

Chapter III

**MUNICIPAL
HISTORY**

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The Power and the Magistracy: Public Authority in Early Amherstburg

To the average Amherstburg citizen of the early 1800s, no figure personified government authority more than the local justices of the peace or as they were familiarly called, the magistrates. As the Western District's military depot for the distribution of supplies to Native allies, Amherstburg was from its origins predisposed to accept an autocratic form of local government. Transcending the military nature of the settlement was the prevailing municipal organization. The most important institution in the Western District was the Court of Quarter Sessions. For centuries, this court had governed local affairs in England and it was expected to fulfill the same function on the Upper Canadian frontier. Clothed as their English predecessors were with considerable civil as well as criminal authority, a justice of the peace cut a formidable figure in early Amherstburg society.

Magistrates decided on the construction of public buildings, on the opening and closing of roads and even set tax rates and enforced their collection. According to the 1817 statute defining the powers of justices of the peace, the magistrates in Quarter Session had the power to make "such prudential rules and regulations... relative to paving, keeping in repair and improving the streets of the towns respectively, regulating the assize [*sic*] of bread, slaughter houses and nuisances."¹ Magistrates were appointed by commissions issued by the Executive Council and (in deference to their enormous influence in the community) they were usually the most prominent and respected men in whom the government could place its confidence.

Loyalty to the British Crown was usually the highest qualification. When he was appointed administrator of Upper Canada in 1796, one of Peter Russell's first acts was to order his county lieutenants to make sure that "you find Magistrates wanting for the suppression of Vice and Immorality."² While other districts became dominated by one grand patron, in the Western District no single figure was powerful enough to dominate. Instead, a tightly knit oligarchy of mid-level government officers and merchants "comfortably dominated" local affairs.³ Not too surprisingly, Amherstburg's magistrates reflected the prevailing military character. Assistant Commissary Thomas Reynolds, Barrack Master William Duff and two medical officers for the garrison, William Harffy and Robert Richardson, held commissions as magistrates. To illustrate the 'family compact' nature of this remote oligarchy, Alexander Duff, a magistrate at the time of his death in 1809, was the son-in-law of Alexander Grant Sr., the commodore of the Upper Lakes during the American Revolution. Alexander Duff's brother William, a magistrate from 1813 to 1837, was the son-in-law of Gregor McGregor, the first Sheriff of the District of Hesse (which included Essex County). As S.J.R. Noel observed, "justices of the peace were not simply local judicial officers but also agents of the central government who exercised an important administrative and supervisory role in the community, which was precisely the situation then prevailing in English local government."⁴ Thus early Amherstburg

fitted the mould envisaged by the colony's first governor John Graves Simcoe as a hierarchical autocracy, the very antithesis of representative government.

Some idea of the magistrates' status comes from the eagerness of the local newspaper to present in full their charges to the grand juries. For example, Charles Eliot, the chairman of the Western District Quarter Sessions, gave an address in 1832 that went well beyond local judicial concerns. He lectured the assembly on one of the most contentious issues of the day, the relations between the religions. He noted that "the pulpit of one Church has been ascended to vent unkind and ungenerous reflections" on another denomination and he reminded his listeners that "Tho' differing in trivial dogmas, we yet coalesce in the most important doctrines."⁵

In 1836 the local magistrates headed by Charles Eliot led the drive to incorporate a railway from Niagara to Sandwich. Quarter Sessions dealt with the need for licensing another ferry across the Detroit River and with the pervasive evil of strong drink. A grand jury in 1836 warned that, "We must be allowed the expression of our firm conviction that the intemperate use of intoxicating drinks has done more than all other agencies in bringing about the present relaxed state of public morals."⁶

The magistrates' civil authority was never more apparent than during the Quarter Sessions of 1841 when they considered how many tavern licenses to issue in Amherstburg. Many applicants were disappointed that "there were seven licenses granted for Amherstburg- about half the usual number."⁷ As one "Philanthropus" noted in the *Western Herald*, "Our worthy Magistrates of Amherstburg with a laudable desire to promote the welfare of the community in which they preside mustered their strength [and] obtained a reduction in the number of taverns in Amherstburg."⁸ This stern resolution was apparently short-lived. Not long thereafter the magistrates granted additional licenses, prompting one Temperance advocate to appeal to the magistrates, "There are no fewer than twelve taverns in this small town of Amherstburg, by which this place is demoralized and drunkenness increased, whereas three or four would be amply sufficient."⁹ On issues of vital local concern - whether roads, ferries or taverns - it was the magistrates, not any elected officials, who would make the final decision.

The authority of the magistrates could be contrasted with that of the elected township officers. As the *Canadian Emigrant* noted in 1836, there was little controversy over the election of township officers in Mersea for these "almost nominal offices" were of no significance in any case.¹⁰ Magistrates, by contrast, were of great significance. While Charles Eliot had dominated the 1830s, John Prince emerged after the Battle of Windsor in December, 1838 as the most prominent figure in the Western District. Prince had been a barrister in England for many years and he brought with him the class-consciousness of the English gentleman. Those with the proper breeding were meant to lead, the others to follow. He had already clashed with Eliot in 1835 when he had publicly criticized the magistrate for prosecuting two young men, Orin and Russell Stanborough, for horse theft. "This Mr. Charles Eliot - this would-be learned Judge,"¹¹ Prince sneered. In a notable Quarter Sessions on July 17, 1839, Prince staged what can only be described as a *coup d'état* against Eliot. While the latter, as per the normal practice, had been elected chairman for the year, Prince moved that he be ousted and replaced. The magistrates supported him and as Prince took the chair, Eliot stepped down and walked out of the Sandwich Courthouse.

For his part, Prince had some revealing comments on the role of the magistrate: "Any man of energy, and who possessed the means and the inclination to settle controversies and to do good among his fellow men - the office of Justice of the Peace has been for years past, one of actual

distress, anxiety, embarrassment, and not a trifling pecuniary loss." When Sheriff Robert Lachlan was elected chairman, he lamented that while in England men of fortune could easily spare the time to be magistrates, "in this new and thinly settled country... very few indeed can be expected to be found qualified for such an office." Perhaps even more startling is the reaction of the grand jury to the Eliot-Prince rivalry. The average citizen, with no experience of representative government, was distraught at the rancour between the district's two leading figures. At the end of the summer Quarter Session of 1839, the jurors "expressed their deep regret that schisms and misunderstandings should have so long existed among gentlemen of influence and property, to whom the public are accustomed to look up."¹²

The magistrates frequently had to assume conflicting roles. The *Western Herald* questioned why Prince, a lawyer and a Queen's Counsel, was permitted to sit as a magistrate, as "it is irregular and by no means common or proper."¹³ On one occasion Prince charged a number of Patriot prisoners captured at the Battle of Pelee Island with murder and appeared as prosecutor at the spring assizes of 1838. Being both a judge and prosecutor seemed more than incongruous to some. Justice Jonas Jones advised him, "Mr. Prince, you are aware that you are a Judge of this Court, being one of the associates named in the commission. I do not therefore think you are a proper person to become prosecutor in this case."¹⁴ With all its controversies, the office of magistrate was the highest one to which an able and ambitious young man might aspire.

The career of Louis Joseph Fluet is an interesting study in climbing to the top of the colonial ladder. At the beginning of his public life, it seemed more likely that Fluet would be called before a magistrate than acting as one. Born in Quebec City on April 10, 1801 Fluet came from a family proud both of its French heritage as well as its service to the British Crown. His father had enlisted in the 1st Battalion Milice Sédentaire of Quebec in 1807 and had served throughout the War of 1812. Applying for a militia bounty in 1844, Louis pleaded that "all our family has always professed a great attachment for their country, and at any time volunteers were demanded they were always the foremost."¹⁵

Young Louis was educated at the Collège de Nicolet and was ordained a priest. Sent to the Western District in 1827, he was reported to have "changed his religious views."¹⁶ This philosophical change may have had more to do with his making the acquaintance of a Miss Justine Reaume and their subsequent marriage at the English Church (St. John's) in Sandwich in November, 1830. The scandal of a Catholic priest leaving his faith and flock so outraged some that a year after his marriage he became the centre of a small riot while on his way to church. One of Fluet's antagonists was none other than his estranged father.¹⁷

In 1834 Amherstburg priest Father Lostrie took the final steps to excommunicate the renegade priest and deny him the sacraments. For his part, Fluet responded in a public letter that excommunication was of no concern to him: "The Rev. Gentleman might have saved himself the trouble as I voluntarily long ago left that denomination and therefore excommunicated myself."¹⁸ Despite potentially alienating a good number of Essex County residents, Fluet worked doggedly to advance himself. He began to study law with Alexander Chewett and later with Col. John Prince. Even though he was an anathema to the Catholic Church, he became a middleman between the French-speaking farmers and the English commercial interests. He would later be recalled as the "legal adviser of many of the old French settlers of Essex."¹⁹

Yet to exercise any real authority, a man had to belong to the magistracy. Fluet took the first

step on that ladder by becoming the clerk of the Court of Requests in 1834. This court dealt with minor civil cases under 15 shillings. This early 'people's court' probably dealt with smaller cases of real concern to common citizens. As clerk of this court, Fluet's position was not as disinterested as might be supposed, for he advertised that "those who may favour him with their patronage that the utmost dispatch will be given to their business consistent with the requirements of the law."²⁰

Ability and diligence were one thing, but what set the magistrates apart was their unquestioned loyalty to the Crown. Fluet may have put himself in some jeopardy when he acted as secretary for a committee of moderate reformers, the 'Freeholders of the Township of Gosfield', in 1834. These men were "of liberal principles but not of such a cast as to create revolutionary principles, or who have the visionary politics of [William Lyon] MacKenzie's faction."²¹ Fluet would never embrace MacKenzie's radical ideas and would serve in the militia during the Rebellion of 1837-38. By 1840, Fluet was clerk of Sandwich Township and could hope for even better things. After the Durham Report of 1839, Britain seemed eager to find new men more in tune with popular demands. The *Western Herald* moaned in 1841 that "in the new Commission for the Western District lately issued are the names of twenty three new magistrates who are said to be decidedly Radical."²² One of these new radical magistrates, Felix A. Lafferty (described by his enemies in the *Amherstburg Courier* as a "low groggery keeper") became involved in a dispute with a former colleague, John Prince. During the 1849 debate on the Rebellion Losses Bill, the irascible old colonel had vehemently protested against Sir Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine's use of "that confounded French language."²³ There was such ill-feeling against Prince among the French-Canadians of Amherstburg that Prince sent an agent to the Catholic Church after Sunday mass to plead that the colonel had been misunderstood. Lafferty decried this going to "Church doors on the sabbath" and suggested that the people of Amherstburg recognized Prince for the dying Tory he was.²⁴

For his part, Fluet's ambitions were finally realized in 1843 when he appeared on a commission as a magistrate. It was his fate that his only year as one of the highest local dignitaries coincided with the decline in the office.

By the 1840s squabbles between magistrates were becoming increasingly irrelevant as the first tentative steps were being made towards municipal government. Under the Municipal Authorities Act of 1841,²⁵ district councillors would now be elected at township meetings. By section 51 of the act, the powers of the justices of the peace with regard to highways and bridges were transferred to elected officials. They were further ordered by section 54 to deliver all documents and records in these matters to the new councils. Thus "various functions devolved upon the Municipal Council and its members, and in particular many of the duties hitherto discharged by the Quarter Sessions and the magistrates."²⁶

The advent of popular government was not universally welcomed. A "British Canadian" writing in the *Western Herald* felt that this was too similar to the levelling politics in the adjacent states. Canada was losing its hierarchical government and "substituting something so nearly resembling a democratic form... as we see exhibited in the neighboring states."²⁷ An example of the "democratic form" in action occurred in 1849 when Amherstburg decided to build a schoolhouse. Three options were available, including "the lot to the rear of the Pastorius' brick house or two lots on the Park block." While the school commissioners could have chosen any site, they preferred to have a public meeting as "they thought it proper to be guided in their choice by the wishes of the Inhabitants."²⁸

Finally, by the Municipal Act of 1849²⁹ local self-government became effective in Canada West. The powers of the local oligarchies were taken away and the magistrates were left with a limited criminal jurisdiction. In many ways, this was the local counterpart to the responsible government movement that had made the provincial government able to control its internal affairs.

As for Louis Fluet, his brief fling as a magistrate was as close to power as he would ever come. He remained a lawyer to local farmers for many years until his death in 1881. Both he and the former oligarchs such as Colonel Prince had been overtaken by events. Amherstburg was finally incorporated as a village with town powers in 1851 and its first reeve, Alexander Hewgill Wagner, represented this change in administration. An apothecary, Wagner reflected the coming of age of the elected official as the leader in local affairs. In a small way, Amherstburg mirrored the peaceful revolutionary change that had occurred throughout the province. Local democracy had replaced the genteel autocracy of the frontier past.

From Magistrates to Mayors

Town Meetings

Although the inhabitants of Upper Canada were able to elect representatives to the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada at York commencing in 1792, they would be without any effective form of elected local government until 1850. As a concession to Loyalists who had been accustomed in the Thirteen Colonies to local government by town meetings, in 1792 the British government reluctantly allowed the establishment of such meetings in Upper Canada in each town or township.³⁰ Town meetings were authorized to take place only one day each year. Commencing in 1794, town meetings were to be held annually on the first Monday of March.³¹ This date was changed by a statute in 1817 which fixed the first Monday in January as the day for the convening of the annual meetings. The calling of the town meeting was authorized by two magistrates issuing a warrant which was posted in a conspicuous spot in the community. The magistrates determined the place within the township for the meeting. The high constable for that community presided at the meeting. Any municipality with less than thirty inhabitant householders combined with adjoining municipalities for the purpose of holding township meetings. The magistrates determined the place within the township for the meeting. According to local tradition, a building on the west side of Dalhousie Street north of Murray Street was used as a town hall in the early days of Amherstburg.

Unlike its American prototype, the town meeting in Upper Canada gave no real power to the community to make decisions for the betterment and better regulation of its own affairs. Although the town meeting may have provided a forum for discussions on various matters and an opportunity to draw up petitions about local grievances for presentment to the lieutenant governor and the Legislative Assembly at York, initially the inhabitants could only exercise their vote at the town meeting to make resolutions regulating the height and sufficiency of fences in the community and to elect the town's officers for a one-year term. The inhabitants were allowed to choose their own officials, but these functionaries were not accountable to the people. In the fulfillment of their duties,

the town's officers were the agents of the provincial government, operating with limited defined powers under the control of the magistrate.

Township Officers

Each town or township was required to elect one town clerk, two tax assessors, one collector of taxes, two town wardens, a sufficient number of poundkeepers and an ever-increasing number of overseers of highways.

Town Clerks, Wardens and Tax Assessors and Collectors

The town clerk's duties were limited to preparing a list of all the male and female inhabitants in the township for the use of the magistrates. The tax assessors assessed all taxes imposed by acts of the legislature and the tax collector demanded payment of the monies due. The wardens acted as guardians of the town's property and their duties extended to arranging for the apprenticeship of abandoned and orphaned children, collecting security from the former owners of freed slaves to ensure that their care would not become a burden to the municipality and providing for the poor. The wardens were to be elected by the inhabitants of the community until an Anglican church with a duly appointed pastor or minister was built in the township. Thereafter the Anglican minister was to appoint one of the wardens (who was also to act as the church warden) and the other warden was to be elected by the voters.³²

Poundkeepers

Whether town dwellers or farmers, every pioneer household kept livestock to provide beef, pork, mutton, dairy products, wool and leather for their own use or commercial purposes. Oxen and horses were needed as beasts of burden in the arduous tasks of clearing the forests and cultivating the fields. Traditionally, these domesticated animals had been allowed to roam free, grazing on the community's common lands. This practice meant that cultivated fields, gardens, orchards, storage facilities and other areas requiring protection from the livestock had to be enclosed with fences. To prevent the destruction of crops by the 'free commoners' (cattle, horses, sheep and pigs running at large) the inhabitants at the annual town meeting were to determine the exact height and nature of the fences required in each township. All livestock trespassing onto lands which had been properly fenced were to be impounded by the poundkeepers. If any question should arise about the height and sufficiency of fences, it was the duty of the overseer of highways to view the fences.

