

Vol. 4 – April 2021



HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

n e w s l e t t e r



Artist's Rendition

**Council Approves Construction Start Date for
new HEIRS Resource Center & Archives** (see page 2)

Welcome to the April 2021 newsletter.

Why am I looking forward so much to the month whose historical claim to fame, is that it boasts days upon days of rain?

Oh yeah, 'cause more & more people are getting their Covid protection, come rain or shine!

So let's start planning for better weather, and better times.

Can't you just wait to clean off all the outdoor furniture or check those plants you put away to if they're showing a bit of life? Perhaps tulips have made their grand entrance to your yard already, or maybe.... is that a dandelion (in April)?

For some, Spring's arrival means you'll put aside your new family discoveries found over the winter, and just pack them away for a while like winter boots, gloves and shovels. But maybe those finds would be excellent leads for uncovering even further information instead?

So let's not put away our genealogical thinking just yet. Let's take the time (while it's raining) to plan our next outside activities (safely, but outside if not in lockdown) and do all those mini-trips we always dreamed about taking again, while we were cooped up in our homes for months. Take that picture you've wanted to take of your grandparents' old house once May flowers arrive.

Stay safe, stay optimistic, and stay in touch with a fellow HEIRS member.

- Rick McCormick

HEIRS is sending its very best wishes to its past-president Edith Woodbridge, who celebrates her 95th birthday later this month. Congratulations Edith, and all the best on your special day!

Oh and about our exciting cover story news...

Just a figment of our imagination, devious minds working overtime, on this 1st day of April!

REMINDER!

Yearly dues are \$30, with memberships running May 1 to April 30 annually.

Some memberships have lapsed for more than a year & need renewing to continue the flow of newsletters & at some point, our monthly meetings.

Please make sure you are a paid-up member, to help offset our operating costs.

During February, the Town of Essex Heritage Week was very busy, highlighting local stories and some of the experts who know those stories best.

The overall theme was “Lost Settlements of Essex”. In an online event, Elise Harding-Davis told of escaped slaves, freedom fighters and black pioneers who came here to build new lives. She especially pointed out the large number of Black cemeteries in the area, many of which are obscure and badly overlooked.

She conveyed stories of the past, and a need to preserve what we still have, as well as making sure the Black history is woven into the school plans for teaching local history.

As part of the same week’s events, HEIRS president Chris Carter spoke as part of an on-line presentation about the many little communities which were scattered around the county, but have disappeared almost completely over the past century. He covered New Canaan, Olinda, Comet, the Iler Settlement and others which are now vague references to most of us.

Essex town council also recognized four deserving citizens with the Community Heritage Preservation Award. These individuals have volunteered much of their time to celebrate and encourage history in the community. Selected for the honour were Elise Harding-Davis, Perry Basden, our own Chris Carter, and the late Bill Gay. Our region is blessed to have four such community-minded people keeping history and tradition alive, each in their own way.

In addition, the town council moved to ‘list’ both the Ferriss Cemetery and the Huffman Cemetery, meaning that they are now listed on the Essex Municipal Heritage Register as having cultural and historical value to the

community. Both were originally pioneer family cemeteries begun by some of the earliest pioneer families of the county, and will now be protected and preserved for those yet to come.

The lockdown has had great effect on HEIRS. The social part of HEIRS - gathering with friends, sharing stories and laughs with a coffee & some cookies after the meeting... these are important to us all.

Even the newsletters have been altered. With no upcoming events or recent past or future speakers to report on, that’s 3 pages to fill each month. Instead, we’ve used more family-focused outlines, and little-known bits of our amazing, yet largely ignored Canadian history.

A long-time member wrote to say...

“I read every word. I loved the part about farming; it reminded me of our farm. We had hogs for a while but they were the first to go. Tidbits bring back memories & then more tidbits appear. Great job.”

Many readers tell us the “Echo of 100 Years Ago” pages are of importance & interest too, as so many well-known families are brought to life and how their days in Harrow used to be.

