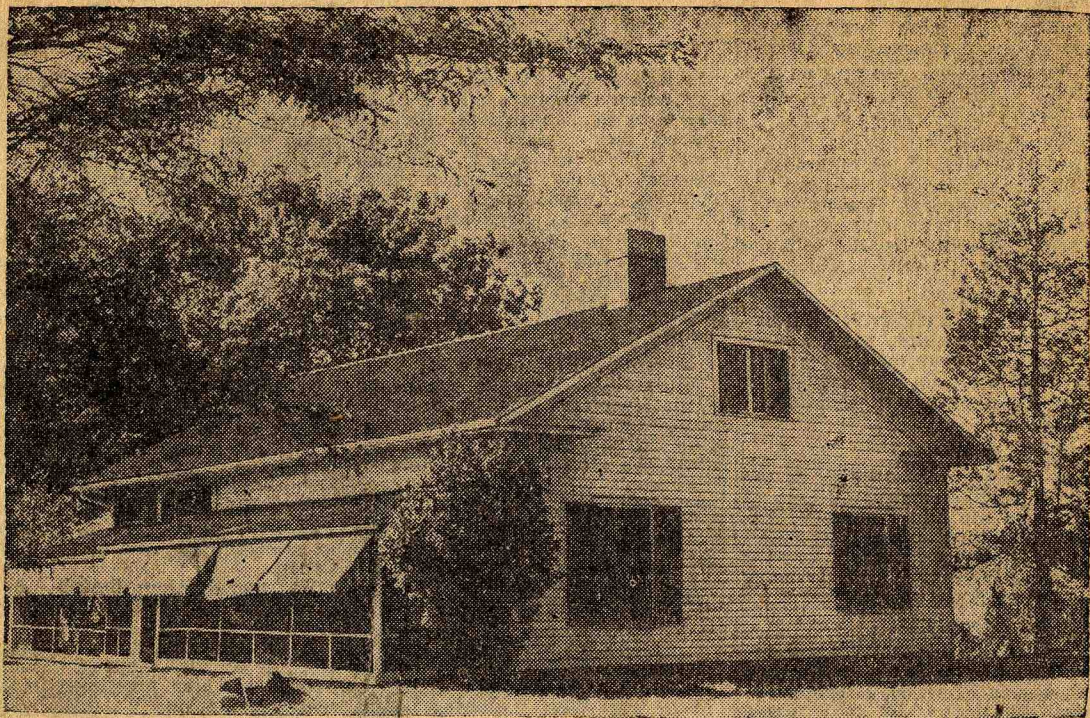
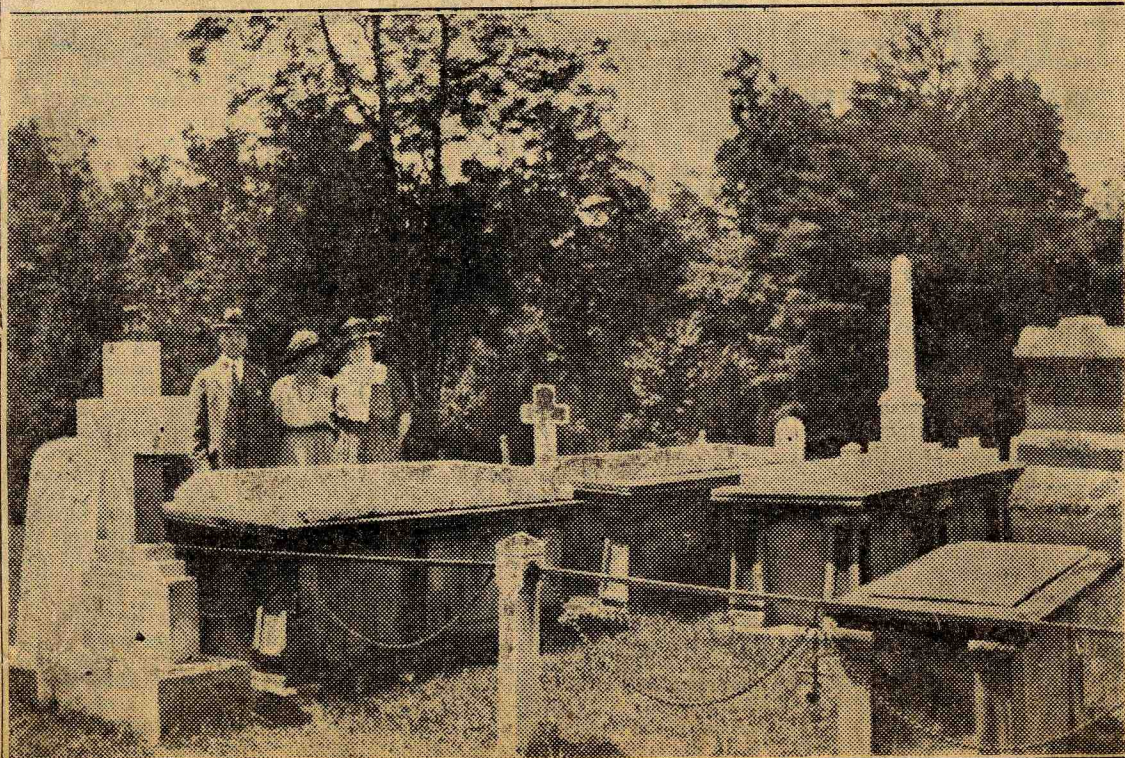


