

The other farm has not fared as well, Jacob Miller's farm, formerly belonging to Norman Miller and Peter Vanderwyst, was sold to the City of St. Thomas for industrial purposes. The Schulman Canada Co. built a plant on this property for the manufacture of plastics, and the Varta Battery Co., on the eastern part of the property, was built about two years ago. The house and buildings were all razed. An Ontario Hydro sub-station was built north of the Varta plant also.

The buildings on the farm formerly occupied by T.J. Smit were razed, but no building has been done on this farm to date. The land is still being used for agricultural purposes although owned by the City of St. Thomas.

1993

The buildings on the Andrew Miller farm, formerly owned by Gordon Dennis and purchased by the City of St. Thomas, were razed in the mid 80's. The Schenley Co. (Distillers) did not proceed with development there and resold the property to the city about this time. About 1990 Freightliner Corp. purchased the land and began construction in the fall of 1991, with the official opening of a large truck assembly plant in spring 1992. Some of this farm is still used agriculturally.

On the former Jacob Miller farm, the Varta Battery Co. sold out to Johnson Control which operated there until early 1992 when the plant closed. The buildings continue to be unused and property is for sale.

On the former T.J. Smit farm the City of St. Thomas began construction of town housing units (modest rental charge) on the extreme south-west section of the Smit farm opening onto South Edgeware Road. The following years have seen more units of town housing built on the north-westerly section of this farm. A large brick building opening onto S. Edgeware Rd. lying east of the town housing was constructed, and housed, temporarily, the offices of St. Thomas City Hall, Talbot Street, while it underwent restoration over the period 1990 and 1991. Some of this farm is used still, agriculturally.

During 1991 the city of St. Thomas annexed more North Yarmouth Township property lying north of its former holdings on South Edgeware Rd. The city now claims property extending north to Highway 52, and lying between Canada Way (Radio Rd.) and Locke's Rd., excluding the K.C.C.A. property.

LOT 10 EDGEWARE ROAD

100 ACRES

"MOUNT PLEASANT"

Named Mount Pleasant after the old home near Holsworthy, Devonshire, England, this farm was purchased from the Crown by my great-grandparents, Richard and Mary (Andrews) Penhale, who came to Canada with their small family with Mary's sister, Martha Gilbert, her husband Richard Gilbert and children, and Mary and Martha's brother Rev. Richard Andrews, his wife and family, along with their neighbours, Simon Westlake and family, leaving Bideford on the Bay of Bristol on a Thursday morning at 10 A.M. on the 8th of April 1831, on a lumber sailing vessel, the Calipso, which had been chartered for the voyage. They came in sight of North America on May 21st, and sailed on the schooner Champion for New York May 31st.

Finding the soil poor they came to Port Stanley June 6th, 1831. These families rode in a wagon through unbroken forest to the Thompson property at Millersburg, near what is now Kains St. in St. Thomas, and stayed there while the men came out to their farms and hewed logs and built their first log shanties. To make them more comfortable they covered them with elm bark. Later this log house was replaced by a mud house about the year 1837. This house being built of mud and straw trampled by oxen was 40 feet by 36 feet and was easily heated in winter and cool in summer. Later a summer kitchen and wood shed was added.

Large beams were placed on top of the mud walls to support the wooden shingled roof which had dormer windows. The outside walls were covered with rough cast, similar to stucco, but contained many very small shining pebbles. The walls were 22 inches thick and had wonderful window sills, an ideal place for house plants. The house was built on a stone wall, the basement was surrounded by this stone wall and it had a brick floor. There was a very good drinking water well in the cellar. The cellar windows were encased in the ground with vertical iron bars about every 6 inches. In the winter heavy planks covered the shallow window-wells. There was also an outside stairway to the cellar which was covered by wooden doors in the winter.

The main floor consisted of living room, dining room, two bedrooms, kitchen, pantry and hall, which had a stairway to the second floor directly above the stairway to the cellar. The inside walls were plastered directly on the mud walls, creating a problem when the house was wired for hydro about 1923. All switches had to be placed on inside walls.

