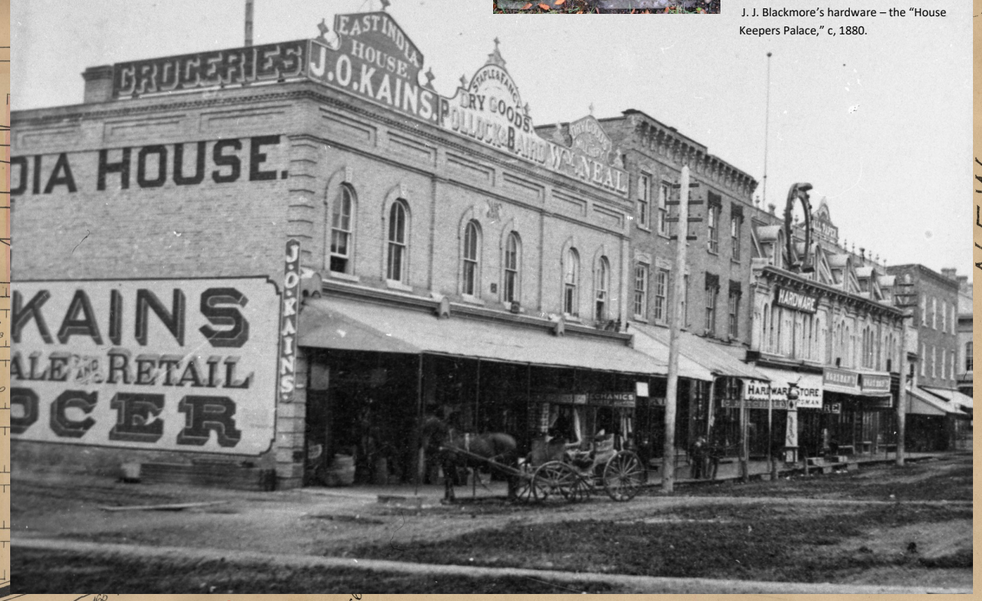
Contemporary photographs are by Jan Row. Historic images are from the Elgin County Archives, Ian D. Cameron Collection.
Red Numbers match the locations from which the historic photos were taken. The red arrow indicates the direction in which the camera was pointing.

1. Talbot Street, north side, looking east from New Street, c. 1875

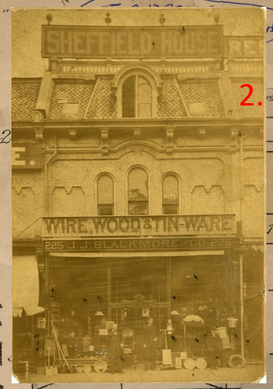
The first three stores comprise the Elgin Block, built 1871. Further up the block, a giant horseshoe hangs over the Horsman hardware store. Later owned by J. J. Blackmore.

