

THE LONGEST REIGN

1837-



-1897



THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF 18.

A Period of Improvements and Progress.
1843--1845.

The close of the Rebellion saw an increase in population and improvements in this port, with the forming of Agarrison in London. Port Stanley reflected the gay life of the larger place and red-coated soldiers were often entertained in the spacious homes of our village. There were plenty of soldiers and sailors joining in the lively fun of the village taverns.



As the first road built was not in a condition for the soldiers marching to London, the Government planked it and straightened it by using Colborne instead of Joseph street. This government work cost at least £40,000. It now became primarily a military road but it also improved travel for the stage coach and wagon-trains.

The second pier was now finished and a draw-bridge was built over Kettle Creek. On the west side, the marshland was overcome by a plank approach from the bridge to William St. The planks of this approach were placed lengthwise.

By 1843, grain was being shipped in such quantities, that McPherson & Crane of Montreal invested their capital in a fine, large warehouse, which was built on the east side of Kettle C. near the water-front. It was finished with a cupola from which elevation one could get a clear view of the valley and far out over the expanse of Lake Erie. The approach of incoming vessels could be noted from this high-perched cupola. Mr. Hoadly was the capable manager of this import and export business.

About this same period, Mr. Zavitz of Yarmouth, built a new mill for Bostwick & Chrystler, on the east side of the creek. An aqueduct was built above Main St. A racer-way was cut through the hill (then belonging to Bostwick), and water was fed from springs situated to the east of the hill, which were dammed. As a result of this engineering project, we have Little Creek and the tunnel beneath the bridge on Hillcrest.

A
close up view
of the
tunnel.



During the months of open navigation, sloops, schooners and side-wheelers lay side by side in our harbour. Sails, smoke-stacks and chimney-tops were silhouetted on the calm surface of the lake, as places of business were built on the shore or on piles over the water. One building with a verandah facing Kettle Creek had a sign hanging on its Main St. side which read, "Ship's Supply Co." but wet goods was the chief merchandise unloaded there! Soldiers and settlers were entering our harbour steadily. It is recorded that 112 soldiers

Soldiers and Settlers Enter Steadily.

were unloaded from the propeller steamer "Earl Cathcart", in 1850. These were men for Her Majesty's 23rd Regiment, in London. The next time she entered our harbour, she brought 92 men. The steamer, "Britannia" also docked with more troops and supplies for the regiment, as well.

Many fine vessels floundered in the wild tempests of Lake Erie and others met with collisions. The following gives a graphic account of one of these wrecks, -

(From a reproduction page of THE EVENING TELEGRAM, Toronto, Ont. Sept. 30th, 1893.)

An accident attended with the most lamentable loss of life occurred on Lake Erie early in May to the Commerce, a propeller plying on the lake. The following extract from a private letter written by a lady residing near Dunville gives a very good account of the circumstances. It is dated Port Maitland, May 9th, 1848 and reads as follows:

"I fear my letter will almost be too late, but this most melancholy accident on the lake has so occupied all our attention that I could not write before. You have probably seen full particulars of it in the papers, but as it occurred within two miles of us I will mention it again.

The Dispatch steamer on her way to Buffalo, ran into the Commerce propeller bound for Port Stanley with a detachment of the 23rd Regiment on board. She sank in fifteen minutes, and forty men, women and children were lost.

The assistant surgeon had left a wife and child in Kingston. He was lost. The other three officers were saved but lost everything they had. One of them said he had just drawn three months' pay in advance. They were all taken on the Minos (the Government steamer). We just saw them leaving the Earl Cathcart. The ensign (Sir Henry Chamberlain) and a few men are to remain here to attend to the melancholy duty of burying any of the poor fellows whose bodies may be washed ashore. They are bound for London. The regimental plate, wine, stores etc. are all lost and a very large sum of money. About seventy men are saved. The most of them are without clothes. They have been partly supplied from Dunville and this neighbourhood and we all sent them all the bedding and blankets we could spare. One poor little fellow, son of a commissary in Montreal was going up with them for a pleasure trip and he was lost. You may suppose it banished everything else from our minds."

