

ADDRESS: 254 DALHOUSIE STREET

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET, PLAN 1 (PIN 0234)

ROLL NUMBER: 372911000001800

STRUCTURE: 2 STOREY COMMERCIAL BUILDING

YEAR BUILT: 1857

ORIGINAL OWNER: TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG



ADDRESS: 256 DALHOUSIE STREET

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET, PLAN 1 (PIN 0234)

ROLL NUMBER: 372911000001800

STRUCTURE: 1 STOREY COMMERCIAL BUILDING

YEAR BUILT: 1907

ORIGINAL OWNER: MICHAEL TWOMEY



NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

Lot 8 on the west side of Dalhousie Street was not one of the original town lots laid out in 1799. At that time it was reserved for the occupation of John Sparkman, the Barrack Master of the Garrison. Sparkman had served in the military since 1772, coming to Canada in 1776 under the command of Lieutenant General Burgoyne with whom he served during the American Revolution. Sparkman was a Conductor of Artillery until 1784 when he was appointed Barrack Master at the garrison at Detroit and continued in this capacity at Amherstburg.¹

After the War of 1812, John Wilson, a Merchant of Amherstburg became the occupant of Lot 23 on First Street now known as Lot 8, west side of Dalhousie Street. In 1820 Wilson mortgaged the property to Angus McIntosh a prominent merchant who lived in Sandwich. The land being mortgaged is described as being bounded in the front by Front Street, in the rear by the River, on the north side by the former Dock yard and on the other side by the Commissariat lot.² This description makes it very easy to locate the south limit of the King's Navy Yard today. The north wall of 254 Dalhousie Street is built along the southerly boundary of the former location of the King's Navy Yard.

Apparently, Angus found Wilson to be a dependable risk, as the property was mortgaged again on April 1, 1830 when Angus Mackintosh was living in Moy, Invernesshire, Scotland. In 1827, Angus had returned to his ancestral home in Scotland on the death of his older brother, in order to assume the position of clan chief.

Unfortunately John Wilson died shortly thereafter and the mortgage fell into arrears. To recover the money owing under the mortgage, Angus Mackintosh sold the property to William Berczy, an Amherstburg Merchant. Since Angus Mackintosh had become a permanent resident of Scotland, Angus had given a Power of Attorney to William Gaspé Hall of Sandwich to manage his affairs in Canada. William Hall signed the Deed to Berczy on February 15, 1833 as Attorney for Angus Mackintosh, not knowing that Angus had died in January of 1833. The Deed to Berczy was invalid because the Power of Attorney had lapsed on the death of Mackintosh. Angus' death caused a great delay as a new Deed had to be obtained from Angus' heir-at-law Alexander Mackintosh, the son of Angus who had also returned to Scotland. On June 22, 1835 Alexander Mackintosh, of Mackintosh residing at Daviot, Invernesshire executed a new Deed to William Berczy of Amherstburg for Lot 8 on the west side of Dalhousie Street in Amherstburg.³

William Berczy was the eldest son of William Berczy Sr. an adventurer and land developer originally from Germany. William's father had already led a very eventful life before his arrival in York in 1794 where he was involved in settling German immigrants in Markham Township. At the time of the War of 1812 the Berczy family was living in Montreal and Quebec. William Berczy first recorded appearance as a resident in Amherstburg is in 1819. At that time, William was a member of the Merchant firm of Berczy and Macon, consisting of William, his younger brother Charles and Jean Baptiste Macon.⁴ That same year William had married Louise-Amélie Panet, daughter of Pierre-Louis Panet of Montreal. William Berczy had substantial land holdings in the Township of Sandwich upon which he grew

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

tobacco. According to William, their firm's shipment of tobacco in 1821 was the first ever exported from Upper Canada. William Berczy served as a member of the Legislative Assembly, representing Kent County in 1828 and 1830. As well, he was a ship owner and a contractor to the government for supplies for troops. Besides his mercantile and farming interests, William Berczy was an artist, a talent which he had inherited from his father. (William Berczy Sr. had been a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Austria in 1762.)⁵ Several of the paintings of William Berczy, the Younger hang in the National Gallery of Canada. One is called *Huron Indians Leaving Residence Near Amherstburg* and another entitled *Indian Encampment near Amherstburg* is particularly interesting as it shows the southern outskirts of the Town of Amherstburg in the background. Another painting entitled *Indian Dance at Amherstburg* is set at Elliott's Point.