Another concern, particularly within the cramped quarters of a town, was to determine which of the 'free commoners' could pose a danger or nuisance to the community. In 1793 the Legislative Assembly instructed poundkeepers to impound "any Stoned Horse, more than one year old that shall be running at large upon the highways or commons."³³ The following year the provincial legislators permitted the inhabitants to determine by vote at their town meeting the periods during which horned cattle, horses, sheep and swine were to be restrained from running at large.³⁴ Regardless of the regulations established by the townspeople on these matters, the Legislative Assembly decreed in 1803 that swine were never to be permitted to roam free in the towns of York, Niagara, Queenston, Sandwich, Amherstburg, Kingston and New Johnstown.³⁵ In 1804, in an attempt to improve the

quality of sheep stock in the province, the Legislative Assembly resumed regulating the confinement periods of rams.³⁶

Overseers of Highways

One of the foremost problems faced by the early legislators in Upper Canada was to provide a network of good roads throughout the province. To meet this need, statute labour laws were passed requiring all inhabitant householders to work for a specified number of days each year on building and repairing the township's roads. The conscripted road builders were also obligated to supply the draft animals, wagons, shovels, picks and saws needed for the task at hand. After 1819, inhabitants were allowed to pay a sum of money in place of supplying their labour.

Under the direction of the magistrates, the overseers of highways were responsible for organizing and supervising the necessary road crews to carry out the provisions of any acts of the legislature relating to roads. Initially there were to be two to six overseers of highways in each township. By 1830 the number had been increased to thirty but there were still complaints about the inadequacy of the province's roads. Building highways by statute labour proved to be very inefficient as there was little continuity in planning with the overseers being replaced annually. Road work undertaken one year could be abandoned the following year or fall into disrepair for lack of regular maintenance.

Township Elections

The township's officials were nominated and elected on the spot at the township meeting by an electorate composed of the "inhabitant householders" appearing on the latest assessment rolls of the municipality. According to these requirements, females, minors and aliens could have voted for the town officers if they otherwise qualified as inhabitant householders.³⁷ Nothing in the 1793 act providing for the nomination and appointment of parish and town officers specifically barred them from voting.

There were women in Amherstburg who would have appeared on the Malden and Amherstburg Assessment Rolls as heads of households owning property in their own name. Barbara or Barberry Adams while an unmarried woman owned property and resided in Amherstburg between 1800 and 1804. Mrs. Mary Scott appeared as the head of her household on assessments and owned property in Amherstburg during the 1820s and '30s. Madelaine Askin owned property in her own name in Amherstburg since 1803, appearing as head of her household after the death of her husband John Askin Jr. in 1820. Americans who settled in Amherstburg while retaining their United States' citizenship would also have been entitled to vote as inhabitant householders. The prominent Amherstburg merchant Thomas F. Park of the Park Bros. firm would have been a qualified voter although he retained his American citizenship for almost forty years after settling in Canada in the 1820s.³⁸

Although appearing on the assessment rolls, non-residents of the community owning vacant or commercial land would not have been qualified to vote because they were not inhabitant householders. Adults who lived with their parents and owned no property in their own name would not have voted either, as their names would not appear on the assessment rolls. The election was

conducted by having each voter present at the meeting publicly declare his vote for a particular candidate in the presence of the constable. The magistrates subsequently swore the successful candidates into office.

Candidates could be elected to office even if they had not consented to being nominated. An office could only be declined on the basis that the officeholder had already served a year in that particular office in the preceding three-year period. Recognizing that some citizens may consider their election to office an unwanted honour, the Legislative Assembly provided that fines were to be levied against persons who had been elected but who refused to take office. Attempts to avoid the duties of elected office by not holding town meetings were checked in 1806 when the Legislative Assembly instructed the magistrates to appoint the township officers if no town meeting had been held.

Little evidence remains concerning the township meetings for Malden. (Until 1851 Amherstburg was considered part of Malden Township.) The early assessment rolls reveal that William Mills and James Gordon (1812), Charles Bercsy and Lewis Grant Gordon (1823), Jonathon Nelson and James Kevill (1828), Alanson Botsford and James Lafferty (1835), John Sloan (1837), William Duff (1838) and Robert Barclay Elliott (1839) were some of the elected assessors and town clerks.

Petitions to the legislature concerning matters of a community concern, such as the necessity of legalizing the titles to Amherstburg town lots in 1819, the settlement of the Huron Reserve (*circa* 1820) and the establishment of a marketplace in Amherstburg in 1822, may have emanated from the Malden Township meetings.

The Road to Reform

Several shortcomings became apparent in this initial plan for administering local affairs. The magistrates were unable to manage the multitude of problems arising in the developing communities as they had not been permitted to initiate bylaws in their communities. In 1792 magistrates were given a limited power to prevent accidental fires in municipalities, being empowered to establish fire safety regulations for communities where forty stores or dwelling houses were erected within a half mile square.³⁹ Any measures subsequently adopted by the magistrates appear to have been ineffective to deal with fire hazards.

A petition presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1817 by the inhabitants of Amherstburg and Sandwich pointed out that these towns had increased in population and "as the houses are mostly built of wooden materials they are very subject to fire," but no municipal fire brigades could be established nor could their citizenry be forced to adopt effective fire safety measures because there were "no provisions being by law now in force affording adequate power to the magistrates to make regulations and impose the same" concerning fire prevention.⁴⁰ Probably in response to this petition, a statute was passed in 1817 specifically empowering the Amherstburg magistrates to establish a fire brigade and pass regulations dealing with fire prevention. The statute also permitted the magistrates to pass regulations concerning street lighting and maintenance, the sale of bread, the inspection of weights and measures and the control of slaughterhouses and nuisances in the community.⁴¹

The residual power to make bylaws remained in the hands of the Legislative Assembly at York

which continued to concern itself with regulating by statute matters that were strictly in the nature of bylaws, such as determining when and where markets should be held in the various towns, regulating pedlars and hawkers, controlling inns and taverns and constantly revising the legislation concerning livestock permitted to run at large. The local needs of the remote Essex frontier were neither familiar to nor foremost in the minds of the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly. It took years to get legislation passed concerning local matters. In 1822 the citizens of Amherstburg had petitioned the government to set up a public market in Amherstburg and land was acquired for that purpose. Nine years passed before the statute establishing the market was passed by the Legislative Assembly in York.

Often the best interests of the community were not even served by the local magistrates who had been appointed to oversee its affairs. As the Tory government had no desire to change the *status quo*, individuals desiring any type of reform were not usually appointed. There were many complaints that the established settlers were often passed over in favour of the appointment of recent arrivals from Great Britain, who had little experience with Canadian frontier conditions. Anyone promoting the American method of democratically electing justices was denounced as a traitor by the ruling autocracy.

When the Reformers gained control of the Legislative Assembly in 1835, there was an attempt to address these past grievances. Legislation was passed stripping the magistrates of many of their administrative municipal functions. Commencing after December 1, 1835 each municipality was directed to elect three representatives to a board of commissioners. This elected board was to exercise many of the administrative functions formerly performed by the magistrates and wardens. A large measure of local autonomy was granted to the townships by giving voters at township meetings the power to make rules relating to such matters connected with the township "as may tend to promote the peace and welfare of the township." The town clerk, rather than two magistrates, called the annual meeting and appointed the place for it to be held. The meetings were to be presided over by a chairman chosen at the meeting and were to be recorded by the town clerk. Persons otherwise qualified to vote at the township meeting, being freeholders or householders on the last assessment rolls for that community, were prohibited from voting if not of the full age of 21 years. Fines were to be levied by the town clerk on any person voting or trying to vote who was not qualified to do so.⁴²

On the heels of these reforms, the Legislative Assembly was dissolved and a reactionary Assembly brought to power through the strenuous efforts of the conservative forces of the Legislative Council and the lieutenant governor. The Radicals' frustration with the autocratic rule of the Family Compact exploded in armed rebellion in 1837. After the rebellion was crushed and the Radicals discredited, many of the reforms of 1835 were repealed by the Legislative Assembly. The magistrates were restored to their former control over township affairs and the elected municipal officers again relegated to being mere administrative agents of the provincial assembly.

When it became apparent to the British government during its investigations into the causes of the rebellion that the absence of effective local self-government had contributed to the misgovernment leading to the rebellion, the existing form of municipal administration was fundamentally restructured. The magistrates' authority was restricted to the administration of justice. Elected district councils assumed all of the magistrates' former powers over municipal planning and administration. Many of the concerns which the inhabitants formerly had to carry to the Legislative

Assembly could be dealt with by the new district councils.

The District Councils

Commencing January 1, 1842 local affairs within each district were to be governed by a district council composed of representatives elected from each township within the district.⁴³ (Upper Canada was composed of several districts. The present counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton formed the Western District.) Dependent upon the population, each township was allowed one or two representatives. The Township of Malden, which included Amherstburg as part of the township, was entitled to elect two district councillors to the Western District Council. Each district council was headed by a warden who was initially appointed by the government in power. In 1847 the district councillors became responsible for electing the warden from among their number.

To be eligible to serve as a district councillor, the candidate had to be resident within the township which elected him and own property situated within the district or adjoining district which had a "real value" of three hundred pounds over and above all encumbrances. Persons in holy orders, ministers or teachers of any religious sect, civil court justices, military officers on full pay in Her Majesty's service, any person accountable for district revenues, any person receiving a pecuniary allowance from the district or having any direct or indirect interest in any contract with the district and any person convicted of treason or felony in any British court of law was barred from serving as district councillor. Any duly qualified person elected district councillor who refused to serve in office was to be fined. At his own request, a person could be excused from serving as a councillor on the grounds that he was disabled by a permanent physical or mental infirmity, that he was over the age of sixty-five years or that he had been elected district councillor within the past five years.

District councillors were elected for a three-year term with one-third of the councillors annually standing for re-election. Robert Reynolds and George Bullock were the first representatives to be elected to the Western District Council from Malden-Amherstburg. Reynolds was a wealthy landowner in Malden and a former magistrate. George Bullock was the proprietor of the British North American Hotel in Amherstburg. In succeeding elections, Lewis Grant Gordon, a merchant; John McLeod, the proprietor of Malden Mills; and Henry Wright, a yeoman,⁴⁴ sat as Malden Township's representatives on the Western District Council.⁴⁵

The Western District Council sat four times yearly. These meetings were always held in Sandwich, the district town. The councillors had a limited power to tax the inhabitants of the district to raise money to pay for the support of public education, local improvements and the construction of such necessary public buildings as schoolhouses, town halls, jails and courthouses. In this era of such necessary public buildings as schoolhouses, town halls, jails and courthouses. In this era Amherstburg acquired a new courthouse building.⁴⁶ The district council functioning as a board of education acquired the land for new school sites, built the schoolhouses and hired the teachers in each new school district. Each district's public works were under the direction of a surveyor appointed by the warden of that district council. The councillors also appointed road commissioners to supervise the work within each township. With their limited revenue, the councillors were hard-pressed to select the most urgent requests from among the deluge of petitions requesting the extension and improvement of roads, the construction of bridges and the establishment of new schools within the Western District. Until 1846, the councillors were prohibited from taking any

remuneration for their services.

Amendments to the Election Process

The nomination and election of the district councillors was to be the first order of business at the annual township meetings in January. If required by a candidate or by three voters, up to three hours of the meeting could be allocated for these elections.

New voting regulations were instituted to curtail the corrupt practices that had surfaced during prior provincial elections. Before any votes could be polled, the town clerk or presiding chairman acting as the returning officer was required to take a lengthy oath that he neither directly nor indirectly had received any fee, gift or gratuity in money or otherwise for effecting the return of any person as district councillor, that he would return the candidate who at the final close had the majority of votes and that he would use his best efforts to preserve peace at the election and would give all voters free and unmolested access to and from the poll.

For the first time at township elections, a poll book was required to be kept wherein each elector's vote was to be recorded beside his name. To further reduce fraudulent voting, the town clerk could require voters to take an oath or affirm that they were the person whose name appeared on the assessment roll for that township and that they had not already voted at that election, but no further proof of eligibility could be demanded.

Elections appear to have been rather rowdy affairs. To ensure that order would be maintained, the town clerk or presiding chairman was constituted a conservator of the peace and empowered to arrest any persons who "may assault, beat, molest or threaten any Elector at, coming to, or returning from the election." If necessary, the justices of the peace for the township could appoint up to twenty-five special constables to assist in maintaining peace and order at the election. "All Constables and others at the election" were enjoined to aid the person presiding to maintain order "under pain of being deemed guilty of a misdemeanour."⁴⁷

Mayors, Reeves and Municipal Councils

The newly-constituted district councils were unable to provide satisfactory self-government for their communities. Despite the numerous reforms, the autonomy and effectiveness of the district councils were limited by several factors. Insufficient revenues hampered the councils in serving the needs of their districts. All bylaws passed by the district council had to be submitted to the governor-in-council and were subject to revision. Expenditures on public works over £300 had to be approved by the provincial board of works. Each district contained too large an area to be easily governed by a district council. It was a hardship for councillors to travel from Sombra and Chatham to the meetings at the Town of Sandwich, nor would they necessarily share the same local concerns as the representatives from Essex County. These factors led to a growing demand for the establishment of municipal councils which would possess a greater autonomy and administer a smaller geographic area than the district councils. Government by district council lasted for only eight years.

In 1849 the Municipal Institutions Act laid down the foundations of municipal government

as we know it today. Each city, town, village or township was entitled to annually elect representatives to its own municipal council. Each township and village council was headed by a reeve who was elected to that position by his fellow councillors at the first meeting of the newly-elected council. This reeve would also represent the municipality on the county council. If the town or village had over five hundred voters, a second councillor was also elected by the town councillors to sit as deputy reeve on the county council. The county council was headed by the warden who was elected from among their number by the Reeves and deputy Reeves representing each municipality within the county. Each town or city council was headed by a mayor.

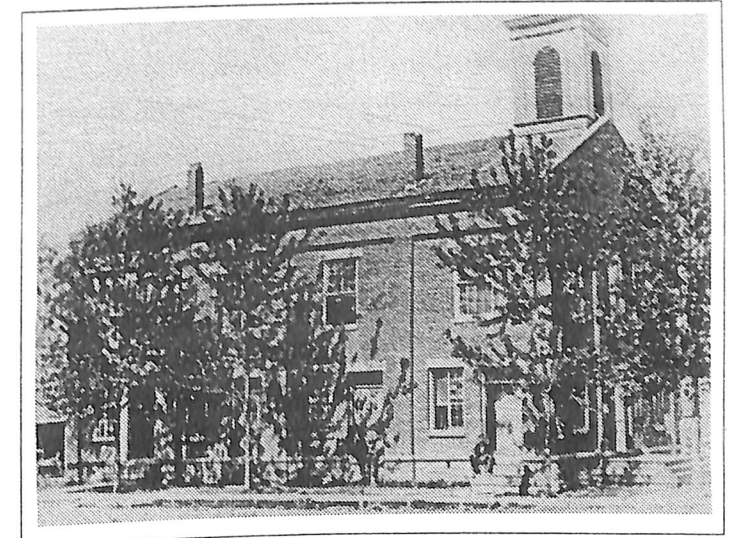
Amherstburg was still considered part of the Township of Malden when the new Municipal Institutions Act came into force in 1850. Voters in Amherstburg and Malden elected five councillors to their township council. The councillors chose Henry Wright, a former district councillor, to head the council as reeve.