Move to Preserve Historic Talbot Estate



TALBOT'S CASTLE—Colonel Thomas Talbot's old home at Port Talbot is in a picturesque setting atop the cliff fronting on Lake Erie. Interest in the 144-year-old estate has been revived by the movement to purchase the estate as a historic site and the efforts to get the Ontario Government interested in its purchase. Of the original estate of many thousands of acres only 650 acres remain.



COLONEL TALBOT'S REMAINS REST IN PEACEFUL ST. PETER'S CEMETERY AT TYRCONNELL ON THE SHORES OF LAKE ERIE

Colonel Thomas Talbot's Speech. Talbot's Speech on St. George's Day in St Thomas, Ont to his settlers is given here. It was a great and his only "political" speech on April 23rd, 1832. at a meeting in "King's Arms" Inn.

April 23rd, 1832 - Colonel Talbot's Meeting and Speech.

St. George's Day Here

109 Years Ago

~~April 23rd, 1832.~~

Colonel Talbot Delivered His Only
Political Speech Then and It
Was an Effective One

In recognition of the glorious part England is playing in the present war St. George's Day, (April 23) this year will be more generally and more reverently observed throughout Canada than usual. The churches will pay tribute to England tomorrow, St. George's Societies and other organizations will hold meetings at which St. George will be toasted, while in every school (in Ontario at least) the children will carry out programs especially arranged for the occasion.

Honoring the patron saints of the component parts of the Motherland has been carried on in St. Thomas, as far as we can learn, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, ever since the early days of the Talbot Settlement. English, Scots, Irish and Welsh mainly comprised the pioneers and as their numbers grew and the time of their residence in the country of their adoption lengthened the ties that bound them to the lands of their birth seemed to grow stronger. With the result that the days set aside as belonging to St. George, St. Andrew, St. Patrick and St. David seldom lacked for fitting recognition.

Without doubt the most notable gathering in the history of St. Thomas on St. George's day occurred in 1832, when the founder of the Talbot Settlement, Colonel Thomas Talbot, called a general meeting of "my settlers" to ascertain as he wrote in the St. Thomas Journal of that time, "the real sentiments of the inhabitants so as to at once put down the fever (by a Jew only) manifested, to encourage disaffection to the British government."

That letter, which Colonel Talbot signed as "Father of the Talbot Settlement" and the calling of the meeting was in answer to other meetings held throughout the Settlement on the subject of imagined grievances" against the British government by William Lyon Mackenzie and others, and the demand by Mackenzie that the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada of that period, Sir John Colborne, be removed from the government of the province.

The St. George's day meeting of 1832, held in the King's Arms (located in Church street), was, to quote the Colonel's own words as reproduced in C. O. Ermatinger's "The Talbot Regime," a "most splendid victory." The Journal's account told of British flags flying, of groups of yeomanry arriving by horse and foot, of a noble body of loyal subjects who had commenced their route from Middleton and were joined by large parties on the Talbot road thence to St. Thomas; of meeting Colonel Talbot on the summit of the hill opposite the village and escorting him to the Inn, to the strains of "band musick" and the martial notes of the Highland piper.

There "surrounded by a dense crowd of intelligent, wealthy and independent yeomanry, deeply sensible that they were in full possession and enjoyment of all the proud advantages which they should inherit as the descendants of Britons, and which are the inherent rights of all who have the happiness to be under the glorious influence of the British constitution" the founder of the Talbot settlement, made a great and his "only political speech." It was, the Journal account says, delivered "in a strain both pathetic and eloquent" Col. Talbot's words were not recorded in full at the time but after his death a draft of the speech was found among his papers and Judge Ermatinger in his book was able to give a reproduction, a portion of which was as follows:

"When I undertook the formation of this settlement between 20 and 30 years ago it was in the hope that I should have none other but sound British subjects for my settlers, so as to insure peace and good fellowship amongst us, and I took every pains to select characters of that description, but in spite of all my vigilance I am sorry to find I have not been successful, for some black sheep have slipped into my flock, and very black they are—and what is worse, they have got the rot—a distemper not known to have shown itself openly until within the last six or eight months—when these (which I shall call for shortness rebels) commenced their work of darkness under the cover of organizing Damned Cold Water Drinking Societies, where they met at night to communicate their poisonous and seditious schemes to each other and to devise the best mode of circulating the infection, so as to impose upon and delude the simple and unwary."