William Berczy remained the owner of Lot 8 until 1839 when Berczy, then living in D'Ailleboust in the District of Montreal sold the property to John Dougall and James Dougall of the Township of Sandwich.⁶ D'Ailleboust was the seigneurie of William Berczy's wife, Louise-Amélie Panet.⁷

John Dougall had emigrated from Scotland to Lower Canada in 1826 when just eighteen years old. James (younger by two years), soon followed his brother and together they established a commission trade for the distribution of cloth there. By the 1830's the brothers had established a general merchandise store in the Town of Sandwich in partnership with their father John Dougall Sr. who died in 1836. Although the Deed given in 1839 for Lot 8 states that it is a conveyance to John Dougall and James Dougall of the Township of Sandwich, John Dougall Jr. was not a resident of Sandwich and the Deed is probably conveying to the partnership of J. and J. Dougall of which John was a member.

John Dougall Jr. remained resident in Montreal where he carved out his own niche in Canadian history. Imbued with a strong moral fervour, John Dougall was an evangelical Calvinist and temperance advocate. He founded the Montreal Witness, an influential paper of the times which championed evangelical Christianity, temperance, and free trade. In 1840, John Dougall married Elizabeth Redpath, the eldest daughter of John Redpath, who was already a prominent merchant in Montreal before the establishment in 1854 of his very successful sugar refinery.

In 1832, at the age of 22, James Dougall married Susanne Baby, the daughter of François Baby. At the age of 27, James was appointed a Magistrate and Notary Public. During the Rebellion of 1837-1838, Dougall furnished supplies to the Canadian defenders at cost. On Dec. 4, 1838 the Battle of Windsor was fought in Baby's orchard and James Dougall was a participant under the command of Colonel John Prince. James Dougall and his father-in-law François Baby were among those who were critical of the summary executions ordered by Colonel John Prince for the first five Americans captured in the abortive Patriot invasion.⁸

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

After the Rebellion, James and Susanne Dougall left Sandwich and re-located near Amherstburg. About a thousand feet north of Texas Road, Dougall established Rosebank Nursery. Here James made his reputation as an eminent horticulturalist, celebrated "for the great variety and excellent quality of his fruit."⁹ James B. Brown wrote in 1844 that he had "seen grapes of perfect size and excellent flavour, and some of the finest peaches, produced on the banks of the Detroit River, in the garden of Mr. James Dougall, near Amherstburg, whose success in the cultivation of superior fruits is well known throughout Canada and the United States."¹⁰ James also imported and raised purebred cattle and horses from Scotland on his property at Rosebank.

Like his brother John, James Dougall involved himself in social causes. In 1845 he donated the funds for the construction of an integrated school to educate both white and black children. According to local tradition Robert Peden, the cousin of James Dougall was the teacher at this school. Robert Peden later became the Minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Until 1847, the Dougalls remained the owners of Lot 8 on the west side of Dalhousie Street. They were also the owners of two vessels which serviced their flourishing wholesale and retail business at its several locations.¹¹ According to local tradition, the Dougall Brothers suffered a disastrous fire which destroyed the shop on their Amherstburg property on January 5, 1843, but their stock of goods was saved. In 1845 James Dougall was elected Warden of Anderdon. In 1847 James Dougall, Merchant of the Township of Anderdon and John Dougall, Merchant of the City of Montreal sold their Amherstburg property to Theodore Jones Park, Merchant, of the Town of Amherstburg. Since the Deed specifically conveyed the buildings, storehouses, wharf and outbuildings thereon it is presumed that their business had continued on Lot 8 despite the devastating fire.¹² During the 1850's, James Dougall moved to Windsor where he continued to be active in business and local politics. Dougall and Victoria Avenue in Windsor owe their names to James Dougall. Victoria was James' daughter who died in infancy.¹³

