

London Area Road 'Unofficially' Named for Brickyards Name to Township School More Than 130 Years Ago

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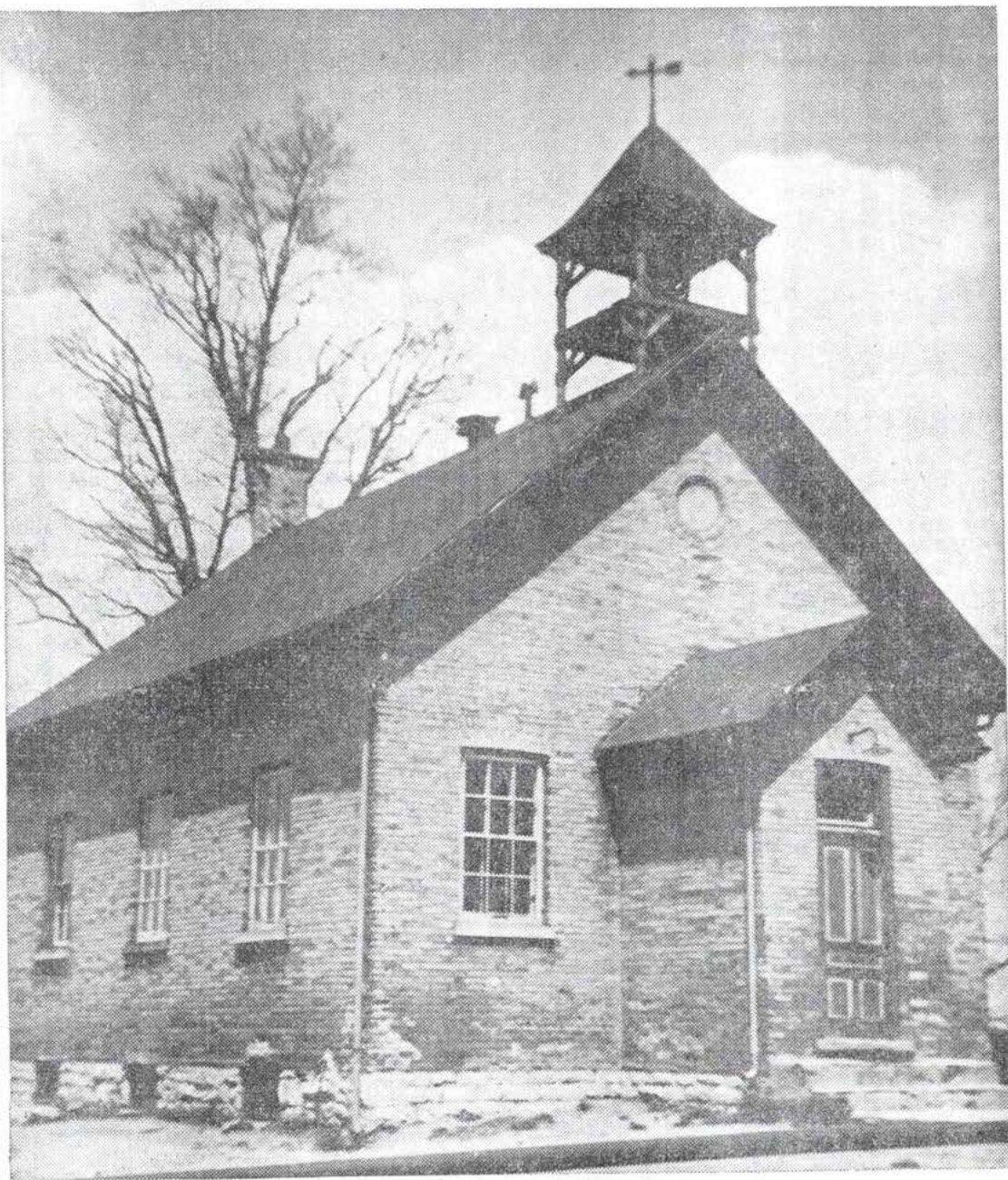
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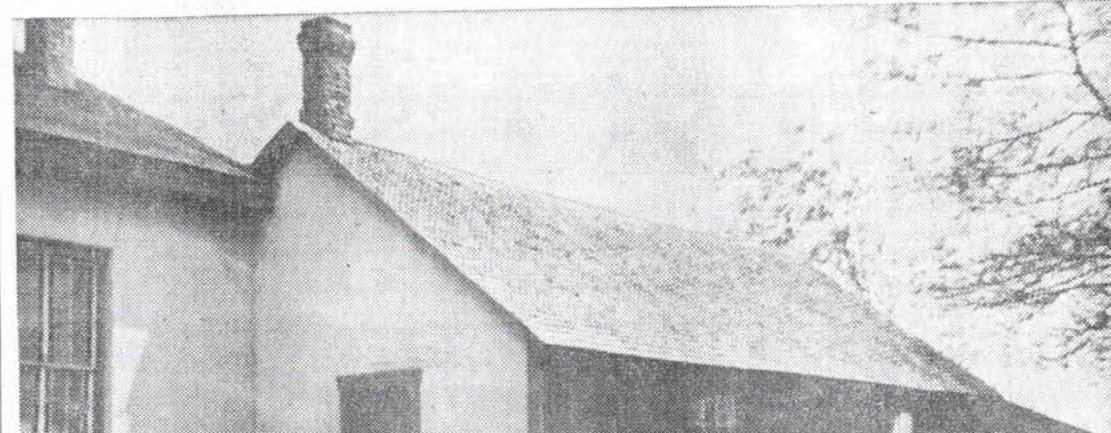
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Brick Street School, built 1893, no longer used



