

Commemorative Walking Tour of St Davids on the 200th Anniversary of the Burning of the Village

Date: July 19th, 2014

Time: 10 am; 12 Noon; 2 pm

The tour begins in parking lot of the St.Davids/Queenston United Church.

Welcome to St. Davids on the anniversary of the day the town was burned and reborn again!

The purpose of the tour – to acquaint walkers to the history of the town and the living history that remains.

Introductions: Megan Gilchrist of St. Davids and Isabel Bachmann of Merritton.

Important notes for the walkers:

Participants are responsible for their own safety.

- a. Please exercise due caution as the walking surface is uneven in some places.
- b. We will be travelling directly beside a very busy thoroughfare. Please remain alert to passing vehicles and especially when crossing York and Four Mile Creek Roads
- c. Please ensure that you are properly dressed for the weather. Particularly, please remember to stay covered and hydrated in the heat of the day.
- d. Refreshments may be obtained at one of two spots, Orchard Glen at the south end of our route east of Creek Road and at the Avondale or café near the main crossroads.
- e. Should you need to return to your vehicle before the tour is ended, please use the map to locate the crossroads and follow York Road west, or towards Queenston.

Our tour contains information about many historic homes and buildings, as well as anecdotal stories about their owners and other distinctive people and places in town. There are other homes in the village that were not included because of a lack of available information. If you have information about a home you would like to contribute to future updates of this walk, please contact the St. Davids Ratepayers Association.

The enclosed map provides a self-guided tour of St. Davids showing the location of each historic home and building in this section. While touring, unless invited, please respect the homeowner's privacy and stay off private property. Thank you.

- Paxton Lane – the original native trail north and south between the lakes. Remained the main road for many years. Among the houses that survived the burning were three along this road: The Secord/Paxton home at the end of the current road; Solomon Quick's Tavern situated approximately opposite the golf club and the Secord Mill that we will see later. The fourth is the Clement/Doyle home that is north of the main York and Creek Road intersection on the left/west side driving north.
- Paxton Lane was the main road for much of St. Davids early life. It continued up to connect with Portage Road.
- We will follow it to the laneway that connects to the old Stephen and Hannah Secord home, where Laura Secord stopped at her relatives on her way to warn Fitzgibbon. The Secord family owned the building for many years, but it is more commonly known as the Paxton House.
- On the site of the Secord/Paxton home, you will see evidence of the archaeological dig that examined the property and determined its significance to local history, both in relation to the native settlement and the later influx of Loyalists. Portions of this property have been designated of such significance that it will be preserved.

Locust Hall - 1 Paxton Lane ~ Circa 1823 -

This beautiful brick five window Georgian house is a superb example of this style built in 1820-23. Note the large windows in relation to the wall space, the fan light over the front door and the side lights next to the door and upstairs window. Also note the wooden fan lights at the gable ends and interior chimneys – all typical Georgian features. Its white dining room mantel is listed in the Royal Ontario Museum and its doorway with a fan and side lights are sketched in G. W. Jeffery's Picture Gallery. A frame house of the same style originally stood on this foundation but was burned down in 1814. Richard (King Dick) Woodruff decided to rebuild in brick and contracted Stoughton Moore to build this house. With the house half-finished the contractor went broke. The house and debt were assumed by King Dick.



The house fronts on Paxton Lane, which was the main road through the village in 1820 and continued to connect with the Portage Rd. in Niagara Falls. The house is called Locust Hall after the many Locust trees in the area. Locust Hall has been the residence of the Woodruff family since it was built and the current residents are the 6th generation to live in the house. Currently the home of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Woodruff and their family. Mr. Woodruff found some old foundations of the old Woodruff barn between the house and York Road while digging in the yard.

Solomon Quick's Tavern – approximately opposite the golf course.

One of the few buildings to survive the burning of the town in 1814. Brick construction.

Secord ~ Paxton House - 46 Paxton Lane ~ Circa 1785

This house was built between 1785–1790 on Peter Secord's Lot 90 (land grant by Peter Secord.) In 1799 the house and property was transferred for a short period to David Secord Jr., Peter's son and then to Major David Secord. At this time Peter Secord moved to the Long Point Settlement on Lake Erie in something of a snit over land grants. The house is of rubble wall construction with interior and exterior finished stone walls and the space between filled with rubble. The walls are about 2' thick. Apparently Laura Secord rested here in 1813 on her long walk to De Cew House to warn the British of a pending American attack. Laura's warning to Fitzgibbon resulted in a British, Canadian and Native victory at the Battle of Beaverdams.



The house at that time was occupied by Hannah Secord and her children. After the death of her husband, Hannah Secord became the miller at the Peter Secord Mill. The house and property have been owned by the Secord's, Woodruffs' and Hanniwells' over the years. In 1915 it was purchased by the Paxton family and remained their property until a consortium began developing the property. The property has been given a designation as a significant archaeological site. This house is difficult to see from the lane. Please do not go on private property.

The St. Davids Gorge formed part of the Niagara River in the distant past. The rubble left when the river diverted into the Niagara Gorge allowed the flow of the Four Mile Creek to Lake Ontario. The creek was significantly larger and more powerful than the little stream that still exists today. The native settlers, the Neutral or Attiwandaron nation, established a significant community here, with a reliable fresh water source, farm land, good fishing and hunting, all centred at the convergence of two the Mohawk and Iroquois trails, major transportation routes to connect with neighbours and invaluable trading routes. The height of land afforded a lookout across the lower Niagara Peninsula over their hunting land and the crops they planted locally. The hubs on these native highways were spaced approximately 20 km or about 13 miles distant from each other, a distance equivalent to a day's travel in each direction.

- The largest First Nations Ossuary (mortuary or place for bones) in Ontario was discovered in 1828 west of the stone cairn on St. Paul Ave on the top of the Escarpment (sandpit) that was rifled by people for souvenirs.
- Sandy and coarse gravel left in the gorge enabled the formation of the Four Mile Creek, the construction of the golf course (ca. 1932). The Queenston Golf Course is on clay, just outside the St. Davids Gorge. Ravine Winery can tell about variety of soils.
- If time permits, discuss the quarry, lime kilns and cement works.
- Tower on Escarpment was part of the Distant Early Warning system in the mid-20th century.
- 1835 – a horse drawn railway was the first of its kind in Ontario, operating between Queenston and Chippawa. The railway converted to steam in 1850 and closed in 1959. It curled around the escarpment here and the St. Davids station was at York Road and Progressive Avenue (now known as Concession 2). The stone abutment in this area was built in 1854. The locals called the railway Paddy Miles after the conductor who ran the train for many years. Later one of the major highways, locally called Old Hwy 8, ran along York Rd, turning south and along Creek Rd to the falls.
- Follow the golf course road around the Paxton property fence line through the park and along the berm toward Creek Road. There is a grass road down and over the valley that comes up at the old barn on Creek Road between #167 and the mill.