There were three chimneys of which two connected to fireplaces. These fireplaces were later replaced by stoves. The pantry had a wooden sink 30 inches square with an outside outlet for dishwater. This room had many open as well as closed cupboards and a large flour bin. The large square kitchen had eight hooks in the ceiling to be used for quilting. These were sometimes used to dry meats. In later years a sink with two hand pumps was in the kitchen.

The top floor had three large and one small bedrooms plus a store room, large hall and two clothes closets.

This house was destroyed by fire in June 1934. Due to the fact it was built of mud, the fire did not spread very quickly and as a result the neighbours were able to save much of the contents on the ground floor, including the front door which is now being used as well as being a souvenir in our house on the Fingal road.

This farm is presently being farmed by Rev. Richard Adnrew's two great-great-grandsons, John and Richard Andrews, great-great-great-nephews of Richard and Mary Penhale. This too makes history.

Ilene Begg, R. R. 1, St. Thomas
February 24th, 1979



MOUNT PLEASANT



THE TISDALE BARN

SOUTH $\frac{1}{2}$ LOT 12 FIRST RANGE NORTH

EDGEWARE ROAD

100 ACRES

Lot 12 North was the site of Richard Gilbert's first home--from log cabin to a more permanent structure. It was his sons, who coming of age and marrying, carved more elaborate homes in other sections of the crown land. This farm was inherited by Richard's son, Marwood, and for some years after his death the land was rented out.

Richard's great-grandson, Lewis Gilbert, (John's son and William's grandson) brought the young Gilbert blood back to Lot 12 North. After a marriage of several years to Jessie Sandham, (they were married in 1912 but spent the first few years of their married life at Gilbert Hall), he moved to Lot 12 North to a modern red brick home which was built in 1915. The house that formerly stood on this property had been moved to Lot 13 South.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Gilbert had two sons, Jack and James, and one daughter, Betty (Mrs. George Elms). Jack Gilbert married Donna Bentley. His family consisted of one daughter, Dianne. At the time he was managing the farm and working on the railroad and he lived with his widowed mother on Lot 12 North until his death in the early 1960s.

(James Gilbert married Barbara Johns, and after farming for a few years on the North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lot 13, Concession 10, the Melford McIntyre farm, due to poor health, he moved to St. Thomas to work in an industrial plant. His family consists of one daughter, Susan, and a son, William H.)

(Betty married George Elms and their family consists of one daughter, Gail, and a son, Howard. It is interesting to note that of all old Richard Gilbert's descendants it is Betty and her family who are the only Gilbert connections left on the original Gilbert holdings. George Elms had purchased three acres from Ralph Heydon, (his uncle by marriage) on the north-west corner of Lot 13 South for his future home. This business deal took place following the Second World War when Mr. Elms was discharged from the Air Force. This piece of ground where the Elms family lives is planted with many evergreens, cedars and spruce and deciduous trees providing a very attractive setting for their handsome ranch style house which was built in the mid 1950's.)

Following the untimely death of Lewis Gilbert, his son Jack operated the farm on a part time basis, cash cropping and feeding cattle. He also died at an early age and the farm was rented by Mr. Charles Goodhue and sons (1963-1964). In 1964 Mr. Goodhue purchased the property taking up residence there with his family in 1965.

He is involved in extensive cash cropping of wheat, corn and beans with no livestock. It is the trend today, where farms have no livestock to pasture, that fences dividing farms into 12 or 15 acre fields be removed--also shrubs and trees which lined the fence rows. The advantage in this practice is to allow large farm machinery longer runs over the land. Many obnoxious weed patches which thrived in fence rows are also removed.

The buildings remain the same today on Lot 12 North with the exception of a new garage replacing the former one. An old apple orchard west of the house has also been removed. Beside this hundred acres Mr. Goodhue is engaged with one son in farming an additional 1000 to 1500 rented acreage in the county. Cash cropping with wheat, beans and corn is done on the rented land also.

