

The iron fence was installed in 1937 at a cost of \$216.33. In 1952 the repairing of the Church was discussed. Over the next two years several community bees were organized and the Church was raised on to an eight foot basement with a new wood and coal furnace installed. The entire outside was refinished, the interior was remodelled and carpet laid.

A large congregation attended the official re-opening on September 13, 1954, conducted by the rector, Rev. H. F. Gross, the guest preacher being a former rector, Rev. C. O. Pherrill, who had also compiled a history of the Church till that time. Two weeks later, the Harvest Festival drew another large congregation, the music being contributed by the choir of St. John's Church, St. Thomas, a tradition still being carried on.

A Baptismal Font was purchased in 1956, dedicated in memory of Edrie (Nott) Whitelock and in 1960, Mrs. William Bradt donated a silver Communion Chalice in memory of her husband.

Electric lighting and heating were installed in December, 1963 during the incumbency of Reverend A. G. Mitchell.

Until 1966, St. Stephen's had been closely connected with St. Peter's Church Tyrconnell, the rector serving both Churches. At the suggestion of Bishop Luxton, it was decided that St. Stephen's should be served by the Rector of Port Stanley and become part of that Parish.

A new Altar Prayer Book and Pulpit Bible were purchased in 1967 to mark the Centennial Year of Canada.

The 100th Anniversary of St. Stephen's was observed in July, 1972, with impressive ceremonies in the Church and wreath laying at the grave of Colonel Burwell conducted by the rector, Rev. E. C. Ward, assisted by many visiting clergy with the Bishop of Huron Diocese, the Right Reverend Carmen Queen as special guest preacher. Refreshments and birthday cake were served on the Church grounds.

In January, 1974, owing to the shortage of clergy and decreasing numbers, it was found advisable to make a combined Parish of the five congregations, namely St. Peter's, Tyrconnell, Church of Nativity, Dutton, Grace Church, West Lorne, St. Stephen's, Burwell Park and Christ Church, Port Stanley, with the rector continuing to reside at St. Peter's Rectory and having a Theological Student assistant on Sundays.

This arrangement remained in effect until March, 1979, when Port Stanley reverted to being a single Parish and St. Stephen's continued its former association with St. Peter's and the others.

Many of the present members of St. Stephen's are descendants of the original founders, the Church records showing that descendants of John Brown Sr. have carried on its continuous service till the present.

Now in its 124th year, St. Stephen's remains the type of church planned by its founders - a country church, serving a rural population and endeavouring to carry on the faithful witness in Christ's Vineyard.

Colonel Mahlon Burwell - Land Surveyor to be honoured Wednesday

by Don Carroll

The Elgin Historical Society

As part of the sesquicentennial of Elgin County in 2002, The Elgin Historical Society will unveil a plaque in honor of Col. Mahlon Burwell at the site of his grave in St. Stephen's Church Cemetery, 33105 Fingal Line, just a short distance west of the Iona Road in Dunwich, on 22nd May at 6.30 p.m.

Col. Mahlon Burwell played a very important part in the development of the Talbot Settlement, he was Col. Thomas Talbot's right hand man for many years, without whose technical skills and hard work Talbot's dreams for the settlement would not have materialized as they did.

Mahlon was born the 18th of February 1783 in Long Island, son of Adam and Sarah (Vail) Burwell. Desiring to live under the British Flag, the family emigrated to Upper Canada and settled in Bertie Township some time previous to 1797. The Burwells were Quakers when they arrived. Mahlon's parents saw to it that he received a good education, which in those days, for boys, included a study of the theory of land surveying. Without surveys there were no farms to settle on. Mahlon apprenticed with a surveyor for a time and in 1809, at the age of twenty-six received his final commissioning. The same year he married Sarah Hahn and their family grew to seven sons and two daughters. On 24th May 1809 he was hired to survey the Talbot Road across Southwold, Yarmouth and Bayham Townships. At that time the surveyors were paid wages but because the government had little money the system was changed in 1819 and the surveyors received four and a half percent of the land surveyed as payment. In 1811 on Talbot's recommendation, Burwell was named Registrar of Deeds for the County of Middlesex, which at that time included Elgin.