(Handed in by Mrs. Ora Findlay)

But here is a brighter picture of that time. The following describes a common incident on any summer day as told by our forebears who arrived from their long sea voyage from across the Atlantic into this port of entry. There is much stir and bustle on a May day in 1849, at the foot of Main St. Here at the East Pier, there are boats loading and unloading as busy stevedores move their wheel-barrows to and fro, hither and yon. Soldiers of the regiment respond to the clipped commands of their superior officer, as they clear the steamer which has been their home for weeks and weeks. Immigrants and other passengers (many a one in the kilt or other native garb) are finding their way across a schooner's gangplank with their treasured possessions, while the jolly tars in the rigging or on the deck, obey the calls of their weather-beaten captain. Lined up near the dock is an old stage coach waiting to load passengers, baggage and packets of mail, for the trip to London.

Everything is in readiness and the procession begins. The horn of the stage-coach echoes from lake to cliff and from cliff to lake, as the coach leads the way over the new plank road and under the shade of the forest trees. The passengers hear the unfamiliar calls of birds and animals and listen to the galloping feet of the four horses as the stage-coach rocks along from side to side, leaving the dust far behind for the red-coated soldiers. And now come the soldiers with the tramp, tramp, tramp of marching feet over this new but uneven plank road. Then the steerage passengers, with little money in their pocket, but with youth and plenty of courage in their hearts trudge along toward their new homes and their uncertain futures.

A RELIC OF THE PAST -A LINK WITH THE PRESENT.



Taken by Arthur Goodwin

From the village looking eastward, this pretty scene forms part of the landscape. It is not a natural gully, but man-made and a link with our past history. Many an early settler used his shovel on this project back in 1844, when the Zavitz Mill was in course of construction.

A FIGHT FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

in
1837-

Municipal Institutions were unknown at this time and Port Stanley was governed by the Courts of Middlesex. Pioneer settlers had been so busy in their struggle for means of existence that little thought had been given to the governing of their new home in Upper Canada. At this time, the government was certainly not of the people and for the people. Some men who were leaders began to agitate for Government reforms. There is no doubt that most of the Reformers were loyal enough, but simply wished to cure some of the existing evils of the time.

The leader of the Rebels (as they were called) was Wm. Lyon Mackenzie. He often spoke in St. Thomas and was a very eloquent speaker in this cause, he deemed so worthy. In this district the leader was a Dr. Duncombe, a member of the Legislature, who was particularly concerned with changes in our Educational system. It was after the war of 1812, that Dr. Duncombe came from the U.S.A. to Canada to take up residence and was made a member of the Legislature in 1834. In 1836, he went to England in the interests of political reform. Discouraged with the results of his mission in England, and under pressure from Mackenzie, he joined in the Rebellion. Other followers in the southern portion of Middlesex, that is, in Yarmouth and Southwold, numbered about 300.

By 1838 the Rebellion appeared to be quelled, and Mackenzie, Duncombe and some of their followers escaped to the United States. However, these exiles and their sympathizers in U.S.A. formed a society and raised funds and prepared for an invasion into Canada from the U.S.A. The Government, of course, organized at once to combat the threat of invasion. In Middlesex Co. a battalion of four companies was formed. One of these was the Yarmouth Home Guards, under command of Col. Bostwick of the Port. Among those serving under him, from the village were his own sons, and Mr. Tomlison and his sons. Others were Mr. Light and Mr. Thos. Meek. Mr. Geo. Williams was stationed at Chatham, and Capt. Nevills and Capt. Jones were stationed at Port with 80 recruits. It is stated that the men under Col. Bostwick witnessed the flight of Duncombe's rebel forces at Oakville and a portion of the same men were foremost at the capture of brigand schooner Anne, at Sandwich.

Col. Bostwick was appointed President of the Court Martial to try the prisoners taken and Jas. Hamilton, Sheriff of the London Dist. and a former resident here, issued the warrant for their execution. The bodies of two of those executed were brought to Sparta, Amos Perley and Joshau Gilliam Doan. Their bodies were interned in the Quaker Burial Ground and the service was preached by Aunt Sarah Haight. Joshau Doan was the son of the land agent of Col. Baby.

note-Dr. Duncombe escaped from Canada to the U.S.A. disguised at a woman. He crossed at Marine City in Jan. 1838.