When Amherstburg became a separate municipality from Malden in 1851, the first Amherstburg Municipal Council was elected. From among the five elected councillors, pharmacist Alexander Wagner was chosen as reeve. The subsequent Reeves elected by their fellow councillors were Alexander Jones in 1852; Henry McKenney in 1853; Peter Menzies in 1854; Felix A. Lafferty in 1855 and 1856; Gordon Watts Leggatt in 1857, 1858 and 1859; James Noble in 1860; John Kolfage in 1861 and 1862; Denis D. Delisle in 1863 and 1864; John Kolfage again in 1865; and William McGuire in 1866.

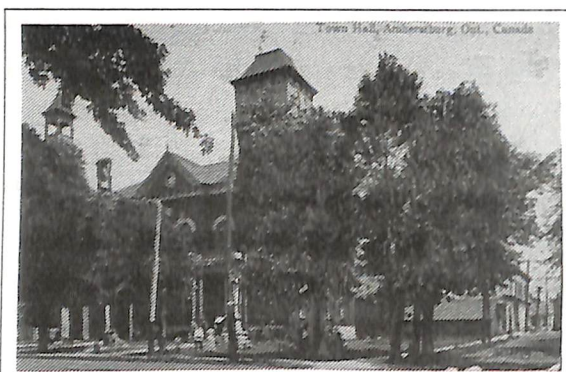
After October, 1863 candidates for council were no longer nominated at the annual town meetings in January. The candidates for council were nominated at a meeting of electors held at the town or township hall on the second-to-last Monday in December with their election occurring as formerly in January. The process of electing the reeve and deputy reeve by the indirect vote of the municipal councillors was amended in August, 1866. Thereafter candidates for mayor or reeve and deputy reeve were nominated at a meeting of the electors held at the town or township hall in December. In January the voters elected to office the mayor or reeve, deputy reeve and councillors.

As previously required for district councillors, candidates for the offices of mayor or councillor had to possess property within the municipality assessed above certain specified values, but now they could include in this evaluation property owned by their wives as well as property held in their own names. A candidate no longer had to actually reside within the municipality to qualify as its municipal representative. As long as he resided within the municipality's county, he was qualified to run for councillor or mayor.

Various occupations were prohibited from being municipal councillors: innkeepers, saloonkeepers, sheriff's officers, division court bailiffs, gaolers, civil court judges and municipal officers. Anyone receiving an allowance from the municipality or having by himself or by his partner an interest in any



Amherstburg town hall, circa 1880.
Marsh Collection Society, P572



Amherstburg town hall, circa 1915.

contract with the municipality also was barred from council. If one did not wish to be elected or appointed as councillor or any other municipal officer, he could decline the honour if he was already engaged in a medical profession, was a judge, court officer, lawyer, sheriff, coroner, civil servant, member of the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council or was over sixty years of age.

Each municipal council was empowered to make bylaws and regulations for the betterment of the community and to levy taxes to pay for these improvements. Among the powers extended to municipal councils was the authority to acquire property for its own use, for common and grammar schools and for cemeteries. Municipal councils were also empowered to build roads and bridges, improve communications, authorize gas and water companies to lay pipes, license taverns and shops and regulate public morals.

In immediate response to the granting of these powers, the Amherstburg Town Council purchased land on the corner of Gore and Apsley (now Sandwich) Streets for a new town hall in 1853. The contract to build it was let in August, 1853 with a scheduled completion date of May, 1854. For thirty years this building served as a town hall, meeting place and schoolhouse. When the ceiling of the town hall collapsed in 1883 the building was replaced by a Victorian structure which partially burned in 1890. Repairs were made to the 'new' town hall and it served the community until it was razed in 1965 to make way for the present municipal building.

The Amherstburg Municipal Council also exercised its newly-acquired power to purchase property for a public cemetery. In 1855 council acquired eight acres of land fronting on the Townline Road between Anderdon and Malden (now Alma Street). The graveyard laid out there was subsequently known as Rose Hill Cemetery.

The Municipal Institutions Act also empowered municipal councils to acquire lands for common or grammar schools. A longstanding concern among area residents was the absence of a publicly funded facility in Amherstburg where their children could obtain an elementary or secondary



Amherstburg municipal building, 1997.
Marsh Collection Society, P1505

school education. To meet this need, property was acquired on Park Street in 1857 for the purpose of building a grammar school but no school was ever constructed at this location.

Amendments to the Municipal Election Process

Within a decade of the passing of the Municipal Institutions Act, women and aliens were specifically barred from voting at town meetings.⁴⁸ Electors at municipal elections had to be male freeholders or male householders who had been resident in the municipality for at least a month before the election, be British subjects who had attained the age of twenty-one years and be rated on the municipality's assessment rolls for real property "held in their own right or that of their wives" in excess of certain specified values. If a municipality was divided into wards then the voters in each ward were to elect one councillor to represent their ward. Every ward election was to be held within the ward and electors were prohibited from voting in more than one ward. No elections were to be held in a tavern or "place of public entertainment licensed to sell spiritous liquors."

Voting continued to be in public with the returning officer recording the elector's vote opposite his name in the poll book. As an addition to the voter's oath or affirmation that he had met all the requirements necessary to be enfranchised and had not already voted, he could be required to swear or affirm that he had not received nor would he receive any gift or money for casting his vote. Voting was to occur over a two-day period between the hours of 10am and 4pm with provisions for closing the polls after the first day if the returning officer "sees that all the electors intending to vote have had a fair opportunity of being polled" and if no elector votes were cast during the last hour of the first day's poll.⁴⁹

Should the elections be interrupted by a riot or emergency, provisions were made to extend the voting over a four-day period. In addition to the powers already possessed by the returning officer as a conservator of the peace, he was now empowered to swear in an unlimited number of special constables to keep order at the election and any special constables refusing to serve were subject to a fine.

Amendments to the Municipal Institutions Act

After October, 1863 candidates for council were no longer nominated at the annual town meetings in January. The candidates for council were nominated at a meeting of electors held at the town hall on the second-to-last Monday in December with their election occurring, as formerly, in January.⁵⁰

The process of electing the reeve and deputy reeve by the indirect vote of the municipal councillors was amended in August, 1866.⁵¹ Thereafter, candidates for reeve, deputy reeve and mayor of towns were nominated at a meeting of the electors held at the town hall in December. In January the voters elected to office the mayor or reeve, deputy reeve and councillors. The Reeves subsequently chosen by the votes of the Amherstburg electors were: John Kolfage in 1867 and 1868; John R. Park in 1869, 1870, 1871 and 1872; Michael Twomey in 1873, 1874, 1875 and 1876; and Samuel McGee in 1877. All of the Amherstburg Reeves were engaged in the commerce of the town, except for Gordon Watts Leggatt who was a lawyer. When Amherstburg became a town in 1878 the reeve was replaced by a mayor as the head of town council.

The Secret Ballot

The introduction of voting by secret ballot at municipal elections in 1875 greatly alleviated any existing problems of bribery and intimidation of voters.⁵² Henceforth voters exercised their franchise in the privacy of screened compartments by marking an X beside their candidate's name on the printed ballot provided by the returning officer. The returning officer and the agents of the candidates were prohibited from attempting to obtain information about whom the voter had voted for or otherwise induce him to display his marked ballot or make known to any other person the contents of his ballot.

Females Franchised

In 1917 women were finally granted the same right to vote at municipal elections as men then possessed but they were not yet qualified to hold office.⁵³ Two years later, legislation was passed providing that a woman could be elected or appointed to any municipal office on the same conditions and qualifications as a man, except that she had to qualify as the owner or tenant of property within the municipality in her own right.⁵⁴ Although men had been allowed to qualify to vote or hold office on the basis of their wives' property, women could not similarly qualify on the basis of their husbands' property.

Amherstburg women immediately exercised their vote in municipal elections but over fifty years passed before a woman was elected to Amherstburg Town Council. Rose Kelly became the first female town councillor in 1975 and served twenty consecutive years in that office.

Amendments to the One-Year Term of Municipal Offices

Municipal elections were held on an annual basis in Amherstburg from 1851 until 1958. From 1959 to 1968 municipal elections for Amherstburg were held every two years and from 1969 to 1974, every three years.⁵⁵ In 1982 the Municipal Elections Amendment Act fixed the term of elected municipal officials at three years throughout the province. This term remains in force to the present day.⁵⁶

Mayors of Amherstburg, 1878-1997

Since its inception as a town in 1878 thirty men have served as mayors of Amherstburg. As most of the early mayors only held office for a one-year term, it is difficult to attribute particular accomplishments to specific men. Several elections would occur before a mayor and council could complete major projects conceived by their predecessors.

Usually engaged in the commerce of the town, Amherstburg's mayors came from diverse backgrounds. Some were descendants of local pioneer families, some came from elsewhere in Ontario and others were first-generation immigrants from Great Britain and Europe. Many were 'self-made' men. All chose to be involved in the progress of the town and contributed their time and effort to this goal.

Following are brief sketches of Amherstburg's mayors.

John Gerhard Kolfage

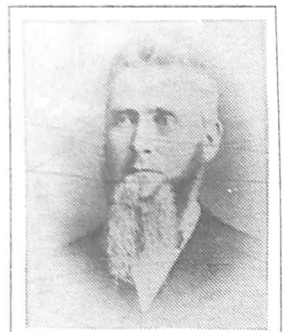
In a close race against Michael Twomey, John G. Kolfage was elected Amherstburg's first mayor when the town was incorporated in 1878. Kolfage had been an active participant in municipal affairs since 1851 when Amherstburg first attained a separate municipal status. An immigrant from Germany, Kolfage settled in Amherstburg in 1837 at the age of eighteen. By trade a shoemaker, he eventually became the owner of a large tannery and a general store and hardware business. Kolfage also owned property on the south side of Murray Street west of Ramsay Street, then in the heart of Amherstburg's business district. The devastating fire of 1875 destroyed these properties and in 1877 Kolfage erected the brick building on the southwest corner of Ramsay and Murray Streets known as the 'Kolfage Block'.



John G. Kolfage
1878, 1881

Michael Twomey

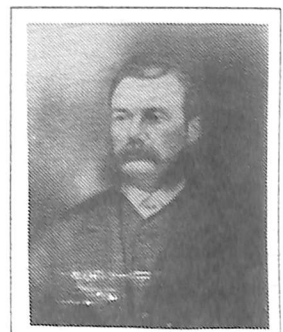
Born in Kingston in 1825, Michael Twomey came to Amherstburg in 1865. After working briefly for distiller John McLeod, Twomey established himself as a general merchant, acquiring considerable real estate and dock property in town as his business prospered. After serving his last term as Amherstburg's mayor in 1887 Twomey moved to Windsor where he was elected mayor in 1889. He died in that city in 1911.



Michael Twomey
1879, 1882, 1886, 1887

Walter Lambert, M.D.

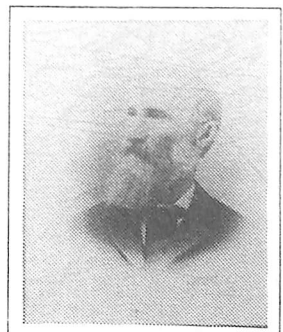
Walter Lambert was born in Niagara Township, Lincoln County in 1832, a descendant of Butler's Ranger Cornelius Lambert. Shortly after graduating from Trinity College in 1856, Dr. Lambert set up his practice on Ramsay Street where he ably attended to the medical needs of many Amherstburg residents. During his term of office as mayor Dr. Lambert became seriously ill with gangrene. He died in his forty-ninth year on June 27, 1881 having undergone the amputation of both legs.



Dr. Walter Lambert
1880

Samuel McGee

Samuel McGee was born in 1834 in Malden Township. He operated a general store in Amherstburg from 1857 until 1926, having taken over the business established by his father in 1828. Until his retirement at the age of eighty-eight McGee participated actively in the community as a town councillor, reeve, justice of the peace, member of the fire department and director of the library board.



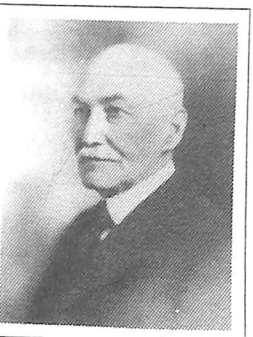
Samuel McGee
1883, 1884, 1885



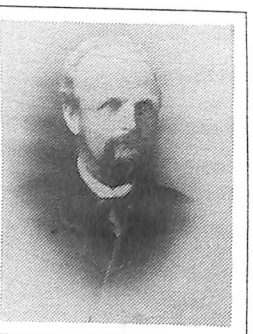
Dr. T. James Park
1888



William H. McEvoy
1889, 1890, 1891,
1892, 1897



John G. Mullen
1893, 1894, 1896



Simon Fraser
1895

Theodore James Park, M.D.

Dr. Theodore James Park was the son of Theodore Jones Park, the youngest brother of the prominent Park Brothers firm which had been engaged in trade in the Amherstburg area since their arrival from Massachusetts in the 1820s. After receiving his medical education in Toronto, Dr. Park set up his own medical office in 1880 on Dalhousie Street in the building now known as the Park House Museum. For many years he was Amherstburg's medical officer of health. 'Dr. Jim' died January 1, 1936 in his 80th year.

William H. McEvoy

Born in Belleville in 1853, W.H. McEvoy came to Amherstburg in 1876 to take over Robert Kay's jewellery business and quickly became involved in the business life of his adopted community. McEvoy sold his jewellery line from the 'old post office store' on the east side of Dalhousie Street, in the building which became known as 'Goldsmith's Hall'. As well as being the agent for the telegraph, ferry and railway companies that serviced Amherstburg, McEvoy was awarded the franchise to install the first incandescent lighting system in Amherstburg in 1894.

John Gallagher Mullen

Born in Ireland in 1848, John G. Mullen moved from Cleveland, Ohio in 1873 to manage the coal docks of the McDowell, Caul & Brett Company in Amherstburg. During this period a coal supplier earned substantial profits because all the steamships on the Great Lakes burned coal for fuel. Mullen proved to be a very able manager. In 1875 he bought the Amherstburg coal docks from his employers. Over the years, coal docks owned by Mullen were also established at Cleveland and Sandwich. John Mullen, a well-known philanthropist, remained involved in the coal business until his death in Amherstburg in 1930 deprived the community of a highly respected and well-liked citizen.

Simon Fraser

Having emigrated from Scotland in 1857, Simon Fraser settled first in Malden in 1872 where he established a wholesale and retail business in lumber, coal and grain. In 1890 he purchased the stately D.L. Wible house on the southwest corner of Dalhousie and Gore Streets for his personal residence. Fraser also owned the abutting lumber yard, the planing mill on the opposite side of Dalhousie Street and the brick 'Kolfage Block' on the south side of Murray Street. He developed the subdivision known as 'Fraserville' which fronts on Sandwich Street north of William Street. Retiring in 1890, Fraser cultivated vineyards and peach orchards on his farm at Fraserville until his death in 1905.

William T. Wilkinson Jr.

Born in 1864 in Amherstburg, William Wilkinson Jr. was a grandson of British soldier Captain James Wilkinson who came to Amherstburg in 1852 with the Enrolled Pensioners.

On the death of his father in 1885 Wilkinson became proprietor of a well-established saddle and harness business here. As well as holding the office of mayor he served as reeve, deputy-reeve, warden and was very active in community affairs. Wilkinson died in 1931. His Last Will and Testament made available scholarships at General Amherst High School, a room at Grace Hospital for needy Amherstburg citizens and a number of other bequests. Wilkinson Court in Amherstburg was named in his honour.