Mahlon Burwell built his first home and registry office in the little village in the flats near Talbot's mill and dam. This village was all burned by invading Americans during the war of 1812. Because he was a Colonel of the Militia, Burwell, who was sick in bed at the time, was taken as prisoner to Ohio for the duration of the war. He next built at Burwell's Corners, near where he is buried, and it was to the registry office here that everyone had to come for their deeds and registrations, even for lots in what is now the city of London.

All surveyors were required to keep a field book, a sort of diary, like a ship's log, in which everything of note was recorded, the names and the number of the men of the party, the days worked, and difficulties encountered. These were turned in to the government with the customary technical field notes, calculations etc. Preserved in the Ontario Archives these diaries make interesting

reading today.

In 1816 he was commissioned to survey the Talbot Road across the townships of Howard, Harwich, Raleigh, Tilbury East, Romney and Mersea. His diary records his first problem was to find rations to last that long in the uninhabited wilderness. The ration for surveying parties per man per day, was 1 ½ pounds of flour, ¾ pound of pork and ¼ pint of peas from which the "coffee" was to be made. He first had to find barrels of salted pork. There were so few farms and fewer still who had any pork to sell that on the 4th of May he headed to the older settlements to the east on horse back. After riding and looking for pork for about a week he decided to go to Buffalo. He bought pork there for \$26 per barrel. It had not yet arrived from Genesee County but he paid for it and another dollar a barrel to deliver it to Fort Erie. On 14th May he bought 20 barrels of flour at Woodhouse at \$10 per barrel. Good men were hard to find, to spend many months on a survey, so as he travelled he was hiring men, their wages to start on 25th May.

He also rented a boat and as soon as his men showed up some of them were sent 31st of May to Fort Erie for the pork. When they picked up the pork, only five barrels had arrived and it cost two dollars per barrel for shipping. When they went to Walkers at Patterson Creek to pick up the 20 barrels of flour, the price had risen to \$12 a barrel. Even though ordered, only 10 barrels of flour had come, the store keeper had had to use one of them and another was stolen, so the men came back with only five of pork and 8 of flour on the 7th of June. On Wednesday 12th of June they set out early and took their provisions to Crawfords at Pointe Aux Pins and started the survey. A good days work was the survey of 4 - 9 lots. The axemen had to cut trees so that the man at the compass could see in a straight line and then the chainmen measured it off into lots. This continued through all kinds of weather and sometimes they had to wade through swamps to put the line straight. They carried no tents, their only cover when it rained was elm bark cut from trees to make a shelter. He writes of how the mesquitos and flies were bad. Somedays they were sick and couldn't work. He records on the afternoon of the 11th of July the men washed their clothes, mended their shoes and baked some bread.

Several places they found spots where the American Army had camped when raiding, during the recent war, in each case trees had been felled flat to the ground in a circle to make a breastwork in case of attack. When they moved their supplies from Crawford's they had to leave a guard with them, even then the Indians managed to steal a barrel of pork while the guard was asleep.

By the 30th of September this survey was done, they rowed

back to Port Talbot, arriving after dark. The next day Burwell made out the pay lists for the men so that they might be signed in the presence of Col. Talbot allowing the men wages until they would arrive at their various homes. The men who worked on this survey were: Edward Kerr, Peter Walker, Jabish Dingman, Peter Hibles, Abraham Talladay, John Chase, Justus Wilcocks, William and James Burwell, George Anderson and John Sovereign.

It was then necessary for Burwell to complete the maps and survey to be sent to the government. It was the 30th November when he finally finished this huge task.