Lord Durham



LORD DURHAM

The following item was taken from an early paper I read at the University of Western Ontario, and was copied from the London Eng. Morning Chronical.

"The late insurrection in Canada has so far been beneficial that it has led to the correction that we cannot hope to keep the Colonies without a complete change of system, so that the bold suggestions of Lord Durham, which at another time might have been disregarded, but now may receive the consideration to which they are justly due.

In 1841, under Lord Sydenham, municipal organizations were instituted in each township.

In 1844, the Weekly Globe at Toronto, started publication with Geo Brown as Editor and publisher. This gave a strong support to Responsible Government.

MIDDLESEX IS DIVIDED

The Southern Division is Named-**ELGIN**-
after Lord Elgin.

As early as 1846, there was agitation for a division of the Dist. of Middlesex into two parts. On Aug. 27th. of this year a meeting was held in the Mansion House, ^{St. Thomas} which was gay with flags and banners and the amateur band of St. George's Society, was in attendance to liven the affair.

Resolutions were passed, unananimously, for the separation and Mr Benj. Drake offered to make a gift of land for a market square, and for the County Buildings.

At first Port Stanley was all out for it, for they wished to have Port chosen for the County Town. When they found out that St. Thomas would likely have the honour, they got up a petition in opposition.

In 1851, however, the Government passed an Act which divided Middlesex into two counties. The new county was called Elgin (after Lord Elgin) and consisted of seven townships as it does to-day.

Under the authority of a proclamation bearing the signature and Seal of James Hamilton, Sheriff, Upper Canada, a meeting of a provisional council ^{was held} at 12m. Apr. 15th/52.

In accordance with the proclamation ^{it was} dissolving the union of Middlesex and Elgin, published in the Canada Gazette, the 30th. day of Sept. /53. The first meeting of the County Council of the County of Elgin was held, Tues. the 8th. day of November 1853. Thomas Locker was the first Warden.



THOMAS LOCKER.
WARDEN 1852-5.

Notes-Lord Elgin was Governor General of Canada from 1847 to 1854.

2
The County Buildings were built on the land given by Mr. B. Drake.

3
Judge Hughes was the first judge appointed for Elgin and he opened court Oct. 1st, but adjourned it until the 1st. day of November ensuing.

Port Stanley at this time comes under the jurisdiction of the County of Elgin.

Reciprocity and Anti-slavery were two of the main topics of the day. A speaker from the Maritimes, who was not greatly impressed with the Reciprocity, said in regard his own country, CANADA. "Canada is possessed with territory large enough to found one of the greatest Empires that the world has ever seen. Population only is wanted to give her that degree of importance which she must shortly attain."

Professor and Mrs. Stowe visited England ^{and} spoke in the Anti-slavery cause at the Music Hall to an audience of 1500. In 1851, the Anti-slavery Society of Canada was formed.

Lord Elgin



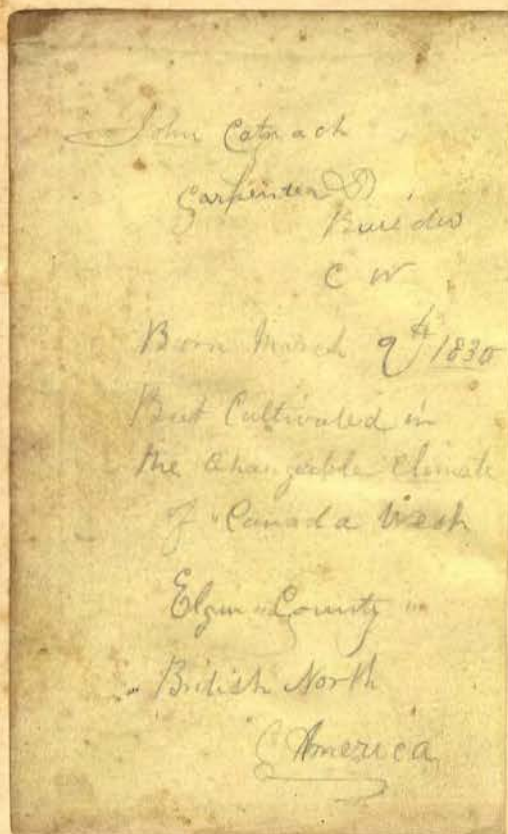
1840. Municipal Act.