We need to hear when a story succeeds in being educational, interesting & thought-provoking. Please send your feedback to me (historynut@outlook.com) with your thoughts to help us decide on future issue topics.

What is of particular reading enjoyment for you & which pages do you find most fascinating?

- Ted

The Amherstburg Echo.

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE COUNTY

Vol. XXX No. 15.

AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 1904.

Whole No. 2,474

100 ACRES FOR SALE.

In 2nd concession, Anderton Township, about 4 miles from Amherstburg, 20 acres of bush, some small buildings. For further particulars and price, see

FALLS BROS., Agts.,
Amherstburg.

THE SOVEREIGN BANK OF CANADA.

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO, ONT.

CAPITAL PAID UP \$3,000,000
SURPLUS AND UNDIVIDED PROFITS, 350,000
ASSETS, 50,000

H. S. HOLT, ESQ., President. D. M. STEWART, General Manager.

SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT.

Interest allowed on Deposits of \$1.00 and upwards at highest current rate. Farmers' Notes Discounted at lowest possible rates.

HARROW BRANCH. AMHERSTBURG BRANCH.
C. A. MacMAHON, Manager. M. I. LANE, Manager.

LOST.

LOST—Strayed from my place, Yorkton, on Sunday Feb. 29th, a black, white and tan English setter bitch, answering to the name "LADY". Finder will receive liberal reward by returning to me or on being notified I will go after her. A. Fildes, Yorkton.

ADDITIONAL LOCAL.

Miss Wm. Hanson's condition has improved. Mrs. Alice McLean, of Windsor, is on her feet after a long illness. Wilson's condition after a long illness, caused by a

MALDEN.

Ernest McGee, of Flint, Mich spent Sunday at home.

Mrs. Frank Hunt has been suffering from an attack of influenza.

Win. Golden is suffering from severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism.

Mrs. Alice McLean, of Windsor, is on her feet after a long illness.

Wilson's condition after a long illness, caused by a

BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.

Judge Mellich refuses to grant New Trial.

At the recent sittings of the Division Court in Amherstburg, Mrs. James Brooker sued the corporation of Amherstburg, for injuries sustained alleged to have been due to a fall on a defective sidewalk. She was awarded \$90 and costs. The town, through their solicitors, Davis & Davis, applied for a new trial on the ground of the plaintiff's alleged carelessness. The learned Judge refused to grant the appeal and the text of his decision is as below:

BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.—Mr. Rough for Plaintiff, D. R. Davis for defendant. This action was tried before me at the last sitting of the Division Court at Amherstburg. It is brought by the plaintiff to recover damages for personal injuries sustained by the female plaintiff by falling on a sidewalk on Fort St. which the defendant alleges was a dangerous and unsafe condition. It is pleaded by counsel for the defendant that if the plaintiff has a good cause of action the damages claimed are less than they would be entitled to recover. The law requires a municipal corporation to keep its streets and highways under its control in repair and if it neglects to perform that duty the law provides that it shall be civilly responsible for all damages sustained by any person by reason of such default. The defendant corporation applies to set aside the judgment entered herein on the ground that there is no evidence that the sidewalk in question was out of repair at the time and place where the plaintiff fell. It is contended that the sidewalk was in repair at the time and place where the plaintiff fell. It is contended that the sidewalk was in repair at the time and place where the plaintiff fell. It is contended that the sidewalk was in repair at the time and place where the plaintiff fell.

ANDERTON COUNCIL.

Saturday, Feb. 27th.

Council met in regular session with all members present. Moved by Messrs. Groulx and Cote, that the minutes just read be adopted.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Volans and Cote, that Fred Pague get a warrant for \$4 groceries furnished to the Ver...—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and... that Antoine Luceur get a... that clearing ice from of 60... and Wilbert Suits... Moved by Messrs. that lease Grounding... refund of dog tax... Messrs. Cote and... Bouteau get a wa... sheep killed by an... Moved by Messrs. that Harold Wis... \$5 for two coor... Willis Howard... state labour... applied for a s... side line in or... for the way... property... and Cote, and... that an ap... that an ap... that an ap...