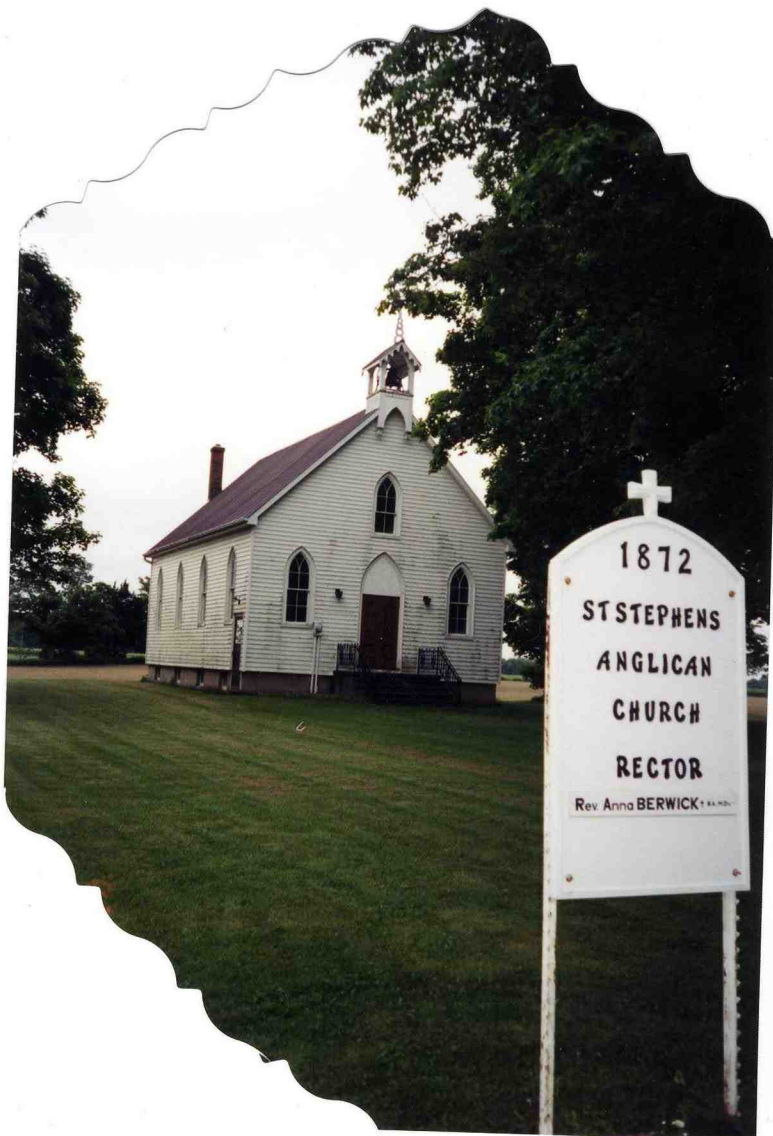
Mahlon Burwell was a Provincial Land Surveyor 1809-1846, Registrar of Deeds for Middlesex County, 1811-1843, Member of the Provincial Legislature 1813-1825, 1831-1834. Justice of the Peace, Colonel of the Militia, Master of the Masonic Lodge 1818 and Col. Talbot's right hand man.

Burwell died 25th January 1846 aged 63 and was buried on the land that he had set aside for a church across from his farm.

May 30th 2002
The Chronicle

The main source of this material is Vignettes of Early St. Thomas by W.C. Miller, 1967 and Mahlon Burwell, Surveyor's Diary, Talbot Road, 1816.

After the unveiling of the Burwell plaque the Historical Society and guests will proceed to St. Peter's Cemetery, Tyrconnell for their yearly toast to Talbot at his grave there, to commemorate his arrival.



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Mayor Phil Van Buren and Don Carson



