

The South-Caradoc Story

The Muncey Road (Middlesex County Road 11) began as an aboriginal footpath and eventually became the backbone of the Caradoc Township agricultural community south of the Londwoods Road. The community is bounded by the Chipewewa and Muncey First Nations land, and the Thames River.

The village of Muncey, 7 km south of Longwoods Road, once supported a blacksmith shop, sawmill, hotel, shoemaker, post office, general stores, and the busy Muncey train station on the Michigan Central line. Also located on the Muncey Road were a cheese factory, blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, and a log school house.

South Caradoc Community Centre

21105 MUNCEY ROAD

Built in 1877, this lovely brick structure served School Section #13 as a one room school until 1960 when the students were bused to the Caradoc Central School in Mount Brydges. At that time the South Caradoc United Church purchased the school at auction to serve as a community centre.

This centre had been a vibrant part of the community with its annual Christmas concert, Arbour Day, Red Cross Society, picnics, school fair garden and other extra curricular educational and social events.

The centre had been maintained by community volunteers and donations until 2004 when a Trillium Foundation Grant provided the money for extensive brick work, new windows and a propane furnace. The landscaping was drawn

from gardens of the community, local woodlots, and remnants of the former school garden on the site. The South Caradoc Community Centre continues to be maintained by community volunteers and continues to serve as an important social centre for the people in this area.

South Caradoc United Church

21054 MUNCEY ROAD

The first services on the Muncey Road were conducted by a Methodist minister in the 1850s. He arrived by horseback from Mount Brydges, and held services in the log school house. By 1868 a white frame church was built. The current building was erected as a community effort in 1895. From 1884 to 1903 Rev. W. W. Shepherd served as minister. He was also Principal of Mount Elgin Institute, the native residential school at Muncey. He died as the result of a buggy accident. A marble plaque in his memory hangs in the church.

The church is built in the style Akron Auditorium, with folding doors providing four classrooms. There were at times up to eighty Sunday School students. The large cement block at the front steps was for the convenience of women and children as they embarked from their horse and buggies. The men folk would then park the horse and buggy in the shed at the north side of the church.

The Church served both Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, as well as Anglicans when the Burwell Church closed in 1930. Turn around and drive north on the Muncey Road to Burwell Road at Price's Hill. Turn right on the Burwell Road.

The Burwell Road

5.2 KM MUNCEY ROAD TO THAMES RIVER

Colonel Mahlon Burwell (1783-1846), a veteran of the war of 1812, was Provincial Land Surveyor for Colonel Thomas Talbot. He surveyed much of the heavily forested wilderness in Southwestern Ontario, including the city of London.

In part payment for his services he received extensive land grants. One grant, of nearly 1600 acres was in South Caradoc. This land became the property of Isaac Brock Burwell, one of Colonel Burwell's seven sons. The estate was called Rougham, after the Burwell's ancestral home in England. At the corner of the Burwell Road and Wightman Road at 21092 was located the Burwell School, SS #14, on land donated by the Burwell's. Built in 1861, the small frame building was an important part of the community until 1946.

To the south of the school on the Burwell Road, at the wrought iron fence, was located the Burwell Memorial Church. Colonel Burwell left 200 acres in his will to support the building of the church, built in 1874. The brick building was located on the central high ground, along with a buggy shed.

