speakers should be compelled to listen to a long sermon at church.



In 1875 Apple Grove Grange was established. David King was the first master, Jabel Robinson was the next master. Through the Grange a great community centre was developed. Regular meetings discussed the affairs of the farmers. Social evenings brought crowds of people. Their oyster suppers were popular for miles around the country. At these meetings the speeches were interesting and entertaining and Mr. Robinson was often the high light of the evening. Later he became master of the Dominion Grange.

There was s Dominion Election in the year 1900. The Liberals nominated two candidates. Mr. Robinson was not a party man but favoured any party that stood by the farmers. He ran as an Independent and received the support of his friends and the Tories. He won the election much to the delight of his friends and the chagrin of the Liberals. He paid his election expenses himself which was about ten dollars.

The family received a terrible shock in the death of Mrs Robinson. Mrs Robinson was a woman of very fine character. While Mr. Robinson was blustering in his manner Mrs Robinson was quiet and reserved. She was very much respected by her friends, I have often heard my Mother speak of her with the greatest admiration. Some years after Mrs Robinson's death he married a Miss Mines who was a very respected and capable lady.

The children were four boys and three girls--Hattie the eldest was a school teacher. She taught S.S. No 14 when I was in the first grade. In those days many of the boys were young men who went to school only during the winter months. The school was considered a hard one to manage and many were afraid that Hattie would have trouble. But with tact, and a raw hide whip she kept good discipline. She ended fifty years teaching in St. Thomas.

William usually called "Bill" was a large powerful dominating man. Early in life he went to Alaska and became associated with a construction company. He was known as "Stikine Bill". He was one of the characters

in Rex Beach's stories called "The Iron Trail". His home was in North Anson, Maine. He had three daughters--two went to Alma College.

Charles was more of his Mother's type. After leaving S.S. No 14 he attended the Agricultural College at Guelph and then McGill, graduating a Veterinary surgeon. His next move was Washington D.C. where he developed a large practice and became Dean of the Veterinary College there. Their family was a girl and two boys.

Jesse after leaving S.S. No 14 joined his brother in Washington in the Veterinary business. In later years he came home and bought the old farm from the estate. He married Miss Agnes Stewart. They had no family.

Sara after leaving S.S. No 14 went to Alma College. She married James Futcher in 1886 and lived where Wm Lyle now lives. Sara was like her Mother, she had a very pleasing personality, and had many friends. They had three daughters.

Kate Robinson after attending S.S. No 14 went to High School, St. Thomas, then remained home looking after the household duties after the death of her Mother. She married John Futcher in 1890, they had five girls and two boys.

Frank, the youngest of the Robinson family was born in 1871. Frank and I attended S.S. No 14 together. Our last teacher was Laura McLean, no pupil had more good natured mischief than Frank. The pupils near him were kept in a suppressed state of laughter. One night our teacher told us to stay after four. We thought it was going to be just a friendly chat, but when we were told that if we did not behave better we would be expelled--this was not only a disappointment but a shock. We were good after that. After failing at the entrance examination, Frank was sent to the Central School under N.M. Campbell, who ruled with firmness and a heavy cane. After completing the High School course he went to the School of Practical Science in Toronto and graduated as a land surveyor. I was attending the Medical School while he was at the School of

Practical Science. Our work did not bring us in contact with each other but I often heard of him. His fellow students christened him "Jadel". His opportunity for fun, jokes and skylarking was fully realized. Students often visit each other at their boarding houses. Frank and his friends were well known by the boarding house keepers, and we must confess not always favourably. However it was all in fun and after graduating he was in charge of a surveying party on the Ontario Manitoba boundary. During this time his home was in Barrie, later he went to Regina and became the Deputy Minister of Public works in Saskatchewan in 1906. He married Lina Scott of Moose Jaw. They had one boy and two girls, he died in Toronto on his way home, in 1917.

THE MILLERS

Across the road from the Robinsons were the Millers. Peter Miller in 1819 was given the farm Lot 29 N. on Talbot Rd. for military service in the 1812 war. His son Andrew inherited the farm and his son Andrew, the second is the present owner. The Millers were very quiet and respectable people. They did not mix much with the neighbours but were held in high esteem by those who knew them. Mrs Miller was a highly educated lady and her son through her instruction and guidance was one of the most intelligent people in the district. I understand that Andrew Miller has deeded his beautiful woods to the government for safe keeping, which is something to think about.

