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Payne's Mills WI Opens ^{March 1} New Community Hall

PAYNE'S MILLS (Staff).—A proud moment in the history of the Payne's Mills Women's Institute was yesterday afternoon's official opening of their \$12,500 Institute Hall. The building, which replaces the former hall whose removal was necessary owing to the widening of No. 3 Highway, is a split-level, and will serve as a centre for community activity. It is of cement block construction, and the auditorium and stage, which are finished in butternut panelling with hardwood floors, occupy the main floor. The cloak rooms and wash rooms are on this level, too, while the lower floor houses the kitchen and dining room.

To Mrs. Anna Kelly, a charter member and past president of the Institute, went the honor of cutting the gold and blue ribbon to officially open the building. Rev. George A. Shields of Talbotville United Church offered the prayer of dedication, and the flag was presented by Mrs. Albert Auckland, W. I. secretary.

Mrs. William Meek, president, accepted the key to the building from F. N. Gillard, Port Stanley, who was the contractor. Roy Jewell was chairman for the program.

the war years; the Centennial celebration and the raising \$2,000 for a county scholarship and of the establishment of Elgin's Pioneer Museum, which was made a reality chiefly by the efforts of W. I. members.

Bringing greetings were Warden Charles Phillips, from the County of Elgin; Southwold Reeve Farnel Nimmo; Mrs. Mervin Hicks, board member of the F. W. I. O.; Mrs. Wilfred Keays, London Convention Area president; Mrs. J. D. Galbraith, Elgin County W. I. president; Mrs. Kennedy, East Elgin W. I. president and Mrs. E. S. Down, West Elgin W. I. president.

Mrs. Ralph Auckland, Talbotville, sang a solo. She was accompanied by Mrs. George Clinton. Two vocal numbers were contributed by the Wallace town W. I. triple trio, directed by Mrs. Lewis Small. Mrs. John Penhale of Yarmouth Glen W. I. was pianist for the afternoon.

A social hour followed the program, when members of neighboring institutes assisted in serving tea.

NAMED QUALITIES

Mrs. J. R. Fitcher, past president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, addressed the nearly 200 persons, including the pupils of S. S. 7. She tendered her personal congratulations to the group, and in her remarks, enumerated and enlarged upon the qualities that make W. I. members so successful in their undertakings.

These she saw as integrity; putting first things first; industry; enthusiasm and ardent zeal. She briefly sketched the history of Elgin County Women's Institutes and spoke of

ST. THOMAS BEARS HIS NAME



HON. COLONEL THOMAS TALBOT

Born, 1771; Died, 1853.

Founder of the Talbot settlement and for whom St. Thomas was named, although no one ever accused the Colonel of being a saint. Talbot street is also named in his honor.

er and glazier, one tinsmith, one surveyor, two bank agencies (Montreal and Bore)—principal tavern, Ivors.

This was in 1846—Four years later (1850-1) the Township of Yarmouth built the old Town Hall, which did good service for a half century.

In 1852 St. Thomas became incorporated and the population numbered 1,300. About the same time a portion of the County of Middlesex was set apart as a new county with St. Thomas as its capital, and out of compliment to the Earl of Elgin (Governor-General 1847-1854), it was called "Elgin."

The first meeting of the new County Council was held in the Town Hall, April 15, 1852, and David Parish represented the town as its first reeve. A year later (1853) the Court House was built. Progress was slow, as population in 1860 was 1,700 and strange as it may appear, the

first railway (London & Port Stanley), built in 1856, did more harm than good.

Railways Cause Rapid Increase.

In 1870 the agitation in favor of the Canada Southern Railway reached its climax and the Great Western, fearing the competition of the new line, surveyed the Loop line, and it seemed as if it was to be two roads or none, for if either withdrew neither would have been built, and the construction of these lines of railway infused a new life and energy that no other town in Canada has ever equalled. From 1870 to 1876 the population increased from 1,800 to 6,000. In 1879 it was nearly 8,000, and it was a task for municipal government to keep pace with such growth.

In 1874, the first waterworks was constructed at a cost of \$25,600 for

fire protection only. The same year the gas works were built by private company at a cost of \$65,000.

In 1878, the first street railway company was incorporated, and on July 1, 1879, the bobtail horse cars were plodding the length of Talbot street.

On May 24, 1878, the corner stone of Alma College was well and truly laid by Hon. Adam Crooks, then Minister of Education. Churches kept pace with the rapid onward march and public school accommodation was a problem for ward schools, as soon as built, were too small for the number of children to attend.

