

The newer Grace United opened in 1910. Central Methodist, now Central United held its early meetings in the Canada Southern Station. This church a Methodist Episcopalian at the time was built on the present site in 1881 and the present one in 1897.

From the Archives at Toronto information is that the little White's Station Church was a Methodist Episcopalian Church from 1867 - 1882 and was connected with the Yarmouth-Southwold circuit. After 1874 it was in the Southwold circuit alone.

In the Methodist Episcopalian Church Missionary Society reports from 1867 in the Yarmouth and Southwold circuits London District there are several names mentioned as contributors. L.J. Widdifield, E. Lawton, Mrs. Mellor, J. Campbell, Mrs. Campbell, J. Sinclair, J. Youk, J. Gilam, R. Thine, M.A. Newton, Mr. Bassett, G. Hathaway, Miss E. Howell, Miss E. Davidson, G. C. Howell, Thomas Guist, Miss R. Howell, Gideon Howell, Alberta Howell, Henry Stockton, G.D. Howell and lady, Widow White, Hamilton Howell, Mettie May Mitchell.

A list of ministers and deacons to Yarmouth and Southwold circuits include, C. Burdett, Ira Bentley, D. Griffin, H.B. Palmer, J.S. Fraser, W. Philipps (ordained) W. Fansher, John Drake, M. M. Collens, J. Webb, R. Duff, A. Kennedy, S. Knott, C.W. Bristoll, T.J. Brown, F.D. Ling, W.M. Betcher, W. Dynes. These were in a list from 1867 to 1884. Perhaps a few did not officiate at the Whites Station branch.

In the "Canada Christian Advocate" Hamilton, Mr. 26, 1873 Mr. Fansher refers to his success on the Southwold circuit. An item states that \$88 had been applied to the church debt at White's Station and refers to a special winter meeting in the chapel at White's Station which several persons attended and the membership revived. He later mentions a surprise gathering at Fingal where Mrs. Fansher received a purse of \$11.

At the time of Union of the two Methodist churches. Wesleyan and Episcopalian in 1884 White's Station church reports disappeared and not even the oldest member of the community remembers seeing it. If still in existence it would indeed be able to tell many a tale of pioneer days. It is regretful that we do not know or cannot obtain more of its history.

Many of the rural pioneer churches have disappeared for it is not now difficult to attend church in a near-by town or city. In the early days country churches played a great part in the lives of the pioneers. Not only did they meet there for worship but attended other gatherings there at a time when it was not possible to go far from their own community.

BEFORE RESTORATION BY R.R. WOMEN'S INST. AND  
SOUTHWOLD COUNCIL





AFTER RESTORATION BY R.R. WOMEN'S INST.

AND SOUTHWOLD COUNCIL 1967-68





## The Mellor or White's Station Cemetery

Just west of the Yarmouth-Southwold Township townline some four miles south of St. Thomas and a mile west of the Old Gravel Road now Highway 4 lies an old pioneer cemetery.

It is not a large burial ground, containing as it did less than 50 marked graves. However it lay for years in a truly neglected condition. Large locust trees had grown up, while wild rose bushes, shrubs, weeds and grass in a tangled mass gave it a most unkempt appearance. Then too sunken graves and fallen stones contributed further to the cemetery's dilapidated state.

The last resting place of the community's pioneers was indeed an eyesore. The renovation of the cemetery had for some time been discussed by members of the W.I. of River Road. In fact some of the women had met with the Township Council to find out what assistance they might receive from that source. Except for the cutting of the larger trees and shrubs, nothing further was accomplished until the W.I. decided that the restoration of this pioneer burial ground might be their centennial project.

It is perhaps unique that in the community there are no descendants or immediate relatives of those buried there and financial help from this source was not forthcoming. The council was again approached and a little later a cheque for \$500 was received from them.

In the spring of 1967 a bee to burn off the grass was held. Later in the summer the stones were lifted and moved to a central location in the cemetery to be later re-located in a cement enclosure. Murray Fulton with his tractor-lifter assisted by men of the neighborhood did the lifting of the heavier stones. Those assisting were members of the Curtis Campbell, H. Reiger, E. Reck, G. Beattie, F. Begg, W. Carter families.