Barn (Agriculture and Fruit crops)

The Niagara Peninsula was one of the major agricultural sites of Canada West/Upper Canada. The rich soil, the protective shelter of the escarpment and climate allowed the settlers of St. Davids and area to produce abundant wheat crops. Wheat was the crop most easily grown and marketed and was an important source of cash for settlers. Apart from limited internal demand from such sources as British garrisons, canal construction crews and lumber camps, the principal markets were Britain and Lower Canada. When the Corn Law and crop failures ended that export, some lesser amounts were shipped to the US.

Eventually technological developments assisted both the grain and livestock sectors in the 19th century, things like stronger plowing equipment, the introduction of crop rotation, covered drainage, crop reapers and specialized farms like orchards. A range of tender fruits (peaches, apricots, sweet and sour cherries, and plums) and other crops, require a longer growing season, were a perfect match in North Niagara.

When the first white settlers came to the peninsula, they had found wild fruit trees prospering in the warmth of the hot summer suns. Some French refugees quickly sensed the fruit possibilities and imported a variety of fruit trees from France. Private growing continued and a historian has noted from the diary of Governor Simcoe's wife, under the date of July 2nd, 1793, that peach trees were prospering at the back of Simcoe's residence.

As early as 1819 peaches were plentiful in the peninsula, but the first record of commercial fruit growing goes back to 1825, or 1830, when one James Durham set out an extensive peach orchard on the River Road near Queenston. Today that property is known as "Fisher Farm".

Despite the advancements and improvements enjoyed by today's farmer, the daily routine is similar to that of earlier generations and weather remains an uncontrollable factor. There are 232,817 acres of farmland in Niagara and of these only 15,000 acres are suitable for growing tender fruit and 15,000 to 20,000 acres for grapes. Farm gate values for tender fruit and grape in Niagara is around \$90 million.

#137 (Secord Mill - pictures)

The Secord Mill - 137 Four Mile Creek Rd ~ Circa 1789

This former gristmill was built in 1782 by Lt. David Brass of Butler's Rangers and operated by Peter and James Secord. Mills were expensive. The Secord mill cost about £500 (New York currency) In 1796 it was acquired by Major David Secord. The mill supplied British and Canadian forces with flour during The War of 1812. It was not burned in 1814 because it was well outside the village of the time, or perhaps because it was operated by a woman miller, Hannah Secord who was the widow of Stephen Secord. The mill was later owned by The Murrays who leased it to James Counter Woodruff for 99 years. Ed Willox operated the mill for Mr. Woodruff for a period of time. It was purchased by the Black family in 1890 and ceased operation as a gristmill in 1910. They subsequently converted the front of the mill to a restaurant called The Olde Mill Inn catering to tourists and travelers using #8 Highway. During the years in which the township was 'dry', a speakeasy ran from here. The Olde Mill was purchased by Ife Stevens in the late 1930's and he operated the restaurant until the mid 1950's. A number of well-known celebrities dined here including Marilyn Monroe, Bob Hope and Elizabeth Taylor. In the cellar, which is 10' high and constructed of rocks collected in the area, are the original hand hewn 14" square beams that supported the grindstones. All the beams and joists in the building are hand hewn and mortise and tendon joined. The floorboards clearly show the marks of pit sawing. The old mill has been converted to a beautiful home by the Bannisters. Thanks to Bill and Carole for saving one of our oldest buildings from possible demolition.

The story comes down through the years to us that when the first mill was ready, it didn't operate properly and Miller Secord was forced to continue to use the grinding stones manually. Grain was spread on the lower stone and the upper stone was rolled around on an axis to crush and grind the grain. This was certainly ineffective and exhausting work. It was easier however than the older version of wooden mortar and pestle.



- Cross to West side and proceed North up 4 Mile Creek Rd.

#167 (Black House); The Black House - 167 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1890

This Italianate style house was built in the 1890's by George Black using local natural cement. The cement was produced by the Isaac Usher Cement works located on the escarpment east of the village. More recently the house as owned by the White family. The owners have included Mr. & Mrs. Graham Telford.



- "Storytime" (share reminiscences; time for questions; talk about Mrs. Currie/Education/Goring?)

As we walk along here sharing stories, we will pass the site where the old "the House of Nations" was built in 1827 and incorporating the old kitchen ruins of an 1802 house that burned in 1814. Became an apartment building about 1910 for many families who lived in this house when they first settled in the country. It was later resituated and reassembled at Ravine Winery by their Lowrey descendant. The plough display we pass is a double bottom mouldboard with coulter (discs).

#184 (The Pines - Fenwick's property); The Johnston House "The Pines" – 184 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1902

This house is named after the three large Austrian pine trees in the front yard. The name "The Pines" is engraved on a stone plaque on the front porch. This house is a good example of Edwardian Classicism style prevalent from 1900 ~ 1930. The style is simple but formal with a simplified but large roof and generous use of windows. The full front porch is typical of the style. The house was built in 1902 by George Johnston, related to the Hanniwell family, on 10 acres of land. Mr. Johnston apparently fell down the main stairs in 1906 at 46 years of age and died of his injuries. In 1910 the property was sold to David Hanniwell. In the late 1920's the property was acquired by Charles and Augusta "Gusie" (née Woodruff) Sanders. The fireplace on the south wall was added in the 1930's. An interesting feature is a carved stone "Woodruff" coat of arms in the face of the fireplace. In 1965 this became the home of Ed & Dianne Wilkinson. Currently owned by



#185 The Hanniwell House- 185 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1895

This house was thought to have been built around 1895 and by the turn of the 20th century it was the home of Margaret Hanniwell. The main beams in the basement are hand hewn white oak from the Hanniwell farm formerly located at the south end of Tanbark Rd. More recently the home of the Jacksons, Armstrongs (not related to the current owner) and Mrs. Klassen and then the home of Roger and Laurie Armstrong.



#190 The Sleeman House - 190 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1872

This house is a good example of the Victorian Vernacular style popular between 1830 and 1900. John Sleeman built the house after his return to the village in 1871 from Guelph. Mr. Sleeman founded the Stamford Spring Brewery in the village in 1836 and later Sleeman's Brewery in Guelph, which is still operating. The house was sold to the Methodist (later United) Church by George Woodruff to be used as a parsonage until the 1970's. The house was purchased and renovated by Brian Boucher and later owned by Victoria Zettel. Connie & Cam Whitworth have added a wing to the house and made other improvements.



#214 (Woodbourne - Osage Oranges); "Woodbourne" - 214 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1839/1883

This house was Heritage Designated in 1995. The north wing of the house is Georgian Vernacular in style and was built by William Woodruff in 1839. The ceilings are 9' downstairs and 7' upstairs and originally there were no closets. Each bedroom was equipped with hooks around the wall to hang clothes. The front door with sidelights is characteristic of the Georgian style as are the large windows in relation to the wall space. The south wing of the house has Victorian Vernacular and Italianate Elements and was built in 1883 by Henry Woodruff. The beautifully detailed fascia and bay windows with decorative hood moulds are typically Victorian. The double front doors with large individual single lights and round tops and windows with pediment hood moulds are Italianate features. It is currently in the midst of renovation for a 9 room country inn.