Theodore Jones Park was the youngest of the Park brothers who were originally from Massachusetts. Theodore's older brothers, Thomas and John had arrived in Amherstburg in the 1820's but subsequently moved to Colchester Township where, joined by Theodore they ran a store and worked their farm. In 1839, Thomas Park returned to Amherstburg along with Theodore Park. The brothers carried on business as the merchant firm of Park & Co. which built up substantial business interests. By 1855, they owned about seventy percent of the waterfront between Richmond and Gore Streets. From this advantageous location, schooners and steamships owned by the Parks engaged in the commerce of the Great Lakes and great stacks of cord wood were sold to the steamers which stopped at their wharves.¹⁴

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

It is known that there was a storehouse and a wharf at this location when Theodore Park became the owner of Lot 8 in 1847. However the assessments give little indication of the type of business carried on here. From 1849 until February 1850 The Amherstburg Courier and District Advertiser published from an office opposite British North American Hotel. Its publishing office would have been located on this lot as Lot 8 is directly opposite the British North American Hotel.

According to the 1853 Assessment Gordon W. Leggatt and J. Aiken are tenants of Park and Co. The following year in 1854, the assessment shows that Theodore J. Park is occupying part of the lot which has an assessed value of 75 with personalty on Lot 8 valued at 1000. Considering the value of the personalty, it is likely that Theodore still had a store or warehouse on this lot. The Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg is shown as a tenant of Park in 1854 on Lot 8 with the assessed value of the Town's interest being 6. Beside the entry for the Town of Amherstburg on Lot 8 is the curious notation "Beefeaters". John Stokes a Butcher is also assessed on Lot 8, his business having an assessed value of 12. It is not known if these last two entries have any connection. Although there were assessments in 1855 and 1857, Lot 8 does not appear on these assessments. From 1860 until 1865 John R. Park Jr., a Merchant appears as Theodore Park's tenant on Lot 8. He would have been Theodore's nephew. Commencing in 1869 until 1872, James Deaubien was Park's tenant. In 1870 William Borrowman, a Grain Merchant is also a tenant on Lot 8 and there is a notation Brick House (1000). No further information has been uncovered regarding the reference to the Brick House.

Oral history maintains that there was from an early date, a frame structure on Lot 8 which housed firefighting equipment. According to this storey at some unknown date, possibly 1870, the frame building was replaced by a two story brick building which became known as the Firemen's Hall. It is possible that the 1854 Assessment which assesses the Town of Amherstburg for property on Lot 8 is in reference to this earlier frame fire hall. In 1857, the Minutes of the Town of Amherstburg indicate that the Fire Department paid cash to William Borrowman for building the Hook and Ladder House. The Hook and Ladder House mentioned in the 1857 Minutes of the Town of Amherstburg could be the original frame building remembered locally or it could be a replacement brick building. It doesn't seem likely that the frame building was replaced by a brick building in 1870. In the March 17, 1882 issue of The Amherstburg Echo an article noted that "J. B. Grenier commenced fitting up the old firemen's hall on Dalhousie St. for a clerk's office." Assuming that a new brick building had replaced the old frame building in 1870, it would be strange to call it the "old firemen's hall" if it had just been constructed 12 years earlier. On the 1870 Assessment an entry does appear for a "Brick House" assessed to Theodore Park on 1/8 of Pt. 8. This brick building has an assessed value of 1000. It is unlikely that this structure is the new building which replaced the frame Hook and Ladder House because the Town of Amherstburg owned the firemen's hall so Theodore Park would not be assessed for it. Also that would be a

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

very high assessment for such a small building. Furthermore, the description denotes a “house” which does not seem a suitable description for the hall. It is most likely that the building erected in 1857 was the building which was being renovated in 1882.

Given the fact that the Dougalls had had a fire on Lot 8 in 1843 and considering that James Dougall was of a charitable nature, it is even possible that James Dougall had permitted the original frame building to be erected on his land sometime after the fire on his property in 1843. As noted earlier, the publishing office of the Amherstburg Courier was located on Lot 8 when it was in operation in 1849 and 1850. Gordon Watts Leggat, a lawyer was a tenant in 1853 on Lot 8 and John Stokes rented space for his Butcher Shop in 1854 on Lot 8. These businesses are of a type that could have been conducted from the frame building which according to oral history was located on Lot 8 and pre-dated the brick Firemen’s Hall. Amherstburg had become a municipality separate from Malden in 1851 and Amherstburg completed building of its first Town Hall in 1854. It is probable that the new municipal status of Amherstburg gave an impetus and provided the funds to replace the frame building which formerly had housed firefighting equipment with a more substantial brick building in 1857.