The Colonel's reference to St. George's day in his speech is interesting. At the outset he said:

"I have chosen this day as being St. George's day—the champion of the greatest nation on earth, and all who claim to be her sons, either by birth or adoption, should feel proud accordingly, and with hands and hearts under the sacred banner that is now waving over our heads, determined with our lives to defend our King, our rights and our glorious constitution against all conspirators and rebels of every nation and denomination whatsoever."

His closing words were:

"This day I hope may be kept in remembrance by you all as a day of salvation and mercy, and that you will implant it in the hearts of your children and to the latest posterity as a day of examination of your actions for the past year so that all corruption may be cast out."

"Now God in His infinite goodness and mercy bless and preserve all you that are true British subjects and keep your hearts and minds untainted by sedition or corruption."

It is one hundred and nine years since that speech was delivered, but neither time nor circumstance have changed the view held by Colonel Talbot of St. George's day—"the champion of the greatest nation on earth." And while we celebrate it differently than did Colonel Talbot and the settlers of old we will without doubt observe it as sincerely and as soundly, for the name "England" means more today to the liberty loving people of the world than ever in the history of the world.

This clipping is from St. Thomas Times. Journal
April 23rd, 1941.

Thursday Is Anniversary of Doughty Colonel's Landing at Port Talbot, Second Choice

May 21st, 1953.

Founder Had Hoped to Settle Either at Mouth of Kettle Creek or Catfish Creek, But Was Forestalled; Some Interesting Historic Facts About Early Settlers and Development of Settlement

Thursday, May 21, will mark the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Talbot Settlement, for it was on May 21, 1803, that Colonel Thomas Talbot landed at Port Talbot.

That was actually the beginning of his settlement for he continued to live there, except for short intermissions, until his death on February 6, 1853.

It was not Colonel Talbot's first visit to the area that was to become known as his settlement.

Ten years previously, during the late part of the winter of 1793, Thomas Talbot, then a lieutenant in the British Army and an aide to John Graves Simcoe, the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, spent four days going through what was to be his settlement, in travelling from Brantford on the Ouse (Grand River) to the site of Chatham on La Tranche (Thames River). It is on record that Colonel Talbot was greatly impressed with the great area he was destined to settle and made a resolution to return.

The fact is, he would have returned in 1801, to settle either at the mouth of the Catfish Creek (Port Bruce) or the mouth of Kettle Creek (Port Stanley) had he not been balked in his attempts to curry royal favor. A letter of application sent to the Duke of Cumberland on May 16, 1801, from Skitewaaba (which was either Port Bruce or Port Stanley) sought the grant of the "township of Houghton, in Norfolk County, or any other adjacent one."

Incidentally, the word "Skitewaaba" is Ojibway for whisky or firewater.

Dunwich Selected

Unable to get his first desires for a land grant satisfied, largely because the Baby family of Detroit (then in British hands) and Sandwich, had got in ahead of him to obtain large grants in Yarmouth Township, Colonel Talbot was constrained to locate his land elsewhere and selected Dunwich Township.

With the aid of General Simcoe, who returned to England in 1796, Colonel Talbot left the Old Land early in 1803 with a letter from Lord Hobart to the new governor of Upper Canada, Lieut.-General Hunter, containing authority for a grant of 5,000 acres in Yarmouth, if available—or in any other township the governor might select. Colonel Talbot selected 5,000 acres in the southwestern part of Dun-

wich, being comprised of two grants. Colonel Talbot had already received a grant of 1,200 acres—which was the customary grant made to officers settling in Upper Canada—and had been living at what he chose to call Skitewaaba.

According to the terms of Lord Hobart's dispatch, an additional grant of 200 acres per family, settled by him, was to be made only upon his having surrendered 50 acres of his original grant to each family for whom he might claim and that such family should at the time be actually in possession of such 50 acres. This condition was the subject of much future controversy as Colonel Talbot proceeded to extend his "empire."

Castle Malahide

And so it was on May 21, 1803, that Colonel Talbot reached the mouth of what was to become known as Talbot Creek, and began his settlement with the building of his own pioneer home. The Colonel referred to it, facetiously, as "Castle Malahide," after his ancestral home near Dublin, Ireland, but it was anything but a castle. It was a humble abode, made of logs, chinked with clay, consisting of a sitting-room, a kitchen and a storeroom. Later a number of one storey buildings were added. It was not until many years afterward, during the latter part of the Colonel's life when his nephew, Colonel Airey, and family, lived at Port Talbot for some time, that the present "Malahide Castle" began to take form.