Note Osage Oranges grow on the north side, adjacent to Warner Rd. Sometimes called 'Bodark' trees (from *bois d'arc*,—"wood for a bow") the tree was used by native peoples for bows and shafts of arrows because of its strength and flexibility. Early settlers in Niagara's Carolinian forests to build thorny hedges to contain or exclude animals, creating fencing that was "horse-high, bull strong, and hog-tight" – impenetrable. The fruit of the tree is bitter and sticky, though some animals will eat it if pressed for food. There is a fruit growing locally that is absolutely delicious and hard to find – the pawpaw! Sort of a guava-banana-custard flesh. Good!

#215 (Peter Secord Inn - talk about architecture and signs of building additions in the stone courses)

The Secord - 215 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1782

The south portion of the basement built in 1782~3 was the original home of Peter Secord, the first white farmer in Ontario, and his wife and five children. The house had a modest sized living area with a fireplace and two windows facing east. There were two small bedrooms about 7'x8' and probably a loft. The north portion of the house was thought to have been built in 1786~90 period also by Peter Secord. This house was not burned in 1814 because it was being used as a hospital. In the early 1880's a section was added to the south and the original house became part of the basement. The house assumed its present appearance. The stone exterior walls are 2 feet thick and the beams and joists are all hand hewn and mortise and tendon joined. The windows are shuttered both inside and outside. The roof beams sit on the stone walls as a structural unit to avoid stress on the walls. The marks of pit sawing are evident in many floorboards. In the 1850's the Reids used the house as an inn. Later owned by the Swazyes when a Swazye married a Reid daughter. The house was purchased in 1925 by the Murdoch's and has been owned by this family for 3 generations. Currently the home of Collette and Harry Murdoch who are restoring and renovating the old house and have added a new wing to the east. The garage is on the site of the old St. Davids Post Office.



#221 (Iron Garden - 40 yr. old reconstruction; original 1840s house was in location of present garage); pick up handout from mailbox on garden wall.

#231 (Oddfellows Hall); Oddfellows Hall Building- 231 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1905

This large two story white frame building was built in 1905. For many years the upper floor was the Odd fellow's Hall and the ground floor contained a bakeshop, barber shop and the Imperial Bank before 249 Creek Rd. was built in 1908. The building currently is an apartment building. The neighbour identified it as a triple brick structure at the front with a stucco addition to the year, all covered with siding.



#234 (Presbyterian Manse); Presbyterian Manse - 234 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1890

This house was built in the 1890's using natural cement (Red Star Cement) donated by Isaac Usher from his cement works located east of the village on the escarpment. The walls are solid cement construction. The style is Edwardian Classicism with the characteristic large cottage style roof, generous use of windows and a full front porch with paired columns. Owners have included Kathryn and Bruce Humphries.



#238 (Duggan House - Dr.'s House - Bank Robbery story); The Duggan House- 238 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1911

Dr. & Mrs. Duggan built this large Edwardian style house of cement block construction in 1911. The house was designed and built by Jim Calvert who had previously built an identical house in Queenston. The barn was built in 1910. While the house was being built the Duggan's were on their honeymoon. The Doctor left enough money with the foreman (not Mr. Calvert) to pay the workers. On his return from the honeymoon he found that the workers had not been paid and the foreman had left town with his money.



Following the 1923 attempted bank robbery, the Doctor examined the robber and found a packet of his hand made cigars in the robbers' pocket. The robber had previously broken into the Doctors house to steal Chloroform to knock out the bank manager and at the same time he took the cigars.

#239 (Wiley Hotel); Wiley Hotel Building - 239 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1823

This large brick building, currently with a vinyl façade, was built in 1823 and operated as a hotel by the Wiley's. The bricks for this building were produced in the area of St. Davids where the canning factory stands today. Scottie Burnett purchased the building and converted the upper floor to a home and ran an implement business on the ground floor. He also operated the last operating gristmill located behind the 253 Creek Rd. before Howard Slingerland took over operation. Later, the building was the home of Mr. & Mrs. H. Slingerland. Currently there are shops on the ground floor and apartments on the second floor.



-#247 Slingerland's Grocery

#246 (2nd Woodruff Store – William. break if needed?)

The William Woodruff Store - 246 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1820

This brick store was built in 1820 by William Woodruff, brother of Richard (King Dick) Woodruff. It operated as a general store in competition to King Dick's store across the street (since demolished, 1961). The store was later operated by the Daylis' and McLeods' and subsequently used as a home by Mr. Joss. The store became a hardware store for many years owned by Lloyd Page and then a weaving craft store owned by the Bannisters. The building has been used as an antique store and then as a real estate agency and a wine kit store, more recently become a café.



#253 Imperial Bank Building - 253 Four Mile Creek Rd. ~ Circa 1908

This building was built in 1908 as the Imperial Bank. The manager lived above the bank. This was previously the location of a blacksmith shop and then the Star Hotel which burned down in the early 1900's. The bank had been previously located at the Oddfellow's Hall Building at 231 Creek Road. Both locations were robbed a total of four times.



This building once stood at the southeast corner of Four Mile Creek Road and York Road. You will now find a vacant lot there as it was torn down in 1961; this photo is from December 3rd, 1960. Before the Niagara Fruitman Magazine and The Growers Monthly it was Lowrey's General Store and prior to that, the Woodruff General Store. The Fruitman is not the first regular publication in St. Davids; in 1816 the St. Davids Spectator was published, later to become the Niagara Spectator and Canadian Argus.

Empty Lot, south-east corner of Creek/York intersection

One of the most important intersections in early Niagara/native routes met here/Stagecoach route up Portage Road to Niagara and west to St. Catharines and on further west/agricultural centre to access mills, tannery, candle maker, lumber, market, school, church, township meetings, etc.



➤ Turn W on York Rd. Pictures of 4 Corners from various perspectives

Between the Avondale and the Woodruff-Rigby house was **Shamrock Inn**, a very popular tourist inn on old Hwy 8. Photo

#1385 (Woodruff-Rigby House - picture of coin?)

Woodruff - 1385 York Rd. ~ Circa 1815

This house was Heritage Designated in 1984. The Woodruff – Rigby House, a five bay, two storey building in the Vernacular Georgian tradition was built by Richard (King Dick) Woodruff in 1815 to replace a house in the same location which was burned down in 1814 by the Americans. The house is on 1.5 acres of land that was purchased from Major David Secord in 1811 and was called “The Homestead”. Barbara & Richard Rigby, the present owners, have been restoring the house since 1976 and their labour of love is now almost complete. The exterior of the house has many Georgian elements – the balanced façade, the windows are large in relation to wall space, wooden fanlights in the gable ends, a medium pitch roof and interior end chimneys. The beams and joists are all hand hewn and mortise and tendon joined. The exterior walls are filled with brick for insulation. During restoration of the exterior of the house a worker saw something shiny drop on the ground. He took it to a pawn shop and was offered money for the 1815 Canadian coin. Realizing what it was he framed the coin using wood from the house and presented it to the Rigbys. The coin was the house's “trademark coin” placed behind the siding when the house was built. The house has six large brick fireplaces. Five fireplaces have a very plain but beautiful white pine mantel. The house has 12 rooms, many of which still retain the chair rails, a feature that was common to Upper Canadian Georgian houses. Following Richard Woodruff's death in 1872, the house was occupied by his widow and then by their son George. The house remained in the Woodruff family until 1918 when it was acquired by the Turnbulls and then inherited by the Pringles. This beautifully restored house is currently the home of Richard and Barbara Rigby.



