

William Woolcock

2.

3. Clara (Mrs. Roy French) lives in Talbotville and has no family.

Thus, although this pioneer farmer's children to four generations(Travers) still live in the community, the line of male descent is gone, and no person by the name of Woolcock lives here now. There are Woolcock descendants of his first family living in London, Ontario.

Contributed by his daughter, Mrs. James Travers

Mrs. Ernest Boughner,

Dated Dec. 5th, 1953.

of his brother, Chas. Jas. Stewart, late Lord Bishop of Quebec. The present belfry and spire were built in 1845 by an English architect.

In 1865 the first organ was purchased and a new walnut pulpit and prayer desk were made. The chancel was built in the 1880's and in 1894 the organ and choir which up to this time had occupied the gallery were moved to the chancel. In 1891 the tablets of the Ten Commandments were presented to the church and the Lord's Prayer and the Creed a year or two later. In 1896 the present organ was given to the church.

The year 1903 being the Talbot Centennial, a fund was started by members and ex-members and the present pulpit and communion table were purchased. The prayer desk and lectern were given as memorials in 1906.

In 1903 the present rectory was built and in 1908 the church was raised and a basement placed underneath. The old pews were used in the basement and replaced with the present new pews which were arranged with two narrow aisles.

Hydro was installed in 1929.

In 1958, oil heating was installed and the pews were rearranged to make a centre aisle.

Several bequests and gifts have been made to St. Peter's and to the endowment fund and many beautiful memorials have been gifts to the church.

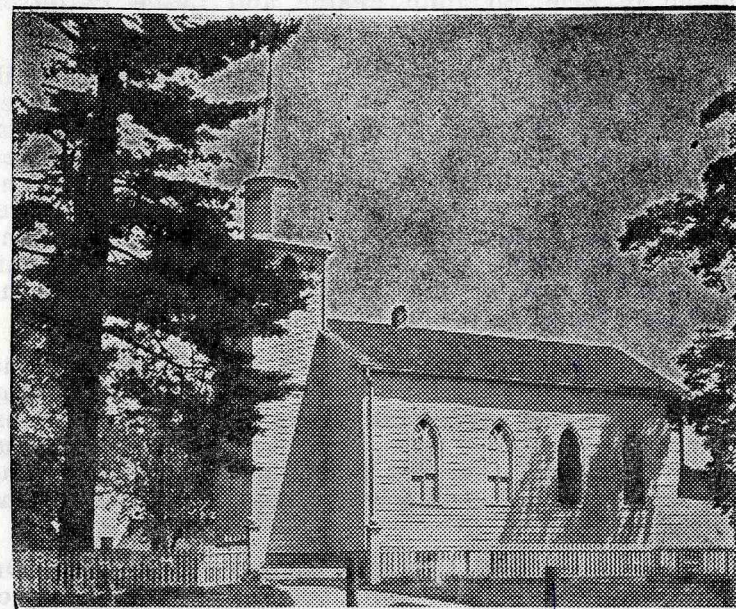
The chancel window was given about 1865. It symbolizes the Cross and the Crown. The glass has attained a richness through the years and could not be matched or replaced today.

Six beautiful memorial windows have been erected. The third one on the north was erected in 1928 just before celebrating St. Peter's Centennial in memory of the pioneers and early settlers who were the builders of the church in 1827 and went as Abraham did into a far country and established homes for themselves and forgot not God.

Col. Talbot was buried in the cemetery across the road from the church which is also the last resting place of the pioneers and their descendants and others who have kept the faith.

Few of the descendants of the pioneers remain in this district but other families have joined the congregation and shouldered their responsibilities to carry on the old traditions.

St. Peter's Anglican Church *Tyrconnell*



The story of this beautiful old historic church begins with the first colonists who came to this Talbot Settlement and is an evidence of the religious faith which they brought with them.

St. Peter's is the only church in this part of Ontario west of Niagara except H. M. Chapel of the Mohawks on the Brantford reserve in which Divine Services have been conducted continuously since it was built in 1827.

In 1793, John Graves Simcoe, first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada and a party which included Lieutenant Talbot explored the country west of Niagara. Apparently Talbot was impressed with what he saw and turned his back on military and court life and devoted the remainder of his life to the colonization of several counties in Southern Ontario. On May 21, 1803, he took up his abode in what is now known as Port Talbot. With him came George Crane, the first settler to take up land in Elgin County.