The Credit Valley, built in 1880-1, from Toronto to St. Thomas, soon passed into the hands of the Canadian Pacific. The Lake Erie, from the west is now controlled by the Pere Marquette and will be extended eastward to Niagara in the near future, forming a system as great as the Michigan Central. The Loop Line built by the Great Western, is now part of the Wabash, through line from Kansas and the south to New York. The Canada Southern, now Michigan Central, have erected mammoth workshops, employing hundreds of men, and is today one of the city's best assets.

A Progressive City.

The extensive additions and improvements to the waterworks system, the new Y. M. C. A. building, the latest models of public schools, the proposed new vocational-high school, the Memorial Hospital and the many new and prospering industries stamp this among the progressive wide-awake cities of Ontario.

St. Thomas now boasts of being one of the most beautiful cities in the Dominion. Thousands of dollars have been spent on street improvements, the Horticultural Society and private citizens have made beautiful the boulevards and homes. The appearance of the city today reflects the prosperity, the contentedness of its citizens.

HAD BEEN WARNED

There are said to be few wittier after-dinner speakers in the British cabinet than Mr. J. R. Clymes. At a public banquet recently, at which Lord Desborough presided, he convulsed his hearers with a story about two laborers at a gasworks. Both men were engaged in wheeling coke, and one of them discharged two barrow loads to every one by his mate. The foreman observed this, and said to the less energetic laborer: "Your mate is doing twice as much work as you." He received the delightfully naive reply: "Well, you shouldn't blame me for that. I've told him about it already."

ELGIN'S HISTORY.

Sketches- ----- prepared for The JOURNAL'S History competition.

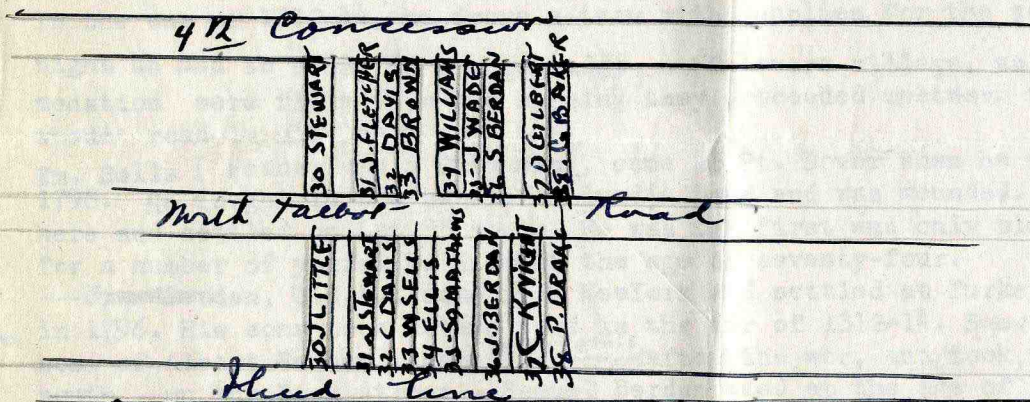
Dec. 5, 1896.

SCHOOL SECTION NO. 7 SOUTHWOLD.

By Ernest C. Gilbert.

The facts for this paper were collected by Miss Louie Gilbert who died early in November, 1895, before it was completed.

While the land in school section No. 7 north of the fourth concession, Southwold, was uninhabited by man, the lots along the "north branch of Talbot road" were gradually being settled by descendants of the United Empire Loyalists and other immigrants. The names and lots of these settlers can be seen in map 1 below.



one lot contained 200 acres. MAP 1.
How and why the people prospered: ----- 1 1/4 miles long.

These settlers, when they first inhabited the country, having no means to build houses, erected rude shanties of logs. As stoves and chimneys were not thought of, they had to use fireplaces above which a large hole in the roof allowed the smoke to escape. After living in those huts or shanties a short time, these people, encouraged by prosperity, began to erect log houses with chimneys, which were considered quite a luxury. Later on these were replaced by good frame and brick houses such as exist at the present time.

The forests were very thick with ash, birch, maple, walnut, oak etc., thus requiring a great deal of labor to clear the land, but when cleared it proved very fertile. The timber was valueless, as everybody could get all the wood they required by simply cutting it, therefore the wood was piled in heaps and burned. The lye from these ashes was put in large caldron kettles, weighing about 500 pounds, and boiled to make black salts. This was sold and shipped away to make potash.

To prove the fertility of the soil, two heads of wheat were found on David Gilbert's farm containing 163 & 165 grains respectively. Wheat was often sold for 50 cents and oats for 10 cents per bushel. To get granulated and brown sugar was impossible, so maple sugar, which was made from the sap of the many maple trees, had to be used.

Thread was so scarce that the people ~~used~~ often had to use strings of the basswood bark to mend their clothes.