BURK BROS.



LIME FOR SALE IN CARLOAD LOTS.

April 1

Harrow Public Library Board met last Monday and decided to put in a modern filing cabinet. The book committee was directed to spend \$75 on new books for this quarter.

Colchester South continues to be the premier egg producing district of the county. It is quite a common occurrence on Saturdays for local merchants to handle 6,000 dozens, and a week's receipt of eggs can be judged by that as providing considerable extra work for the clerks.

April 8

Lorne Murray's little daughter gave them a bad fright the other day by drinking some gasoline. Dr. Collins was soon on the job and got her out of danger promptly.

A woman clairvoyant at Rockford Il., told Mrs. Mary Thomas, 45, that a man would woo her soon. A man appeared, told of his orange groves in California and won Mrs. Thomas quickly. She gave him \$7,000 in cash and on the day set for the wedding he went out to get some cigars, and did not return. The clairvoyant is also missing.

April 15

Rev. Mr. Jewell, returned missionary from Africa, will speak in the Presbyterian church Sunday, on his life & work in that dark continent, which no doubt will be very interesting. He expects to return to Africa this fall.

Mr. & Mrs. W.L. Hughson quietly celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on March 28th. Both are enjoying very good health and by present appearance bid fair to celebrate many more anniversaries, which their friends sincerely hope.



MEN'S HAT SPECIAL

\$ 2.89

1899 Essex County Business Directory

HARROW

T. B. Adams - general store

John Bertrand - butcher

W. J. Campeau - physician

Clark & Bell - general store

Thomas Curtis - shoemaker

E. F. Darby - druggist and G N W Telegraph Co.

C. E. Drummond - prop. Drummond House

John Farbrother - butcher

Gordon Ferris - baker

Mrs. A. Ford - grocery

D. Halstead - saw mill

John Halstead - prop. Harrow Exchange

E. Harris - chopping mill

Samuel Heard - barber

Henry Herdman - carriage maker

H. Klie - grocer

Robert Laing - tailor

John McIntyre - harness

John Morand - painter

Alvah Munger - jeweler

M. P. O'Connor - Agent Federal Life Assurance Co

W. F. Park - physician

C. I. Pastorius - postmaster and furniture

E. Pastorius - hotel

P. L. Quick - hotel

Charles Richardson - hardware

Mrs. P. R. Rumbull - hardware

A. E. Sinasac - banker

F. E. Sinasac - blacksmith

Staddon & Flood - millers and grain dealers

John Stocker - grocer

Straith & Manning - general store

Thompson & Co. - general store

J. E. Webster - tailor

B. Wright - barber

S. C. Zimmerman - planing mill



6 'Family Gathering'

As you begin to explore your own family's history, you should expect to find that some long-held ideas about ancestors may not be what you have been led to believe.

I recently looked into a story that came to me as a request for help. The family had a minimum amount of facts to work with, but "knew" that an ancestor had founded a business a few generations back. A small amount of digging showed this to be highly doubtful.

Family legends are often untrue, or have been "modified" over time, and retain only a kernel of truth. Expect the unexpected. Occasionally, a story comes to light that catches you completely off-guard.

The letter shown below is something I inherited from my Uncle's files. He began researching the Steeles in the 1930s and up until he died about 1972. The paper looks old, and I assume he had it for some time. He may have been 'cleaning up' the family files by censoring - who knows. I find the truth behind a story brings the individuals to life, warts and all.

Be prepared to learn that not all your kin were saints. This William, was a brother to my GGG Grandfather David. He may have been guilty, or charged falsely. Further research would settle it once & for all.

By the way, most of us Steeles are saints.
- Ted.