In 1800, Leslie Patterson and sisters left Fermanagh, Ireland, and settled in Erie, Pennsylvania. Here,

Leslie married Lydia Backus from Vermont and one of his sisters, Frances, married John Pearce from Rhode Island.

They would not forego their allegiance to the British crown so could not obtain a clear deed to land purchased in Erie. So John Pearce and Leslie Patterson came to Upper Canada to look for homes.

In 1809, Leslie Patterson, his wife and two children, his widowed sister, Mary Storey and her three children and John Pearce, his wife and three children left Pennsylvania in a flat bottomed boat and landed about five miles west of Port Talbot, where lay the land purchased the year before from Col. Talbot. Stephen Backus came the following year and married Anne Storey. These were Col. Talbot's first colonists and after untold hardships and toil, they lived to change the unbroken forest into beautiful farms.

The Pattersons were staunch Church of England people and John Pearce's mother was a sister of Bishop Seabury, the first Protestant Bishop in the United States. It is no wonder that these early settlers were anxious for a visit from the first travelling missionaries who would hold divine service where most convenient in the district.

It was in 1820 that the Honorable and Rev. Dr. Chas. Jas. Stewart, who later became second Bishop of Quebec first visited Dunwich and was one of the first missionaries or ministers of any church to hold service in this township of which there is any record.

Dr. Stewart kept records of all services on his travels. Thus we have records of persons baptized by him in Col. Talbot's house in 1820. Records of baptisms show that he spent a week in the district in 1822. In 1827, the first confirmation service in Elgin County was held in Col. Patterson's home before St. Peter's was built.

The next record concerning Dunwich reads, "On Sunday, 28th of October I performed Divine service in Dunwich to continue regularly every 6th Sunday till their church is finished, then the first Sunday of each month." Signed A. Mackintosh. Rev. A. Mackintosh was the first rector of St. Thomas Church which was built in 1824.

From this record we presume that the erection of a church had been started. In all probability the choice of site for the church was decided by Mrs. Storey's gift of 10 acres for church yard, burial ground, and rectory glebe lands. This land was part of the farm she had bought from Col. Talbot for two barley corns and was

then the best part of her farm which she and her son had toiled hard to clear and improve. The cemetery was used as early as 1825 and the land was deeded to the Bishop of Quebec.

St. Peter's was built in the Autumn of 1827. There was no scarcity of timber in those days. Only the best of white or blue oak was used in the frame and used lavishly. One can almost step from crossbeam to crossbeam in the attic of the church. The outside of the church was finished in rough cast. The shingles and lath were made from pine and split by hand. Col. Patterson went by boat to Buffalo to purchase the glass for the windows also the lead and oil for the paint and the putty. Tradition has said the first pulpit was a carpenter's work bench and the seats were planks on blocks of wood.

Only what is now the nave of the church was built at this time. Seven years later the present siding was put on by Stephen Backus and John Pearce finished the inside by lathing and plastering the walls and ceiling, making seats, reading desk and pulpit. On the floor near the steps leading to the chancel may be seen square pegs which show where the altar used to be situated.

During the incumbency of Rev. Mark Burnham the church was consecrated in 1840 and the cemetery in 1842, both by Dr. Strachan.

In 1842, the Tyrconnell Church was separated from St. Thomas and Rev. M. Burnham devoted his time to St. Thomas.

His successor in Dunwich was Rev. Jas. Stewart. Since he was the first resident minister he commenced the parish register. In this register, now in the parish safe, in beautiful penmanship are the names of nearly 500 persons baptized by Rev. Jas. Stewart between 1842 and 1849.

In 1843 a rectory was built. Some private records show that Col. Talbot gave \$40.00 towards its erection, the only time his name is mentioned as contributing to the support of the church.

The early rectors were graduates of Oxford, Cambridge, Wycliffe and McGill Universities and were leaders in the community and some of them taught classes for young people or tutored private pupils.

In 1844, two valuable gifts were presented to St. Peter's. The beautiful communion service and a set of books for the communion table was a gift from Charlotte, daughter of the late Governor Simcoe. The bell was given by the eighth Earl of Galloway in memory

The Community I Know Best

Talbotville

J. W. Auckland '49

Third Year Ag. Science.

O.A.C. Guelph, Ont.

*Written at O.A.C. Guelph, Ont.
by J. W. Auckland
of Talbotville, Ont.*

Talbotville, Ont.

"The Community I Know Best."

by

John W. Auckland, /49.

of Talbotville. Ont.