THE PHILLIPS

Benjamin Phillips bought the farm Lot 30 South on Talbot Road from William Drake in 1872. Mr. Phillips was a very ardent Liberal. On one occasion during an election he told my Father who was a tory, that a Tory had no chance to go to heaven. The Globe was his Bible.

He was very proud of his large family, and every one of them was without a fault. In the year 1880 the older boys would gather after dark and play pranks on the neighbours, and the Phillip boys were the ring leaders. They used a sort of Indian war cry to call the gang

together. Their pranks were putting wagons on top of stalks of grain. Sometimes a wagon wheel would replace a gate. However they never did any serious harm and the neighbours just laughed the jokes off.

The family was five boys and four girls. The boys were Sylvester, Hector, Benjamin, Montford and Charles. The girls--Margaret, Amanda, Esther and Mabel. As time went on the family scattered and the farm was sold. The farm is now owned by Robt. Dowler.

THE McALPINES

At one time many centuries ago Ireland was called Scotia and the people were called Scots. In those days Scotland was called Caledonia and was inhabited by the Picts. His descendent married the daughter of the King of the Picts and thus founded the Royal family of Scotland.

Neil McAlpine who came from Argyle, Scotland bought the 200 acre farm Lot 30 North on Talbot Road in 1830. Peter McArthur tells of a time when frost killed the wheat and the farmers had no wheat for seed. Neil McAlpine who went to the church at Fingal and told the farmers that they could have wheat for seed if they would return bushel for bushel after the next crop. Needless to say the offer was very thankfully accepted.

He married Mary Galbraith who was born in 1799. They had four boys and seven girls. Dan married Janet McGugan, Hugh never married, Belle married Dan Cameron, Catherine married Neil McCallum. Their children were the famous Dr. A.B. McCallum--Prof. of Physiology at Toronto University and Dr. Hugh McCallum of London. Sarah married Malcom McAlpine, Margaret married John McGregor, Nancy married Alex McCallum. Mary and Christine remained single. Neil McAlpine died in 1875 and his son Hugh inherited the farm.

Hugh was a great and gentleman farmer. For many years John Stubbs who was a good worker and very dependable did the heavy work. The farming was mostly raising feed for a great many cattle. Hughie's main

business was buying cattle and preparing them for market. Hugh McAlpine was a good looking and well built man. He was well educated and was considered a great catch for designing ladies, but was never captured. He took an active part in the Grange. When the Grangers held their famous oyster suppers he was often the chairman. Christine or Christy as we called her kept house for Hughie. She was an excellent house-keeper and her cooking was famous. They sold their farm to Mr. Noble Tufford and came to St. Thomas and lived in the house now occupied by Stan. Gilbert.

THE WELTERS

The Welters were Pennsylvania Dutch. John Welter bought Lot 31 North on Talbot Road in 1830. His son David took the farm over the same year. Neil McAlpine and David Welter exchanged fifty acres. McAlpine taking the front fifty of Welters farm and Welter taking the back fifty of McAlpine's.

After the death of David Welter, his son Isaac became the owner. About 1882 he rented his farm to Mr. Branton and bought the fifty acre farm of Lot 31 from Peter McLean. He also bought the hundred acre farm Lot 31, west half south on Talbot Road from Mrs Casey. The Welter family was five girls and three boys.

They had a remarkable ear for music, often some of them went to an opera at St. Thomas and when they came home they could repeat the tunes on the organ ^{or} violin. Their home was very popular for the young folks to gather where they enjoyed the songs and music. As we lived just across the road we often visited each other. My parents and theirs were close friends. Mr. and Mrs Welter were fine people.

Physician and Surgeon in St. Thomas for 55 Years

Dr. James D. Curtis Had Been Practicing Medicine for Five Years When Medical Association, Now Half Century Old, Was Formed



DR. JAMES D. CURTIS

—Photo by Stollery.

The year 1899 was rather a momentous one in St. Thomas and Elgin County. Canadians were enlisting and going overseas to fight with the British against the Boers in South Africa. The Conservatives triumphed over the Liberals in two by-elections, with C. A. (Andy) Brower winning the East Elgin seat over Dan McIntyre of Yarmouth, and Finlay G. Macdiarmid winning over Donald Macnisi in West Elgin. Electric trolley cars had replaced horse cars in the St. Thomas Street Railway system—and the St. Thomas Medical Association was formed.