Several of the stones had crumbled or cracked. A few had to be discarded but a few of the slightly broken ones were later repaired. A number were in a fair to good state of preservation. Mr. W. Pow Southwold Road Superintendent removed the irreparable markers and old footings.

Other renovated cemeteries were visited in order to get ideas as to the restoration of this one. Mr. Oscar Temple was finally engaged to do the work. The stones mostly of the slab type were placed inside around the walls of a cement enclosure and the three larger ones embedded in the inside cement floor. The work, costing the amount of our grant was finished in July.

A little later Fitcher Begg ploughed the land but found that the old tree stumps made it a most difficult job. In late August another bee was held. Dynamite was donated by the County Road Superintendent and Mr. Henry Reiger was in charge of this phase of the work. The stumps were dynamited and lifted in the same manner as had been the markers. J.H. McPherson took these stumps, iron railings and other debris to a fill east of the cemetery. Those assisting at this bee were members of the Curtis Campbell, Fulton, Begg, Beattie and Reck families. Lunch consisting of sandwiches, cookies, coffee and cold drinks were served the men on these occasions by some of the ladies of the R.R. W. Institute.



The cemetery has since been disced twice by Colin and Curtis Campbell. Some stumps remain to be moved and the ground is to be levelled, seeded and it is hoped some landscaping done in the spring of 1968.

In the restoration of the cemetery there is in a way revealed something of the hardships of a past era. There are recorded several children's deaths, possibly due to some disease for which we are now fortunate enough to have immunization. Too there were young people who had passed away at an early age, and of course there were others who after enduring the hardships of pioneer life had lived long enough to see some of their dreams fulfilled.

Some of the deceased were born in the 1700's. These included Catharine, wife of John Doan born 1785, died 1848. James Lawton born in England 1791, died 1873. Elizabeth Nicol born 1800, died 1890. Others were born in the early part of the 1800's and included. Robert Nicol born 1804, died 1878. John Wright born 1805, died 1889. John Mellor born 1809, died 1862. Marie wife of John Mellor born 1810, died 1861. William Clarke born 1814, died 1880. James Lawton born 1815, died 1862. Jean wife of William Clarke born 1818, died 1895. Abel Lawton born 1839, died 1922, the last internment in the cemetery.

Two Wright children aged 8 yr. and 1 yr. died in 1867 another daughter aged 2 yr. in 1855. Two Mellor children aged 5 mo. and 1 yr. died in the years 1862 and 1865. A Lawton child aged 1 yr. in 1831, A Dadson child in 1874 aged 7 mo. A Mitchell child in 1870 aged 24 days. Jessie Nicol in 1863 aged 18 yr. A Dadson boy aged 13 yr. Noel Mellor aged 13 yr. Mary Mellor Wilkinson aged 21.

On Thurs. evening May 30 1968 a bee was again held in the cemetery when more stumps of trees were taken out. Those assisting were Curtis Campbell, Fatcher and John Begg, Eli and Tim Reck. Gordon Beattie, James McPherson and Murray Fulton and Jim Fulton with a tractor lifter. Some levelling still remains to be done, to be followed by seeding.

During the summer of 1968 Mr. J. Hasiwar worked the cemetery land several times. In September Murray Fulton and Curtis Campbell sowed seed purchased at cost from Elgin Co. as well as spreading fertilizer donated by the same company. Mr. J. Hasiwar harrowed the plot after seeding.

In October 1968 the cemetery presented an appearance of which those who assisted in the work of renovation may well be proud. Shrubbery will be added in the spring of 1969.

1983 The River Road W.I. with funding from the Southwold council, keep the grass cut and trimmed. Mr. G. Vowels, Mr. J. Hasiwar, and Robert Veenstra have done the grass cutting and sprayed for weeds.

Head stones in Mellor cemetery

Mary wife of Samuel L. Wilkinson oldest daughter of John and Maria Mellor, kied 1855, aged 21 yrs.

Elizabeth, daughter of James and Ann Laughton , Oct. 13 - 1831, aged 1.