#1367 St. Davids Spectator - 1367 York Rd. ~ Circa 1815

This was the home of The Spectator, the first newspaper in the area first published in 1816 and edited by Amos McKenny. See a copy of the newspaper elsewhere in this history. The floor beams are hand hewn logs with one side flat and the framing is all mortise and tendon joined attesting to the age of the building. Later converted to a house and the Young's, Smith's, and Fred Lowrey lived here. The building currently contains two separate dwellings, owned by Bob and Dianne Gill.



- Cross at crosswalk to North side and school
- Stop in front of old part of school (education and "new" school; bell; Tanbark - road and tanneries)

This entire section north of York Road was Lowrey farmland, and Lowreys have milled, farmed and canned fruit on this land for 5 generations. Lowreys still farm on the land to the north of these homes. The farm is known to be one of the first commercial grape vineyards in the area with 500 vines planted in 1869 by David Jackson Lowrey on land purchased from the Upper family. He gave each of his children a building lot when they married. All of the houses on the north side of York Road between the school and Four Mile Creek Road were built by the sons and daughters of D.J. Lowrey. Cousins own and operate two wineries on the property behind these homes: Five Rows Craft Wine (off Tanbark Road) and Ravine Winery. The park at the corner of York and Tanbark is named for the Lowrey family (plaque). This school was on land donated by David Jackson Lowrey whose descendants attended St. Davids.

St. Davids Public School

St. Davids was the first public school ever established in the Niagara area. First built by Major Francis Goring in 1790, the school was a one room log building. Construction costs amounted to 1 pound, 12 shillings or the equivalent today of about \$5.00. In 1871, a new one-roomed stone school was built in the village on the present location. About the beginning of World War I, a brick two-roomed addition was added. These rooms presently used by the Grade 7 and 8 classes. In 1953, the old one roomed school was removed and two new classes and a playroom were added. A third addition was completed in 1960. In the fall of 1990, the Lincoln County Board decided to add a gymnasium addition to St. Davids. Grant Sauder was selected as the Architect and the construction was awarded to Risen Construction. Construction began in September, 1991. It was appropriate then that the school's thorough renovation, construction of a new library/computer room, construction of offices and creation of a new entrance would also be awarded to Grant Sauder in the summer of 1994.



➤ Continue East along York Rd.

➤

#1354 The Lowrey Fast House – 1354 York Road

The Frank Lowrey Home is one of a series of Lowrey homes along this part of York Road. Frank was involved in the canning operation at the old mill on Creek Road. Later the Wayne Brady family lived here – Wayne owned the BA gas station in town. More recently the Fast family has lived here.



#1360 The Lowrey House - 1360 York Rd. ~ Circa 1908



This large Edwardian style red brick house was built in 1908 by Edwin. D. Lowrey. The specifications for construction of the house are 17 legal size pages long and specify everything from the amount of mortar to be used between the bricks to the type of wood to be used in various parts of the house. The house has two large stained glass windows, chestnut trim, large crown molding on 10' ceilings, pine flooring, cut stone windowsills, two fireplaces, and double wall construction with exterior of brick veneer. The house was constructed with indoor plumbing an unusual feature in those days in St. Davids. A large water tank was located in the third floor attic into which water was pumped from an outside cistern. The weight of the water alone would have required extensive strengthening of the interior support walls. In the days before electricity the house was also constructed with an acetylene gas lighting system. The generator is still in the basement in which calcium carbide made at the Cyanamide Plant in Niagara Falls was mixed with water to produce acetylene gas. Apparently people would visit from afar to view the gaslights and chandelier ablaze on special occasion such as Christmas. This house had the first telephone in the village. Edwin Lowrey, as the story goes, met his future wife, Rose Wright, over the telephone. She was an operator in Niagara Falls Bell Exchange. Later, this beautiful Edwardian house became the home of Mrs. Howard Lowrey.

The Packing Shed, burning of the old cannery building (photo?)

The Harbers of Ravine Winery had hoped to incorporate the Lowrey Farm packing shed, built in 1920, into their building plans and had carefully moved it onto a new foundation next to the house that was still in pieces. Torched by a local arsonist in 2007, the shed was totally reconstructed and serves as a food emporium.

- Ravine Winery (Lowrey House history; Restaurant and replica of packing shed);



The land was originally purchased in 1867 by David Jackson Lowrey, the current owner's great grandfather. Norma Jane (Lowrey) Harber can still remember as a child, playing in the cherry, peach and pear orchards where five farming generations later, grapes are now flourishing. She and her husband Blair Harber, decided to plant European grape varieties. The house that is now the tasting room was originally built in 1802 by David Secord, a major in the 2nd Lincoln Militia. He later sold it to a William Woodruff who was a Member of Parliament in Upper Canada and the house has kept his name. The Woodruff House tasting room is like walking through an early 1800's time capsule. The paint colours have been resurrected all the way down to the original fireplace that was left from the Lowrey farm homestead after it burnt down in the war of 1812. During the war of 1812, the buildings in St. David's – a grist-mill, a blacksmith shop and a general store – were all demolished. The house however was rebuilt and remains an authentic example of Loyalist Georgian architecture. Norma Jane remembers how the people in the village affectionately called it the *House of Nations* as many families rented and lived here when they first settled in the country. The house was later sold to a Judge on the condition it remains intact. He eventually sold it to someone who was going to restore and relocate it to the Caledon Hills area. The subsequent owner hired a Norwegian architect who numbered and labelled all the beams and posts as the house was dismantled but unfortunately, he did not see this relocation realized. It was after Norma Jane and her husband decided to plant a vineyard that she got wondering what happened to the original farmstead. They eventually found the "boxed up" house in Port Hope and decided to bring it home to its original and final resting place where we sip wine today. Many descendants still remember the "House of Nations" which is a landmark of not just St. David's village but of Canadian history.

#1376 (Lowrey-Birdsey House); Lowrey ~ Birdsey House – Now the Green Oak B&B - 1376 York Rd. ~ Circa 1912

Harry Lowrey built this Edwardian style home in 1912. He was one of the founders of the Lowrey Canning Factory later bought out by Canadian Cannery. Mr. Lowrey's widow, Lucy, lived in the house until her death in the 1940s. Was home to Sid and Rita Birdsey. Now a b&b with a sweet little cottage tucked away in the corner. Note the free range chickens!