The last-named event is of especial interest, for next week the medical men of St. Thomas will observe the fiftieth anniversary of their Association and will pay honor to the only living charter member. He is Dr. James Davis Curtis, dean of all the sons of Hippocrates in the St. Thomas district.

The St. Thomas medical men will pay honor to a great doctor and humanitarian and to a former

civic administrator who introduced such progressive health and sanitation measures in St. Thomas as the collection of garbage and refuse from the homes; instituted the oiling of the city's streets to reduce the dust menace, and directed the building of isolation hospitals for the care and treatment of persons suffering from communicable diseases.

The remarkable thing about Dr. J. D. Curtis is that after 55 years of general practice in St. Thomas and district and 50 years of membership in the St. Thomas Medical Association, he is still going strong. In fact he has the vigor and keenness of men in his profession thirty or forty years his junior in age. Dr. Curtis is a man who has been just too active to grow old either mentally or physically.

He is a product of Elgin County, born on the Curtis farm in the Middlemarch district, a son of John Curtis and Mary Davis. He was named for an uncle, James Davis. The old farm was purchased by Dr. Curtis' grandfather, Salathiel Curtis, in 1847. It is

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Physician and Surgeon in St. Thomas for 55 Years

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still owned and worked by a Curtis.

Early Education

Dr. Curtis' acquired his early education at the pioneer Southwold school at Middlemarch and attended the St. Thomas Collegiate Institute when John Millar was a principal. It took him only three years to get through the Collegiate Institute and graduate. Then he attended Normal School at London, Ontario, qualified for the teaching profession and taught school at Brayne's School, north of Port Stanley until 1890 when he went to Toronto and started the study of medicine in the University of Toronto Medical Faculty. The late Doctors R. M. Lipsey and Frank Smith, both of St. Thomas, were classmates. Dr. Curtis graduated as a physician and surgeon in 1894 and returned to St. Thomas in June of that year to "hang out his shingle." His first office was on the north side of Talbot street, opposite the Michigan Central Railroad depot. He was there only a relatively short time when he moved westward on Talbot street to take over the practice of Dr. Samuel Day and establish his office in the building where the C. N. R. express and telegraph offices are now located, on the south side of Talbot street, just east of Elgin street. His sleeping quarters were over his office, where R. W. Johnson and Company, chartered accountant, are now located. The office to the rear of Dr. Curtis' office was occupied by J. M. Glenn, barrister and solicitor, who later became police magistrate for St. Thomas.

In 1899 the year that the St. Thomas Medical Association was formed Dr. Curtis became associated with Dr. William Smith, who had been physician and surgeon for the Michigan Central Railroad and M.C.R. Hospital Association for some years. It was in that year that Dr. Curtis became associated with the Michigan Central Railroad, an appointment he has held ever since.

Trained With the Great

Just before Dr. Curtis went in with Dr. William Smith, he paid his first visit to the famed Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, to do post-graduate work, training under four of the immortals of modern medicine. He took medicine under Dr. William Osler, later to be knighted by Queen Victoria for his great contributions to the advancement of medical science; surgery under Dr. Halsted; gynecology under Dr. Kelly.

And the resident physician at Johns Hopkins that April day, 1899, when the youthful Dr. Curtis arrived there, was the late Dr. T. B. Fletcher, another native of the Middlemarch district of Southwold, who attended St. Thomas Collegiate Institute with Dr. Curtis and graduated from the Toronto Medical Faculty a year before him. Dr. Fletcher remained with Johns Hopkins for years to become one of America's leading medical authorities.

In 1903, Dr. Curtis went to New York City to do further post-graduate work and tem-

porarily became an interne at the great Bellevue Hospital.

He paid another visit to Baltimore in 1907 to take further post-graduate work at Johns Hopkins, studying surgery under Dr. Harvey Cushing and in 1908 he paid his first visit to the world-famed diagnostic clinic and hospital established by the late Drs. Charles and Will Mayo at Rochester, Minnesota, for observation instruction. He knew both the Mayos well and also studied surgery under Drs. Balfour and Judd, two veteran members of the Mayo Hospital staff.

World War Service

The First World War started on August 4, 1914 and the following year Dr. Curtis had enrolled for service and went overseas to join the Royal Army Medical Corps. He had been surgeon-major in the old 25th Elgin Regiment for a number of years. He remained overseas until December, 1916, when he returned to St. Thomas to resume civilian practice. In March, 1917, he accepted an offer from the Ontario Government to become medical officer for the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Board. He held that position until October, 1918, when he resigned and returned to St. Thomas. Being a civil servant and government employee just didn't appeal to him.

