

### THE ALBIN JAY HOUSE

The white brick house on lot 5, King St. north is believed to have been built in 1892 by the late Albin Jay. The masonry was in charge of the late Harry Smale who built the brick houses at that time throughout the district. A Mr. Ellwood of St. Thomas was the builder. Mr. Jay, who operated the saw mill in the village had saved for many years the pieces of choice walnut. These he seasoned with tender care and used for downstairs parlour, dining-room, front hall, steps and newel post, as well as kitchen and bathroom trim. The bathroom gave him much satisfaction as it was one of the first in the district. The lead pipes conveying the water to a tank suspended from the attic floor were conspicuously fastened to a walnut trim. Outside the house at the front walk, Mr. Jay used his old mill wheels as steps. These are still used. On top of the house was an iron railing around a small deck on the slate roof. As this was the highest spot in the village, people frequently climbed a ladder from the upstairs to observe the view. Mr. Jay sold the house in 1898 to Wm. Kerley. In 1902 the house was bought by Joseph Vincent and in 1909 to the late Dr. G.A. Shannon. In 1913, Dr. Shannon's father-in-law, the late Wm. Cole took over the house when Dr. Shannon moved to St. Thomas. Dr. Lee Elliott bought the house in 1916 and at this time of writing, (1955) still continues to live there.



## SCHOOLEY

Asa Schooley and wife, Louisa, and son, Henry, came from Welland County in 1840 and assisted Reuben Haight for two years, then bought a clergy reserve - Lot 24, Concession 7. He put up a twelve foot shanty in the woods and lived there until he built a log house on the south side of the ravine and east side of driveway that leads to the frame house that he erected in 1852.

When his daughter, Rebecca, married Edward Schooley in 1868, they took over the farm. The latter had formerly clerked in the Co-operative store, opposite Mr. Eakins' in Sparta.

Asa Schooley used to go on horseback to Toronto once a year when paying for this clergy reserve land.

He sold the place to Frank Ryckman in 1888 and sold to George Haight in 1907. The Haight family still live on this place in 1949.

A farm situated on the old Bostwick Road - parts of Lots 22 and 23 - Concession 5, is known to have belonged to David Mills and lived on by different families, - the Levertons, Miltons, John McDowell and his daughter, Mary, and her husband, Asa J. Wood, from whom Henry Schooley bought it in 1869.

The original house was a story and a half frame building painted red. The studding on the outside walls was four inches wide and bricked in between the studs and boarded on the outside and lathed and plastered on the inside. The present red brick house was built in 1899 just in front of the old house. Walnut timbers taken out of the barn were used in finishing the new house inside. In 1907 Henry Schooley's son, Frank, took over the farm and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schooley went to live with their daughter, Mrs. Elston Prior, on the Ephraim Haight place.

Later, Frank Schooley sold the part of the farm on the south side of the road to Mr. Claude Smith.





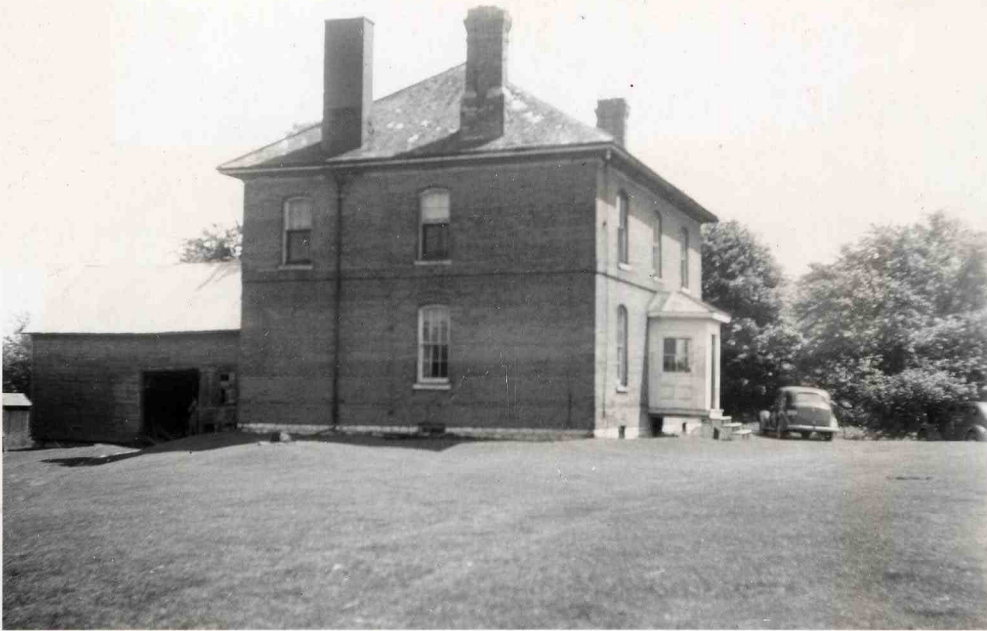
Home of Asa Schooley  
Built in 1852.



Built by David Mills  
about 1830

Known for many years  
as the Henry Schooley place.





Home of David Roberts built in 1862.



Barn on the Robert's farm built before 1826.