Judson A. Patten

Judson Patten settled in Essex County with several other family members around 1875. Being artistic he worked as a portrait painter and decorator and taught classes in portrait and landscape painting. Prior to 1899 he sat on council six times. In May, 1903 the family moved to Regina, Saskatchewan where Patten took a position with the Land Records Office. In 1925 he went to California for his health where he died two weeks later.

George T. Florey

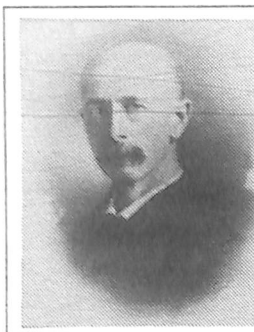
George Florey ushered in the twentieth century as Amherstburg's mayor. Orphaned at the age of twelve, the native of St. Catharines established himself in the grocery business upon his arrival in Amherstburg in 1876. After his demise in 1921, the Florey family continued to operate the highly successful G.T. Florey & Sons grocery store until the Dominion Stores rented their premises around 1930.

Oscar Teeter, M.D.

A native of Grimsby, Ontario, Dr. Teeter came to the Amherstburg area fresh out of medical school in 1893. He became a partner in medical practice with Amherstburg physician Dr. Forest F. Bell who owned the property on the northwest corner of Sandwich and Gore Streets. In 1897 Dr. Teeter bought the practice and residence of Dr. Bell, his home on Sandwich Street henceforth being known as the 'Teeter building'.



William Wilkinson
1898



Judson A. Patten
1899



George T. Florey
1900



Dr. Oscar Teeter
1901, 1905



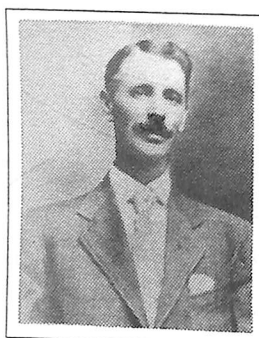
J.J. Breault
1902, 1903, 1904



John W. Stokes
1906



Franklin A. Hough
1907, 1908, 1909



John W. Gibb
1910

Joseph John Breault

Joseph Breault was born in Amherstburg, the son of Marcel Breault, a merchant and longtime Amherstburg resident. An accomplished musician, Breault sold pianos, organs and other musical instruments in his store on Murray Street for almost forty years. This "courteous refined gentleman" also organized bands in Amherstburg and on Pelee Island. As a representative of the Erie Tobacco Company, Breault travelled throughout Ontario and Quebec and cultivated tobacco on Pelee Island.

John William Stokes

John W. Stokes III became the third generation of his family to carry on the butcher trade, operating the Boss Meat Market on Gore Street. His father, John William Stokes II, was a successful butcher who had supplied meat to the garrison at Fort Malden and to the Malden Lunatic Asylum. Mayor Stokes was the first of his family to be born in the stone house his father built on the riverfront in the late 1840s (now 433 Dalhousie Street South). In 1896 Stokes built the stately home which still stands on the southwest corner of Gore and Bathurst Streets. He died in 1916 in Amherstburg.

Franklin A. Hough

F.A. Hough practised law for over fifty years in the Amherstburg area. Born at Cobourg, Ontario, Hough came to Amherstburg in 1891 as a junior partner in the law firm of Reade & Kirkland. In 1918 he purchased the Park & Borrowman lumberyard property, part of the lands formerly occupied by Fort Malden and later by the Malden Lunatic Asylum. One of the two-storey wooden barracks erected after the 1837 Rebellion was dismantled by Hough and reassembled as three large homes on the east side of Laird Avenue (numbers 37, 41 and 43). He transformed the large brick bakery/laundry/storehouse building into his own impressive residence. By the time of his death in 1944, Hough had substantial property interests in Amherstburg.

John W. Gibb

John Gibb became mayor by acclamation when the incumbent Franklin A. Hough declined to stand for re-election. Gibb was the only other candidate. He also served on council seven times. Gibb was born in 1858 in the little brick Presbyterian manse on Park Street. His father, William C. Gibb, was a carpenter who had recently taken up residence there after emigrating from Scotland. John Gibb was fond of telling friends that it was up to him to be good in view of the nature of his birthplace! Around 1900 Gibb set up a seed and building supply store which he operated until his death in 1926.

William Frederick Park, M.D.

Born in Chatham, Dr. W. Fred Park first practised medicine in Harrow around 1894. By 1900 he had moved to Amherstburg where he quickly became immersed in the life of this town. Dr. Park is remembered as one of this community's most respected and beloved citizens, being eulogized as a town builder, a municipal director, a man of wide charities, a physician of skill and a poor man's friend. Dr. Park served nineteen one-year terms as mayor, often securing the office by acclamation. During his mayorship citizens were provided with clean water which finally eradicated typhoid in Amherstburg and General Amherst High School was built.

John Allen Auld

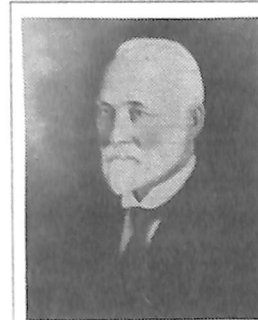
Born in Warwick, Lambton County in 1853, John A. Auld was a printer by trade. While working for the *St. Catharines News*, Auld formed a partnership with co-worker William D. Balfour. On October 30, 1874 Balfour and Auld commenced publication of the *Amherstburg Echo*. Auld served as a member of town council, a member of the public school board, chief of the fire department and reeve of the town. He was nominated to represent the riding of Essex South in 1896 when his partner, the Honorable William D. Balfour, then the incumbent M.P.P., died in office. On election eve Auld was the successful candidate, serving as M.P.P. until 1905 when he retired from public life, leaving retirement to serve one year as mayor in 1916.

George H. Jones

George Jones lived on Dalhousie Street in the house constructed by his grandfather John Pembroke Jones, a ship's carpenter of Welsh descent who settled in Amherstburg in the 1850s. In 1913 George Jones became the proprietor of a popular confectionery and china business located on the southwest corner of Murray and Dalhousie Streets. For decades Jones' shop was well-known for its selection of fine English china as well as its variety of sodas and sundaes. Jones was also a justice of the peace and served as town clerk and treasurer.

J. Ernest McGee

Born in 1884 in Malden Township, J.E. McGee moved to town as a young man and spent many years thereafter in public service to Amherstburg. As well as public utilities and town council, he was greatly interested in preserving the area's rich history and was a founding member of the Fort Malden Management Committee in the late 1930s. McGee retired from his position as foreman of the machine shop at Brunner Mond in 1955 and died two years later.



Dr. W. Fred Park
1911 through 1915,
1917 through 1927,
1932 through 1934
(one-year terms)



John A. Auld
1916



George H. Jones
1928, 1929, 1930, 1931



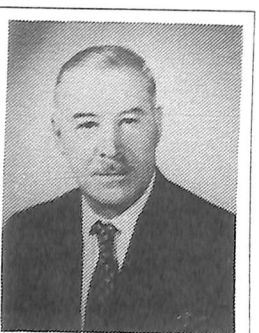
J. Ernest McGee
1935, 1936, 1937, 1938



N.A. Marra
1939, 1940, 1941, 1942,
1943, 1944, 1945



Ted Pickering
1946, 1947



A.H. Stevenson
1948, 1949



William Nattress
1950, 1951, 1952, 1953

Nick Marra

Nick Marra was born in Reggio, Italy in 1888. His family immigrated to New York City but returned to Italy in 1903. Marra returned to America in 1905, initially finding employment managing the commissary department of a construction company. He came to Amherstburg in 1917 establishing a grocery store near the construction site of the Brunner Mond plant (now General Chemical) in Gordon. Two years later he opened the new Liberty Theatre on the northwest corner of Richmond and Sandwich Streets. In 1925 he established Marra's Bread Limited which was a major supplier of bread to the people of Essex County for over fifty years. During his years in Amherstburg Nick Marra was involved in many aspects of public service as well as serving as mayor for seven consecutive years. He died in 1949.

F. 'Ted' Pickering

Ted Pickering was born and educated in Amherstburg. He was trained in Detroit as an electrician and upon his return to Amherstburg in 1926 he conducted his own electrical business before being hired as the chief electrician for Calvert of Canada Limited. Pickering was a mover and shaker in local politics and became the first chairman of the Amherstburg Public Utilities Commission. Pickering Drive in Amherstburg, built in 1969, was named after this well-loved former mayor who died in January, 1970.

Alfred H. Stevenson

Alfred Stevenson grew up in Windsor, moving to Amherstburg in 1932 to take over the law practice of the late S.H. Smith and A.W. McNally. From the beginning of his residence in Amherstburg he was active in council and community organizations. As chairman of the police committee Stevenson advocated changing from local to provincial police. His election as mayor in 1948 was assured when it was found that he was the only one of the five nominees who qualified to run for election. That year the entire town council received an acclamation as well, because only the requisite number of councillors was nominated.

William Nattress

William Nattress lived in Amherstburg all his life. He was the son of Reverend Thomas Nattress who was the minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for many years. Mr. Nattress served in the Royal Flying Corps in World War I. He was employed as a stationery engineer at Brunner Mond where he formed a union for the engineers and was also active in union affairs when he later worked for Seagram's. Nattress had a long career in municipal government service. He was elected as town councillor four times, as deputy reeve twice and served on the Public Utilities Commission.

Edward Michael Warren, D.D.S.

A native of Cornwall, Dr. Warren established a dental practice in Amherstburg in 1930, taking over the practice of the late Dr. W.S. French. Warren retired from dentistry in 1972 having served the community in various capacities, the only interruption being during the Second World War when he served as captain in the Canadian Army Dental Corps.

Dr. Warren's persistent efforts resulted in the 1954 construction of the government-sponsored housing development southeast of Alma and Victoria Streets which was named Warren Park in his honour.

Harvey E. Hamilton

Born in Amherstburg in 1896, Harvey Hamilton spent most of his life in his native town. With three of his brothers he served with distinction overseas during the First World War. As a 25-year employee of Brunner Mond Canada Limited, Hamilton was the first president of Local 89, U.A.W.-C.I.O. He later helped to supervise the construction of soda ash plants in India and South America.

Harvey Hamilton devoted much of his time to local government, serving as councillor, reeve, deputy-reeve and two years as chief magistrate.

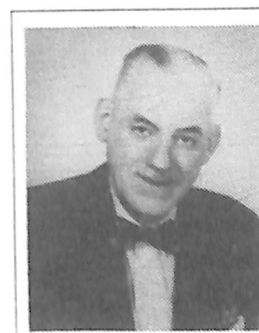
NOTE: In 1959 the mayor's term of office changed to two years instead of one.

Emile T. Laframboise

E.T. 'Red' Laframboise was the first mayor of Amherstburg to be elected for a two-year term of office.

Born at River Canard, he moved to Amherstburg in the early 1940s. During his years in this community, Laframboise served on the town's planning board, recreation commission, library board, industrial promotion committee, board of police commissioners and public utilities commission, as well as being president of the AAM Chamber of Commerce in 1966 and a town councillor for three years. In his last term as mayor in 1964, Laframboise urged council to accept a federal grant to develop the Bell farm on Victoria Street into a recreational park as a Centennial project.

NOTE: In 1969 the mayor's term of office changed to three years. It changed back to two years in 1975.



Dr. E.M. Warren
1954, 1955, 1956



Harvey Hamilton
1957, 1958



E.T. Laframboise
1959-60, 1961-62, 1963-64



H. Murray Smith
1965-66, 1967-68, 1969-71, 1972-74, 1975-76, 1977-78

H. Murray Smith

A native of Windsor, H. Murray Smith was one of three founders of the SKD Tool Company. Smith left that company in 1959 to establish Amherst Quarries at the corner of Meloche and Pike Roads.

He served on council for four years prior to being elected mayor in 1965, holding that office until 1978. Smith's contributions to the community was rewarded with several honours, not the least of which was being named Citizen of the Year in 1977. Centennial Park at the southeast corner of Simcoe and Victoria Streets was renamed H. Murray Smith Centennial Park in his honour.

NOTE: In 1983 the mayor's term of office again became three years



Garnet Fox
1979-80, 1981-82, 1983-85

Garnet Fox

A native of Amherstburg and by trade an industrial electrician, Garnet Fox was a militant promoter in the development of this town's rich heritage. From his community service as chairman of the Public Utilities Commission to deputy-reeve and finally to the mayor's office, Fox led many projects to fulfilment.

Under his guidance as chairman of the Neighbourhood Improvement Program, Gore Street from Dalhousie to Sandwich Street was reconstructed into a heritage street; the recreation and cultural centre on Victoria Street was completed and major work was undertaken in the King's Navy Yard Park. While deputy-reeve, Fox also led the fight to retain the AAM Volunteer Ambulance Service.



William Gibb
1986-88, 1989-91, 1992-94, 1995-97

William Gibb

Born in 1939 in Amherstburg, like his predecessor to the mayor's chair Bill Gibb is a descendant of area pioneers. His deep love and concern for his native town were apparent in his nine years' involvement in local municipal government as councillor, three of which were spent as deputy-reeve before becoming mayor in 1986.

Gibb has the distinction of being Amherstburg's last mayor before the town and neighbouring townships were amalgamated in 1997.

Law and Order

Amherstburg Police Service

In 1817 "An Act to establish a Police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburg" was passed. "Police" referred to the magistrates and the fact that they now had the power to set down rules and regulations pertaining to their district in terms of streets, livestock, fire companies and other matters. To enforce these regulations, each town or township had a chief constable appointed by the magistrates. This constable was expected to be on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and his duties were quite diverse. In 1878 Amherstburg Town Council passed a bylaw to "define the duties of Chief Constable," stating that he was to "preserve the peace...post all notices...serve all summons and warrants...[take] proper care of the lock-up...be Health Officer...superintend work on streets or sidewalks...and attend all meetings of the Council." For these services the chief constable would be paid an annual salary of \$150.⁵⁷

In 1892 when the duties of the "chief of police" were outlined in a new bylaw, they included patrolling the main streets on a daily basis, preserving the peace, arresting and confining drunken and disorderly people, preventing horse racing and "furious driving," ensuring that no wine or liquor be sold on the Sabbath and holidays, posting notices and bylaws, attending all public meetings, serving water rate notices and cleaning, inspecting and repairing street lamps. The chief was also expected to act as assistant electrician, Board of Health inspector, town hall caretaker and "general man" for the Board of Works. That year town council received only three applications for the position of chief of police!⁵⁸

Until the 1920s the position changed hands frequently, probably because of the job description and the number of hours involved.⁵⁹ Herbert Craig was hired as chief of police around 1920 and resigned in 1922. His son Austin Craig recalls those years:

"My father was the only police officer. Because the police did not have a car, he patrolled the town by foot. If he needed a car he would pull someone off the street and command their car. My dad always told me the police always have to have control. If they lose that, they lose everything."

*Like the police today, the tools of Chief Craig's trade were a gun, handcuffs and a Billy club. Craig's term as chief was cut short due to a clarification of his job description. "The town wanted him to do janitor work in the town hall. He said he was hired for chief of police and that's what he was going to do, so he quit."*⁶⁰

Herbert Craig remained a police officer, first on Bob-Lo Island and later in the town of Delhi, Ontario.