ended by Mr. Samuel Jarvis,
(Trustee);

"Duty Of All"

RESOLVED — That education being a subject of most vital importance to mankind in general, and to every individual in particular, it is the interest and duty of every honest member of the community, and of every lover of social order and harmony, to aid in its diffusion among the rising generation — to render every possible assistance, and to give every incentive towards acquisition.

Moved by Mr. Richard Tunks seconded by Mr. Eli Griffith;

RESOLVED — That it is the opinion of this meeting, that the views of the Chief Superintendent of Education, as expressed in his Circular to the Wardens of Municipal Districts, respecting the supporting of Common Schools according to property are quite reasonable and just.

Moved by Mr. Robert Frank seconded by Mr. Samuel Jarvis:

Set Levy

RESOLVED — That the Municipal Council of the London District at its next meeting, be requested by the Trustees to assess the sum of £25 upon the inhabitants of this school section, (in addition to the sum authorized to be raised by 9th Vic., chap. 20), for the purpose of supporting the school from this date till the 31st December next in pursuance of the 8th section of the Amended School Act.

Moved by Mr. Henry Frank, seconded by Mr. Charles Combs:

RESOLVED — That a set of Maps be immediately procured for the purpose of being suspended in the school room, to facilitate and illustrate the study of Geography

Robert Summers, Chairman
Nathan Griffiths, Secretary
Westminster, July 3, 1848."

Fees Abolished

In 1871 public or elementary schools, basically as we know them today, were established. Fees which had gradually been going out of fashion, were abolished and schools henceforth were tax supported.

It is difficult to determine the number of schools that have been called Brick St. School. The present one is the third within memory of living residents. Roy Blinn, who was Secretary-Treasurer of the School Board for nine years, from 1922-1931, attended the old red brick school for six weeks prior to its closing in 1893. His father, William Blinn, attended this school too. The present school just opened

in 1822 in which Gourlay says that there were two schools to serve an area settled in 1811 with a population six years later of 428 people.

(The oldest settled areas in Westminster Township seem to be the areas around Byron and the two areas around Norton School and Brick Street School on Commissioner's road. These three areas were probably settled about 1809 and so it is not impossible to assume that one of these two early schools in Westminster Township mentioned by Gourlay, could have been a pioneer edition of Brick Street School).