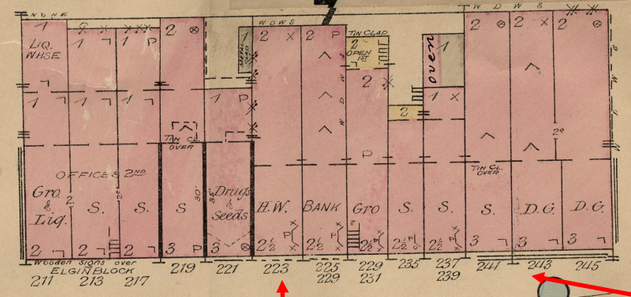


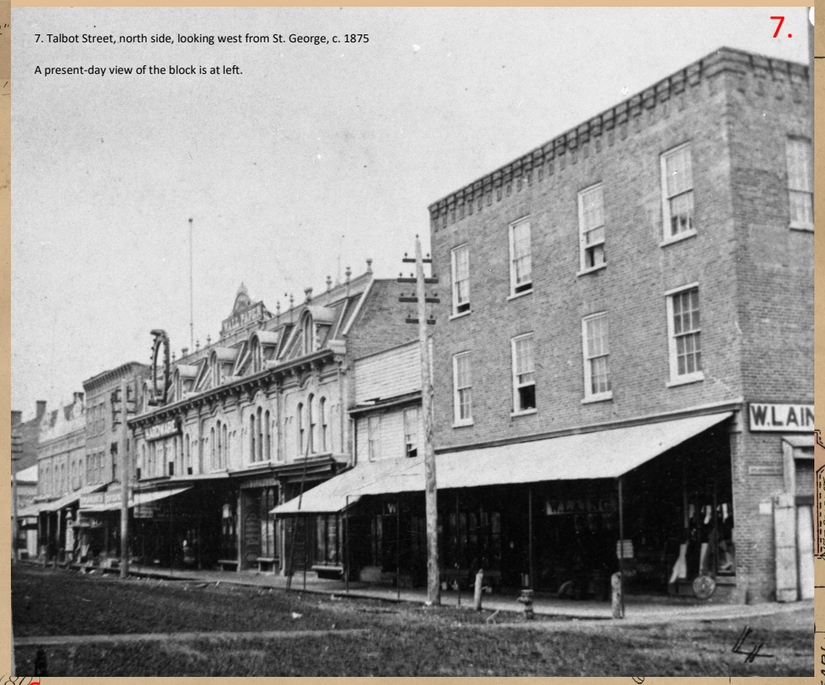
Right:

2. Sheffield House

J. J. Blackmore's hardware – the "House Keepers Palace," c, 1880.







7. Talbot Street, north side, looking west from St. George, c. 1875

A present-day view of the block is at left.

3. Talbot Street, looking east from near Stanley, c. 1875

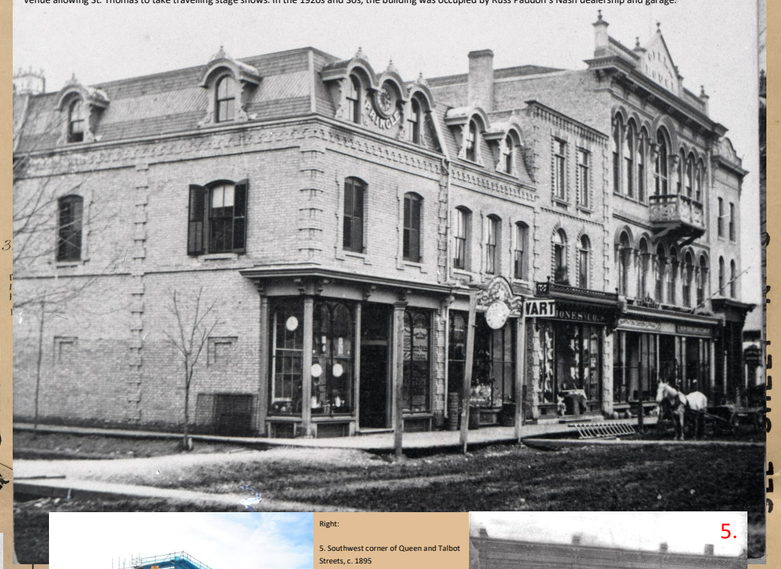
In the distance, can be seen the Penwarden House Hotel and the Opera House.

4. William Street, east side, between Talbot and Centre, c. 1890

From left to right: the livery for the Penwarden Hotel, the City Hotel, built in 1870, a livery with a resident vet – Dr. Charles E.. Edmonds, and Daniel Barnes' blacksmith shop. The long building on the right is the St. Andrew's Ward market shed.

6. Talbot Street, south side, looking west from Queen, c. 1875

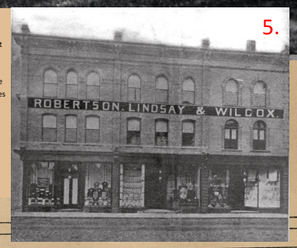
The large building to the right with the balcony is the Claris Opera House which opened in 1873. It had a capacity of 900 and was the town's first large public venue allowing St. Thomas to take travelling stage shows. In the 1920s and 30s, the building was occupied by Russ Paddon's Nash dealership and garage.



Right:

5. Southwest corner of Queen and Talbot Streets, c. 1895

This Robertson dry goods store may have been responsible for changing the facades of these three stores. The original Mansard roofs, likely dating from the 1870s, can be seen in the photo above.

Left:

The same corner today (2020).