3rd year student in Agricultural
Science at Ontario Agricultural
College, Guelph, Ontario. 1948.



JOHN W. AUCKLAND, B.Sc.A.,
son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter
Auckland, Talbotville, who gradu-
ated from Ontario Agricultural
College May 25. He has taken a
position as assistant manager of
the Prince Edward Poultry Pro-
ducers' Co-Operative in Picton.

1949.

May 23th, 1949.

THE COMMUNITY I KNOW BEST ----- TALBOTVILLE.

By John Talbot 1995
 The community I wish to describe is Talbotville, a small hamlet in southwestern Ontario. It is situated halfway between Windsor and Niagara Falls, fifteen miles south of London, three miles north of St. Thomas, at the intersection of highways number three and four. It is in the center of a very prosperous farming district. General farming is carried on extensively and dairy farming is gaining in importance.

It is a small community of approximately three hundred inhabitants. It is typical of any small community with its general store, post office and small church. It is a very peaceful community where every one knows every one else. Most of the inhabitants are farmers, retired farmers, or business men and labourers who work in the nearby city of St. Thomas and live in Talbotville.

The history of Talbotville dates back far into pioneer days. It has seen many changes and has much historical background leading up to the present time. The regret is that no systematic recording of the past has been made and much of the information is obtained only from the memories of older residents.

On May 21st. 1803, Colonel Thomas Talbot landed at a spot on the north shore of Lake Erie, later called Port Talbot, and began his work of parcelling out the vast tract of land granted to him by the British Crown. He opened up a road which ran parallel to the lake which was called the Talbot Road. From the then small town of St. Thomas (to London) he opened up another road, which was called the north branch of the Talbot Road. This road was later continued southward to the small, thriving lake port of Port Stanley.

Three miles north of St. Thomas, there began to grow a tiny hamlet. It was first called "Five Stakes" and later Talbotville Royal. The name of "Five Stakes" was given locally. The name was derived from the fact that five roads converged at that point. Occasionally one still hears the name from old-timers who remember it from bye-gone days.

It is very unlikely that Colonel Talbot had any local interests in this community, except as an agent for the government in placing of settlers on the land. In his frequent journeys to and from London, Colonel Talbot usually stopped for the night at an hotel in the little village. On one occasion, on his return from London, the thought came to him that this thriving little community was deserving of a better name than "Five Stakes", so he renamed it "Talbotville". This place has still the honour of bearing his name, as have also Port Talbot, The Talbot Road, Talbot Street and St. Thomas - the county seat of Elgin County.

The first settlement in this district was about 1830. Many of the early settlers of the community, which was then part of the county of Middlesex, came by boat to Port Stanley, then journeyed northward to the small settlement. Others came overland from the Niagra district. There were a few United Empire Loyalists among the early settlers. Most of the early settlers were of English, Irish and Scotch descent.

As the size of the community increased, a small log school house was opened at the cross roads. And as the need arose a black-smith shop, a wagon shop, a shoe shop, an hotel and eating places, and also a general store were opened. These were all very well patronized by the members of the community.

In the early 1820's, a plank road was laid from Port Stanley to London, through Talbotville. A great deal of teaming was done from and to the growing manufacturing center of London. As Talbotville is situated halfway between the two places, it was a stopover for the teamsters at night. The village was a busy and noisy place at night, with the stables full of tired and hungry horses and oxen, the yards crowded with wagons and carts loaded with merchandise, and weary and hungry teamsters crowding into the eating places for food, while others would be at the bar trying to quench their thirst. No doubt the nights were not always peaceful.

But in a short time a change came over the little hamlet. The London and Port Stanley railway was built, and most of the teaming ended. A Temperance Lodge was formed, and the hotels were closed. The people settled down to a quiet, rural life. Since then Talbotville has been a very quiet, un-eventful place.

In due time log houses began to be replaced by frame and brick houses. As a result of this, carpenters, plasterers and brick-layers were very much in demand. We are told that a potash factory was established in this community at a very early date, and for a while it was a very flourishing business. Ashes were bought from the farmers by the bushel, and paid for in laundry soap. Later the factory was closed, and the ashes were shipped out to a central point. Of course the making of soft soap from ashes was a common practice in nearly every farm home.

Life in the early community of Talbotville was simple and plain, with little relaxation and recreation. All of the pioneers had a hard life of clearing and draining the land, and of erecting fences and