After Colonel Talbot's death, the estate was in the possession of the Macbeth family (of which the late Judge Macbeth of London, Ont., was a member) for many years.

In his old age, Colonel Talbot made a favorite of young George Macbeth, whose father and mother and four other children were among the brave Selkirk settlers who made the long trek from the Red River in Manitoba to the Thames River in the 1830's. Young George Macbeth took up residence with Colonel Talbot in 1839 and was joined in 1840 by his brother, Donald Macbeth.

From all accounts, the Colonel did not get along too well with the Aireys.

For one thing, Colonel Talbot liked his dinner in the middle of the day, while the Aireys regarded it almost as being a breach of social etiquette to have dinner before seven o'clock in the evening.

The Colonel also enjoyed his liquor, not infrequently to the point of intoxication, which was displeasing to the Aireys.

It has been related by Judge C. O. Ermatinger in his "Talbot Regime" how on one occasion Hon. James Crooks, an acquaintance of half a century, called on Colonel Talbot while the Aireys were away. Colonel Talbot proceeded to offer his old friend liquid refreshment but found everything in the shape of liquor under lock and key.

Lived in Shanty

By 1849, Colonel Talbot was not living in the main house at all but in what Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley described as "a sort of shanty, which agrees with my idea of an Indian wigwam, close."

She added that Colonel Talbot, "almost immediately, is going to rebuild it and make a good-sized comfortable house of it." That would suggest that the big house on the Talbot Estate as it is very much today is 103 years old.

Lady Wortley travelled from Buffalo to Port Stanley on the steamer London and wrote about the elite of that village over a century ago. Of the Aireys, she said: "They have made this house delightfully comfortable, and there is an air of true English comfort and of that indescribable refinement which the gorgeously furnished saloons and chambers of the hotels we have lately been at in New York and other places did not possess. Everything is in the perfection of good taste. The drawing room is a most charming apartment, with large windows reaching down to the ground, presenting a lovely view of that fresh-water sea, Lake Erie." She described her own room as "being draped with beautiful old Greek lace brought by Mrs. Airey from the Ionian islands, where she had resided for some time."

The year after Lady Wortley's visit, Colonel Talbot made over 13,000 acres of land to Colonel Airey, who gave New Glasgow his name for a while, then set out on his last journey to England, accompanied by the dependable George Macbeth.

In 1851, John Macbeth, youngest of those boys and later Colonel Macbeth, deputy clerk of the Crown at London, Ont., took up abode with Colonel Airey at "Castle Malahide" and assisted in laying out what was to be the major port town along the north shore of Lake Erie—Tyrconnell, capital of Colonel Talbot's Little Ireland. Benjamin Springer was the surveyor—and copies of that survey of streets that never came into existence are still extant.

"Here Will I Roost"

Colonel Talbot has been reported as saying: "Here will I roost and will soon make the forest tremble under the wings of the flock I will invite by my warblings around me."

That remark is supposed to have been made to Governor Simcoe ten years previous to 1803; but it

may have applied to Port Stanley or Port Bruce, or some point even east of those places in view of the fact that Port Talbot certainly wasn't the Colonel's first objective.

Colonel Talbot was pretty well buried in the forest primeval for several years after his arrival. It was not until 1808 and 1809 that settlers began to arrive in any number to take up the Crown lands. John Barber and James Watson came from Pennsylvania and settled in Southwold, northeast of Port Talbot, and the Pearces, Storeys and Pattersons, also from Pennsylvania, landed at Port Talbot and began the settlement of Little Ireland. John Bostwick began the settlement of Port Stanley in 1804 and blazed the line that was to become the Talbot Road. George Crane, a discharged British soldier, came with the Colonel, and settled in the Wal-lacetown area, and James Fleming, who was with Governor Simcoe's party to Detroit in 1793 and returned with his wife and children in 1796 to settle on Lot 6, fronting the Thomose River in Aldborough.

Other first settlers were Daniel Rapelle, on the Yarmouth side, and David Mandeville, first on the Southwold side of what was to become St. Thomas; Stephen Backus to Little Ireland in 1810; David Secord Garrett Oakes, Benjamin Wilson and Moses Rice, along the Talbot Road, and in Delaware Township, the Bird, Brigham, Springer, Westbrook and Sherick families. By the end of 1809 there were only 12 families scattered through Dunwich, Southwold, Yarmouth and Malahide.

Sold to American

The Talbot Estate remained in the possession of the Macbeth family until the 1920's when it was sold to a group of Americans headed by the late C. A. Pfeffer of Detroit. They planned to convert the historic place into an exclusive summer resort with private dock, swanky hotel, bridle paths, ski and toboggan slides, and other facilities for luxury leisuring. Unfortunately, the economic depression intervened and the pretentious plans never materialized. Mr. and Mrs. Pfeffer continued to make Colonel Talbot's "Malahide Castle" their summer home until shortly