#1384 (Lowrey); Lowrey - 1384 York Rd. ~ Circa 1820

The exact date of construction of this house at present is unknown except that it was built in the early 1800's. When David Jackson Lowrey (UEL) bought the present Lowrey farm and moved here from Vanessa, near Brantford, in 1868, this became the Lowrey family home. David Lowrey brought the first commercial peach trees and commercial graperies to the district in 1869. In the early 1900 this was the home of Mr. Lowrey's widowed daughter, Augusta Vivian, followed by Mr. & Mrs. A. Rignanesi. Now a duplex.



#1388 (Lowrey-Murdoch); Lowrey House - 1388 York Rd. ~ Circa 1913

This Edwardian style house, built in 1913, illustrates the large roof and generous use of windows typical of this style. The construction is unusual in that the first floor is brick and the second floor frame construction. The house was originally built by Augusta Vivian (née Lowrey). George Woodruff's widow Hannah (née Lowrey) shared this home with her sister Augusta on the north side of York Street in the last decades of her life. Subsequent owners were a Dr. Murdoch and the Erwin family. During recent renovations a lady's purse was found with \$100.00 dating from the 1940's. This was a significant sum at that time. Also owned by Ruth & Ted McQuade.



Pendergast Blacksmith Shop - The Swallows Nest - 1388 York Rd. ~ Circa 1870

The board and batten building located east of the house at 1388 York Rd. and close to the sidewalk was originally a blacksmith shop that operated from 1870 – 1912. The building was later used for fruit packing and is currently used for storage. Mr. John Pendergast was the last blacksmith to run the shop. The wooden structure was fabricated in Stamford and brought to St. David's by horse and wagon. The foundation is thought to be much older than the building.



NW corner of 4 Corners (Burning of St. Davids - why wasn't the mill burned?);
Clement/Doyle House; Cannery

The village of St. Davids was a hot spot during the War of 1812, overrun and occupied several different times by British, American and native forces in the struggle to win the Niagara Peninsula. In 1810, the First Regiment of Lincoln Militia was formed in St. Davids and vicinity. This Regiment was involved in more engagements than any other militia unit during the war of 1812. The locals and militiamen hostile grew extremely hostile toward the invading American forces, harassing them, shooting from hidden vantage point and buzzing around their flanks like so many stinging insects. US General Porter reported that the enemy "were advised of all our movements and positions by the women who were thronging around us on our march ... professing friendship."

The Americans were also unhappy with Upper Canadians when on July 12, General John Swift accepted the surrender of a Loyalist, but before the prisoner was disarmed, the prisoner raised his musket and shot the general dead. In response to ambushes from Upper Canadians, Porter sent WNY Lieutenant-Colonel Isaac Stone, a tavern keeper and mill owner, to St. Davids to investigate the area on July 18, 1814. After a brief skirmish, the American volunteers plundered the village and burned down fourteen homes, two shops and a gristmill. Shortly after the burning, McFarland and the regulars entered the village. Major Daniel McFarland of the U.S. Twenty-Third Infantry summed up the hostility of Upper Canadians in a letter to his wife, "The whole population is against us; not a forging party but is fired on, and not infrequently returns with missing numbers. The militia have burnt several private dwellings and on the 19th (July) burnt in St. Davids 30-40 homes. My God, what a service! I never witnessed such a scene."

General Brown was outraged and decided to dismiss Stone from the army citing that Stone was accountable for an act that "was directly contrary to the orders of the Government and those of the Commanding officer." Although Stone denied giving the order to burn the village, the results were clear. The Canadian militia were particularly outraged and General Riall reported that they "seem actuated with the most determined spirit of hostility to the enemy."

In retaliation, Governor General Prevost called on Vice-Admiral Cochrane "to inflict a severe retribution" on the Americans. The destruction of St. Davids, and the earlier destruction of Dover, led to the British attack on Washington in August 1814.

Formerly, Dominion Citrus had a facility beside the Old Fire Hall.

Still in operation, Dominion Citrus Ltd. Began operation in 1935. No details available on the St. Davids location.

Old Fire Hall - a volunteer fire house from 1943 until 1985. 2 stories with a fire pole in the middle! Had to be renovated several times over its' 40+ years of service, including an excavation of the floor to allow newer vehicles enough headroom to get through the doors. New firehall at corner of Warner and Tanbark was built and old firehall was closed and equipment moved to new building on Nov. 1, 1984. " the value ... not only for the provision of normal fire services to the population but also for its possible use in case of sabotage. ... in the middle of the Second World War." Old firehall remained empty for many years. Eventually sold to Rigas family who remodelled and opened it as The Old Firehall Restaurant in 1994.

St. Davids Firefighters Association - volunteers

also does work in the community, including organizing the annual Halloween party at the firehall, flooding an ice rink in the winter, holding turkey rolls at Christmas—very different from the firefighting role, but also important.

Clement House - 290 Four Mile Creek Rd ~ Circa 1786

This house was built in 1786 by Major Clement and his wife Margaret Duffett and their family. They farmed lots 88 & 89 in the village (north of York Rd). The house was apparently partly burned in 1814 and re-built by the Widow Clement. Although the house has been renovated many times, a recent alteration uncovered a long disused partition. Here among fire blackened beams were found an earthen blackening bottle and a child's Hessian boot. The sole of this boot had neat wooden pegs in place of nails. Both were from the 1812 period. The inference is that part of the house was saved in 1814. The home was maintained by the sons of Joseph Clement until the mid 1800's. G. Curry purchased the home in 1876, then David Lowrey. In 1914, the house was sold to Augusta Vivian (née Lowrey,) in 1917 to H. Dockstader and in 1919 to H. Holt, and then their daughter Grace Doyle.



Cannery Park 2014 – 329 / 365 Four Mile Creek Road

This new development is on the location of the Lowrey Gristmill and Cannery, Canada's last surviving Cannery.

Home sales began in 2013 on several acres, with construction beginning in the summer of 2014. The southern edge of the property was subject to an archaeological dig before the development began. The focus was the old Barbeau/Lowrey Mill and some interesting finds were documented and removed before the builders moved in.

- Cross at crosswalks (South then East) Point out DeRottenberg Marker, Presbyterian Church, Clement Graves

St. Davids Presbyterian Church - 1436 York Rd. ~ Circa 1887

This brick church was built in 1887 using in part bricks from the large smoke stack of the James Counter Woodruff sawmill. George Clement donated the land for the church. A marker in front of the church commemorates the period in 1813 when the army under Generals Riall and de Rottenburg were stationed at St. Davids, and it was the capital of Upper Canada while Niagara on the Lake was in enemy hands.



Clement Burying Ground #1

This cemetery is located behind the Presbyterian Church beside the Lion's Club swimming pool. It is small and contains only two identifiable graves, that of Colonel Joseph Clement, who died in 1867 and that of his second wife Ann (née Caughell) who died in 1880.

- Return to Cemetery (Secord Marker, Zimmerman Marker, Questions, etc.)