John Wright, died May 17, 1889 aged 84

Joseph Lawton died May 7, 1861, aged 27 years

Esther Wright, died March 3, 1886, aged 57.

Amelia, daughter of John and Emily Dadson died March 4, 1874, aged 7.

Charles Abner Dadson, son of John and Nancy died Apr. 7, 1875, aged 13.

Catharine, wife of John Doan died Feb. 25, 1848, aged 13. (63)

Barbara, caughter of Wm. and Elisa Mitchell died May 26, 1874 aged 24 days.

Laura daughter of John and Esther Wright, died Feb. 3 1855 aged 2

M. Althea, daughter of John and Esther Wright diede Oct. 15 1867 aged 8

Solomon A. son of John and esther Wright died Oct. 8 1867 aged 1

John and Esther Stockton aged 86.

James Lawton who died March 5 18 73 aged 82.

Abel Lawton, died May 25 1922. aged 83.

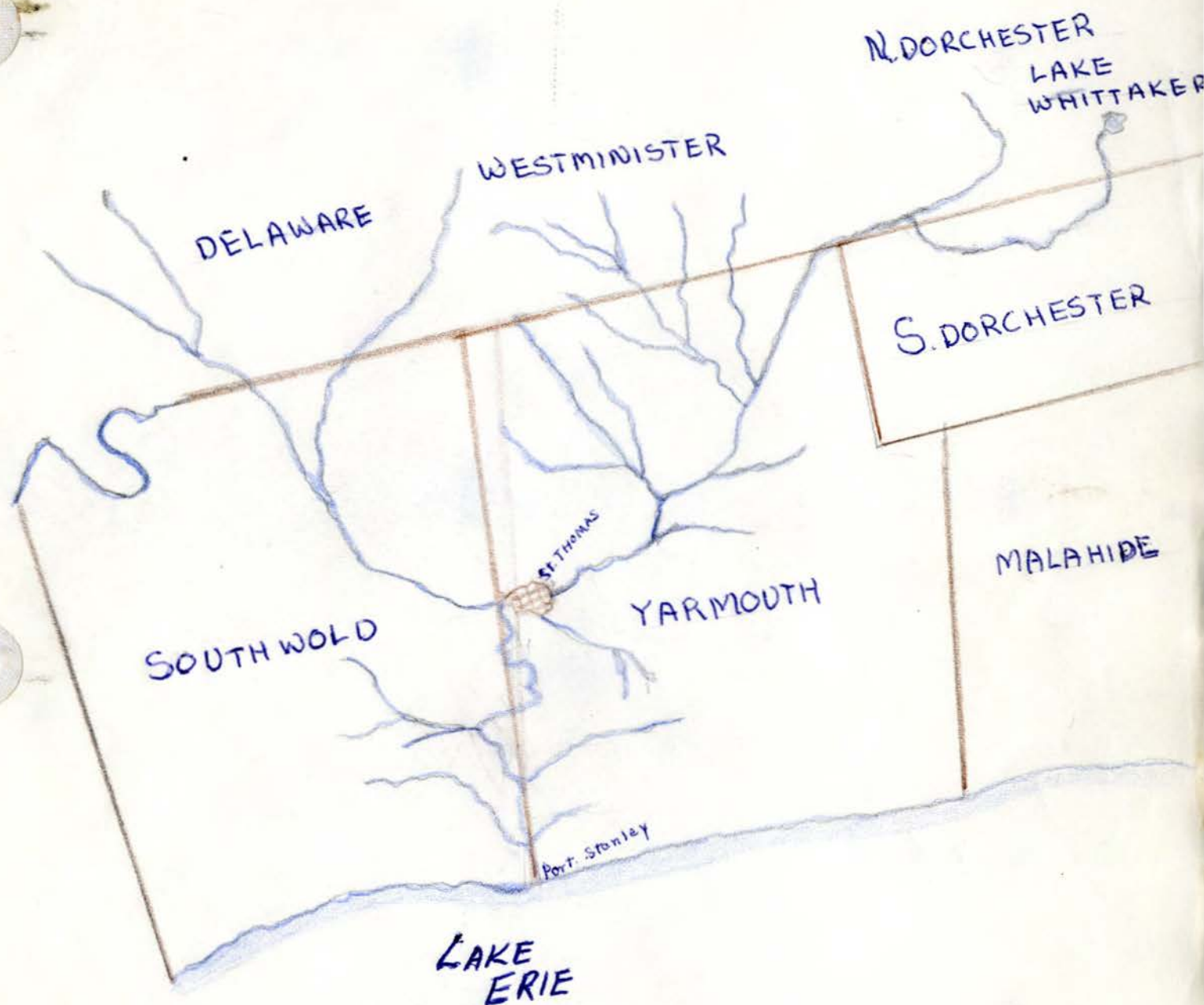
Jean wife of Wm. Clarke, died June 14. 1895 aged 77