During his long medical career, Dr. Curtis was associated with many other outstanding medical men of St. Thomas and Elgin. One of them was the late Dr. A. C. (Archie) Campbell. The medical and surgical team of Curtis and Campbell was widely known for two decades. It was a medical affinity which started in 1908, after the death of Dr. James Fulton, with whom Dr. Campbell had been associated, and continued until Dr. Campbell's death in 1923. Older people still talk about "their operations", performed by those great surgeons, Dr. Jim Curtis and Dr. Archie Campbell. Their offices were in the two storey building, opposite the city hall where Dr. J. D. Curtis is still located.

Another close associate of Dr. Curtis from the early years of this century was the late Dr. F. O. Lawrence. He often worked with Dr. Curtis and Dr. Campbell. Following Dr. Campbell's death, Dr. Douglas Carrie was associated with Dr. Curtis for several years following his graduation, and following that Dr. John F. Curtis became associated with his father. The two occupy adjoining offices in the same suite.

Honor Is Conferred

It was in 1925 that Dr. Curtis was honored with the degree of Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, in recognition of his service to humanity in the surgical field. The honor was conferred on him following examinations in New York City.

But the greatest honor that Dr. Curtis has received during 55 years of medical service comes from thousands of people to whom he has ministered and from the hundreds and hundreds of young people he has brought into the world.

"Just how many babies have you ushered in" he was asked by The Times-Journal.

"Oh, I couldn't say exactly,"

he replied. "I never kept a full record, but probably between 2,500 and 3,000—and that would include fifteen or twenty sets of twins. I never introduced triplets or quadruplets into the world."

Nor has Dr. Curtis any record of the number of surgical operations he has performed, or assisted at. He does recall, quite vividly, however, the first operation performed in Amasa Wood Hospital. The hospital was built in 1891 and he was a medical student at the time. He assisted, as a student, at that first operation which was performed by Dr. Harry Meek of London, Ontario. The operating table was an ordinary flat, wooden table.

The St. Thomas Medical Association was formed in 1899, the year the late Patrick Meehan was mayor. Dr. Duncan McLarty was the first president; and the late Dr. Allison McCrimmon, son of the late Crown Attorney Angus McCrimmon, was the first secretary. Dr. Curtis was one of the charter members. Six years later, in 1905, he was elected president of the Association. He was president again in 1941 and 1942.

Throughout the entire 50 years of the Association's existence, he has been one of its most active members and supporters.

And throughout the last half century, Dr. Curtis has been a friend and wise counsellor of young men entering the medical profession and a sort of "father confessor" to successive nursing staffs at Memorial Hospital. He is the undisputed dean at the hospital, a kindly, considerate man of medicine who has fought pain and sickness with words of cheer and hope as well as with surgical skill and medical knowledge. A student of human nature, Dr. Curtis has used psychology in the treatment of patients as well as the scalpel and the pill.

The First Automobile

Dr. Curtis served his apprenticeship and a dozen or more succeeding years in the horse and buggy era of medicine. He owned a number of horses, not only for making his calls in a high, narrow-seated doctor's buggy, equipped with iron bars on either side of the seat, but also for riding. He was very fond of horseback riding in his younger days.

Then in 1909, with the foresight that has characterized his career, he invested in the first doctor's car in St. Thomas.

He likes to tell about that first motor car. It was a one cylinder Brush, equipped with a seven horsepower engine. It had a double chain drive, but it had no top, no windshield and no doors. It would operate for 40 miles on a gallon of gasoline costing about 15 cents in those days, and if there was no wind blowing, or the wind happened to be going in the same direction that Dr. Curtis was going, that Brush would make a top speed of 20 miles an hour. But if the Brush was heading into a wind, ten miles an hour was about the most that could be expected of it.

"I didn't even have to buy a license for that first car," Dr. Curtis told The Times-Journal. "When I needed gasoline and oil, I had to go to a hardware store and make the purchases. When the car went out of kilter, I had to be my own mechanic. There were no service stations; no repair garages."