St. Davids School House - removed

St. Davids was the first public school ever established in the Niagara area. First built by Major Francis Goring in 1790, the school was a one room log building. Construction costs amounted to 1 pound, 12 shillings or the equivalent today of about \$5.00. He wrote his own textbooks for the students. His diaries, books and sword from the war of 1812 still remain in the Goring family. Since St. Davids was the temporary capital of Upper Canada for a couple of years during The War of 1812, it was the target of many attacks. In 1814, most of St. Davids including the school was burnt to the ground.

A new school was built near the present location of the United Church. In 1871, a new one-roomed stone school was built in the village on the present location. This school was on land donated by David Jackson Lowrey whose descendants attended St. Davids.

St. Davids United Church - 1453 York Rd. ~ Circa 1949

The St. Davids United Church parish was founded in 1789. The first church and probably the first schoolhouse was located in the area of the present cemetery and was presumably burned down in 1814. Construction of the second church of frame construction was started in 1815 but because of a rift in the Methodist congregation it was not completed until 1843.

MAJOR DAVID SECORD

Birth: 1759 New York, USA Death: 1844, Canada
Magistrate in 1796 and member of the Legislative Assembly, U.C. in 1811. Sergeant in Butler's Rangers and fought in the Revolutionary War. "On Friday, Aug. 9th, at his residence near St. Davids, after five days illness, Major DAVID SECORD, aged one day less than 85 years. The deceased was born at New York, and when the Provinces which are now called the United States of America rebelled, he entered the service of his Sovereign at a very early age, and was on all occasions conspicuous for his courage and loyalty. He was one of the noble band of brothers who commenced the settlement of this part of the province under Col. Simcoe. He was twice elected a member of the House of Assembly, and during the last war was Major of the 2nd Regt. of Lincoln Militia, and highly distinguished himself at the battles of Chippawa and Lundy's Lane, as well as on other occasions. During the war Major Secord suffered severely in his property, and his numerous memorials in reference to his own losses and to the claims of the Militia have of late years made his name as well known to the members of the Legislature, as his gallant conduct in earlier days had made it familiar to the student of Canadian history. His remains were interred on Sunday, the 11th inst., and were attended to the grave by an immense concourse of relatives and friends." - NIAGARA CHRONICLE.



Mary Page Secord Aged 85 yrs Birth: 1788, USA
Death: Jul. 2, 1861



Many people of note buried here:

Samuel Zimmerman

St. Davids and District Lions Club Hall - 1462 York Rd. ~ Circa 1830

The two story portion of this building was originally the home of Colonel Joseph Clement, his wife Anne and their family. He owned lots 88 and 89 immediately north on York Road. Col. Clement was the commanding officer of the First Battalion of the Lincoln Militia.

The home was later owned by Canadian Cannery and in 1963 was purchased by the newly formed St. Davids Lion Club. The structure to the left of the building was added by the Lions Club in the late 1960's to serve as a meeting room. Various other changes and additions have been made over the years. The Lions currently allows other community organizations to use the facility for meetings and events.



Fair Next Weekend!

BANK ROBBERS!

Over the years there were four bank robberies in St. Davids.

(1907) Robbers on horse drawn vehicles blocked the roads to Niagara Falls and St. Catharines while others in the gang removed the door of the safe with nitro-glycerine. In the meantime, the teller returning to the bank heard the explosion and began hurling stones through the rear windows. The robbers began to shoot their guns, then panicked and fled when lights came on in nearby homes. They left \$5,000 still on the open safe. The teller was duly rewarded.

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(1951, September 10) This time, three bandits tried to rob the bank. The teller sounded the alarm. The manager shot two of the bandits and C. Slingerland fired shots into the tires of the getaway car. The car had been stolen from lawyer Judy LaMarsh (who later became a Federal Cabinet Minister in the government of L.B. Pearson). A customer at the bank, using the manager's revolver, also fired shots at the car. Two wounded suspects were captured the later in the day and a third was captured a few hours later.

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St. Davids United Church – 200 Years – Our Journey of Faith 1788-1988

Self-published

St. Davids – Queenston United Church – Our Journey of Faith – Queenston 1786-2013 – St. Davids 1788-2013

St. Davids - Queenston United Church 225th Anniversary Committee

http://www.stdavids-queenstonuc.ca/Portals/0/Assets/History_of_St-Davids_Queenston_United_Church_FINAL.pdf

The Queenston Quarry Development

Located on the Niagara Escarpment, inside the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, the 248-acre property offers a mix of townhomes, condo suites and single detached homes branded as the Residences at Queenston Quarry, and may well become an architectural marvel to complement the region's other natural and man-made wonders. More than 98 acres of the property has been deeded to the Niagara Parks Commission to enhance the protected Bruce Trail, which runs along the edge of the property.

Located atop the Niagara Escarpment, near the Niagara River and Queenston Heights, this historic quarry supplied much of the stone that built many of the jewels of eastern Canadian civic architecture.



“Buildings made from quarried stone have their own unique character,

the same way wine has the character of the soil in which it is grown.”

Jack Prazeres ~ President of MasonryWorx

Queenston Quarry



The original Queenston Quarry was established in 1837 and is among the oldest quarries in Canada.



Queenston stone was one of the most widely used building stones in Canada, comparable to Indiana limestone, though coarser and harder. The smooth finish detail of Queenston limestone made it the perfect choice for some of the country's most

prestigious buildings as well as many cherished landmarks, including buildings of the Canadian Parliament, Queen's Park, Toronto's Union Station, numerous banks, the courthouse in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Brock's monument. Trails connect to existing trail networks along the river; hiking trails within the property will connect with the 800 km Bruce Trail and provide an interpretive trail through the area's historic sites, including the remains of the 19th Century quarry settlement, as well as the route taken by British forces during the famous Battle of Queenston Heights, in the War of 1812. A significant portion of the property, more than 98-acres, has been deeded to the Niagara Parks Commission to enhance the protected Bruce Trail environment which runs along the edge of the property.

The reclamation plan calls for the development of a small western section of the site into an intimate, custom-designed residential community, with the original rock face of the quarry as a stunning and dramatic backdrop to their setting. These homes will be built from the same stone that made this site so famous — Queenston limestone in its ashlar, finished form. (Ashlar is finely worked masonry)

Around the development, the rest of the site will be left undisturbed as wilderness.



Lime Kilns

- near the Queenston Quarry, approximately midway on the trail between Queenston Heights and Fireman's Park.
- five large unmarked circular holes that drop into the ground, each lined with limestone bricks mined from the Queenston Quarry. These are ovens used to treat the raw limestone materials and produce natural cement.
- date back to 1882 and built by the Issac Usher & Son company, mining a natural layer of rock cement, a mixture of lime and clay, from the hills next to the main limestone mining operation at the Queenston Quarry. The caverns they hollowed out are now known to locals as the Queenston Caves, not naturally occurring structures. Natural cement has something of a terroir to it. It reflects the properties of the land from which it was made. As such it was unreliable as a building material. Portland cement has more stable properties, sets faster, and performs uniformly regardless of where it was produced.
- If you climb down the Escarpment next to the kilns the substructure reveals itself to be a large stone building with fireplaces at the base of each cylinder. The mixture of clay and lime mined from the Queenston Caves would have been brought down here to the kilns, fired, and later ground into powder and barrelled.