Wm. Clarke died Sept 20 18 80 aged 66

Robert Nicol died July 2 1878 aged 74

Elizabeth Newl died May 31 1890 aged 90





## Kettle Creek

Throughout the years rivers have contributed much to a country's development and economy not only for transportation and a water supply to pioneer homes and livestock but as well for a source of water power and drainage. So has it been in Canada or more locally in this part of Ontario where the earliest settlements were along the many rivers and streams. Kettle Creek the comparatively small water way in our community has played its part in all these phases. Surely if it could talk it would tell a most fascinating and interesting story.

The great gullies, ravines, gorges, mountains, hills, rivers and lakes are a result of the mighty glaciers that swept down from the north ages ago. From the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific in Canada this upheaval is evident.

After the ice age, vegetation slowly returned and the land was once more habitable. It is not known for how long before the coming of the white man to this region that the Red Man lived here, ever moving from place to place seeking new hunting grounds and refuge from other tribes on the warpath. By rivers creeks and trails through the great forests they travelled. Later these same routes were followed by the first white explorers and settlers many of the trails eventually becoming roads and highways.

Through this region in 1793 came Governor Simcoe and his party including young Thomas Talbot. On their westward journey from Niagara to Detroit they found but the odd settler and a few Indians as the native neutrals had been practically annihilated by the Iroquois about one hundred and fifty years before. They found the country with the magnificent forests and rivers beautiful. Young Talbot decided to take up land in this region when he could return to do so. In 1801 after proceeding along Lake Erie he came to a point he called "Skitewaaba" presumably at Port Stanley at the mouth of the creek called Kettle.

It is recorded that probably in 1642 Fathers Breboeuf and Chaumont, Jesuit Missionaries crossed this stream on their way to a mission to the neutrals of this region for a map of 1650 shows a mission to the west of the present site of St. Thomas. Joliet saw the waters of Kettle Creek in 1669 for he left his boat in the harbour. La Salle, Tonté, Cadillac, Indians and French knew Kettle River Trails led inland from it. For a time the stream was known as Tonté. The Iroquois knew it as Kanagio the Ojibways Aukiksabee or Akikseebe. The French called it Riviere de Chaudiere, each meaning Kettle. Mrs. Jameson in writing of her trip through the Talbot settlement told Colonel Talbot that she didn't like the name but he said he thought it not worth while to change.

Different stories are told of the origin of the word Kettle. One is that an early settler found an Indian Kettle in its water, another that French explorers found a kettle at its mouth, another that an early settler lost a valuable potash kettle in it. Kettles were a prized possession in those days as they were used for many purposes.



To return to Colonel Talbot we learn that he was unable to obtain a land grant in Yarmouth Township north of the mouth of Kettle River so he proceeded in 1803 some miles west to the mouth of a smaller stream (later called Talbot creek) and there atop a cliff inaugurated his settlement which for some time grew slowly. A road from it was blazed eastward in 1804 by Col. Bostwick and surveyed in 1809 by Colonel Burwell to connect with the tiny settlement of Long Point on Lake Erie to the east.

Near where this road soon known as the Talbot Road crossed Kettle Creek some nine miles north of the Creek's mouth in 1810 a tiny settlement was begun. The first families that settled there knew that the clear pure water would supply their needs. They built their homes, the first ones but crude shanties. In 1817 the nucleus of a village was formed at Kettle Creek Crossing.