The first winter Dr. Curtis had his Brush, he kept a horse and buggy for emergency use, but it was an open winter and he drove the car all winter. It was about the only motor car that was operated in the St. Thomas district that winter. Needless to say, it was a novelty. After the Brush came a Hupmobile, then a Maxwell, possibly a brother or first cousin of Jack Benny's famous Maxwell; and following that a Dodge, a McLaughlin-Buick, a Ford, a Nash, a Lafayette, which Dr. Curtis didn't keep long; then two successive Packards, and back to a Dodge which the Doctor is now driving.

In City Service

Despite his busy medical career, Dr. Curtis found time to serve St. Thomas as a member of the City Council and also on the St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce. He was first elected to the City Council in 1913, the last year that the late R. N. Price was mayor. Dr. Curtis was made chairman of the Board of Health and during the busy 12 months that followed, he did much toward reorganizing and modernizing public health service in St. Thomas. He started the garbage collection service, with a collector paid \$4,000 that first year to provide the service. He fathered the oiling of the city's unimproved streets and the isolation hospital cottages off Chester street were built.

"It wasn't a bad garbage collection service for a starter," he told The Times-Journal. "I got some calls from householders whose garbage had been missed but for \$4,000, the city got a pretty fair service."

In 1918, Dr. Curtis was re-elected to the City Council, with E. A. Horton as mayor. For the succeeding five years, he was chairman of the Board of Works. He was chairman when the present city engineer, Warren C. Miller was engaged. Dr. Curtis had a few of what he would term "battleground royals" at No. 2 Committee

and Council meetings, but he was always quite capable of holding his own.

For a number of years, Dr. Curtis was on the directorate of the St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce. He was one of the civic leaders who directed the reorganization of the Chamber over 20 years ago. He was honored with the presidency in 1931.

A Real Sportsman

Probably one of the reasons that Dr. Curtis has remained in active service so long is that he learned early the secret of relaxing and enjoying himself in his off moments. He has been an ardent sportsman all his life, and still plays a good game of golf. He is a charter member and a past president of the St. Thomas Golf and Country Club, being one of the leading members when the golf course was just east of the city, now owned by the Timken Roller Bearing Company and operated as a municipal golf course. When the campaign for the beautiful 18 hole course at Union was launched, Dr. Curtis was one of its most ardent and active supporters. He has recommended golf as a form of relaxation and also for taking off excessive weight and worries to many a patient.

There is nothing he likes better than to take a visiting friend to the Union course and get him to try his skill on some of the tricky fairways and ravine drives.

As a younger man, Dr. Curtis also enjoyed baseball and played the game whenever the opportunity presented itself. There was usually a game of baseball or two, when his boyhood friend, Dr. T. B. Fletcher, came home for his annual vacation from Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore.

In politics—well, Dr. Curtis is very much a Tory of the old school. He has been active just about all his life in politics in St. Thomas and Elgin, attending local and national conventions. He is a past president of the Elgin Progressive Conservative Association.

The Canadian Legion is another organization in which Dr. Curtis has been keenly interested since the First World War. He guided the destinies of Branch No. 41 for three years as president, back in the 1920's.

Friend of Veterans

A veteran himself, who ministered to many wounded Canadians overseas, the ex-service man has always had a sympathetic and understanding friend in Dr. J. D. Curtis.

No sketch of Dr. Curtis' medical career would be complete without mention of his wife, the former Dora Ferguson, to whom he was married in 1901; his son, Dr. John F. Curtis, one of the city's busiest younger physicians; his daughter, Miss Carolyn Curtis,

a talented artist; and the one and only George Evans, general handyman for the doctors in the Curtis block.

George Evans started with Dr. J. D. Curtis as a boy, in 1903, and like the good doctor, he is still going strong.

It has been said that in an emergency, Mr. Evans can do a bit of doctoring himself through his long association with the medical profession. In fact, on at least one occasion, when both Dr. Curtis and Dr. Campbell were away from their offices on calls or hospital duty, patients were referred to "George" by one of the Campbell boys—possibly Alderman A. L. Campbell, chairman of No. 3 Committee of the city Council.

Dr. Curtis' home is at 24 Southwick street and there he finds another medium of relaxation in horticulture. Usually the first day of spring finds him out with rake or spade, tending to his lawn or his flower beds and borders. And for years past, he has set an example for all the other residents in the neighborhood by keeping the long stretch of sidewalks along his grounds off Southwick and Elizabeth streets, cleared of snow and slush.