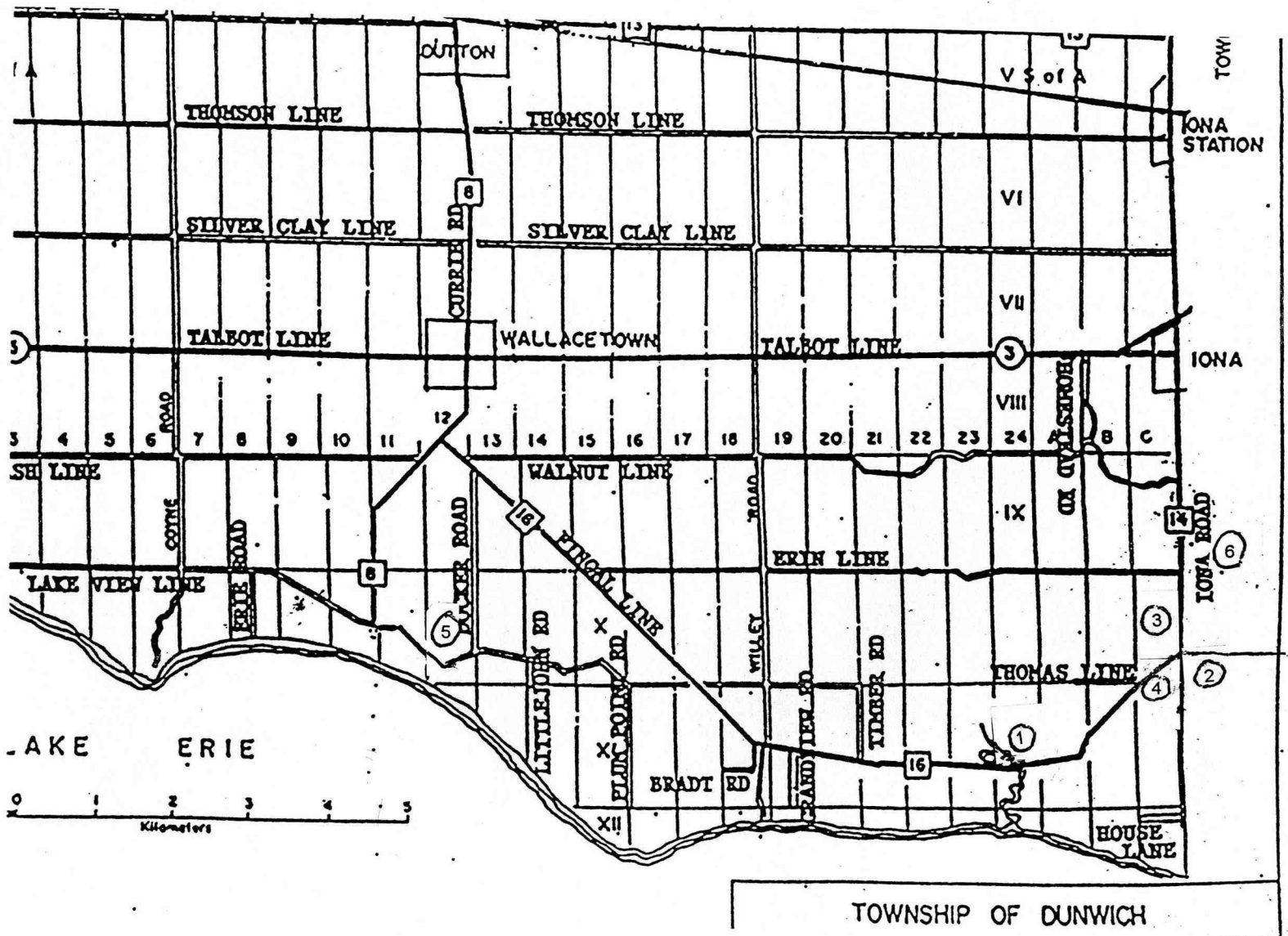
Unveil a plaque at the grave of Col. Manion Burwell, a county pioneer.