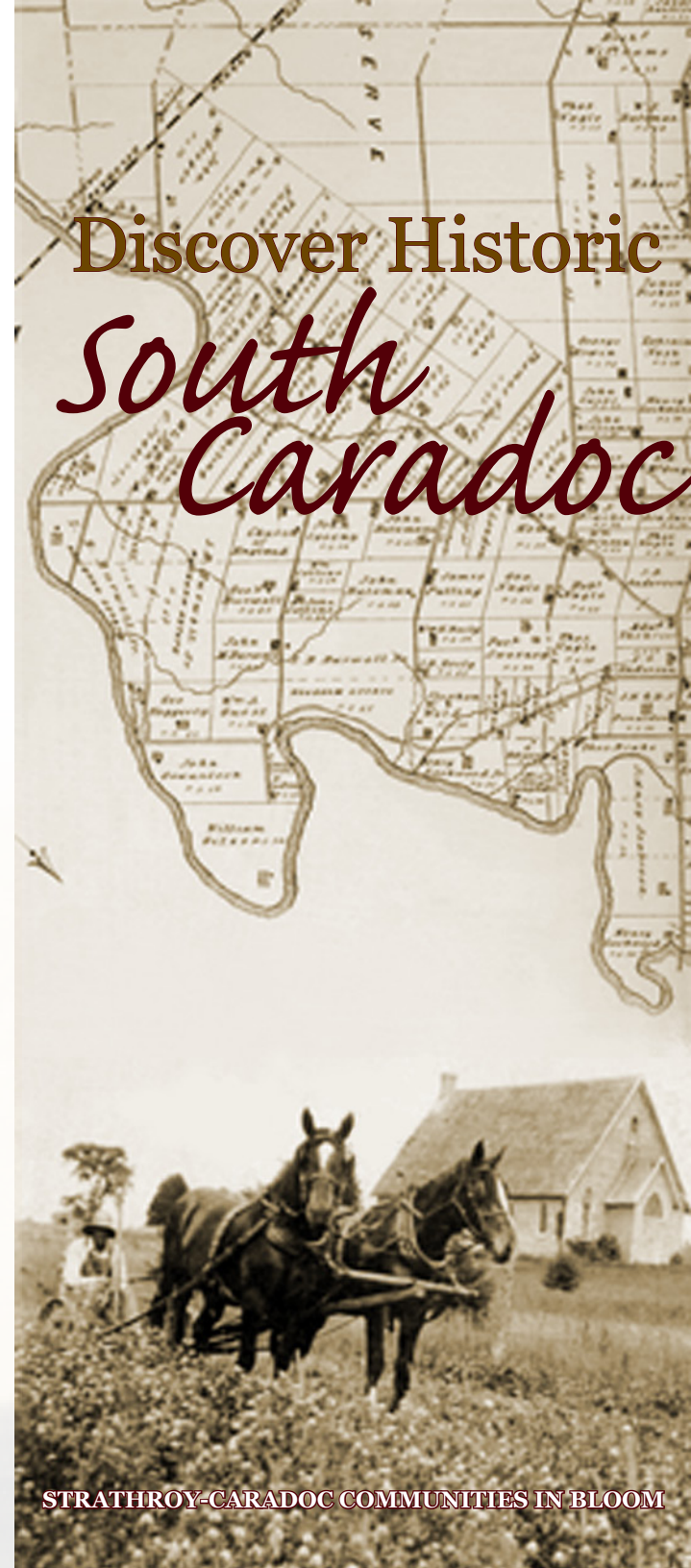
The Burwell Cemetery is located on the site. The tall monument marks the burial site of Isaac Brock Burwell, his wife Augusta, and their nine children.

The stone marker at the gate is from the foundation of the Burwell homestead. A stained glass window from the Burwell Church was relocated to St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ontario.

Visitors are welcome to respectfully explore this historic cemetery and tranquil setting.