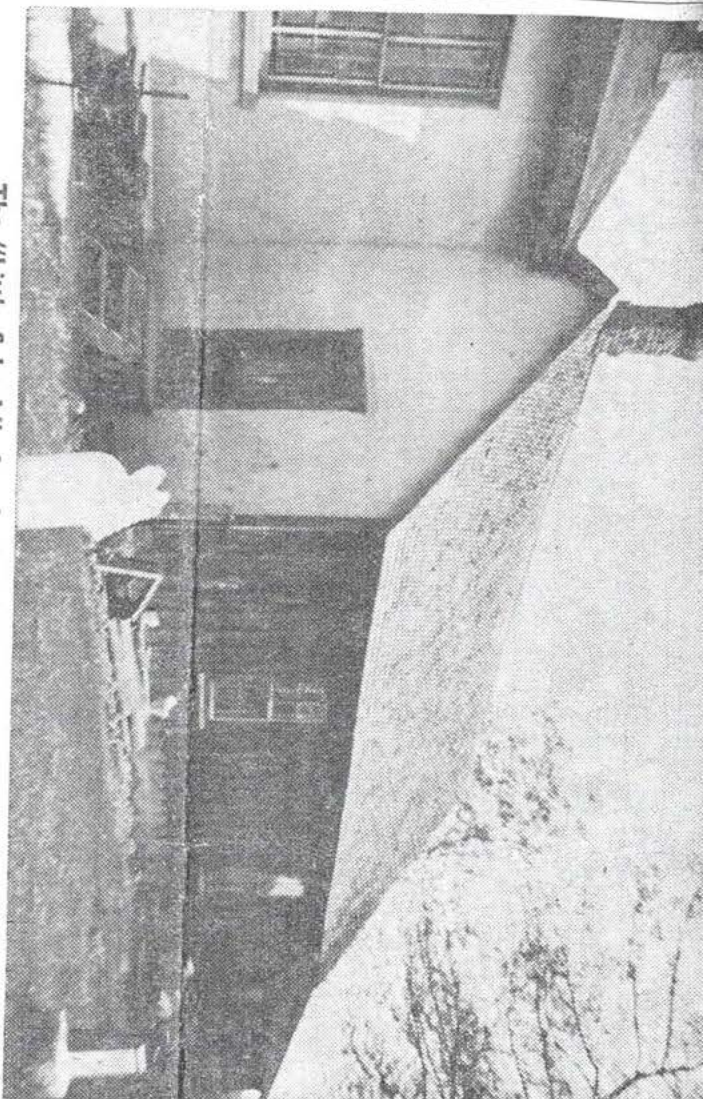
Other Services?

Apparently it was the custom in Upper Canada for church services to be held in the local school house. The Rev. Mr. Duffield believes prior to 1852, when the present Brick Street United Church was built, that Methodist Episcopal services were also held in the same school house. Probably the district even in those early days was on the Methodist circuit. It was not until 1828 that the Town of London had a school according to Nicholas Wilson, an early London teacher, in his brief account of the early schools of London, written sometime after 1866.