Major H.H. Timmis became police chief in 1922 and remained until 1934. In addition to the aforementioned duties Timmis was the noxious weed inspector, collector of dog taxes and school attendance officer. In his 5th annual report in 1927 he stated that the Provincial Police had assisted him a number of times in



Herbert Craig,
police chief
circa 1920-22.

preserving the peace.⁶¹

In August, 1946 it was announced that the Ontario Provincial Police would take over the policing of Amherstburg effective September 1st of that year. The Police Committee, headed by A H Stevenson, recommended to town council that two police officers be stationed in Amherstburg for "exclusive police work in the municipality" to "enforce local bylaws, provincial and dominion laws and the provisions of the Liquor Control Act." The committee felt that by signing a one-year contract with the OPP, Amherstburg could "give the provincial police a trial and see if they will solve [Amherstburg's] difficulties with police matters," thereby getting "an impartial enforcement of the law." The province supplied a police car for the use of the Amherstburg officers, for which the town paid a mileage fee. Amherstburg's first OPP officers were Constables H.H. Peever and Harold H Wheeler.

The Ontario Provincial Police remained in Amherstburg for eleven years. In late 1957 the newly-formed Amherstburg Police Department took over law enforcement in the town under Chief George Hanna, a former OPP officer. One year later town council passed a bylaw providing for a Board of Police Commissioners. At the board's first meeting on January 29, 1959 it hired three new constables and made plans to purchase a mobile radio system to replace the callboxes on Richmond Street.⁶²

Chief Hanna resigned as chief in 1969⁶³ and was succeeded by Ron Seney who served in that position until October, 1970.⁶⁴ Everett Johnson was the next police chief, followed by Tom Tack. The current Amherstburg chief of police, Bill Fryer, was appointed in April of 1993.

For many years Amherstburg's police station was located in "cramped quarters" in the basement of the town hall. A new "ultra-modern" building on Sandwich Street South was officially opened on November 6, 1987⁶⁵ and ten years later still serves the 14 members of the Amherstburg Police Service.



Amherstburg Police Station, 1995.
Marsh Collection Society, P1272

Amherstburg Fire Department

The earliest record of a fire department in Amherstburg is a document naming the members of the No. 1 Fire Company dated February 14, 1841.⁶⁶ This list includes such prominent citizens as George Bullock, William L. Schultz and Thomas Horsman.⁶⁷ Although the civilians of the town made up a fire brigade, evidence suggests that the only fire engine at the time was owned by the British government and was stationed at Fort Malden. This hand-pump engine may have been at the fort as early as 1828 and by 1849 there were at least two engines which the commanding officer allowed the

townspeople to use.⁶⁸ The town purchased its first hand pump around 1860.⁶⁹

The 1870s was an active decade for the fire brigade. An 1871 photo of the Amherstburg brigade shows 29 members in their new blue and white uniforms.⁷⁰ In June, 1875 Captain Louis Lemay of the fire company requested that the town council purchase a new fire engine.⁷¹ In October of that year council passed a motion to form a "Hook and Ladder Company" of at least 12 men⁷² but this resolution came too late. In November, 1875 fourteen businesses were destroyed in a disastrous fire along Murray Street. One fire engine was disabled due to a broken brake that had not yet been repaired and the brigade had only a small box engine and No. 2 engine from Park & Borrowman's.⁷³ The *Amherstburg Echo* noted that the lack of a hook and ladder had never been felt so keenly. "Town Council and the people have at last been aroused to the urgent necessity existing for better protection against fire" and "steps [were] taken towards securing a steam fire engine." However, at a town meeting at the end of November, 1875, taxpayers were asked to vote on whether to erect a waterworks or purchase a steam engine. The former was chosen with the comment that "a vigilant fire warden will be appointed and a hook and ladder company organized. A waterworks will be built to take care of both fire and water."⁷⁴

Throughout the next several decades the Amherstburg Fire Brigade was reorganized a number of times. In March, 1879 a meeting was held at the Firemen's Hall on Dalhousie Street for the purpose of organizing a fire company.⁷⁵ Officers were elected and the group, named the "Amherstburg Fire Company No. 1," was to hold practices on the first and third Monday of each month. The fire brigade planned to ask council to place fire engine No. 1 in their charge. Shortly thereafter, a horse-drawn steam engine was purchased second-hand from the City of Detroit. This engine was housed in a lean-to structure located on the north side of the town hall and was used until the waterworks was built in 1891.⁷⁶

Officers of the fire brigade seem to have changed annually. In early 1882 the *Amherstburg Echo* reported that a meeting had been held of the proposed new fire company.⁷⁷ When the new town hall was built in 1883 it included a "fire engine room" and "firemen's assembly room" and the old hall on Dalhousie Street was no longer needed.⁷⁸ Apparently the heating system in the engine room was not adequate for preventing the horse-drawn steam engine from freezing up in cold weather. In early 1886 "the Fire and Police Committee put up a partition across the fire hall, making two rooms. The engine [was] stored in the south room" and a coal stove was added to the engine room.⁷⁹

By 1910 the fire brigade was in a state of disorganization. A major fire in January of that year resulted in the destruction of the Anglo-American Hotel on the corner of Apsley (Sandwich) and Richmond Streets⁸⁰ as well as several nearby structures. Although the firemen "did splendid service" they were forced to contend with "frozen hydrants, frozen hose, [a] ropeless fire gong [and a] wrenchless hose cart" leading to "inefficient protection."⁸¹ Within two weeks a volunteer brigade was reorganized with Percy Deneau in charge.⁸² Nine years later the local fire brigade was again reorganized. Twelve men were appointed, divided equally among the three wards of the town⁸³ with



Circa 1840s fire engine, now the property of Fort Malden National Historic Site.
Department of Canadian Heritage: Fort Malden National Historic Site

a captain for each ward to look after the apparatus. It was hoped that the new system would result in "greater efficiency."⁸⁴

Until 1949 the fire brigade appears to have been under the auspices of town council. In October, 1949 a bylaw was passed creating a "Volunteer Fire Department" and applications were accepted.⁸⁵ More space was needed after a pumper truck was added to the fleet of two vehicles in 1949 and a new ladder truck was acquired the following year.⁸⁶ In 1952 a new fire hall was constructed on the northeast corner of the town hall property.⁸⁷ That year council officially turned over the rescue truck to the Volunteer Fire Brigade⁸⁸ who sold it in 1953 to the Remington Park Fire Department.⁸⁹

By 1961 the Amherstburg Fire Brigade was considered "one of the most up-to date in Ontario."⁹⁰ Its first aid and rescue team made up solely of firemen was the only one like it in Essex County. This team was instituted in 1939 when town council agreed to purchase a "resuscitator and inhalator" to be used by a rescue squad formed of members of the fire department.⁹¹ Two of the firemen - Harry Spearing Jr. and Louis Robillard - had practical training in rescue work. Later that year, members of the squad bought an old Packard sedan and in two months remodelled it into a rescue truck. Unfortunately, the car that had fit into the fire hall in its original state was too large to exit through the narrow doorway. The fire brigade appealed to the town's property committee to dispense funds for the widening of the opening.⁹² The Lions Club donated a Ford panel truck to the rescue team in 1951 and in 1959 a Ford station wagon was purchased by Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden for use as an ambulance. In 1961 four of the team members had medical ambulance technologist certificates and instructed classes in Red Cross First Aid.⁹³

Through an 87-year history, the Amherstburg Fire Department has had only a few chiefs. Percy Deneau was in charge in 1910. John Raymond 'Jack' Hamilton, one of the original members, became chief in 1917⁹⁴ and served in this capacity until 1966.⁹⁵ His successor, Mel Mailloux, became the town's first full-time fire chief in 1968 and was given the responsibility of caring for the fire equipment and conducting fire inspections.⁹⁶ Mailloux retired in 1990⁹⁷ and was replaced by



Amherstburg Fire Hall, 1997.
Marsh Collection Society, P1393

current fire chief Rick Murray who is in charge of the department's 27 volunteer firefighters.⁹⁸ In 1992-93 a new fire station was constructed just north of the town hall.⁹⁹ This 6-bay facility which opened June 12, 1993 is home to the department's five vehicles.¹⁰⁰

Prohibition¹⁰¹

Ontario might have been 'dry' during the period known as Prohibition but Essex County was 'wet', not only from water on three sides but from the lake of alcohol inland. As the song said, "Everybody's doing it," and nearly everyone was. The money flowed like water in sums comfortable even by present standards. Police Magistrate McCormick often levied fines of \$500 or \$1000 on supposedly impoverished locals, rural and urban, only to watch them peel the bills out of their pocket and leave the court.

Prohibition in the Amherstburg area lasted from 1920 when the United States government banned the importation of alcohol to 1930 when the Canadian government banned its export. In the interim, liquor could be exported legally from Canada to a country that did not ban its importation. Consequently loads bore exotic official destinations such as Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Bermuda. With speed to rival modern means of transportation, delivery was made in two hours or less as the courier, known as a 'rumrunner', returned to the Canadian shore. From the large population of rumrunners, the river acquired the name 'Rum Alley'.

The only illegal activity at that time was 'bootlegging', the manufacture or sale of alcohol or its possession beyond the needs of personal consumption. With proper connections, any quantity of alcohol could be delivered to one's door. Equally effective but faster was a payment to a rumrunner to fake an export and return the load to a secluded spot along the Canadian riverbank. Ingenuity of area residents was endless. Anderdon resident Aaron Josephson stated that the prenuptial festivities for his approaching marriage necessitated 100 cases of the finest for the entertainment of his future bride's guests. His lack of a guest list led to a fine, which he promptly paid. Doctors were allowed to prescribe alcohol legally for medicinal purposes and they happily obliged at the rate of 100-200 prescriptions per month at \$2 to \$4 per quart, much to the improved health of area citizens. Often residents stored several hundred cases of whisky at home for 'personal' requirements, went on a short holiday, returned to report a 'theft' of the cases to police and had the nerve to file an insurance claim on the stolen load (after already collecting from the supposed thieves). By 1921 the insurance companies limited the loss on such 'thefts' to \$500 and police magistrates began to convict the owners of 'selling' alcohol illegally.

The water cooler of a railway passenger car turned out not to be a safe place for the storage of bottles as one unfortunate discovered when a block of ice thrown into the cooler broke the bottles and led to a pleasant return home for all!¹⁰²

So many cases of alcohol were being seized by authorities that storage quickly became a problem. Use was made of the basement of the post office; after that filled, cases were stored in the back of a private office, much to the delight of those who managed to lift a skylight and relieve the police of 17 cases of Dawsons Scotch on the night of September 14, 1920. Soon Police Chief Hirons himself had difficulty accounting for 62 cases out of a seized load of 88 that never quite made it into storage. He testified that one case had been opened for refreshments after the labourious work of

loading the cases onto a truck. The problem pointed out to him was not the loading but the unloading, or lack thereof. Before the month was out a new chief, A.J. Warton, who trained with the North West Mounted Police, was on station.¹⁰³

Most of the export activity occurred at the docks at the foot of Park Street and behind the flour mill of Colin Wigle. To ensure the legality of the activity, the area was ringed by a high wooden fence behind which the liquor was stored under the 'supervision' of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Ontario Provincial Police, who checked for guns and illegally returned loads. Even the illustrious editor of the *Amherstburg Echo*, John A. Marsh, was not above the illegal purchase of export alcohol off a dock, all for naught on one occasion when he managed to pass through the OPP in town and the U.S. Customs at the border only to have the heat of his own body break the over-full glass flasks in which the whisky was being carried. He remarked that he had never smelled lovelier on his damp stroll up Detroit's Woodward Avenue that evening.¹⁰⁴

The transit between the Canadian and American shores varied with the season. When the river was navigable, 'any boat that could float' was the motto - rowboats and yachts for the amateurs, larger forty-foot 'luggers', tugs and even steamboats for the professionals. The winter ice was crossed in sedan automobiles, usually the Studebaker 'Whisky Six' with the top chopped off and the doors left open, not only for fast unloading but also for quick exits if the car broke through the ice. Planks were carried to cross cracks and small holes; paths were marked by tree branches and extra cargo was carried in boats towed behind on ice runners. The Border Patrol thought they were seeing ghosts at one point when cargoes were shrouded in white sheets to render them invisible against the snow. Unexpected thaws were bad for business and the ice breakup of 1925 kept divers busy all spring searching the river bottom.¹⁰⁵

The preferred route was across the Amherstburg and Sugar Island Channels, in which a myriad of islands provided sufficient cover before the dash to the other shore. Danger came more from hijacking gangs than the U.S. Customs Border Patrol, which was often paid to 'look the other way'. The line of vision must have been crowded because Canadian Customs officers were also told to 'look the other way' as they filled out the B-13 export documents. Times became especially difficult when hijackers began to attire themselves in the uniform of the Border Patrol and when the latter acquired a sense of duty and patrolled with a large ice-breaking tug across auto paths laid out on the ice.¹⁰⁶

Big-time professionals in the trade included the Captains McQueen - father John Sylvester and sons John Earl ('Cap') and Peregrine. Better-known ships of their fleet included the old passenger steamer *City of Dresden*, the tug *Leroy Brookes* and the motor cruiser *Sonora*. Primary routes were between Toronto and Belleville on the Canadian shore and Rochester, New York and Erie, Pennsylvania on the American shore, with secondary runs made from Amherstburg to Toledo and Detroit. Their big lumber tug *Progresso* was chartered as power for the refitted ocean freighters of Windsor liquor baron Harry Low who exported from these floating bases stationed around the Great Lakes and on the east coast. The Lakes are famous for their November storms and in the year 1922 two such tempests on November 17th and 18th devastated the McQueen family.

On the evening of the 17th, the *Sonora*, under the command of Capt. A.L. Wilson, was returning to Belleville from a delivery to New York State. Dense fog had settled and caused the captain to lose his bearings, a problem that quickly compounded when a freak storm broke waves over the cabin and wrecked the ship against a huge boulder. The crew jumped overboard and, not

knowing where the shore was, were fortunate to miss the rocks around them and reach safety.¹⁰⁷

On November 18, 1922 the *City of Dresden* was near Long Point on Lake Erie, upbound for Port Huron, Michigan with a cargo of whisky when fate turned foul as pounding waves worked the oakum out of its 50-year-old seams and the pumps could not handle the intruding water. A difficult decision had to be made by Capt. J.S. McQueen and his crew consisting of his son Peregrine, Amherstburg natives Jack McBride and engineer Ray 'Nitchy' Sawyer (who had lost a leg in an earlier factory accident), James Hurst of Belleville and Harry Kerr of Detroit. The ship had to be beached in order to save the cargo but shifting reefs interspersed with deep water were a hazard in the area. Captain McQueen turned the ship landward but struck a sandbar 400 feet from shore and called for all hands to abandon ship. Twice the rough waves capsized the lifeboat of Peregrine and Sawyer. The third time it capsized, Peregrine drowned while gallantly saving the life of his friend. The others made shore and Peregrine's body was found the next day six miles down the beach. The 60-year-old Captain McQueen hung between life and death for five hours owing to exhaustion; the experience forced him into retirement. As his ship broke up, rescuers turned into scavengers claiming the cargo from the sea. The following spring, the engine and equipment were salvaged by a crew from Amherstburg comprised of Lewis Goodchild, 'Nitchy' Sawyer and a young Oromond 'Ormie' Hamilton.¹⁰⁸

Gang activity in the area was minimal and only one achieved some notoriety with the fearsome title of the 'Blood and Guts Gang'. Its trade was hijacked booze, which led to the often-told tale of the Battle of Old Crow. In the early morning of Saturday, June 27, 1920 a load of Old Crow whisky was being readied for export at the Wyandotte Cemetery at Middle Sideroad and Highway 18. An obliging constable who was 'in' on the deal agreed to check the route but was sidetracked on Gore Street where he had to seize a load of liquor from a horse-drawn wagon mired in the mud. The gang offered assistance to the constable and for their efforts were rewarded with the entire load, which also made its way to the point of export. The rightful owners descended on the burial grounds to retrieve their goods. An hour-long gunfight ensued but all got away, as did the liquor in boats.¹⁰⁹

The gang's activities came to an end when another hijacking landed two of its members in Kingston Penitentiary with the distinction of being among the last to receive corporal punishment (lashes) in Canada.¹¹⁰ One of them, Walter 'Goody' Goodchild, spoke freely of his experience, especially how technology had replaced the cat o' nine tails with a board full of knives that passed over the prisoner's back, followed by a dip into a salt brine. He admitted that he had not been a very good person before that experience but later recounted, "If someone placed a million dollars on a table, before the lash I would have nearly killed for it, but after I wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole." Some cure! He once asked where the author was studying, to which the reply was a four-year business programme at Queen's University in Kingston. Walter mentioned that he, too, had spent four years in Kingston - studying geology (cracking rocks)!