St. Thomas would never have to employ snowplows or sand the sidewalks if all the residents were as attentive to the duties of good citizenship as Dr. J. D. Curtis.

THE SMOKES

Peter Smoke or Smuck bought the front half of Lot 33 North on Talbot Road from Samuel Long about 1845. There were two houses on the sideroad north of Smokes Corner. Peter Smoke lived on one and his son Caleb or "Kep" as he was called lived in the other. Peter Smoke fought in the war of 1812. His son "Kep" was an enthusiastic horseman. He drove a team of prancing horses to a buggy. The harness was polished, and shining. The buggy was spotless. He sat up straight as a soldier with his wife Eliza beside him. People stopped and looked when he drove by. Kep's family was--Maggie Esther, Mary and Edgar. The young folks were popular.

Peter, brother of Caleb had a family of four--Sarah married Lorne Campbell, Fannie married Edgar Bowlby, they had 14 children. Delbert married Ivez Stanton and Henry married and lives in West Lorne.

SMOKES CORNER

The front of the Smoke farm was sold in lots. One for a house and blacksmith shop, another for a school bought in 1844, and another much later for the church. The blacksmith shop was built by George Jones who married my Grandfather's sister. His son John carried on the work for a time when it was taken over by Thomas Hatherley.

The north end of Lot 34 was divided into three lots. The first was taken by Thomas Hatherley who built a house and a wagon shop on his lot. The next lot was taken by George Stanton who kept a hotel. The other lot was taken by Henry House.

Thomas Hatherley was an Englishman and a good wagon maker. He also was the first Post Master when Smokes Corner became Middlemarch. He had one son John who married Mary Lilley Hendershot.

It is said that Hattie Robinson and her Father suggested the name Middlemarch. The blacksmith shop was a busy place. The school boys coming from school often stopped to watch horse shoeing done. The older men often stopped to hear the latest news. John Kent was the blacksmith

*The Stinchcombe property is now owned by Mr. Jones
There are three children in the Jones family. —*

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in the late seventies.

After him was Frank Westlake who married Mary Ann Stubbs, daughter of John Stubbs.

Then came Albert Stinchcombe and took over the shop in 1888. He was appointed Post Master in 1890 at one dollar a month. Later the blacksmith shop was moved north and a general store took its place. Mr. Stinchcombe was Post Master for over fifty-eight years, when it was discontinued this year 1948. Mr. Heard took over the wagon shop after Mr. Hatherley's death. *died 1944*
Mrs. T. Stinchcombe was post mistress

1944-8. Delaware, Ont.
Mrs Stinchcombe was an ~~Ken~~^{E.C.}burger. She was a very active church worker. They had three children--Cleveland who married Miss Ross, Floyd who married another Miss Ross, and Trevor who married Mabel Webb.

At one time there was a frame house on the side road just east of Hatherley's place. The Vowel family lived there about sixty-five years ago. After they left, the house was occupied by an old man who peddled fish. The smell was not appreciated, so one night when the old man was away the boys put his wagon on top of the house, in taking it down the wagon was smashed, so the fish peddler left. This house may have been the home of Richard Drake who owned the farm in 1836.

THE JOINERS

In 1864 Charles Joiner bought 50 acres of the North West half of Lot 33. After a few years he sold and bought 50 acres of the south half of Lot 34, a mile south of Smokes Corner.

Charles Joiner was an Englishman of the old type, he was honest and plainspeaking. His sister was the wife of Capt. Thomas H. Jones. His wife was an Axford from Devonshire.

The Joiners in my early days, were our nearest neighbours and warmest friends. There were five boys and one girl. They were my first playmates, and I shared in the hand-outs of large slices of bread with sugar thickly spread over it. For years our family had our Christmas dinner at the

Joiners, and they had New Years dinner at our home. And how we gorged ourselves on Turkey and Plum Pudding!

At Christmas time and New Years, as soon as we were old enough to carry a gun we went hunting. Our guns were muzzle loaders, and our game was black squirrels. If we got one or two--our hunting was a success.

As time passed the boys left home. John went to British Columbia and disappeared, the mystery was never solved. Proctor went to Spokane and was in the hardware business. He died two or three years ago. Charles and Chester were twins--Charles married Bertha Sanders, daughter Richard Sanders who bought the Joiner farm. Their family was two boys and one girl--Vernon married Blanche Silcox, Richard who spent five years in the last war married Thelma Evans of the Edgeware Road, and Marguerite married George Evans, St. Thomas, their home is the George Ponsford home on Centre St.