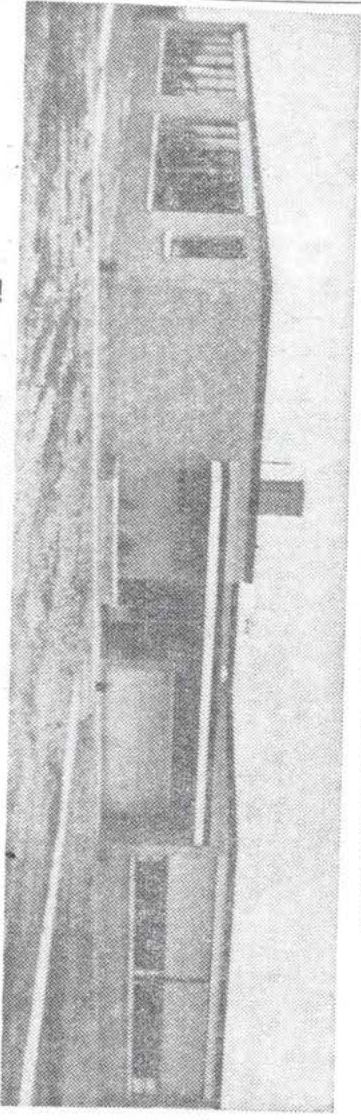
S.S. No. 4 Westminster grew out of the various pieces of legislation passed by the Province of Upper Canada and, after 1841, the Province of Canada, enabling schools to be built and paid for.

1807 Act

In 1807 the Legislature of Upper Canada passed an Act "to establish public schools in each and every district in this province." One of the eight districts was called the London District and the act specified that the London District School "shall be opened and kept in the Township of Townsend, County of Norfolk." The term "public school" in the Act of 1807 was not used in the sense in which it is used in Ontario today, but in the sense of the English public schools — Eton, Rugby, Harrow and others for the sons of gentlemen and wealthy parents who could pay high fees. In addition to a grant of £100 per annum from the Crown which went to the teacher as a salary the teacher collected fees and sometimes boarded students. The Upper Canada



The "Little School," church shed behind Brick Street United



The new Brick Street School, opened this year

common schools. In 1841 and 1843 the school acts were revised and school sections such as we know today were organized. In 1844, Dr. Egerton Ryerson was appointed Chief Superintendent of Schools and further legislation resulted in 1846 and 1850.

Public Meeting

In the Journal of Education for Upper Canada for July, 1848, the following may be noted:

"Public meeting in favor of free schools in the London District."

"We are glad to perceive that a movement for the improvement of their schools is commencing

among some of the inhabitants of the London District. Such movements at primary meetings of the people — several of which we have had the pleasure of noticing — are the best indications of a growing interest in behalf of Common Schools, and the best means of improving them by diffusing correct information and embodying right views on the subject of education. We copy the following from a local paper:

Tax Whole Section

"Pursuant to a requisition of the Trustees of School Section, No. 4, Westminster, a meeting of the in-

habitants of said section was held on Saturday, the 1st inst., "for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of having the entire school section assessed for the support of the school, from henceforth, in pursuance of the eighth section of the amended School Act." The following resolutions were proposed and adopted:

Moved by Mr. Robert Frank, seconded by Mr. Thomas Jarvis: RESOLVED — That Mr. Robert Summers (Trustee) do take the chair, and that Mr. Nathan Griffith do act as secretary.

Moved by Mr. Robert Frank, sec-

schools, basically as we know them today, were established. Fees, which had gradually been going out of fashion, were abolished and schools henceforth were tax supported.

It is difficult to determine the number of schools that have been called Brick St. School. The present one is the third within memory of living residents. Roy Blinn, who was Secretary-Treasurer of the School Board for nine years, from 1922-1931, attended the old red-brick school for six weeks prior to its closing in 1893. His father, William Blinn, attended this school, too. The present school just opened superseded the one-room white-brick school with the roofed bell built in the summer of 1893. (The red-brick school, also one-roomed had no bell.) The red-brick school faced, not south on Brick street as the now unused white-brick school does but east on Brick street, although both schools were in the same location. I have been unable to find the date on which this earlier school was built. Mrs. Ella (Gullen) Norton, widow of John Norton Jr., was a teacher in the red school for one year before she married John Jr., who died in 1945 and as far as I know she is the only surviving teacher who taught in the old red-brick school. John Jr. was postmaster of Woodland Post Office from March 1, 1900, to July 29, 1909, when the post office was closed, and he was also Secretary-Treasurer of the School Board for many years — from June 26, 1893, to December 27, 1922.) The red brick school was in use for about 50 years according to Roy Blinn. For many years previous to the erection of the red-brick school, there had been, according to the traditions of the community, a log cabin school house but the location of this building is uncertain.