The 'Mabel Gang' was an informal group of practical jokers - Grant Duff, Angus Bernard, Ormie Hamilton, Jack Kennelly and Fred Beneteau - who delighted in 'going to see Mabel' when a new Romeo in town considered himself irresistible to women. Mabel, of course, was non-existent but her virtues were extolled until manly passions reached a fever pitch on a night that just happened to coincide with her husband being away. Now begging to see Mabel, the prospective lover would be transported to a farmhouse, usually Langlois' (Eliza's Cabin) south of town, and told to call at the front door, "Yooooo-hoooo, Maaaabel!" Grant Duff would burst from inside with a shotgun, shout

out, "I'll Mabel you, fool around with my wife eh!" and blast rocksalt into the air. The balance of the gang would return to the export dock to await the results of the evening. One lover ran into the water, waded back to town and collapsed half-dead on the deck of a whisky boat. Another ran across Mabel's yard, knocked himself out when he hit a clothesline at neck level and later quit his job on the river and left the area in fear for his life. One had had his passions so aroused that he ran back to town in his underwear. The game was played twice on a fellow from Harrow who wore his car tires down to the rim as he fled from his first experience (Ormie had let the air out of his tires). The gang disbanded after the tables were turned on the perpetrators one evening when a prospect grabbed the gun from a surprised Grant Duff, discharged it at him then pulled a revolver and aimed at the rest. The return to town that night was made in record time.

The Hamilton brothers - Lester, Ormie and Louie - although never directly involved in rumrunning, joined Art Gosselin in the late 1920s to form Gosselin Construction Company to build warehouses and factories for the many breweries, distilleries and exporters in the county. Lester supervised construction, Louie tended to things mechanical and Ormie operated the cranes. Several of their buildings are still standing, such as the Hofer Brewery at the north end of LaSalle and the Carling Brewery that has since housed the Art Gallery of Windsor and now the temporary Casino Windsor at the northeast corner of Bruce Avenue and Riverside Drive. On the river side across from this corner, export warehouses were constructed for the British-American Brewery with special doors at water level so that, upon a signal from Detroit, a single button could spring them open and allow whisky boats to race across the river in seven minutes flat. The one job that Gosselin Construction did not land was in its own backyard, the big warehouse at the north end of town for Pioneer Distillers Limited, a division of the Border Breweries and Distillers Company of Harold and Joseph Massey, which later became part of the Seagram operations.¹¹¹ The Hamiltons were welcome in influential liquor circles because, as Lester once explained, they did good work and knew how to keep their mouths shut. They tried to encourage their sister Mary to be a secretary for the company but she told them in characteristic style that it would go broke, which it did as Prohibition ended and the Depression deepened. Unknown to Mary at the time, her career choice of nursing eventually would lead her to work privately in the magnificent homes of her brothers' customers, namely Cooper Court of Jim Cooper, the Walkerville mansion of Harry Low (later owned by politician Paul Martin) and the Marc Chappus home next to the Sunnyside Tavern in LaSalle, among others.

Many establishments indirectly made a good living by catering to the whisky trade. Chan Quan's restaurant at the southwest corner of Murray and Ramsay Streets was the favourite location for meals and lodging. The Canadian Bank of Commerce, located in the docks area at the northeast corner of Murray and Dalhousie Streets, mopped up the fortunes made daily. For disbelievers, the best one-day take of one dock was a quarter-million dollars while another made over a million dollars in a 36-day period. Hotels such as the Lakeview and the Amherst operated wide-open throughout Prohibition, without bother from the authorities as long as activities were carried on discreetly. The Lakeview stored its liquor out of sight in a safe of the former bank building next door. The Amherst Hotel was much livelier with floating card games upstairs and a large-stake crap game at the end of the bar.¹¹²

Competing with the hotels were an estimated 160 'blind pigs' (illegal bars). Officer Farrow was kept busy raiding these emporiums but they often re-opened as quickly as they had been shut down. Competition was apparently heavy, as demonstrated by one owner who tipped the police that

his neighbour was bootlegging. When asked how he knew of such activity, the man stated that his neighbour had taken all of his customers!¹¹³

The police, both local and provincial, always seemed to have difficulty hanging on to their seized goods. On February 8, 1929 the police seized a load being illegally returned to Canada after its near seizure on the American shore. Captain McQueen and Russ Wigle offered to help the police in their duty. The loading of the contraband onto police trucks was hard work, so McQueen boldly invited the officers to drop by his home for deserved cold beers on their next trip to town. Two cases were found missing when the trucks were unloaded in Windsor. On a return trip, both officers accepted McQueen's generous hospitality with the seized alcohol.¹¹⁴

A colourful character was Alec Duff, co-proprietor of the D & C Café on the south side of Murray Street between Dalhousie and Ramsay and later sole proprietor of the Deerhead Club, located originally on Sandwich Street near the high school and relocated to the second floor of the former Bullock's Tavern at the northeast corner of Murray and Dalhousie Streets. The D & C Café was the site of one famous incident when police attempted to raid the Legion's Armistice Day banquet for liquor violations but instead found themselves carried to the river at the foot of Murray Street with threats of being thrown in unless they left the party and stayed away. The revelling continued well into the night.¹¹⁵

Alec Duff recorded less success when the grand opening of the Deerhead Club was thwarted by a successful raid by the police, who had been tipped by an employee disgruntled at the lack of a pay raise.¹¹⁶ The wintertime practice of asking a patron to fill a burlap sack with coal borrowed from Mullen's coal dock evolved into the 'Moonlight Coal Company'. A New Year's Day tradition at the Deerhead was the proprietor's free round of drinks for all those who had purchased liquor during the year - or had borrowed coal for him. The honour of pouring the first legal drink in Amherstburg after the end of Prohibition fell to Alec, who moved to larger quarters at the Fraser house and converted it into Duffy's Tavern, still located at the southwest corner of Gore and Dalhousie Streets.¹¹⁷

The rumrunning party ended when the *Detroit News* ran a front page story with photos about the steady stream of booze-laden automobiles crossing the ice from Canada. The border tightened and within a few months Canadian laws banned the export of liquor. One knew that the era was ending when silly events started to occur, such as the successful rumrunners strike of January, 1930 when a 24-hour shutdown of the Amherstburg docks won piece-work scale of \$3 a case for beer and \$15 a case for whisky. Final clearance papers for the export of alcohol were issued in Amherstburg on May 31, 1930.¹¹⁸

Utilities

Natural Gas in Amherstburg

"GAS IS COMING!", was the welcome announcement in the *Amherstburg Echo* on April 3rd, 1958. The article continued, "The pipeline will come down King's Highway No. 18 from Ojibway..." Since that time residents of this Tri-Community have been using natural gas to heat

their homes, for cooking, laundry and in some cases, to fuel their vehicles.

The natural gas industry in Ontario was initially established by a local man who later headed the company which eventually brought gas to this district.¹¹⁹ Eugene Coste, son of Napoleon and Matilda (Robidoux) Coste, was born in Malden township on July 8, 1859. The family later moved to France and Egypt where Napoleon Coste, an engineer, worked on the Suez Canal. In 1883 they moved back to Amherstburg where Coste senior built 'Mireille', a beautiful mansion on the riverfront. (The building was known in this century as 'Chateau LaRose'.)

Eugene Coste and his brother Louis were educated at Grenoble and later at the University of Paris.¹²⁰ A third brother, Denis A. Coste, also educated at Grenoble, received further training at Dover College in England while the family lived there for a period of time. Eugene Coste was further educated in engineering, receiving a degree in 1883 from École Nationale Supérieure des Mines in France as a mining engineer.

From his earlier school days in Paris, Eugene was a firm believer in the inorganic origin of oil and gas.¹²¹ Between 1900 and 1903 his consistent views were recorded in papers on "Natural Gas in Ontario" and "The Volcanic Origin of Natural Gas and Petroleum." It seems that even then the Malden native was destined to create the natural gas industry in Canada.

In 1888 he began drilling 'Coste No. 1' in Gosfield Township. The well was completed in January, 1889 with an initial open flow of 10 million cubic feet per day. This marked the beginning of the Essex gas field and the natural gas industry in Ontario.¹²²

Early in 1889, Amherstburg town council was approached by E.I. Scully, representative of Hiram Walker & Sons, asking for permission to lay pipes "for the purpose of conveying oil or natural gas to the inhabitants of Amherstburg,"¹²³ specifically for lighting the streets. A few weeks later William McGregor addressed council outlining a two-year plan to organize the company and lay pipes. He indicated that the output at Gosfield would equal 650 tons of coal or about 1400 cords of wood per day.¹²⁴ Napoleon Coste, then reeve of Malden, told council that he hoped to sink more wells and that within a year there would be a well six miles from town near the Malden-Colchester town line. A bylaw was drafted and passed two readings. Clauses were added, one stating that the pipes had to be laid not later than April 1, 1891 and another which said that free heat and light would be supplied to town buildings. At the same time, factions promoting electricity for street lighting also entered into discussions with council and a bylaw was prepared. In the end Colin Wigle's plan for lighting the streets of Amherstburg with electricity won out over natural gas.¹²⁵

During the first three or four years after 'Coste No. 1' was drilled, Essex County gas was supplied only to nearby communities such as Leamington, Kingsville and Ruthven. By 1894, with some thirty producing wells, it was time to look further afield to seek a market for the apparently "unlimited" supply. An eight-inch pipeline was laid from the Essex field to Windsor and Walkerville and in 1895 to Detroit. By 1897 Toledo, Ohio was being supplied with Essex County gas. By 1901 it became obvious the company had been spreading themselves too thin - gas pressures drastically dropped and before long the Essex field was depleted and finally abandoned.

New Fields

In 1906 natural gas was discovered in Tilbury East Township. This signalled a new boom in the industry and competition was keen to meet the ever-increasing demand. In November of that year the Coste interests entered the field through the formation of Volcanic Oil and Gas Company, with

Denis A. Coste - also a pioneer of the natural gas industry - as secretary-treasurer.¹²⁶ The newly organized company supplied gas to Windsor and its surrounding villages as well as the town of Essex. In later years Eugene Coste was president (1926-27) and a director of Union Gas (1922-24, 1930-37). Denis A. Coste was president (1927-29) and first vice-president of the company from 1929 to 1940. Incidentally, in 1946 while drilling on Lot 53, Conc. 5, Malden, the Drake & Walker Company encountered at 965 feet a small commercial gas flow, this within three miles of the old Coste homestead.¹²⁷

Union Natural Gas Company Formed

In December, 1911 Volcanic Oil and Gas Company merged with Ridgetown Fuel Supply and the United Fuel Supply Company to form the Union Natural Gas Company of Canada Limited. After long and successful careers, Eugene Coste died in Toronto on January 22, 1940; his brother Denis A. Coste, two years his junior, passed away seven months later on August 18th in Chatham. As Victor Lauriston said of the two brothers, "They were the beginning of great things!"¹²⁸

Natural Gas for Amherstburg

On October 31, 1957 officials of the Union Gas Company met with the Amherstburg Town Council to discuss the granting of a franchise to the company to supply the town with natural gas.¹²⁹ In February of the following year Russel Perkins, district manager of the company, told council that construction would begin as soon as weather permitted. Representatives of local retail stores were present at the meeting, concerned that Union Gas Company would sell appliances which might affect the former's businesses. They were, however, given assurance that Union Gas would not undersell other stores and further, that they would provide classes to train retail store employees in the proper method of installing gas appliances.¹³⁰

Soon an eight-inch gas line spanned the miles between Obijway and Amherstburg. The official turn-on ceremony took place on October 28, 1958.¹³¹

Office and Showroom Set Up in Amherstburg

The Union Gas Company opened its first office in Amherstburg in 1958 on Dalhousie Street in the north end of the historic Bullock's Tavern building, next door to Eaton's Order Office. Bill Johnson was the first local manager. Marilyn Dube, the company's secretary, not only looked after the administrative paperwork but took service calls, prepared work orders and periodically sold the appliances. Phil Smith was the company's first sales representative in Amherstburg. Through the years many local men and women found employment with Union Gas Company but among the first, including the above-mentioned, were service representatives Maynard Hurst, Reg Spencer, Walt Lacey and Pete Tehonchuk. Ron Lacy worked part-time and young Mike Johnson handled janitorial duties.

In January, 1965 Union Gas Company moved the office to the east end of the Liberty Theatre building, facing Richmond Street,¹³² where it remained until 1981 when all but a small maintenance shop was moved to Windsor.

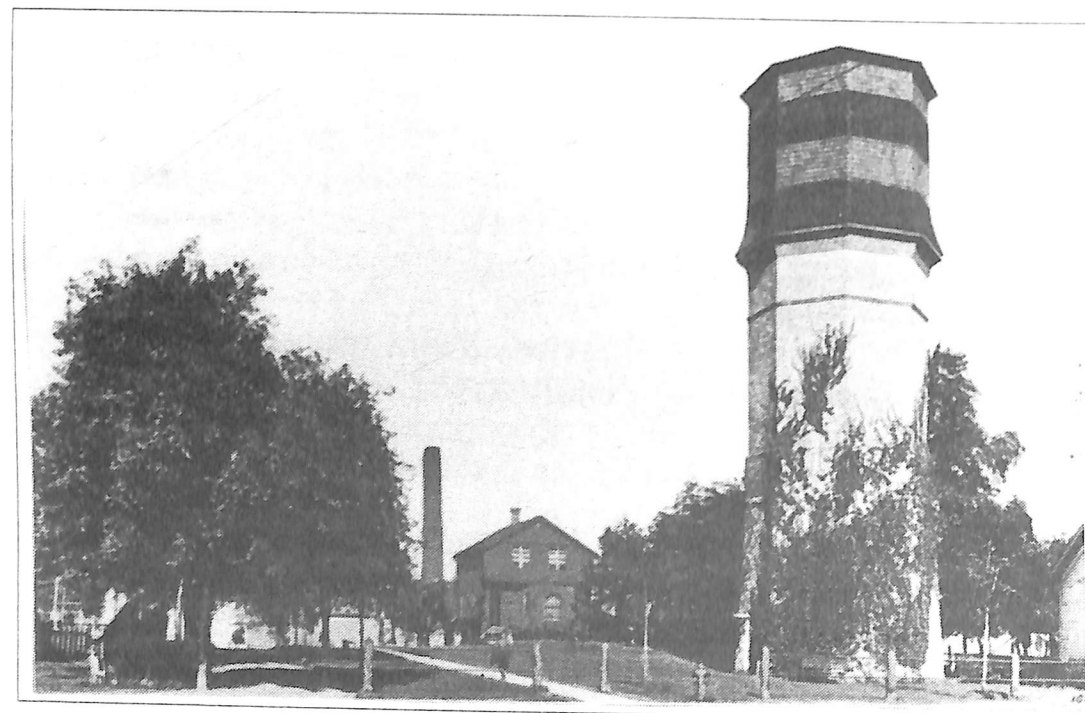
Today the Union Gas Limited services over 712,000 customers in Ontario. The head office is located in Chatham and the Windsor office boasts close to 300 employees.