The renovation of the old building by J. B. Grenier was for the purpose of providing an office on the second storey of the building over the firehall for James Templeton, the Town Clerk. There is no record of the Town of Amherstburg ever having received a conveyance of the land on which the Firemen’s Hall stood so it is presumed that Firemen’s Hall remained on Lot 8 with the permission of the owner of Lot 8. It is certain that the Town owned the building and by By-law dated December 23, 1884 the Town of Amherstburg approved the sale of Firemen’s Hall to Michael Twomey for the sum of \$400. The Deed recited that the Town “having no further use for the premises” quitclaimed and released all its interest” in the “Firemens’ Hall Dalhousie Street” which had a width of 15 feet along Dalhousie Street and a depth of 30 feet being situated on the northeast corner of Lot 8.¹⁵ An 1883 sketch submitted in conjunction with an Insurance Application shows that the entire frontage of Lot 8 is vacant land except for a small building labelled “Mayor’s Office” at the north end attached to the Salmoni brick block on Lot 9. This small building would be the former Firemen’s Hall. In April of 1885, the Town Clerk, James Templeton moved all his books and papers from Firemen’s Hall to the new Town Hall which had just been built.¹⁶

Thomas F. Park, the elder brother of Theodore, died in 1864 leaving a substantial Estate. The bulk of Thomas’ Estate was left to his youngest brother Theodore, including the unsold lots in the Park Street subdivision, and Thomas’ share of the partnership known as Park and Company.¹⁷ Perhaps this injection of new capital inspired Theodore J. Park to embark on a new and expensive project on Part Lots 7 and 8. In 1877, Park completed construction of a grand four storey brick hotel conveniently located on the northwest corner of Murray and Dalhousie Streets near the public wharf at the foot of Murray Street. Guests could obtain hot and cold baths at the luxurious Park House Hotel or enjoy the river breezes and the pleasing view from its spacious balconies overlooking the Detroit River. Its shaded lawn

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

sloping down to the riverfront featured a summer pavilion. Offices were rented out in the ground floor premises of this modern hotel which had cost Theodore Park \$35,000.00 to build and furnish. Later known as the Lakeview Hotel, the building continued to be operated as a hotel until gutted by fire in 1976.¹⁸ The former location of the Lakeview Hotel is now occupied by the Gordon House Museum.

Shortly after the hotel project was completed Theodore Park experienced financial difficulties which culminated in a major collapse of his fortunes in 1879. All of Theodore's real estate was seized and sold by Public Auctions in October and November of 1879. By Deed dated November 8, 1880 John McClary, a Manufacturer from London Ontario became the owner of Lot 8 and other lands that had been owned by Theodore J. Park.¹⁹ At this same time, Caroline Park, Theodore's wife entered into an Agreement with McClary by which Caroline agreed to make periodic payments to McClary for the purpose of receiving a reconveyance of certain of her husband's lands upon the payment of the agreed upon purchase price.²⁰ It was agreed that title was to remain in McClary's name until all the required payments had been made. Theodore J. Park died March 13, 1884 leaving his widow Caroline to pay off the amount still owing on the land covered by the Agreement with John McClary.

In September of 1884, Michael Twomey received the Deed for all the land between the Salmoni brick block and the Park House (later known as the Lakeview Hotel).²¹ At this time, Michael Twomey also owned the Salmoni brick block (252 Dalhousie Street). In 1885 Michael Twomey "had the outside of the old firemen's hall painted and penciled to match his block adjoining."²²

Michael Twomey was an Amherstburg Merchant originally from Kingston. During his residency in Amherstburg he accumulated substantial real estate holdings and dock property. Michael Twomey was elected Mayor of Amherstburg in 1879, 1882, 1886 and 1887. After serving his last term as Amherstburg's Mayor, Twomey moved to Windsor where he was elected Mayor in 1889.