<http://www.checkinniagara.com/2010/09/limestone-kilns/>



Brief Chronological History of St. Davids, ON

Compiled by Ed. Wilkinson; Revised I. Bachmann

Early People and Events

First Nations people inhabited the St. Davids area before the arrival of United Empire Loyalist settlers who left the United States to remain loyal to Britain. The area named after Major David (King David, King being a term given to leading business men) who was a sergeant in the Butler's Rangers, Major in the Lincoln Militia, Magistrate, 1796, and member of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, 1811-1844. He died in 1844.

The more settled community was founded by Richard Woodruff (King Dick), veteran of the War of 1812 (who was granted 200 acres for his service), a member of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, 1837. He died in 1872.

Pre 1652. Two important trails intersect at St. Davids, the north-south trail from Lake Ontario to the top of the Escarpment (Creek Road) and the east-west trail along the ledge below the Escarpment (current York and Queenston Roads) that extended from what is currently New York State to Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula. The Neutral/Attawandaron community located here was called Onyahrah. The historical book *Niagara Township, Centennial History* describes the word "Onyahrah" as being from the Iroquois and meaning neck, or the strip of land between the two lakes. The Neutral Indians were skilled flint knappers and the first farmers in this area. The largest First Nations Ossuary (mortuary or place for bones) in Ontario was discovered in 1828 west of the stone cairn on St. Paul Ave on the top of the Escarpment (sandpit) that was rifled by people for souvenirs.

1652. The Neutrals of St. Davids were annihilated by the Seneca of the Iroquois Confederacy.

1775. A trading post was established at St. Davids because of its strategic location at the intersection of the two major trails. This settlement pattern makes St. Davids amongst the oldest remaining settled communities in Ontario.

1780 (August). Peter Secord, aged 53, his wife Abigail, three sons and two daughters with five horses commenced farming on lot 90 in St. Davids. He was officially recognized as the first European farmer in Ontario and given an additional land grant.

1781. The Niagara Peninsula was purchased by the British from the Mississauga First Nations and divided into 100-acre lots to be granted to the United Empire Loyalists. These lots are still used today to identify property location.

1782. Peter and James Secord, with government approval, first built a sawmill just south of York Road and then a gristmill at what is currently 137 Creek Road.

1783. Secord's saw and gristmills were completed in 1783. These mills were built with Government financing and operated by the Secords. This was the second gristmill in Upper Canada (now Ontario). The sawmill burned down in 1814. The gristmill survived the war and is currently a private house at 137 Creek Rd.

Name of the community. Initially this community was called **Four Mile Mills**, later **Davidsville**, **Davidstown**, and **St. Davids**.

1776-86. Peter Secord built a larger house to accommodate his family (46 Paxton Lane). Joseph Clement and his wife Margaret Duffett acquired Lots 88 & 89 and built their house at what is now 290 Creek Road.

1790. The first St. Davids School (a private school), built around 1790, was a log structure in the area of the present school. Francis Goring, who was also the first teacher, donated land for this school. Mr. Goring taught from texts he wrote himself. This school remained in use until 1871, when a two-room school was built. ~~Mr. Goring was knighted later in life for his role in education.~~ (kighthood is undocumented)

1792 Samuel Lutz built the second grist mill.

1796. Major David Secord purchased Peter Secord's property in St. Davids. Peter moved to Long Point Settlement on Lake Erie.

1801. The Warner Meeting House at the Warner Burying Grounds on Warner Road was built by Christian Warner and was the first Methodist Chapel west of Kingston.

- 1782-1812.** St. Davids grew to become an important milling centre using waters from Four Mile Creek. There were four gristmills, a sawmill, a tannery, shoe, soap, candle and barrel factories, as well as two churches, a school and thirty to forty homes. It was larger than either Niagara Falls or St. Catharines.
- 1800-1820.** A black community consisting of small farms was located at the south end of Tanbark Road in the current area of Highway 405. Following 1815, these farms were gradually bought out and made up of the Hanniwell Farm.
- One family named Graham refused to sell. Their descendant by the name of Hedgeman was the last resident of this group in St. Davids. The Baptist church was located on Tanbark Road. This road was named after the elm bark used at the tannery and it was laid on the road for a base.
- 1810.** The First Regiment of Lincoln Militia was formed in St. Davids and vicinity. This Regiment was involved in more engagements than any other militia unit during the war of 1812-
- 1812.** June 18th the United States declared war against Great Britain.
- 1812.** (October) General Sheaffe, with six companies of Lincoln Militia, British Regulars and First Nation warriors scaled the escarpment east of the village (see stone marker on York Road) and defeated the U.S. Army at the Battle of Queenston Heights. Major General Sir Isaac Brock had been killed earlier in the day on Queenston Heights.
- 1813-1814.** During this period, after the burning of York (now Toronto), St. Davids was the Capital of Upper Canada as well as at various times headquarters for the British army in Upper Canada and all of Canada. The stone monument in front of the St. Davids Presbyterian Church on York Road states "Headquarters of De Rottenburg 1812" commemorating that St. Davids was the capital and military headquarters of Upper Canada for a period in 1812. St. Davids was mentioned in dispatches seventy-nine times and was occupied by U.S. Forces six times. At other times it was a no-man's land held by one side or the other's cavalry patrols.
- 1813.** David Secord donated land near the present United Church Cemetery on York Road for a church, school and cemetery.
- 1813.** Orders were issued from Solomon Quick's Tavern (on what is now Paxton Lane, across from the golf course) for the capture of Fort Niagara and the destruction of the American Frontier from lake to lake (Ontario to Erie) in retaliation for the burning of Newark (now Niagara-

on-the-Lake). Troops departed from St. Davids to successfully execute this order. Solomon Quick's Tavern was demolished in 1932. We frequently read of invading armies abusing women and children. We seldom read of women and children abusing invaders. However, deprived of its male inhabitants of military age, the actively hostile attitudes of the females, boys and men of St. Davids and vicinity eventually became so objectionable that part of the village was burned in retaliation for injuries inflicted on occupying forces. A letter from Major Daniel McFarland, 23 U.S. Infantry at Queenston, to his wife, dated July 1814, stated "***the whole population is against us, not encamped a foraging party but is fired on and not infrequently returns with missing numbers. The militia have burnt several private dwellings and on the 19th (July) burnt in St. Davids 30-40 homes***" A picket of Canadian volunteers under Cornet (equivalent to a Second Lieutenant) Henry Woodruff surprised some American scouts west of the village. In the skirmish the horse of U.S. Commanding Officer Colonel Isaac Stone was killed. He swore revenge. His revenge came two days later on July 19 with the burning of St. Davids.