The settlers had to carry their grist or take their oxen and the waggon which supplied the neighborhood, with his load, to mill about sixty miles away near Port Ryerse. Some of them would have a stone or a block of wood hollowed out like a bowl, in which they would pound their grain to a coarse meal, (bran, shorts and flour all going together.)

As game was abundant people were supplied with meat as well as being paid a bounty for the heads of the fiercer animals such as bears, wolves and lynx. These animals were nearly always trapped as the old flint-lock gun made hunting very unsuccessful. Beavers were not extinct at this time; even now there are places which show where

these industrious little animals had built their dams across the stream. In the spring and fall of the year the sky was often darkened by the dense flocks of wild pigeons passing over. Nets which were set to catch them often contained from twenty-five to one hundred pigeons. In the spring the many small streams swarmed with fish, thus supplying the settlers with a change of diet.

In a few years all the lots along the Back Street (north branch of Talbot street) were quickly taken up. David Gilbert one of the first settlers settled on lot 37. He lived only about two years on his place till his shanty, clothing and all provisions belonging to him and his family were burned. As it was in the fall of the year they had to live two weeks on hickory nuts and pounded corn; then they returned to Long Point about sixty miles distant. In the early summer of the following year 1818 they returned to their farm which they drew from Colonel Talbot.

To show his respect for him, Colonel Talbot kept his lot for him during his absence at Long Point.

In the war of 1812-14, he drove a team with supplies for the soldiers. One cold winter's night he had to sleep in a hogshead at Delaware village, as all the places of accommodation were filled. In the morning they proceeded westward to Battle Hill on Longwoods road in Middlesex.

Wm. Sells (Pennsylvania Dutchman), came to Pt. Dover when he was ten years of age, in 1798. He fought in the battle of Lundys Lane and was wounded. After the war he came here and settled on Lot 33 south. He was the first and only blacksmith in this part for a number of years. He died at the age of seventy-four.

Albert Berdan ~~Jonathan~~ Berdan, U.E.L., came from New York and settled at Turkey Point, near ^{LONG POINT} ~~Pt. Dover~~ in 1796. His sons took active part in the war of 1812-14. Samuel and ~~Jacob~~ ^{Jacob} Berdan sons of Albert Berdan, came ^{here for this} after the war, and took up lots 36 north and 36 south, on the Back street. Samuel Berdan died at the age of sixty-six, after a lingering illness of thirty years. Jacob Berdan died when he was eighty-seven years of age. About the year 1858, while Isaac Freeborn and Francis Berdan, sons of Samuel Berdan, were digging in a low marshy place on their ^{father's} farm, lot 32 north, they found some large bones of some huge animal. Its teeth were as large as a common brick, two tusks or horns, eight inches across at the base, tapering to a point in a semi-circle. measuring seven feet; thigh bones, a jaw bone, and several other bones were found. Where did this animal come from, and when did he live here? These bones were sold to a museum at Niagara Falls. On the 5th of April 1862, Isaac Freeborn and his brother Samuel, left for the gold fields in British Columbia. They travelled by rail to St. Paul, Minnesota, from there to Ft. Garry by Indian Trail, thence west to Ft. Edmonton with Indian guides. After leaving here they passed through the Rocky Mountains to the Fraser ~~valley~~ River, then down it to Cariboo district. It took them ~~nine months~~ and nine days to complete their journey. Shortly after they arrived ~~there~~ Isaac F. Berdan was seized with mountain fever and died, after a short illness ~~and was~~ buried ~~in~~ in Cariboo district. His only son A. Berdan, resides at Frome ~~Southwold~~.

Charles Knight an ~~early~~ settler, was in war of 1812-14 ~~and~~ was taken ~~prisoner by the Americans at~~ Sqaw Island, Niagara River. He was marched at the point of the bayonet to Green Bush, New York State. After the war he was liberated. In 1818 he drew lot 37 south, where he lived the greater part of his life. He was also a great hunter.

Jonathan Wade, a great sailor, came to this part about 1818 and drew lot 35 north. He being a ship carpenter, built a ship in 1828 on his farm for Mr. Smith, to move his family to River St. Clair.

The boat was loaded on a waggon, taken to Byron, and launched on the river Thames. Joseph Little ^{hatter} by trade, came from Niagara District, and took up lot 30 South. He died at the age of seventy five.

The above six settlers lived and died on the lots they drew from Col. Talbot.

Squire Mathews, a Welshman, came to this country about 1818, and settled on lot 35 south. He rapidly improved his farm as well as his stock. About the year 1825 he built a barn on his farm, this being the first barn in this section, the frame of which is still standing. In 1826 he went to England and Wales and purchased some thoroughbred stock (cattle and sheep) He returned the same year bringing with him a number of Welsh families.