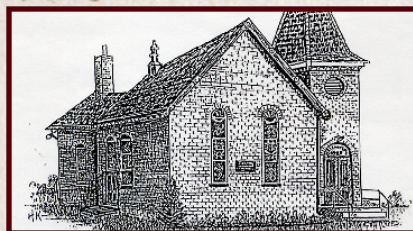
The Burwell Road

- * Located in the original farm house at 21075 was the first Burwell Road Post Office. Mail was delivered here daily from Mount Brydges. The school children picked up their family's mail on the way home from school.
- * Across the fields to the east at 20923 Burwell Road can be seen a large woodlot. This was the Jane's Sugar Bush, a large maple syrup operation and community landmark. A sawmill was at the road-side entrance. Traditionally, many farms in South Caradoc had their own maple sugar operations. Maple products were produced for family use, and for sale locally. Some was also sold at the London Market. One modern maple syrup operation is still operated in South Caradoc.
- * Further down the Burwell Road is the low-maintenance side road called Black Jack Drive. There were three Jack Clarks in the community, and the one living on this road had a very dark beard. So this road became, and remains, Black Jack Drive. The secluded roadway provides a quiet environment for a resident flock of wild turkeys, bluebirds and native plants - a hiker's and photographer's delight. Park at the top of the hill. This Drive links Muncey Road and the Burwell Road.
- * Arbour Day, the first Friday in May, was the day pupils and teachers gave their school and grounds a major spring cleaning. In the afternoon pupils of Burwell Road school and Muncey Road school would get together on the Black Jack for a picnic, and perhaps some fishing and hiking before returning home.
- * Continuing on the Burwell Road, past the bend in the road, is the site of the Burwell home "Rougham". Evergreens and walnut trees mark the location of the estate, set back a distance from the road across the field. The home faced the Thames River, which served as an important transportation route. The large frame house, built in 1834, is now located at Longwoods Road Conservation Area.
- * Continue on to the end of Burwell Road at the large checkered sign. At the bottom of the steep bank is the Thames River, and on the other side is the Oneida Settlement, which began in 1840. Early South Caradoc pioneers recall that many families had dugout boats made by the Oneida craftsmen. Fishing and boating on the Thames were part of pioneer life. Retrace the route back up Burwell Road to the Wightman Road.
- * Major changes have evolved in agriculture in South Caradoc. Traditionally each compact family had a variety of enterprises. Today's large scale family farms tend to specialize whether in cash crops of corn, wheat, soybeans, vegetables, or livestock.
- * Continue on to the Cooks Road intersection and turn left. Enjoy the scenic view of the Thames River and the fertile river flats.
- * Continuing on the scenic Cooks Road, you will pass an apple orchard on the right. At the stop sign, you are back at the Longwoods Road again, 0.6 km's east of Muncey Road.



CARADOC

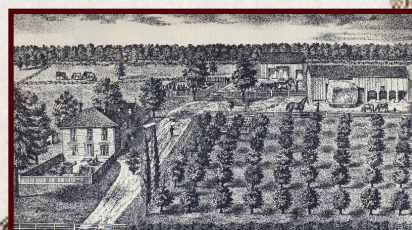
SCALE 60 CHAINS=AN INCH



SOUTH CARADOC
UNITED CHURCH
21054 MUNCEY ROAD



BURWELL ROAD
POST OFFICE
21075 BURWELL ROAD



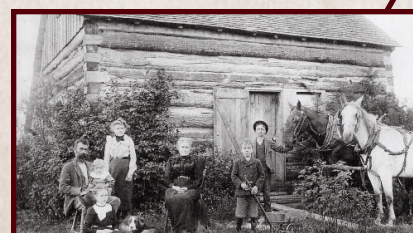
RESIDENCE OF I. B. BURWELL



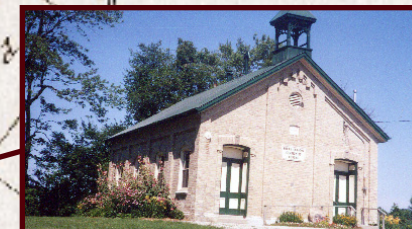
RILEY'S SUGAR BUSH



BURWELL CHURCH



WIGHTMAN FAMILY



SOUTH CARADOC
COMMUNITY CENTRE
21105 MUNCEY ROAD



RILEY FAMILY FARM



BURWELL SCHOOL

Giles Bridge, 1919

Until 1919, the Thames River had no bridge in South Caradoc. That year a new bridge was put in place at Delaware, and the original Delaware bridge was installed at the end of Cooks Road, South Caradoc on land settled by the Giles family in 1877.

DELAWARE
VILLAGE