In September, 1946, with an expanding community the board was forced to use the church hall of Brick St. United Church, known as the "Little School," as a second classroom with the children of Grades 1, 2, 3, and 4 in attendance. The parent school known as the "Big School" was for grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. (Sometimes grade 4 was in the "Big School" in order to balance the number of students in each school.)

(To be continued.)

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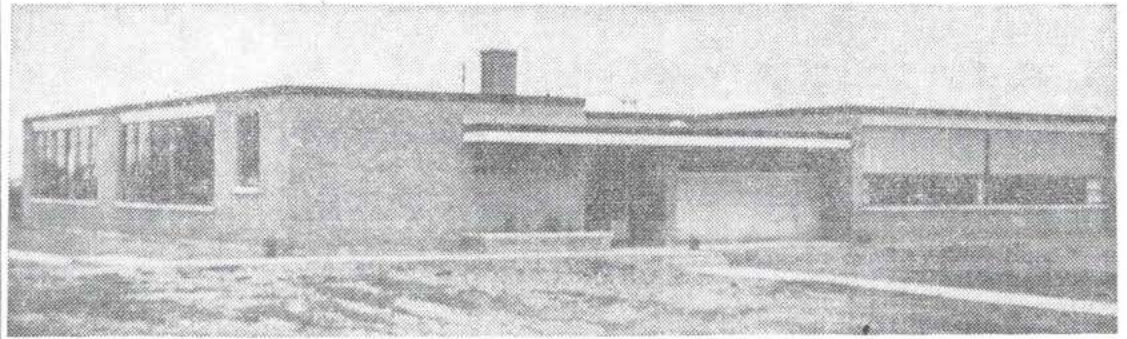
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Schools for the common people called in law and general usage "Common Schools" were established by law in 1816. Brick Street School could have been organized as one of these common schools, although possibly some kind of private, subscription school existed in the community prior to 1817. It is doubtful if the Act of 1816 could have been implemented within one year of its passing the Legislature. Trustees of both "Public Schools" and "Common Schools" had to provide buildings before they could get a grant from the Crown. Gourlay does not give an average fee for the two schools in Westminster Township, which he does for several townships, but the average provincial fee was 13s 8d per quarter and for the London District, 11s 10d per quarter. Whether Public Schools are included in these averages or not is difficult to say. There were not more than eight of these as opposed to a total of 40 schools as given by Gourlay, therefore, at least 32 in the London District were the equivalent of



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Brought to Mind by Free Press Picture

Early Otterville Businesses

By William R. Parson

The interesting picture of Otterville in the last century, published last week in The London Free Press on Looking Over Western Ontario, suggested the considerable industrial activity carried on there in the 1850's. At least two important industries were not suggested in the picture.

One was the Otterville Manufacturing Company originated by the Bullock family and operated by Henry, Fred and James Bullock. It was a woodworking concern and played an important part in the village economy for more than 50 years.

On the west end of the village

was the Parson Wagon Works established by my grandfather, William Parson, and his two brothers in 1860. It was a prominent industry in the village for 40 years until it was completely destroyed by fire.

William Parson was a wheelright by trade having learned his craft in St. Marys and Woodstock. His brother, Cornelius, was the blacksmith and Augustus was the painter and trimmer.

It was an eight-bench factory employing 18 or 20 men. Alex and John McFarlane both learned their trade there and later established a similar business across the street. The Parson wagons were widely used and well known in South Norwich. Originally heavy wagons and sleighs for teaming

produce out of the area were made and, later, fine carriages.

Because of abundant water power and the good agricultural and timber resources, numerous grist, flouring and saw mills were established in this district and an extensive lumber trade was carried on. Grain, lumber and flour were teamed out in vast quantities.

The township was then traversed

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