Attorney General's Office
York, 15th July 1817

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you that two Private soldiers of His Majesty's 99th Regiment were apprehended at Kingston last summer for sheep stealing, and as their trials will come on at the next assizes, I have to request that you will communicate to His Honor the Administrator, that the principal witnesses vizt: Henry Arnold, Colour Sergeant, Thomas Richardson, private & Charles Kitt, Corporal of the 8th Company, 88 Regiment, are at Montreal with that Copps and to suggest the propriety of an application being made to the Commodore in Chief for their removal to Kingston for the purpose of supporting the prosecution on the part of the Crown.

I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.,

D*ARCY BOULTON.

AttY General

Names of the Felons

Daniel Carty

William Steel

Genealogy of The Phillip Fox Family

- by Ted Steele

Few families have roots as deeply planted here in Essex County as have the Fox family.

Originally the Fuchs, from Germany, Philip (b. 1751) married Catherine Lamer, (b. 1752), in 1772, and they sailed to America in that year. Landing in Baltimore, Maryland, they lived there for 4 years, and then moved to York, Pennsylvania, where they resided for 15 years.

Later, after spending several years in the Detroit area where they met fellow German-speaking settlers Leonard Kratz, and Johann Weigle, they crossed into British territory and awaited the Crown's acquisition of land from the local natives.

Philip and his family drew lots 7, 8 and 9 in Gosfield Twp. near Ruthven. Threat from American forces was recognized early, so soldiers were given land along the river near the fort, where an attack was most likely. Farmers got land further along Lake Erie, where the river widened.

During their marriage, they produced 8 sons and 2 daughters who intermarried with most other Loyalist families of the region.

Here are just a few of these intermarriages to demonstrate the extent that the Fox genealogy has helped shape the county. **They include Philip's children:**

Jonas, born in 1774, married Susan Bruner.

Philip, born in 1766, married Sarah Snyder.

George, born in 1781, married Juliana Wigle and both are buried on North Bass Island near Pelee Island.

Michael, born 1784, married Elizabeth Wigle.

Henry, born 1786, married Catherine Ulch.

Jacob, born 1788, married Madalanna Wigle.

Adam, born 1788, married Mary Snyder.

John, born 1793, married Rachel Stewart, and both are buried on North Bass Island.

Judith, born 1797, married Henry Tofflemire and after his death, married Adam Bruner.

These marriages usually produced 6 to 10 offspring, whose marriages further entrenched the Fox line in local history. An interesting note reads...

"Many of the Fox families migrated from Essex County to North Bass Island, commencing about 1850. This may have been due to the depletion of the ore supply which affected about 200 men at the Olinda furnace, where iron was smelted from bog ore into pig-iron during the period from 1831 to about 1850."

Most Fox branches in the county trace their roots back to Philip, including those in Ruthven (the Fox-Neal apple orchards will be familiar to many); however, at least 2 other lines are not seemingly connected with Philip. They seem to be of British origin with many in the Leamington area. One Col. Thomas Fox received a medal for the Fenian Raids of the 1860s, but his line came from England in the 1840s or so.

Note that although there is much info available through HEIRS, no real effort has been made to produce a binder or book documenting the evolution of this family. Hopefully a descendant will soon be motivated to tackle the task, with help from the HEIRS vast collection of family files and helpful volunteers, of course.

History As It Used to Was...

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

The Vikings came from the northern areas of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in their longboats; the sight of them approaching was usually enough to terrify their intended victims.

They did not wear helmets with horns on them, although most artists insist on depicting them in this fashion.



Around the years of the 11th century, they were an ever present menace, but gradually changed to a more European lifestyle. They acquired land in present day France, which came to be known as the 'land of the Northmen', then 'land of the Normans', and finally Normandy.

Eventually, they became Christian to the point that they took part in the Crusades of the 1200s, trying to free the Holy Land from Turkish control.

In 1066, William the Conqueror, King of Normandy, invaded England and defeated King Harold in the Battle of Hastings. Thus a Viking leader became king of England.