Canada West-

This fly-leaf comes from a pocket edition of "Johnson's Dictionary", which belonged, at one time to my aunt, Miss. Isabella-Hepburn. On the other side is written,

Miss Isabella Hepburn
Born in Scotland and
Cultivated in Canada
West
British America.

Canada West was used, when there was federation with Quebec. 1840
In 1867, the name Canada was left to the entire population and this province chose the name 'Ontario in honour of the fact that it was along Lake Ontario that the immigrants first settled in the greatest numbers.



note- Miss. Isabella Hepburn, later Mrs. Forsythe, was the donor of the money which built the wing of the now "Memorial Hospital" on Curtis St. It was built for the Nurses' Home and was first used for that purpose.



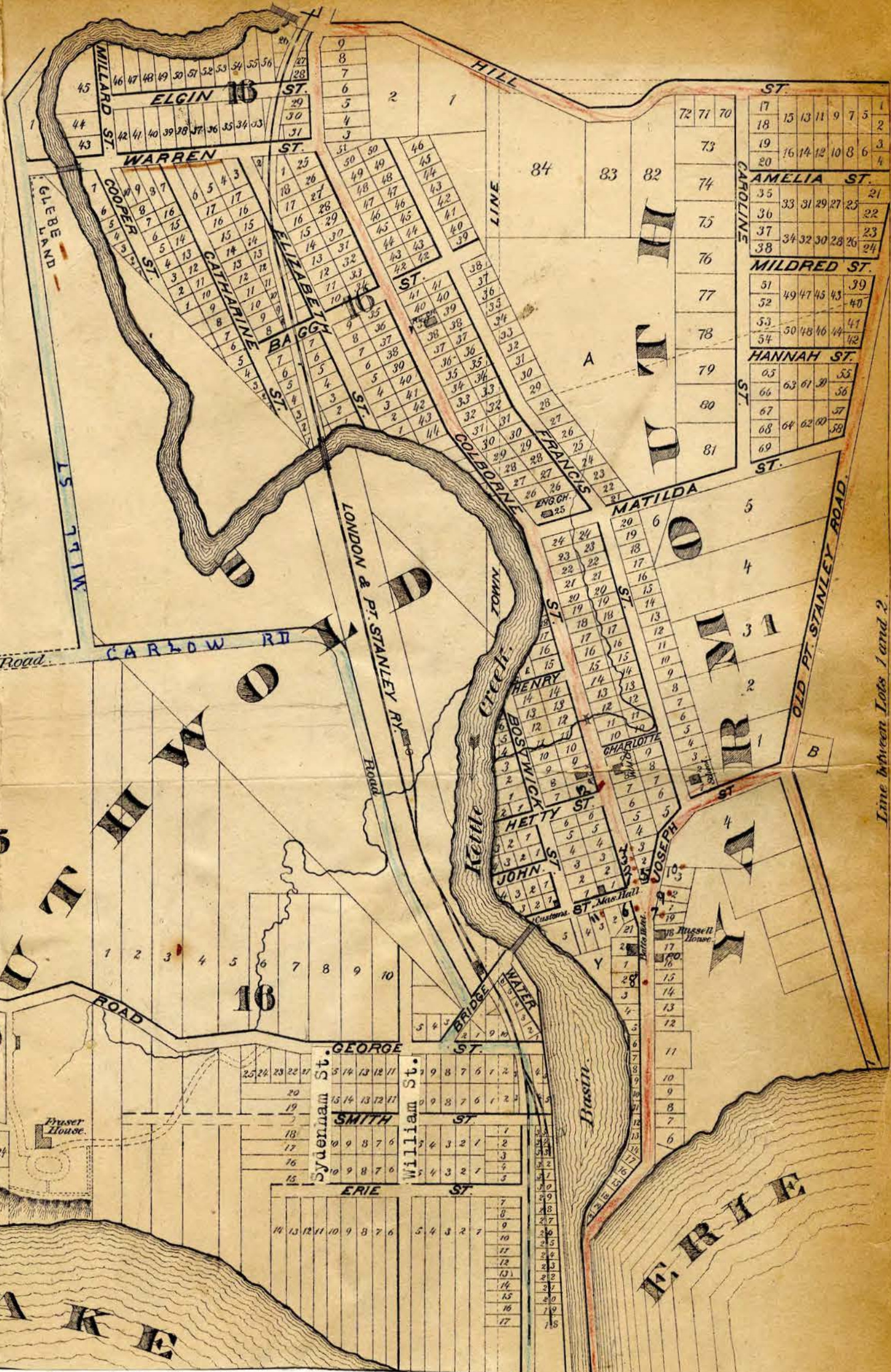
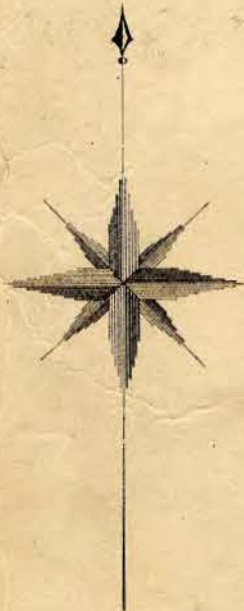
MAY 1, 1948