1814 (Jul 19) The Burning of St. Davids. At least four buildings were spared the torch - Solomon Quick's Tavern, the gristmill at 137 Creek Road, the houses at 215 Creek Road and 46 Paxton Lane. The house at 290 Creek Road was partly damaged. David Secord suffered the greatest losses: a three-story house, 22x50 ft, with 7 fireplaces; two smaller homes; grist mill and blacksmithy; two tanneries and barn; 2 log buildings; 1000 weight of candles; 7 horses, 4 cows, 20 fat pigs; new wagon; a yoke of oxen; all the family's clothes and furniture.

Washington, DC was burned by the British in retaliation for the American burning of St. Davids, Queenston, Niagara (now Niagara-on-the-Lake) and York (now Toronto). The last remaining shell of a burned house from the 1814 burning by U.S. forces was dismantled in 1915 on the creek side of Paxton Lane. It was called the Little Red House and had two bake ovens in the cellar and two large chimneys and two large fireplaces, one at each end. The rafters and floorboards were put together with wooden pins. The cellar was built of stone and dug into the bank above the creek. This house belonged to Mr. William Woodruff.

- 1815.** In 1813 Major David Secord gave a large tract of land for a church, school and cemetery. Church construction for all denominations started in 1815 but because of a division of opinion in the Methodist church members, remained unfinished until 1843. This church remained in use until 1949 and was located close to the ravine on York Road where the cemetery is today. The current United Church is built on land donated by Mrs. D. F. Woodruff and the first services were held in April 1949 in the basement. The sanctuary was completed ten years later.
- Post 1814.** The industrious inhabitants of the village rebuilt their community and it eventually consisted of four gristmills; a tannery; shoe, potash, plough and barrel factories; a harness shop; a brewery; a print shop; several blacksmith shops and three hotels as well as thirty to forty houses.
- 1815.** Richard Woodruff built a large general store on the southeast corner of York and Creek Road. This building was demolished in 1961 for road widening.
- 1816.** The first newspaper in the area, The Spectator, was printed at what is now 1367 York Road. Its columns were full of names of dead and wounded militiamen, the widows and children of the war dead and the relief, pensions and grants awarded to the war victims.
- 1818.** The first steam gristmill in Ontario was built by Richard and William Woodruff along the creek behind 215 Creek Road. The Lowrey brothers later used it as a fruit evaporator. The mill has since been demolished. Six years later the Woodruffs built a water-powered mill on a site leased from Major Secord.
- 1820.** William Woodruff built a brick building to serve as a general store located at 246 Creek Road. This building has been an antique store, a hardware store and is currently a wine kit store and real estate agency.
- 1835.** St. Davids was served by a horse drawn railway operating between Queenston and Chippawa. This was the first of its kind in Ontario. The station for St. Davids was at the intersection of York Road and Progressive Avenue (now known as Concession 2). The stone abutment in this area was built in 1854. The railway converted to steam in 1850 and closed in 1959. The locals called the railway Paddy Miles after the conductor who ran the train for many years.
- 1835.** In this year also the Queenston Quarry opened and operated until 2006. It was the oldest continuing industry in Niagara-on-the-Lake and the oldest operating quarry in Canada.
- 1836.** John Sleeman built a brewery (Stamford Spring Brewery) south of Townline Road and on the west side of Creek Road. This brewery operated until 1900 when it was converted to a water bottling plant. Later it was a recreation and dance hall called Ravine Inn. It subsequently burned down. Some ruins are still evident.
- 1850 ...** Fruit growing gradually replaced mixed farming as the main industry in the area. David Jackson Lowrey is credited with bringing the first commercial peach trees and the first commercial vineyard to the district in 1869.
- 1886.** The first canning factory was operated by C. and J. Black. It was called the Silver Lake Canning Company and was located on Creek Road south of Townline Road. The plant canned fruits and vegetables until it closed in 1926.
- 1887.** Cement works started by Isaac Usher burned limestone in the lime kilns still visible on the Escarpment east of the Village. This cement was used to build the Sault Ste. Marie and the Welland Canals. Two surviving houses in the Village were made with this cement, 167 and 234 Creek Road. These works ceased operation in 1903 because they could not compete with the new Portland Cement.
- 1887.** The brick Presbyterian Church on York Road was built in this year using, in part, bricks from the smokestack of James Counter Woodruff's sawmill. George Clement donated the land for the church and Henry Woodruff the land for the manse at 234 Creek Road.
- 1897.** The second canning factory was in a converted flour mill located near the former Kraft Canning Factory. Frank and Harry Lowrey started this plant, which canned fruits and vegetables and made jams and jellies. The plant was sold to Canadian Cannery in 1903. It burned down in 1923 and was rebuilt.
- 1904.** The third canning factory was owned by Isaac Usher and canned fruits and vegetables. This plant closed in 1915.
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- 1910.** The Doyle Hotel, a large brick building with a livery stable, burned down. The hotel was located where the Avondale Convenience Store is currently is located. The flames from the fire could be seen for miles.
- 1932.** On the Victoria Day weekend in 1932, the St. Davids Golf Course opened for the first time. The Golf Course was owned by Lynn Usher.

Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries.

St. Davids continued to grow during the first half of the 20th century and stabilized at approximately five hundred persons in the 1950s, beginning to assume its present character. Major road widening in the 1960s resulted in the loss of many old trees and landmarks as buildings were demolished or moved. The old tannery ruins, the last of the mills as well as the Woodruff-Lowrey store were torn down to permit the elevation of the road. The residential area was extended in the 1950-1960's by Bevan Heights subdivision that overlooks the old village from the escarpment.

Cemeteries of St. Davids and Vicinity

St. Davids Cemetery

This cemetery has the graves of many early pioneers of St. Davids and Queenston and was established by the Secord family of St. Davids. The earliest discernable gravestone is that of Solomon Quick who died in 1823. It is believed that many people were buried here before that date. Some of the memorable names to be found on graves are Secord, Lowrey, Woodruff, Clement, Hanniwell, and Stewart. Major David Secord, after whom the village was named, and Richard Woodruff, the founder of the village, are both buried in this cemetery.

The Warner Burying Ground

This cemetery is located on Warner Road about two miles from St. Davids and next to the Queen Elizabeth Highway. Some of the earliest pioneers of this area are buried here, their names being Hopkins, Clement, McKinley, Secord, Van Every and Warner. The oldest grave is that of Stephen Secord who died in 1808. In one corner of the enclosure are the remains of the stone foundation of a small church that was built in 1801. This was the first Methodist Church west of Kingston and was known as Warner Meeting house.

Clement Burying Ground #1

This cemetery is located behind the Presbyterian Church and next to the Lion's Club swimming pool. It is small and contains only two graves, that of Colonel Joseph Clement, who died in 1867 and that of his second wife Ann (née Caughell) who died in 1880.

Clement Burying Ground #2

Sterling Farm, Lot 103, South side of line 6

Crysler Burying Ground

West of Creek Road near Line 8 is the site of a small Chrysler Family burial ground with a couple of grave stones still in place. This is one of the earliest European gravesites in this area.