He thus established the line from which Queen Elizabeth II is descended, and she proudly traces her line back to William of Normandy.



In 1898, a Minnesota farmer reported discovering a large runestone during his plowing. About the size of a tombstone, it bore carvings of Viking symbols, and many took the stone to confirm that Vikings had visited the shoreline of the Great Lakes, and the interior of the continent.



In another location, a Viking sword was found in Minnesota. These 2 discoveries provided the inspiration for the NFL's Minnesota Vikings. The objects have indeed been certified as authentic Viking artifacts.

In December of 1936, James Dodd, a small-time prospector in Northern Ontario, walked into the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

In his possession were 4 relics dating to Viking times, badly corroded and broken. He claimed to have found them near Beardmore, a small town near Lake Nipigon, while prospecting.



On inspection, they proved to be true Viking relics - a sword (broken in 2 pieces), a hand axe, and a piece of metal which was identified as 'probably the handle for holding onto a shield'.

Charles Currelly, director of Archaeology at the ROM, downplayed their importance to Dodd, and purchased them for only \$500. According to Dodd, they were part of a Viking burial in northern Ontario but the bones and other items had likely been carried off or spread by wild animals. The items were verified as true Viking relics by several experts, and the rest of the story, while never checked out properly, was accepted as true.

Many had long hoped to find proof of Vikings in North America before Columbus, and Currelly wanted desperately to believe that the ROM had it at last. (At this time, nothing had ever been found to prove the theory, and L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland was not discovered until the 1960s.) The ROM allowed itself to accept the story without proper checking of facts, only a quick trip to 'the spot' where Dodd claimed to have made his find. **Currelly was warned about a possible mistake in his claims, but he chose to ignore the warnings.**

Eventually, the bubble burst. Experts pointed out that the sword and the hand axe were not from the same time period. The 'shield

handle' idea was dismissed since shields had leather straps. The metal object was identified as a 'sleigh rattle' from a Norse sled.

Currelly insisted that the Beardmore discovery and the runestone of Minnesota, found 30 years earlier, each supported the other's veracity, and together formed the proof of Vikings in the interior of the continent before Columbus.

Finally, an expert on archaeology, University of Toronto Professor, Edmund Carpenter, was assigned to prove or disprove the story. He concluded that Beardmore was also a hoax, and a poorly done one at that. Other witnesses came forward, establishing that the items had been housed in a Beardmore home for many years, left there by the original owner. They in all likelihood came from northern Europe when the influx of immigrants brought Swedes and Norwegians among others to Canada in large numbers.

Currelly found his reputation trashed, and he was something of a laughing stock. He resigned and retired; soon after, his health began to fail and he was a broken man. As the hoax was revealed his memoirs were published at about the same time. His extolling of the 'great find at Beardmore' came at the worst possible time for him.

The ROM continues to display the items, but no longer claims that they were originally found in Ontario, or that they prove any Viking presence in the Great Lakes region. New discoveries are being made almost monthly, but these are located where Vikings are known to have existed.

Other than Newfoundland, no trace of them has otherwise been found.

HEIRS RESOURCE CENTRE

Open September - June (December excepted)

Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM

Call to confirm Wednesday or other appointments.

Office is temporarily closed due to Covid restrictions!

Newsletter

Published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, September to June, (December excepted).

Receive full colour newsletters by email, or a B&W print version by regular post. Simply provide your email or street address to our office.

Memberships

\$30 CDN / U.S. per person or couple.

Memberships run May 1st - April 30th, annually.

Send membership cheque to:

HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow
ON, Canada N0R 1G0

Please include phone, postal address, email & family names you are now researching.

Non-member using Research Library

\$10 per visit (+ photocopy costs).

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Harrow & Colchester South
Community Centre (Arena Bldg.)

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Kudos go to Greg Harrison at The Computer Centre in Harrow, who provides HEIRS support for all things technical to help keep our office running smoothly.

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