The creek as it flowed through the valley was soon to provide power for turning mill wheels when dams and mill races were completed. These mills provided the first industry for the settlements. Stirling was the name given to that part of the early community where Talbot Road crossed Kettle Creek. Kettle Creek Village was the name given to that part well up the Talbot St. Hill and Hog's Hollow to that district where the mills or Industrial Area was situated presently at Southwold St. and in the area of the Pollution Control Plant. Kettle Creek Village later became St. Thomas and included the village Stirling and Hog's Hollow.

In this latter Community were situated grist mills, Hampdin's ashery and Paul's distillery. Rapelji one of the very first settlers established grist mills on Mill Creek. The stones of this mill were brought by David Caughill from Catfish Creek as Kettle Creek stones apparently were not satisfactory. The Caughill family received an iron Kettle in exchange an appropriate payment those days. Besides the grist mills there was a carding mill owned by Mr. Freeman as well as several mills along Mill Creek. A dam in the vicinity of Elm St. created a mill pond which provided water for the Canada Southern now the New York Central Railroad. Kettle Creek was dammed at one time east of St. George St. bridge. The falling water turned the wheels in the flax mill operated by William Keith.

Downstream some three or four miles southwest of St. Thomas near the Fulton bridge in early times there was Conrads grist mill and a log mill run by Hugh and Adam Fulton. Lumber mostly walnut was taken to London from the mill to be used in the construction of furniture. There are still signs of the mill race and dam evident here. A woollen mill on Beaver Creek a tributary of Kettle Creek near Union was established in 1837 by John Thompson and operated by Joh Preffer who came to Canada in 1816. He was a born mechanic and built his own 96 spindle jenny and carding machine. The Earnshaws had a woollen and carding mill near Port Stanley. It was on a stream joining Kettle Creek from the west.

Before the era of steam, electric and atomic powered machinery we recognize what a part dammed streams and the resulting power of falling water did to save the pioneers much labour.



It might be mentioned here that Kettle Creek was the largest stream flowing into Lake Erie in the then County of Middlesex. Kettle was the only stream that might power a substantial mill as bottom lands could be flooded while the settler lived on higher adjacent grounds. And so these mills were certainly a factor in the development of the little community of Kettle Creek.

Kettle River or Creek has its origin in small Lake Whittaker situated in North Dorchester two or three miles east of the Village of Harrietsville which is on No. 17 Highway north of Aylmer. The creek flows westward almost parallel to the boundary between north and south Dorchester. Directly north of this is a height of land from which streams run north to the River Thames. Lake Whittaker is approximately thirty five miles or so from Port Stanley where Kettle Creek joins Lake Erie. However in the stream's winding course it has far greater mileage. After the stream pursues its course through Dorchester it crosses Highway 74 at Belmont. As it then flows southwestward it is joined by several streams some of which have their origin in Westminster Township even from a point farther north than Lake Whittaker.

The creek enters St. Thomas from the North. The Waterworks Reservoir established in 1874 and enlarged since with a higher dam becomes here a part of its system. At the time of writing (1967) there is a controversy over whether the water from this source or from the newly constructed pipe line from Lake Erie to the Ford plant will in the future supply St. Thomas. In connection with the waterworks reservoir beautification of the surrounding area was begun years ago, resulting in a park with rustic bridges, lagoons, evergreens, flowers, one of the beauty and recreation spots of Ontario.

At the westerly limits of St. Thomas Kettle Creek is joined by Dodd's Creek which flows in from the northwest through the north part of Southwold Township. Tributaries flowing down from Westminster and Delaware Townships join Dodd's Creek in the neighborhood of Payne's Mills.

Mill Creek so called from the early mills established along its course has its origin near the fourth concession of Yarmouth and joins Kettle Creek near the Pollution Control Plant, Pinafore Lake is part of its system. Following a winding course across the city this small stream pursuing its course in the valley below the wooded and recently in some instances landscaped hillsides has not only in pioneer days provided water power for mills but of late has contributed to the city's scenic beauty. Pinafore Park bordering Pinafore Lake was landscaped and opened to the public in May 23, 1903, the time of the Talbot Centennial celebrations. The park has been gradually extended and beautified becoming a very attractive recreation centre.