Water

For nearly the first hundred years of Amherstburg's existence, residents' water supply came directly from the river or, for a few fortunates, from private wells. By the second half of the 19th century several people, including Eli and Peter Mero and Arthur 'Dandy' Harris, earned their living by filling barrels with river water and selling them to citizens at a rate of 25 cents for two barrels during summer months and 25 cents for one barrel in the winter.¹³³ By 1875 the townspeople were beginning to consider the erection of a waterworks for the town.¹³⁴ A quote was obtained from Toledo contractor J.D. Cook in 1875 for just over \$21,000 U.S.¹³⁵ but nothing seems to have come of it.

In 1890 the issue was revived with a fervour. In July of that year, a Letter to the Editor published in the *Amherstburg Echo* opined that "the present system of Amherstburg water works, hauling in box carts and selling by the barrel, is one of laughter, sneer and ridicule to all who visit our town, and there are, unfortunately, too many of the residents...who talk...as if they would vote against having a regular system of supply of good and healthy water."¹³⁶ Council asked ratepayers to vote for a system of water pipes to be laid along several streets, the water to be conveyed into homes at the owners' expense. It was pointed out that this system would not only be beneficial for health reasons but would also serve the town well in case of a fire.¹³⁷

By the end of 1890 town council passed Bylaw 28A to raise \$27,000 by debentures for the construction of a waterworks on the riverfront at the foot of Rankin Avenue.¹³⁸ In early 1891 plans for the buildings were unveiled with work to commence "not later than April."¹³⁹ The contract was awarded to Miles Hunting of Hamilton, Ontario for \$21,380, several thousand dollars below council's estimate. The surplus funds were to be used to extend the piping farther than originally planned.¹⁴⁰



Waterworks, circa 1915.

Department of Canadian Heritage: Fort Malden National Historic Site

By June of 1891 the watermains were laid, the hydrants were expected to arrive soon and James Wilderspin had completed the construction of the waterworks buildings.¹⁴¹

Although the waterworks provided the convenience of running water to homes, the untreated water supply caused annual typhoid epidemics that led to several deaths each year. In 1912 chlorine was added to the water¹⁴² but residents were still warned to boil all water before drinking it. In 1917 the Brunner Mond Company announced its imminent construction of a complex in Amherstburg which would include a water purification plant. By March, 1919 the town's water was coming from Brunner Mond and the "purified filtered water" finally put an end to the typhoid problem.¹⁴³ Water metres were installed in Amherstburg homes in 1936.¹⁴⁴

By the early 1930s the old waterworks buildings at the end of Rankin Avenue were in decay and the tower was razed in 1933. A popular swimming spot, the site was landscaped and its "well-kept lawns and rock-bordered driveway" were "much admired."¹⁴⁵

The Brunner Mond water filtration plant served the town for several decades. By 1961 the increased population forced Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden to consider new alternatives for "a more adequate supply of water."¹⁴⁶ A new water tower was erected on the south side of Alma Street in 1969, its pre-stressed concrete construction being the "first of its kind in Canada."¹⁴⁷ That year in 1969, its pre-stressed concrete construction being the "first of its kind in Canada."¹⁴⁷ That year the Ontario Water Resources Commission negotiated with Allied Chemical for the latter to amend its facility and temporarily continue to supply town water, the agreement going into effect in the spring of 1970. By that time tenders had been called for the construction of a new water treatment plant north of Allied on Highway 18, to be called the Detroit River Waterworks System.¹⁴⁸ The new facility had a capacity of four million imperial gallons per day and went into operation in September, 1971 with the official opening being held on November 16th of that year.¹⁴⁹ It has since expanded to serve Amherstburg, Colchester North, LaSalle, Anderdon, Malden and west Windsor.¹⁵⁰



Ontario Water Resources Commission, Amherstburg Area Water Treatment Plant, 1970s.

Electricity

In 1889 the Amherstburg Electric Light, Power and Heating Company was formed by "local parties," notably Colin Wigle, to supply "electricity for the purpose of light, heat and power" to Amherstburg "at a small cost."¹⁵¹ At a town council meeting in March of that year, it was moved that a bylaw be introduced granting the company the privilege of erecting poles and wires as soon as the company was legally formed.¹⁵² By April, 1889 an agreement between town council and Colin Wigle stated that the latter would install twelve street lights "not later than May 1st" and that the lights would burn from sunset until midnight. Wigle would be paid to maintain the system for a period of one year.¹⁵³

In December, 1891 a bylaw was introduced to "abandon the present system of lighting the streets by employing Electric Lights furnished by a private person, and instead...purchase and operate

under the direction of [town] council the necessary Electric Lighting Plant and by means thereof to light the streets through each night."¹⁵⁴ In 1894 W.H. McEvoy was granted a franchise and a five-year lease to provide energy to the town. He was to pay the town \$1200 per year for power "from sundown to sunrise," the use of town poles for his wires and space for his machinery in the powerhouse at the waterworks complex. Residents who desired electricity paid McEvoy a set rate.¹⁵⁵ By 1896 his electric plant was "in complete working order" and was reported to be "the most economical plant in this part of the country."¹⁵⁶ The demand for street lighting was on the rise and in October, 1896 "the incandescent lights [were] extended down the bank as far as W.S. Falls' residence and up the bank as far as W.H. Gatfield's [on the Anderdon riverfront]. Also Park Street and Rankin Avenue and other streets."¹⁵⁷ McEvoy's plant was enlarged that year but after it was destroyed by fire in 1901,¹⁵⁸ a new brick powerhouse was built behind the post office on Dalhousie Street (now the site of Navy Yard Park). All-night service, which had been promised to consumers for some time, was inaugurated February 1, 1910 after meters were installed in most businesses and residences.¹⁵⁹

In 1912 privately owned generating plants in Essex County were purchased by the Essex County Light and Power Company, a subsidiary of Detroit Edison, which served Amherstburg for a few years before being taken over by the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario. The latter quickly set forth on its plan to "have the town well lit by summer [1916], with a light on every corner."¹⁶⁰ By 1924 many towns were taking over their own distribution systems and Amherstburg elected to do the same. The bylaw forming the Amherstburg Hydro System was introduced in 1925 and A.G. Brown was named superintendent.¹⁶¹ The Hydro Commission retained control of the transformer station at the corner of Simcoe and Bathurst Streets as well as lines running out of town.¹⁶² A new meter and storeroom were built in the Amherstburg Hydro Commission rooms in the basement of the town hall in 1932.¹⁶³

Public Utilities Commission

At a town council meeting in March, 1936 Mr. Timmis, the chairman of the Fire, Water and Light Committee, suggested that Amherstburg set up a public utilities commission.¹⁶⁴ A bylaw forming the Amherstburg Public Utilities Commission (APUC) was passed by town council on March 6, 1939.¹⁶⁵ The first meeting of the three-member board of directors was held the following day.¹⁶⁶ The APUC would not only deal with all hydro business but would have the "power to manage, control, operate and maintain the water system, to regulate water in all places and to fix rates."¹⁶⁷ N.E. Wilson was named manager and was succeeded by Fred Bridle in November, 1955. The Commission occupied cramped quarters in the town hall until the new APUC office building and service centre was erected in 1958 on the east side of Sandwich Street just north of Richmond Street.¹⁶⁸ A new sub-station at the rear of the utilities property was officially opened in December, 1959.¹⁶⁹ Fred Birdle resigned in 1964 and Gerry W. Coyle took over as manager.¹⁷⁰

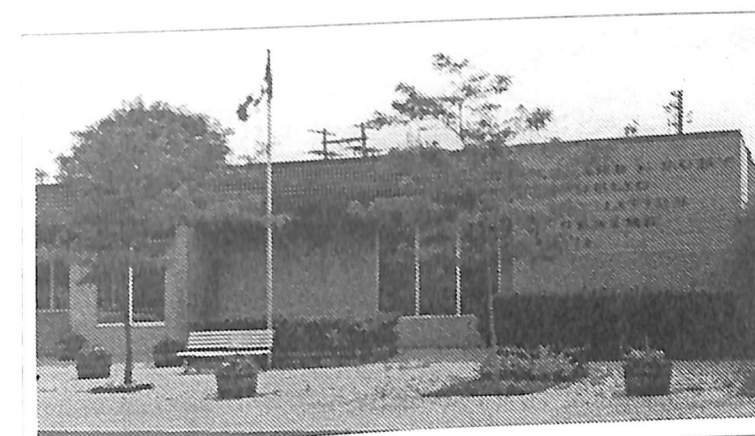
In the late 1960s it was decided that a voltage change should be instituted for all new construction and that all services be placed underground. Voltage would be distributed at 16,000 volts directly from Ontario Hydro feeder lines, eventually eliminating substations within the town. The APUC continued to operate efficiently and relatively debt-free through a large growth period in

the 1970s. Subdivisions flourished, some with electrically heated homes. Commercial apartment buildings sprung up along or near the Detroit River, the majority also having electric heat.

In 1980 Gerry Coyle retired and Robert Hardy assumed the position of general manager. The Town of Amherstburg annexed parts of Anderdon and Malden in 1981, increasing Amherstburg's population from 5730 to 8500. By 1985 the APUC was serving 2500 customers with a staff of ten. At this time the town experienced a slow growth period but utility rates continued to climb at an alarming rate because of Ontario Hydro's incessant wholesale increases passed on to utilities. In order to better serve its customers, the APUC building was expanded in 1986-87 to allow for larger office and garage spaces. The expansion was dedicated on June 18, 1987, exactly 29 years after the dedication of the original building.¹⁷¹

Early in 1994 the APUC was serving some 3500 customers with a staff of twelve. The maximum demand in a peak month was 17,917 kilowatts and consumption for that month was 9,119,748 kilowatt hours. Robert Hardy passed away suddenly in 1994 and Larry Smith took over as general manager, a position he still holds today.

In the spring of 1991 the APUC building was renamed the Leonard F. Duby Public Utilities Centre in honour of the late Leonard Duby, Amherstburg Public Utilities commissioner from 1961-68 and 1978-90.



Leonard F. Duby Public Utilities Centre, 1997.

Endnotes to Chapter III

1. "An Act to establish a Police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburg." *Statutes of Upper Canada*, 1817, Chapter 2.
2. Letter from Russell to County Lieutenants, 8 August 1796. In Russell Papers (Ontario Historical Society Papers, Vol. I, 1932), p. 21.
3. Armstrong, Frederick H. "The Oligarchy of the Western District of Upper Canada, 1788-1841," *Historical Papers of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1977.

4. Noel, S.J.R. Patrons, Clients, Brokers, Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p. 49.
5. *The Canadian Emigrant*, January 19, 1832.
6. *The Canadian Emigrant*, February 2, 1836.
7. *The Western Herald*, December 23, 1841.
8. *The Western Herald*, January 15, 1842.
9. Ibid.
10. *The Canadian Emigrant*, January 19, 1836.
11. *The Canadian Emigrant*, September 5, 1835.
12. *The Western Herald*, July 17 and October 14, 1839.
13. *The Western Herald*, April 14, 1842.
14. *The Western Herald*, May 29, 1838.
15. Letter from L.J. Fluet to Commissioner of Crown Lands, 19 March 1844. (Windsor's Community Museum, PM544)
16. *The Essex Record*, May 19, 1881, obituary of Louis Joseph Fluet.
17. *The Canadian Emigrant*, December 1, 1831.
18. *The Canadian Emigrant*, June 28, 1834.
19. *The Essex Record*, May 19, 1881.
20. *The Canadian Emigrant*, February 8, 1834.
21. *The Canadian Emigrant*, June 28, 1834.
22. *The Western Herald*, July 16, 1841.
23. Douglas, R. Alan. John Prince 1796-1870: A collection of documents. (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1980), p. 102. Also, the *Toronto Globe*, March 10, 1849. Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine was the leader of the Lower Canadian Reformers from 1841-51.
24. *The Amherstburg Courier*, July 14, 1849.
25. Statutes of Upper Canada, 4 & 5 Victoria, Chapter 10.
26. *The Western Herald*, March 3, 1842.
27. *The Western Herald*, May 14, 1842.

28. *The Amherstburg Courier*, March 31, 1849. The "Pastorius' brick house" may refer to the home of Charles Pastorius who lived on Lot 7, east side of Bathurst Street. (Gaspar, Doris. Amherstburg 1796-1996: The New Town on the Garrison Grounds, Book I, Chapter II, 'The New Town on the Garrison Grounds'. Amherstburg: Amherstburg Bicentennial Book Committee, 1996.)
29. Statutes of Upper Canada, 12 Victoria, Chapter 81.
30. Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe was successful in getting the "Act to provide for the nomination and appointment of Parish and Town Officers" shelved when it was introduced in the first session of the new Legislative Assembly. It passed in a diluted form when it was introduced again in the second session, as Simcoe had come to realize that many "well-affected settlers" were not prepared to obey petty town officers not elected by themselves. (See Shortt, Adam & Doughty, Arthur G. (eds.) Canada and its Provinces, Archives Edition. (Toronto & Glasgow: Brooks & Co., 1914-1917), p. 413.)
31. "An Act to provide for the nomination and appointment of Parish and Town Officers within this province." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1793, 33 George III, Chapter II (passed July 9, 1793).
32. Ibid., s. 2-7.
33. Ibid., s. 6.
34. "An Act to restrain the custom of permitting horned cattle, horses, sheep and swine to run at large." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1794, 34 George III, Chapter 8.
35. Ibid., Chapter 10.
36. "An Act to repeal so much of an Act to restrain the custom of permitting horned cattle, horses, sheep and swine to run at large" as related to sheep and to restrain the owners of rams from permitting them to run at large during a certain time of the year." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1804, 44 George III, Chapter 4.
37. "An Act to provide for the nomination and appointment of Parish and Town Officers within this province." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1793, 33 George III, Chapter 2. Although it was not customary for women in Upper Canada to vote, there were numerous incidents of women in Lower Canada voting in elections prior to the Rebellion of 1837. (See Garner, John. The Franchise and Politics in British North America, 1755-1867. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969.)
38. Thomas F. Park, formerly of the State of Massachusetts and "now of Amherstburg," became a naturalized British subject on June 12, 1861. (Essex County Registry Office, Abstract Book J, p. 241.)
39. "An Act for the prevention of accidental fires." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1792, 32 George III, Chapter 5.
40. Glazebrook, G.P. deT. Life in Ontario: A Social History. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 54.
41. "An Act to establish police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburgh [sic]." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1817, 57 George III, Chapter 2.
42. "An Act to reduce to one Act of Parliament, the several laws relative to the appointment and duties of Township Officers in the province." Statutes of Upper Canada, 1835, 5 William IV, Chapter 8.
43. "An Act to provide for the better internal government of that part of this province which formerly constituted the Province of Upper Canada by the establishment of local or municipal authorities therein." Statutes of the United Provinces of Canada West and Canada East, 1841, 4 & 5 Victoria, Chapter 10.

44. A yeoman is "a farmer who cultivates his own land." (The Random House College Dictionary (rev. ed.) Toronto: Random House Inc., 1984.)

45. The first councillors elected served from one to three years depending on when they were required to stand for re-election. Robert Reynolds served one term of 2 years commencing in 1842; George Bullock served three terms being elected in 1842 for a 1-year term and in 1843 and 1847 for the normal 3-year term. In 1847 the wardenship became elective and Bullock was elected warden by his fellow councillors. Lewis Grant Gordon was elected for a 3-year term commencing in 1844; John McLeod served one 3-year term commencing in 1846; and Henry Wright was elected in 1849 (Phelps, Edward & Cumming, Ross (eds.) Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Essex and Kent. Toronto: H. Belden & Co., 1881. Reprinted 1973.)