Mr. Goodhue married the former Jean Cook and they have two married sons-- Kenneth, who farms with his father, and Ralph, who is employed in an industrial plant. Joyce Ann, the daughter is still in High School.

Mrs. J. G. (Isobel) Martin
March 1969.

SOUTH $\frac{1}{2}$ LOT 12 FIRST RANGE NORTH

EDGEWARE ROAD

100 ACRES



The Lewis Gilbert Home

Edgeware Road

Built 1915

SOUTH $\frac{1}{2}$ LOT 13 FIRST RANGE NORTH

EDGEWARE ROAD

100 ACRES

Richard Gilbert bought Lot 13 North from the Canada Land Company through Colonel Burwell in 1835. The price paid was 62 pounds 10 shillings. It was to compliment his initial acquisition of 300 virgin acres on the other three corners.

William Gilbert, a son of Richard, married Elizabeth Tansley in 1856 and in September 1857 they moved to what is presently the rear of the J. Martin home on Lot 13 North. Their life was well occupied in raising a young family and further land clearing. Their children were John and Elizabeth, (later Mrs. John Westlake.)

In 1872 William built a twin house to the Rhude "dream" home being built by Matthew on Lot 12 South. These houses were reproductions of the ancestral Gilbert home, "Rhude" of Devon, England. It is not certain whether many buildings to house cattle and other livestock existed before 1880, but when William's son, John, left school at the age of seventeen many farm projects were to be undertaken. Farming was becoming a business as well as a way of life.

John married Mathilda Lewis in 1883 and their family consisted of Blanche, (Mrs. Neil Curtis), Hazel, (Mrs. Douglas), Lewis, Ethel, (Mrs. Parker), Kathleen, (Mrs. Ralph Heydon) and Ina, (Mrs. Clarence Gloin).

The present wood-sided main barn was built in 1884 and a horse section and drive barn were built in 1885. The latter housed buggies, cutters and democrats. A silo was built later in 1929. More land was cleared on Lot 13 South and orchards and windbreaks were planted. Mr. John Gilbert stated that when he looked out his door that every tree he could see he planted. As a result today many magnificent old spruce, pine and cedar still provide protection around the buildings. Several orchards produced an abundance of apples which were shipped to England. Mr. Gilbert was known for his purebred Shorthorn cattle and accompanied them on sales abroad. Other farm interests included milking cows, horses, hogs, turkeys, geese and pheasants. A corn crib and ice house were included in the farm buildings. This was the era when many farm enterprises were typical and though there were sales of surplus products, the main object was the complete self-sustenance of the farm family. Mr. John Gilbert's son, Lewis, farmed with his father before and following his marriage in 1912 to Jessie Sandham. While he and his bride waited for their new red brick home to be completed on Lot 12 North they lived in Gilbert Hall with father John and family. In addition to the large family mentioned above hired help both inside and outdoors also lived there.

In 1925 John's younger daughter, Ina, married Clarence Gloin and in 1926 they took over the farm on Lot 13 North. Mr. John Gilbert and his wife, who had moved to Yarmouth Centre, died in 1927 and 1926 respectively. The trend to farms in the '20's, '30's, and early '40's was to mixed farming. Milking cows, chickens, some hogs, ducks and geese were seen. Farming was still a way of life with the family still quite self-sufficient as far as the food supply was concerned. Many necessary household and farm articles were now being manufactured. Clothing was no longer spun or woven at home but purchased as yard goods or ready-made garments. The advent of the telephone and electricity into rural communities began to make changes in farm life. However, during the days of the Depression and World War 2 the farm family benefitted by living near the land and its produce when there was a scarcity other places. Mention should be made of community efforts typical of that time, barn-raising, threshing bees, gathering sap for a boiling-down into maple syrup. At the time of the Second World War in the early '40's, farm labour was almost impossible to obtain and so began the appearance of mechanized farm machinery. The tractor replaced horses in many farm jobs until by the late '40's and early '50's almost all farm work was done without the horse. The tractor had the advantage of endless driving power and fair speed.