As Kettle Creek flows southward to the lake smaller creeks and tiny streams from ravines and gullies swell its waters. At Fulton bridge, at Union and Near Port Stanley sizeable creeks join the everwidening stream. However the creek is not navigable except for some distance from its mouth. In 1893 Charles Oakes Ermatinger newly elected member of the Legislature for East Elgin and later to become Judge Ermatinger secured a survey for a canal from Port Stanley to St. Thomas through the Kettle Creek valley.



But nothing came of the plans. The depth of the stream for most of the year is not sufficient for boating except in the stream near the mouth.

Following the survey of the townships when roads and farms were laid out and settlers moved in it was necessary for them to go from farm to farm or from farm to village. In many cases this was not too much of a problem. They walked or went on horseback and would ford streams or use some sort of crudely constructed bridge for a part of the year at least. However when wagons or buggies became common some sort of fill or more permanent bridge had to be constructed. These bridges were made of logs and rough lumber while the approaches to them left much to be desired. In some cases there were very steep hills on a surveyed road leading to the creek and on this account no bridge was built and the road re-routed. In our neighborhood and along Kettle Creek valley there are several instances of this.

It might be interesting as you motor through the country to speculate on what the earliest bridges in any particular location may have been like.

In the city there are many fills and bridges where the creek and its tributaries have pursued their course. Over the Mill creek is the fine Wilson Avenue bridge, while at the western limits of the city near the Highway Junction is a new concrete one on the Fingal road and between Talbot Road and Farley Hill are more bridges. These two latter ones on Highway 4 formerly the old London and Port Stanley gravel road were not built as early as some as the road ascended Farley Hill meeting the other part of the road after curving around the brow of the hill and descending again. In the flats below were the early mills as before mentioned. Another bridge crosses Kettle Creek on Sourhwoild St. Formerly Mill St. The road there upon leaving the bridge went directly up the hill and led to the present River Road community. In 1911 the horseshoe hill was built making the ascent a little less difficult. The early road southward is said to have been in the flats in the valley of the creek. Adam Robbins who came to Canada from England in 1836 and who later purchased Lot 6. East River Road in 1844 states the East River Road was not opened then and that in the following winter he logged the road and three years later built or helped build the first Robbins bridge, the timber having been gotten out by a bee. This bridge is still of narrow construction. Downstream from the Robbins bridge is the Fulton bridge where the creek makes a 90 degree turn. It is quite evident that Kettle Creek here in the not distant past pursued a different course. Nearer the bottom of the hill immediately below the road hill leading to the valley. Much piling has been done here as well as cement embankments and abutments to keep the stream on its present course. As has been mentioned before in an article about Indians native to this region a portage route from Kettle Creek to the Thames probably existed years ago here.

Nearer Port Stanley a large bridge crosses the creek near the Meek residence while some distance south of that there is another span on the road leading from the Union Road to No 4 Highway. Over the creek in the village of Port Stanley a Government lift bridge was built some years ago. This is one of several bridges erected at this point, one of them having been a swing bridge over the swamp land in pioneer days.



St. Thomas has for very many years been known as the railroad city, the economy of the city dependent to a large extent on this industry. The construction of the railroads entering and passing through the city necessitated the building of several bridges as Kettle creek and its tributaries wound their way about and through the town. The first railroad to be built was the London and Port Stanley in 1855 and bridges were required for the line over the Kettle Creek and the valleys. The Canada Southern later called the Michigan Central and now recently the New York Central built its line in 1872 and spanned the long valley and creek to the west of the city by a wooden trestle bridge 1352 feet long and 90 feet high. Over the ravine to the North the Great Western now the C.N.R. built a bridge a wooden structure 900 feet long and 80 feet high. About a mile south of the early N.Y.C. bridge the Lake Erie and Detroit Railway later the Pere Marquette presently the C. and O. erected a bridge to span the creek and valley at this point. All these former structures of wooden trestles have been replaced by steel some reinforced by cement.