46. Smith, William H. Smith's Canadian Gazetteer. (Toronto: H. & W. Rowsell, 1846. Reprinted Toronto: Coles Publishing Co., 1972), p. 5.

47. "An Act to provide for the better internal government of that part of this province which formerly constituted the Province of Upper Canada by the establishment of local or municipal authorities therein." Statutes of the United Provinces of Canada West and Canada East, 1841, 4 & 5 Victoria, Chapter 10.

48. The author could not find an existing copy of the 1849 Municipal Institutions Act but instead had to work with a revised act that did not indicate which sections had been amended.

49. "An Act respecting municipal institutions of Upper Canada." Statutes of the United Provinces of Canada West and Canada East, 1849, 12 Victoria, Chapter 81.

50. "An Act to extend the provisions of the two hundred and seventy-fifth section of the 'Act respecting the municipal institutions of Upper Canada' and to provide for the election of councillors in the several townships of Upper Canada, whenever the same may be divided into electoral divisions under the authority of the said section." Statutes of the United Provinces of Canada West and Canada East, 1863, 27 Victoria, Chapter 16.

51. "An Act respecting municipal institutions of Upper Canada." Statutes of the United Provinces of Canada West and Canada East, 1866, 29-30 Victoria, Chapter 51.

52. "An Act to provide for voting by ballot at municipal elections." Statutes of Ontario, 1874, Chapter 28. This act was to be applicable to municipal elections commencing in January, 1875.

53. "The Women's Municipal Franchise Act," Statutes of Ontario, 1917, Chapter 43.

54. "The Women's Municipal Qualification Act," Statutes of Ontario, 1919, Chapter 47.

55. "The Municipal Amendment Act," Statutes of Ontario, 1955, Chapter 48.

56. "Municipal Elections Amendment Act," Statutes of Ontario, 1982, Chapter 2.

57. *The Amherstburg Echo*, February 15, 1878.

58. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 25, 1992, 'Just Folks'.

59. Amherstburg police chiefs from 1920 to 1923 included James H. Herons, A.J. Wharton, Herbert E. Craig, J.H. Fulmer and Wilfred C. Richard. (Chief of Police day books, Amherstburg town hall.)

60. *The Amherstburg Echo*, October 25, 1995, 'Random Recollections of Austin Craig'.

61. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 23, 1927. 'Annual Report of Police Activities in Town of Amherstburg for Year Ending Dec. 31st, 1927'.

62. *The Amherstburg Echo*, February 5, 1959. The first Amherstburg Police Commission was made up of G. Eric Dennison, Judge A.J. Gordon and Mayor E.T. Laframboise. Callboxes were located at the corners of Richmond and Sandwich Streets and Richmond and Dalhousie Streets. In April, 1959 the Amherstburg and Anderdon Police Departments decided to split the cost of a mobile radio system. (*The Amherstburg Echo*, April 12, 1989, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1959')

63. *The Amherstburg Echo*, September 18, 1969.

64. *The Amherstburg Echo*, October 30, 1969. Also, the *Windsor Star*, October 5, 1970.

65. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 11, 1987.

66. The original document was donated to the Fort Malden Museum in 1958. A transcript can be found in the Marsh Collection Society, file "F-37."

67. Other members were Richard Hadwick, Alexander Wagner, George Thompson, Richard Watson, Simon Bertrand, James Findley, Alexander Jones, John Hamilton, Antoine Meloche, James Love, George Watson, Rowland Wingfield, Antoine Racicot, Henry Middleditch, John Turk, Joseph Girardin, Felix Drouillard, Israel Beneteau, James Brown, Charles G. Fortier, Thomas Nicholson, Christopher Kenden and George Baker. Information about most of these men can be found in *Amherstburg 1796-1996: The New Town on the Garrison Grounds*, Book I. Amherstburg: Amherstburg Bicentennial Book Committee, 1996.

68. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 12, 1941. *The Amherstburg Courier* of December 1, 1849 reported that two engines were dispatched from the fort to fight a fire in "the woodyard of Mr. Archer in this village."

69. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 12, 1941.

70. *The Amherstburg Echo*, May 19, 1939. This photo appeared in the *Detroit News* during that week.

71. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 28, 1995. 'Yesterday's News - 1875.'

72. *The Amherstburg Echo*, October 25, 1995. 'Yesterday's News - 1875.'

73. Park & Borrowman purchased part of the old Fort Malden property in 1875 and the fire engine along with it. In 1941 Mrs. A. Aikman, daughter of John R. Park, donated the old hand-pumped engine to the Fort Malden Museum. (*The Amherstburg Echo*, December 12, 1941.)

74. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 6, 1995. 'Yesterday's News - 1875.'

75. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 14, 1879. The "Firemen's Hall" was located on the site of what was later the Mullen Coal Office, immediately south of the Salmoni block on the west side of Dalhousie Street.

76. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 12, 1941.

77. *The Amherstburg Echo*, January 13, 1882. The officers for 1882 were Samuel Lauer, chief; W.D. Balfour, captain; W.T. Wilkinson, 1st Lieutenant; James Campeau, 2nd Lieutenant; Daniel Boufford, Secretary; P.C. Cadaret, Assistant Secretary; Zenobie Morin, Treasurer; Thomas Ashwell, Foreman of Hose; Michael Girardin, Assistant Foreman of Hose; Andrew Belcours, 1st Branchman; Nicholas Stevens, 2nd Branchman; Alexis Boufford, 3rd Branchman; Henry Belcours, 4th Branchman; George Middleditch, Engineer; D.M. Kemp, 1st Assistant Engineer; and George Rebidoux, 2nd Assistant

Engineer.

78. "The north end of the first floor [of the new town hall] is occupied by a fire engine room, 29 feet by 38 feet with separate entrances level with the ground for the steam fire engine and the hose carts. From the engine room there is an entrance to the hose tower. Off the engine room is a firemen's assembly room, 12 ft. 4 in. by 17 ft. 6 in..." (The *Amherstburg Echo*, July 13, 1883.) In 1885 Michael Twomey, owner of the Salmoni block on the southwest corner of Dalhousie and Richmond Streets, "had the outside of the old firemen's hall painted and penciled to match his block adjoining." (The *Amherstburg Echo*, April 23, 1995. 'Yesterday's News - 1885.')
79. The *Amherstburg Echo*, January 15, January 22 and March 5, 1886.
80. This is now the site of the Amherstburg Public Library. The Anglo-American Hotel was also known as the 'Tin House' because of its tin roof which was credited for slowing the spread of the flames to other buildings.
81. The *Amherstburg Echo*, January 14, 1910.
82. The *Windsor Star*, June 17, 1961.
83. The town's three wards were (1) west of Sandwich (Apsley) Street and south of Richmond Street; (2) east of Sandwich Street and south of Richmond Street; and (3) north of Richmond Street. (The *Amherstburg Echo*, June 17, 1970. 'With the Tide'.)
84. The *Amherstburg Echo*, March 28, 1919.
85. The *Amherstburg Echo*, October 25, 1989. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1949.'
86. The *Amherstburg Echo*, March 12, 1942; and February 28, 1990. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1950.' Also, the *Windsor Star*, June 17, 1961.
87. The *Amherstburg Echo*, May 12, 1982. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1952.'
88. The *Amherstburg Echo*, December 8, 1982. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1952.'
89. The *Amherstburg Echo*, February 9, 1983. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1953.'
90. The *Windsor Star*, June 17, 1961.
91. The *Amherstburg Echo*, April 26, 1989. 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1939.'
92. The *Amherstburg Echo*, August 3, 1939. Members of the fire brigade at the time were Ed Kemp, Chief Jack Hamilton, Irvin Bernard, Bud Lalonge, Harry Spearing Jr., Louis Robillard, Bill Wade, Ed Grondin, Jack Kennelly, John Belcours, Bill Fryer and Julian Kopacz.
93. Ibid. The four members were Chief J.R. Hamilton, Phillip Smith, Douglas Goodwin and R.W. Brush.
94. The *Amherstburg Echo*, March 12, 1942.
95. The *Amherstburg Echo*, October 27, 1966.
96. The *Amherstburg Echo*, January 11, 1968.
97. The *Amherstburg Echo*, February 21, 1990.
98. Rick Murray, formerly deputy chief, became fire chief on October 15, 1990. He is assisted by Deputy Chief Ron Duby. (Conversation with Fire Chief Rick Murray, May 1997.)
99. The *Windsor Star*, February 16, 1993.
100. The *Amherstburg Echo*, June 16, 1993. In May, 1997 the Amherstburg Fire Department had five vehicles: two pumpers, a ladder carrier, a rescue truck and a car for the fire chief. (Conversation with Fire Chief Rick Murray, May 1997.)
101. A copyrighted work of Terrance Hamilton Hall, 1995, for which all rights are reserved and no reproduction may be made without the express written permission of the author. Permission has been granted to the Amherstburg Bicentennial Book Committee to include this work in its book. This work represents a collection of the author's interviews and conversations with many local personalities, including Walter Goodchild, John Goodchild, John Marsh, the Hamilton brothers of Park Street (Lester, Oromond and Louis) and their sister Mary Helen (Hamilton) Hall.
102. The *Amherstburg Echo*, April 23 and June 18, 1920; January 28, February 11, February 25 and March 18, 1921.
103. The *Amherstburg Echo*, July 2, July 23 and September 17, 1920.
104. The *Amherstburg Echo*, March 7, 1930 and September 13, 1978. Also, Marsh, John A. With the Tide: Recollections and Anecdotal Histories of the Town of Amherstburg and the Lower Detroit River District. Amherstburg: Marsh Collection Society, 1995. Hereafter referred to as Marsh.
105. The *Windsor Star*, July 13, 1977. Also, the *Amherstburg Echo*, December 10, 1926; January 3, 1930; and June 14, 1972.
106. Ibid. Also, United States Coast Guard Report from Marblehead, Ohio dated June 13, 1929 (Marsh Collection Society, file "P-83"). Also, Marsh.
107. The *Amherstburg Echo*, November 24, 1922.
108. The *Amherstburg Echo*, November 24, 1920. Also, Marsh. Excellent discussions of the senior McQueen and the loss of the *City of Dresden* are found in Boyer, Dwight. True Tales of the Great Lakes. New York: Dodd Mead, 1971; Hunt, C.W. Booze, Boats and Billions. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988 (hereafter referred to as Hunt); and Gervais, C.H. The Rumrunners. Thornhill: Firefly Books Ltd., 1980 (hereafter referred to as Gervais).
109. The *Amherstburg Echo*, July 2, 1920. Also, Hunt. Also, Gervais.
110. The *Amherstburg Echo*, August 12 and September 30, 1921.
111. Marsh.
112. The *Amherstburg Echo*, January 21, 1976 and September 13, 1979. Also, Marsh.
113. Marsh.
114. Ibid.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.

117. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 19, 1976.
118. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 14, 1972. Also, Marsh. Also, *The Labor World*, January 11, 1930 (Duluth, Minnesota) (Marsh Collection Society, file "P-83").
119. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 14, 1957.
120. Lauriston, Victor Blue Flame of Service (Chatham: Union Gas Company of Canada Limited, 1961). Hereafter referred to as Lauriston.
121. Lauriston.
122. Ibid.
123. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 1889, Amherstburg Town Council Minutes.
124. *The Amherstburg Echo*, April 8, 1889, Amherstburg Town Council Minutes.
125. *The Amherstburg Echo*, May 17, 1889, Amherstburg Town Council Minutes.
126. Lauriston.
127. Ibid.
128. Ibid.
129. *The Amherstburg Echo*, October 17, 1957.
130. *The Amherstburg Echo*, February 27, 1958.
131. Lauriston.
132. *The Amherstburg Echo*, January 7, 1965.
133. *The Amherstburg Echo*, July 18, 1941.
134. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 29, 1995, 'Yesterday's News - 1875' reported that a public meeting was called "to discuss the question of securing a waterworks and/or a steam fire engine." The next issue of the paper stated that the citizens of Amherstburg had voted for a waterworks.
135. *The Amherstburg Echo*, January 14, 1876.
136. *The Amherstburg Echo*, July 11, 1890.
137. Ibid.
138. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 12, 1890. This is now the north end of the Navy Yard Park and the site of the Park House Museum.
139. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 13, 1891. "The plan for the proposed water-works station buildings which includes pump house, boiler house, store room and engineer's residence, were approved of by the council...and Engineer [John] Galt was instructed to advertise for tenders at once...The building will be erected on the present stone foundation on which the

- grain warehouse stands, being 55 x 26 feet. The boiler and pump rooms will be 10 feet 6 inches by 20 feet each, a brick wall dividing them, this part will be one story [sic] high, at west end of the building; the other end of basement about 30 x 23 feet will be used for a storeroom or can be utilized for electric-light plant, if desired. The part of the building in which the storeroom is located will be carried up one story-and-a-half. The first story will be even with the ground and will contain two rooms, 16 ft. x 11 ft. 6 inches, with a hall. The second story will contain four rooms...A balcony 26 x 5 feet, overlooking the river, runs across the west end. The chimney will be 64 feet above the ground, and will be located just south of the boiler room."
140. *The Amherstburg Echo*, April 10, 1891.
 141. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 17, 1891.
 142. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 22, 1982, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1912.'
 143. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 7, 1919.
 144. *The Amherstburg Echo*, August 27, 1986, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1936.' It is reported that council had been discussing the purchase of water metres for "20 years." (*The Amherstburg Echo*, July 16, 1986, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1936.')
 145. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 8, 1934.
 146. *The Windsor Star*, June 17, 1961.
 147. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 8, 1989, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1969.'
 148. *The Amherstburg Echo*, November 24, 1971.
 149. Ibid.
 150. Interview between Carole Courvillon and Dennis MacDonald, superintendent of the water treatment plant, August 11, 1995.
 151. *The Amherstburg Echo*, February 15, 1889.
 152. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 1, 1889.
 153. *The Amherstburg Echo*, April 5, 1889.
 154. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 18, 1891.
 155. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 11, 1980, quoting Bylaw No. 78A, passed April 23, 1894.
 156. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 19, 1896.
 157. *The Amherstburg Echo*, October 30, 1896.
 158. McGill, Sheila. "The History of Electricity in Amherstburg." Unpublished paper, 1966. Copy in Marsh Collection Society, file "A-65;" also printed in the *Amherstburg Echo*, October 6, 1966. Hereafter referred to as McGill.
 159. *The Amherstburg Echo*, February 4, 1910.

160. *The Amherstburg Echo*, April 10, 1996, 'Yesterday's News - 1916.'
161. *The Amherstburg Echo*, August 14, 1996, 'Yesterday's News - 1926.'
162. McGill.
163. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 10, 1982, 'Upsetting the Hour Glass - 1932.'
164. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 27, 1936.
165. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 10, 1939.
166. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 10, 1939. The board of directors was made up of the three former hydro commissioners, F.T. Pickering, R.D. Wigle and Mayor Nick Marra. In the mid-1950s the board of directors became a five-member group.
167. *The Amherstburg Echo*, March 10, 1939.
168. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 18, 1958.
169. *The Amherstburg Echo*, December 10, 1959.
170. *The Amherstburg Echo*, April 16, 1964.
171. *The Amherstburg Echo*, June 24, 1987.

Chapter III - Municipal History

p. 102 - George Hanna should be spelled "Hannah."

Chapter IV - Transportation & Communication

p. 160 - William Knight was postmaster from 1958-78. Calvin C. Hart was appointed in 1979 and served until 1980. Arthur Langlois was postmaster from 1953-57.

p. 167 - In endnote 124, the date of the *Amherstburg Echo* issue should be December 4, 1969.