Chester who lives in Appin married Ada Lewis, their family is two boys and one girl--Lewis who married Margaret McPhee, Allison who married Helen Charlton and Ada lives at home.

Frank who married Ethel Wardell had two girls--Eva who married Percy Vary, Port Stanley and Elva who married Orville Ingram.

The Joiners after selling their farm to Richard Sanders bought a farm on West River Road. Mrs Charles Joiner senior passed away on this farm. She had always treated me as one of the family.

THE ANDERSONS

James Anderson who married Sarah McGill came to Canada in 1836. He bought the north half of Lot 34 north in 1864, now owned by David Lyle. They had four boys and four girls.

Neil married Jessie Gordon, and after her death he married Margaret Bateman. Richard and Peter who did not marry. John who married Jennie McAlpine, they had five girls--Jennie Belle who died a few yrs ago, Ella who married Roy Laidlaw, they have one boy James who was overseas

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in the last war. He is a medical student now. Mary who married Burleigh Campbell, they have two boys, both served overseas in the last war. Jessie who died when she was 19 yrs old. Alberta who married T.W. Oates has two boys, both served overseas in the last war.

THE WARDELLS

Joshua Wardell bought Lot 35 South on Talbot Road in 1825. His brother Marsden taught school in this section. They were United Empire Loyalists. He bought the south half of Lot 34 in 1828, also 50 acres of north east half of Lot 34, and the south half of Lot 33, a total of 450 acres.

The family comprised one son Edwin and two daughters Josephine and Sally. After Joshua Wardell died in 1875 the two daughters became the owners of the farm on Talbot Road. Josephine was a refined and capable type of woman, and was much respected by her friends. They rented the farm for several years to John Pearce who lived in a frame house on the farm owned by the Widow Casey, now owned by Robie Fatcher. Josephine and Sally never married.

The son Edwin lived on a fifty acre farm on Lot 34, a mile South of Middlemarch. He married a daughter of Colonel McQueen. They had three sons and two daughters--James McQueen married Fannie Metcalf and lived in London. They had two girls and a boy. Maud, Blanche and Ernest.

Merue called "Rue" graduated in medicine at Ann Arbor and practiced in Michigan. Rue's family was a son and a daughter. When he was a student he vaccinated his sister Emily, so a few days after it had taken, my Mother took me over to the Wardells and Rue vaccinated me off of Emily's sore. The vaccination took, I still have the scar and have never had Small Pox, although I have been exposed several times.

Walter the third son married Minnie Brandon. Their family was four girls--Evelyn who married Frank Joiner, Eva who married Ora Lonsberry, Sara who married Jack Travers, they had two boys--Donald and Walter. Elva, a nurse died with Influenza in 1919.

ELVA - R.N.

The Wardells

Mrs. Jack Travers died, then later, Mr. Jack Travers re-married and had one daughter, Mary Ann.

After Mr. J. Travers died, the place was sold to Leo Vandenberg. After Mr. Vandenberg's death, his son William and wife Marie with three children lived on the farm. The house burned and the original house was torn down. A new modern ranch-style house was built.

Edwin's two girls died of Diptheria when children. Diptheria in those days was a very fatal disease. It is probable that the treatment in vogue at that time never saved a life. Edwin Wardell and family moved to Dacota about 1882, they came back about 1887.

Roger Allen rented the farm while they were away. Mr. Allen had a large family of girls and boys.

Mrs Wardell was a very capable and intelligent woman. Whenever the neighbours became sick they sent for Mrs Wardell before they sent for a doctor. Often the patient recovered without the doctor. She was also a great lover of flowers, their yard around the house was beautiful.

THE YEANDLES

William Yeandle came from England and settled on Lot 35 North on Talbot Road in 1868. This farm was called "The Weldon Estate" and has an interesting history.

An American Calvin Witt bought the farm from Colonel Talbot in 1820 and built a large log house which became the social centre of the district. Col. Talbot held his anniversary celebrations there on May 24 each year. It was also the favorite stop off place for travelers. The first blacksmith shop was on the Witt farm.

The Yeandles had a large family--five boys and five girls. William who taught school in S.S. No 14, Samuel who married Miss Russell of the St. Thomas Post Office. Charles and Thomas. The girls were Emma, Jennie, Mary and Elizabeth.