Near Belmont there has recently been constructed on Highway 74 over Kettle Creek a fine new concrete bridge and as a Centennial project a park costing around \$4000 was completed this last year, another \$4500 bridge is being constructed east of Belmont while plans for a \$195,000 dam two miles east of Belmont has been proposed for recreation and conservation. This is in charge of the Kettle Creek Conservation authority.

The building and upkeep of all these bridges over Kettle Creek and its tributaries have been a great expense to the municipalities and railroads involved.

At Port Stanley at the rivers mouth early settlers disembarked from sailing vessels and followed trails or the stream to homes in this new land. What an adventure it must have been.

Here too in pioneer days Indians drew up their canoes or paddled upstream to other destinations. Now many small craft mostly motorized anchor there or gaily take a turn up the river before speeding to the open lake. A marina to the west of the creek is now providing more room for pleasure craft.

A welcome addition to the frugal fare of the Indians and pioneers were the fish caught by anglers along the rivers bank. In later times farmers used seines or spears to pick suckers off the rapids in spring. Along the creek a day's fishing off or near bridges is still an outing for some. However the increasing pollution of the stream is presently of concern to fisherman as well as farmers who use its water for their livestock.

Before the era of indoor rinks the frozen waters of Kettle creek provided skaters with many an outdoor area for skating and hockey Except in particularly cold weather the patches of ice cleared of accumulated snow were not too safe and many were the warnings given of a possible break through the ice. There are many stories told of those who had the misfortune to plunge into the icy waters below and there have been a few tragic results.



Prior to the making of artificial ice and later the appearance of electric refrigerators, ice was cut into blocks and upon being removed from the creek or pond was stored in ~~was~~ dust in ice houses. This was sold in summer by those engaged in this work to customers for their ice boxes. The supply was replenished at least twice a week in warm weather. Ice blocks were cut from Pinafore Lake.

In the early history of St. Thomas we find that many fires at times wiped out entire blocks. The first waterworks was established at the foot of New Street and the supply of water helped in the fire situation.

Deep pools in Kettle creek provided spots for swimming. City boys often spent their leisure hours there while country lads gathered at the end of a busy day in the "old swimming hole."

We are told that early pioneer women often washed their clothing in the waters of the creek rather than carry the water.

Perhaps no story of Kettle Creek would be complete unless mention were made of the fact that a fine source of gravel lies in and around the stream's bed and in its former bed. Much gravel has been taken adjacent to the creek at Fulton bridge. This gravel is carried along in spring freshets and builds up on already deep deposits. In early days roads hereabouts were logged but later gravel was spread upon them. Creek gravel was easily obtained and suitable. For many years it was pitched into a wagon box holding a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cord the hauled to the road and pitched off where needed. This operation was termed "road work" and many a farmer hoped to pay his taxes from the payment for this work. Later gravel trucks and modern equipment took over. Gravel is mixed with cement for highway construction and building. Much of the gravel used for the new western approach to T. Thomas came from or near the river bed near the Fulton bridge.

There are some examples of stones from the creek bed, unused in constructing foundations for houses, barns, mills. In this community creek stones were used by the McIntyre brothers in their stone gateway and are also in the barn foundations at the same place and at the old Adam Fulton barn and doubtless in other locations.

For most of the year Kettle creek is a quiet stream rather narrow, and shallow enough to expose the stones on the rapids as the water trickles over them. However in a spring freshet it may become very turbulent and even terrifying. As more trees are cut there is less leafy decaying vegetation to hold the moisture and when it rains the run-off quickly finds its way to the creek. Melting snows add to the volume and flooding results. We may recall exciting floods at Southwold St. bridge or at Fulton bridge where muddy shirling waters threatened the road bed. An ice jam is often created in spring at the mouth of Kettle Creek as the rushing waters and ice blocks endeavour to reach the lake.