THE ST. THOMAS TIMES-JOURNAL

ST. THOMAS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Built around the nucleus of the original Amasa Wood Hospital, which was opened in 1891 with 30 beds and enlarged in 1901 by the Forsythe-Hepburn wing with 20 more beds, the Hospital today consists mainly of the handsome Memorial Hospital building opened in 1923.

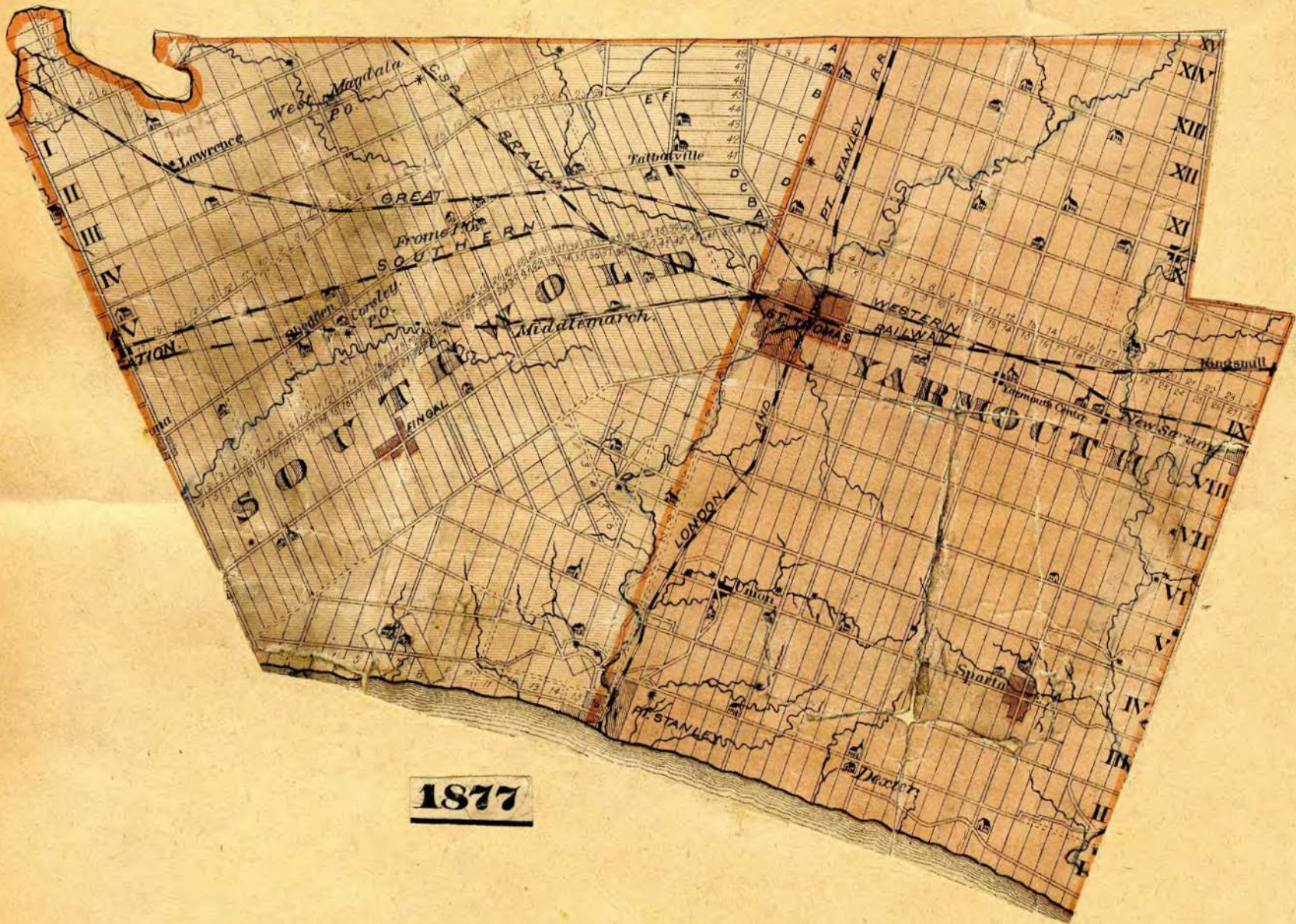
1876



Part of Thesurvey made by Patrick Mc Niff, known as the Old Lake Rd. has

ceased to exist but the part from Kettle C. Harbour over Carlow Rd. will soon be joined by a new survey through the pioneer farm of Robt. Hepburn, making a shorter and more scenic road to our health-giving resort.

Line between Lots 1 and 2



1877

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



"A meeting of the inhabitants of Port Stanley (of all who may belong to the Presbyterian form of church government, or may be favorable to it) will be held in the school room on Friday coming, the 3rd February, at 7 o'clock, for the purpose of uniting themselves, in order to adopt the means of establishing a church in this place."

Port Stanley, 28th Jan., 1854.

The above notice indicates the time and manner of the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Port Stanley.

(3rd. of February 1854)

Dr. Daniel was called to the chair and Geo. McPherson acted as Secretary. The chairman made some appropriate remarks on the object that the meeting was called together and read for the benefit of the audience, some extracts on the principles and constitution of the church of Scotland.