Canby - Donnelly Place 1850



## ROBERTS

David Roberts, a native of Wales, came in 1854 and purchased 400 acres of land south-east of Sparta from the Court of Chancery. As it was necessary to have a right-of-way to his property, 100 acres to the west- in Yarmouth - were also purchased. On it was a log house and two small barns. On May 18, 1854, Thomas Roberts came to this property and boarded with John Gloin, who lived in a log house on the east farm. The barn still stands - built before 1826. In 1862 the present brick house was built requiring 110,000 bricks which were made on the farm. The stone for the foundation was brought from Kingston in sailing vessels, as ballast, and wheat was taken back in their place. The woodwork, including doors, windows and fireplaces, was all made by hand. The sugar bush has been tapped for about one hundred years. One night, when Thomas was returning from the bush, an owl lifted his beaver cap and dropped it. Pigeons were so numerous that when flying it was like a heavy cloud going over. Probably an Indian battle took place in one of the fields as many Indian weapons were found. These were given to the St. Thomas Historical Society.

David Roberts named his home "Glen Avon Hall" as it was much like a place by that name in Wales. This home is still owned by the Roberts family.

## THE DONNELLY PLACE

Amos Canby owned this place about 1850, and William Yoe sold it to John W. Scott in 1878 - witnessed by John Calland (druggist) and John A. Eakins ( a commissioner for taking affidavits in and for the County of Elgin). There was a cheese factory on this place and Mr. Scott sold it to George and Charles McCullough in 1907, and in 1911 the McCullough brothers sold it to J. T. Donnelly. In December of the same year the old factory burned and in the spring of 1912 a new factory was built on the same site where it stands in 1950. In 1905 Charles J. Donnelly made the cheese for John Scott. He made the first that was ever made in Sparta on Saturday nights. In 1905 he made 70 tons, and in 1906 - 75 tons. John Donnelly made 125 tons in 1915. Mr. Donnelly was the last to use the cheese factory. Robert Doxtater and William Foster purchased this place in 1947 and sold it to Mr. Wallace Little in 1948 where he is engaged in gardening and general farming.

In 1955 the former cheese-factory being converted into a cannery by the Little family, is a busy center.

This year the Littles grew four acres of tomatoes with an average yield of 11 tons per acre. The daily output of canned goods is from 500 to 800 cans, which are on sale in many stores in Ontario.



## LEWIS

The Lewis family were early settlers, having erected in 1828 a beautiful home on the lake road on a 200 acre property extending from 1st Concession to the lake. This home was about one mile west of Barnams' Gulley on the east side of Lewis' Gulley. The house was unfortunately destroyed by fire around 1900. This Lewis house had twenty rooms, ten bedrooms - not only accommodation for the family of six sons and three daughters, but for travellers and guests to whom the home was open with pioneer hospitality. Floor beams, wainscoting and staircases were fashioned of black walnut. This homestead later passed from Barnabus to his son Lyman, whose daughter Ella Lewis was once Secretary of St. Thomas Historical Society. Out of respect of the oft expressed wish of her father, she erected a simple stone in the Friends' Cemetery on the grave of Lyman Lewis' friend Joshua Doan, who was executed as a rebel, but considered by the Lewis' a patriot.

Mr. Barnabas Lewis came from White Hall in New York in 1828 and settled on Lot 18 - 2nd Concession. His son, Asabel, was editor of "The Liberal" published in St. Thomas.

For the first time in the history of Upper Canada it was a grave misdemeanour for a farmer, especially if he was a Radical or an American, to own any sort of fire-arm. Searching in settlers' houses for muskets, pistols and rifles kept some of the soldiery occupied for many weeks. Miss Ella Lewis of St. Thomas has said that after several farmers of South Yarmouth had had their fowling-pieces declared contraband of war and confiscated, some of them took their guns to her grandfather's house on the Lake Road south of Sparta and hid them there. In this house, the walls of an upper room were covered only with lath, some of which the men removed; they then hung their guns on cords inside the partition and made the wall appear as before. When a body of the militia came in a few days to inquire about the owner's gun, they found him working at a cobbler's bench. As they began the search, he went on calmly mending shoes, pausing only to remark, "Well, I haven't seen my old shot-gun for a long time. I hope you can find it for me." The soldiers hoped so too, but everybody was apparently disappointed after the house had been ransacked. One of them, Lyman Lewis, Barnabas' son, was unable to find a secure hiding place for his gun. The elder Lewis came before the commission and swore that six men commanded by John Burwell took Lyman's musket worth twelve dollars.





## YARWOOD

Mr. Henry Yarwood came from England early in the century. He first went to St. Louis and New Orleans - then New York State where there were some relatives living. Finally he came to Toronto, which was then but a muddy little village called Little York. In 1821 he heard of a Quaker settlement in this vicinity, and, being a Friend, he walked through the woods following an Indian trail from Little York to a place called South Yarmouth Corners, afterwards known as Sparta. He carried a gun and an axe over his shoulder to protect himself from wolves and bears.

He clerked for a time in a little store two miles north of The Corners where Earl Burton's house now stands. Later he set up business for himself on the main south-east corner of Sparta. He owned and operated the first store ever kept in Sparta. He purchased this lot from Hiram Kipp in 1838, off the north west corner of his farm and built a small store. In 1834 Henry Yarwood was one of a committee that named Sparta.

After selling the village property, he purchased a farm, Lot 24, Concession 2 and at the age of fifty he married and they had one son James Yarwood, who remained on the farm his father purchased in 1834. As he came to manhood he married Ursula Turrill, a sister of Isaac Turrill Sr. They had several children. Those who lived in this vicinity were Pearl, who married William B. Roberts and Florence, who married Mr. Witty, who taught in several schools. In this section he taught in the East, also in Coles' schools. A son, Edward Yarwood, lived in the neighborhood. In later years Mr. James Yarwood married Etta Gunn, a daughter of Daniel Gunn of the old Doan homestead.