A Kettle Creek conservation authority has been set up to deal with conservation and recreation facilities in the Creeks watershed. Some reforestation has been done north of the city. As population increases there is a real challenge to get rid of refuse. There are many sources of contamination, run off from fertilized fields, sprays, raw sewage, by products of



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industrial waste, plants etc. We who live near Kettle Creek realize what is happening to the stream and we hope that in the near future the problem of making our waterways more pleasurable will be solved.

Poets have written of the beauties of meandering streams, in spring the sights and sounds of early freshets, in summer the sound of water gurgling over rapids or splash of fish or frog in shady pools, in autumn the beauty of multi colored trees in the creek valley and in winter the ice bound wxpanses of water.

With the possible solution of pollution may we not hope to see the valley of the Kettle Creek converted into parkland.

Mindful of the extra leisure hours enjoyed by those who work nowadays much has been done throughout the country to provide facilities for recreation.

The Grand River Conservation authority proposes a 7000 tract of land from Kitchener to Lake Erie to be developed for pleasure or at least left in its natural state. Perhaps in the future as the city grows we may see parkland developed in Kettle valley north and southward from the city.

Clara Fulton



## River Road Literary Society

In rural communities before the advent of radio and television, young people and old enjoyed providing their own entertainment. They gathered at one another's homes for dances, parties, including crokinale and sugar off parties, oyster suppers, etc.

The church in the neighborhood was too, often the centre of social activities, tea meetings, box socials, garden parties. However in this particular community there was no church and for many years the school building was used for many enjoyable gatherings by different groups.

We have no records of meetings except for the Sunday School of community gatherings being held in the school house prior to 1900.

However in the years, possibly from 1909 to 1911 there was a very active Literary and debating Society. Two teachers, Miss Delia Jennings and Miss Eva Haines are mentioned in the accounts of meetings written up for the St. Thomas paper.

Copy of Clippings re. R.R. Literary Society- by Alice Dunn Knight

Another interesting meeting was held last Thur. evening by the R.R. Literary Society, the evening being devoted to science. After arrangements for the next meeting had been made and special business disposed of the program was as follows. "Reading of the Chronicle," Miss Alice Dunn song "Where the River Shannon flows" by the Glee Club. Address "How man has conquered nature" by Adam Fulton. Violin duet by Mr. E. O'Brien and Mr. Neil Campbell. "A talk about the stars." Mrs. F. Corman. essay "Domestic Science" Mrs. J.N. Spurr. essay "Man" by Albert H. Ward. "Nutrition of plants" Miss E. Haines, "Natural Phenomena" F. Thompson. Song by the Glee Club. The meeting closed by singing "The King" On Thurs, evening March 21 the Civic Club of St. Thomas will assist in the program.

### A Choice Program

The fourth meeting of the season of R.R. Literary Society was held Tue, evening and was a decided success. Chairman's address Frank Thompson, Song by the Glee Club, Recitation "The Irishman and the owl" by Wellington Francis. An essay "Literary Success" by Miss Eva Haines. Reading, Miss Alice Dunn. Solo Mrs. J.N. Spurr. Reading Albert Ward. Recitation Miss Elva Chaplow. Song "Down by the Old Mill Stream" by the Glee Club. Violin duet Messrs Neil Campbell and Ed O'Brien accompanied by Miss Edna Parker. Reading Frank Thompson. The proceeds from the box social which followed were \$10.00. The next meeting March 12 will be devoted to science.

### Mock Trial

There was a large number present Tue. Evening at the final meeting of the R.R. Literary Society. The feature of the program was a "Mock Trial" a breach of promise suit. This case caused no end of amusement from the empanelling of the seven jurors until their verdict was rendered.

The first number on the program was the reading of the Chronicle by Mrs. Frank Corman. Then followed a solo by Lila Frances, reading Miss Belle McDiarmid, Fingal, violin solo Edward O'Brien, reading Miss Smith London. Solo Mrs. J.H. Spurr St. Thomas. Solo Claude Ward.

Those who took part in the trial were, Chief Justice Magee Wellington Frances, Lawyer Hellmuth for the plaintiff, Frank Thompson, Lawyer Johnson for the defendant Claude Ward. Miss Samantha Wiggins (Plaintiff) Miss Alice Dunn, Si Saubins (defendant) Samuel Fulton.