Moved by R. Smith, seconded by A. Hume and resolved; That in the opinion of this meeting it is imperatively demanded, by the spiritual necessity of a large portion of the community that a congregation should be formed in the village in connection with the Presbyterian Church in Canada; and moreover it is the conviction of this meeting that the time has come when Presbyterians in Port Stanley and vicinity are loudly called on by various conditions to put forth a vigorous and united effort to make such preparations as may be necessary to get supplied with the means of grace from the church around which their warmest sympathies are intended.

The following committee was formed to carry out the resolutions, - Richard Smith, Andrew Hume, John McBride, James Henderson, Alex McAnzie, Adam Herbertson, John Milligan; Alex Campbell, Robt. Thomson, Francis Mitchell, Geo. Lloyd, Angus Monroe, Duncan McIntyre, Geo. McPherson, Thos. Daniel, John McQueen, Joe. Black, Thos. Morrison, Ewen Cameron, Robt. Hepburn, Wm. Meek, Jas. Begg, Bryce Thomson, Adam Fulton, Duff Cameron, Sam. Farr, and Robt. McGill.

Moved by Jno. McBride, seconded by Jno McCallum, that the Secretary forward the minutes of the meeting to the "London Free Press and the "British Standard".

Monday, the 7th. August 1854.

At a meeting held within the Temperance Hall on Monday, Aug. 7th, 1854, Mr. Richard Smith was called to the chair and John McQueen acted as secretary.

It was moved by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Robt. Thomson, that the congregation are of the opinion, that the time has now arrived that they would have a Pastor settled amongst them, to minister to them in Holy Things and resolve to petition the Reverend the Presbytery of London, to moderate in a call to the Rev. William Doak, "Licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland", to become their pastor, and that Mr. Bryce Thomson and John McQueen be appointed as a deputation to represent the petition of the congregation to the Presbytery of London.

(signed) John McQueen, Secy.