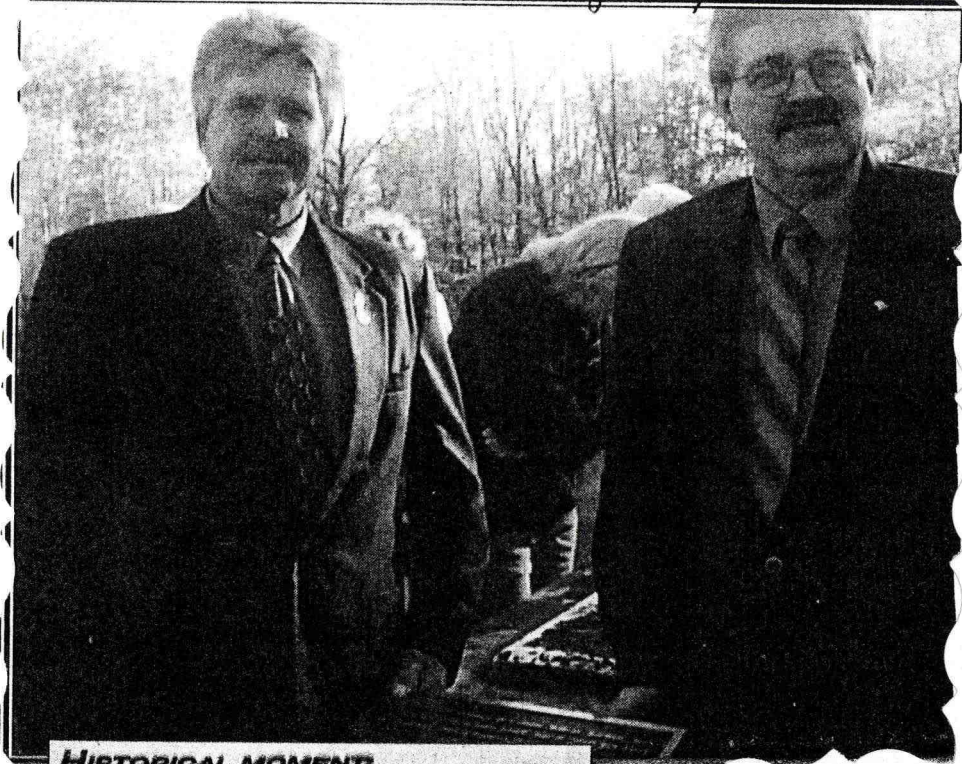
LOCATIONS KNOWN TO COL. MAHLON BURWELL

May 22nd - 2002

1. - Site of Mahlon Burwell's first home and Registry Office in the village by the Talbot Creek. It was here that he was taken prisoner during the war of 1812-14 and his house burned.
2. - Site of his second home and registry office. This house still exists and is the home today of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Clark. It was built in 1815.
3. - Site of his big brick house built in 1825. It had a two storey centre section with one storey wings on each end, the south wing was the Middlesex Registry Office, until it was moved to London.
4. - St. Stephen's church, Burwell Park, where Mahlon Burwell and his wife are buried.
5. - St. Peter's church and cemetery.
6. - Indian Earthworks, which were protected against destruction by Mahlon Burwell when he sold the land.



May 25th / 2002 . T.J.



HISTORICAL MOMENT

Dutton-Dunwich Mayor Rien van Brenk, left, and Don Cosens of the Elgin Historical Society unveil a plaque Wednesday at the grave of Col. Manlon Burwell, a county pioneer. The grave is in a cemetery on Fingal Line. (T-J photo*)



Outgoing Mayor Rein VanBrenk hands the gavel to incoming Mayor Bonnie Vowel last Wednesday afternoon at Dutton-Dunwich council's inaugural meeting

Dutton has talented team

Looking around the council table, incoming Mayor Bonnie Vowel knows the municipality has some wonderful resources to draw upon.

Councillors represent extensive business backgrounds through Vowel, Don Page and Elizabeth Kornaker, John Yokham offers a water and emergency services background and the new deputy mayor, Cameron McWilliam brings an agricultural background to the table.

Vowel herself brings 34 years experience in the insurance industry and as the past deputy mayor, is in a strong position to help the new council make its transition.

"I feel great about it. I look around the council table and I see the talents of the people there. We've been blessed with some very talented people," said Vowel.

She sees a team already taking shape with strong personalities willing to express their views but also believes they'll be able to work well together to reach decisions.

"I don't know what's coming ahead of us," said Vowel but as the new council gets up to speed, she expects they'll soon be working their way through the 2004 budget process.

Dec 11th 2003 - The Chronicle

David Phillips photo

RESIDENTS

PIONEERS.