Assessments after 1884 indicate that the former Firemen's Hall was occupied by tenants of Michael Twomey being Francis Carroll, Operator and M. Twomey, Furniture dealer, upstairs (1885). According to an advertisement in The Amherstburg Echo on February 9, 1885, Francis Carroll had a Telegraph and Express Agency in the "old Firemen's Hall." In 1886 the building appears to have been partitioned. David Kemp, Furniture dealer is assessed for the south part (1886-1889) and James R. O'Reilly (1886) and George Twomey (1887) for the north part. An Insurance application dated April 16, 1886 insuring the contents of James R. O'Reilly's law office states that the insured property is contained "in a 2 storey brick and shingle roofed building 12 x 30 feet, occupied as a law office ...situated on the west side of Dalhousie Street."²³ Unfortunately the application does not contain any information as to the age of the building.

NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

In 1888 and 1889 along with David Kemp there are tenants Perry B. Leighton and Patrice Ouellette. From 1890 until 1892 Perry B. Leighton shares space with John Mullen. The 1894 Assessment shows the firm of Gatfield and Mullen, Coal Merchants in the former Firemen's Hall with Michael Twomey upstairs. The firm of Gatfield and Mullen is succeeded by C. W. Shipman, then Cuddy and Mullen which becomes the Pittsburgh Coal Company in 1900. With few exceptions, Twomey and Pittsburgh Coal remained the tenants in the Firemen's Hall for the next decade.

An Insurance Plan made in 1906 shows the two storey building municipally known as 254 Dalhousie Street, that is, the former Firemen's Hall, abutting the Salmoni building which is to the north. There is a thirteen foot space between the south side of the former Firemen's Hall and the block of buildings to the south being 258-264 Dalhousie Street. An Insurance Map made in 1913 shows a one storey cement block building labelled "Office" built in this space between 254 Dalhousie Street and 258-264 Dalhousie Street. This one storey cement block building was likely built in 1907 as the 1908 Assessment shows Falls Brothers as tenants in addition to the Pittsburgh Coal Company for the first time. This one storey building is now municipally known as 256 Dalhousie Street.

Michael Twomey died in 1911 leaving the bulk of his estate to his son Maurice Twomey. In 1917 the one storey cement block building being 256 Dalhousie Street was conveyed to Philip Mullen, Coal Merchant by Maurice Twomey, the heir and son of Michael Twomey.²⁴ In 1926 the two storey brick office building known as Firemen's Hall, being 254 Dalhousie Street was also sold by Maurice Twomey to Philip Mullen.²⁵ In 1927 Phillip Mullen conveyed the one storey building being 256 Dalhousie Street to Francis Falls, Coal Merchant and Real Estate and Insurance Agent leaving Mullins with only the two storey building.²⁶

End Notes

- 1 Upper Canada Land Petitions, Volume 451, Bundle 54, Petition 160, Microfilm C-2808
- 2 Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 195, Old Box D
3. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 496, Old Box F
4. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 139, Old Box D
5. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online Contributor John Andre and J. Russell Harper
6. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 103, Old Box H
7. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online Contributor John Andre and J. Russell Harper
8. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online. Contributor J. G. Snell
9. Canada Past, Present and Future p. 23
10. Views of Canada and the Colonists p. 318
11. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online. Contributor Frederick H. Armstrong
12. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 266, Old Box J
13. Windsor's Scottish Heritage www.windsorsscottish.com
14. Amherstburg 1796-1996 The New Town on the Garrison Grounds, p. 76

END NOTES FOR 254 AND 256 DALHOUSIE STREET BEING PART LOT 8, WEST SIDE DALHOUSIE STREET

15. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 2758, Town of Amherstburg
16. The Amherstburg Echo, April 3, 1885
17. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 233 GR
18. Amherstburg 1796-1996 The New Town on the Garrison Grounds, p.94
19. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 2154, Town of Amherstburg
20. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 2208, Town of Amherstburg
21. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 2723, Town of Amherstburg
22. The Amherstburg Echo, April 23, 1995, Yesterday's News – 1885
23. Citizens Insurance Co. Policy No. 152267
24. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 734, Town of Amherstburg
25. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 9772, Town of Amherstburg
26. Essex County Registry Office, Instrument Number 10135, Town of Amherstburg