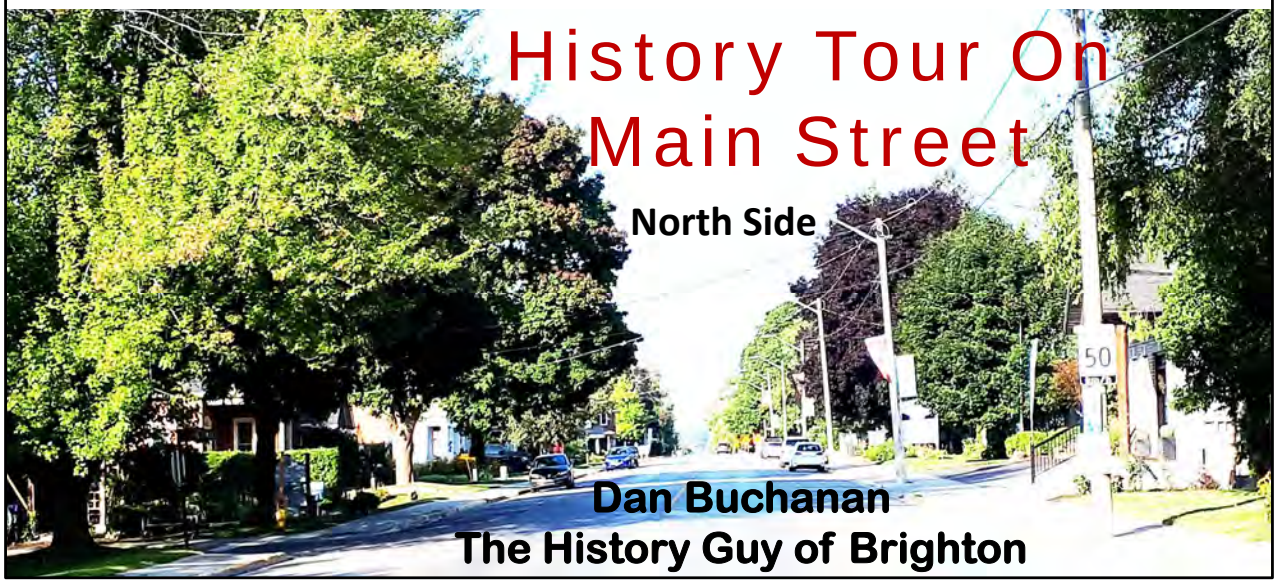
Around Town



Good evening everyone. Thanks for coming. Welcome to “Around Town: A History Tour on Main Street, North Side”

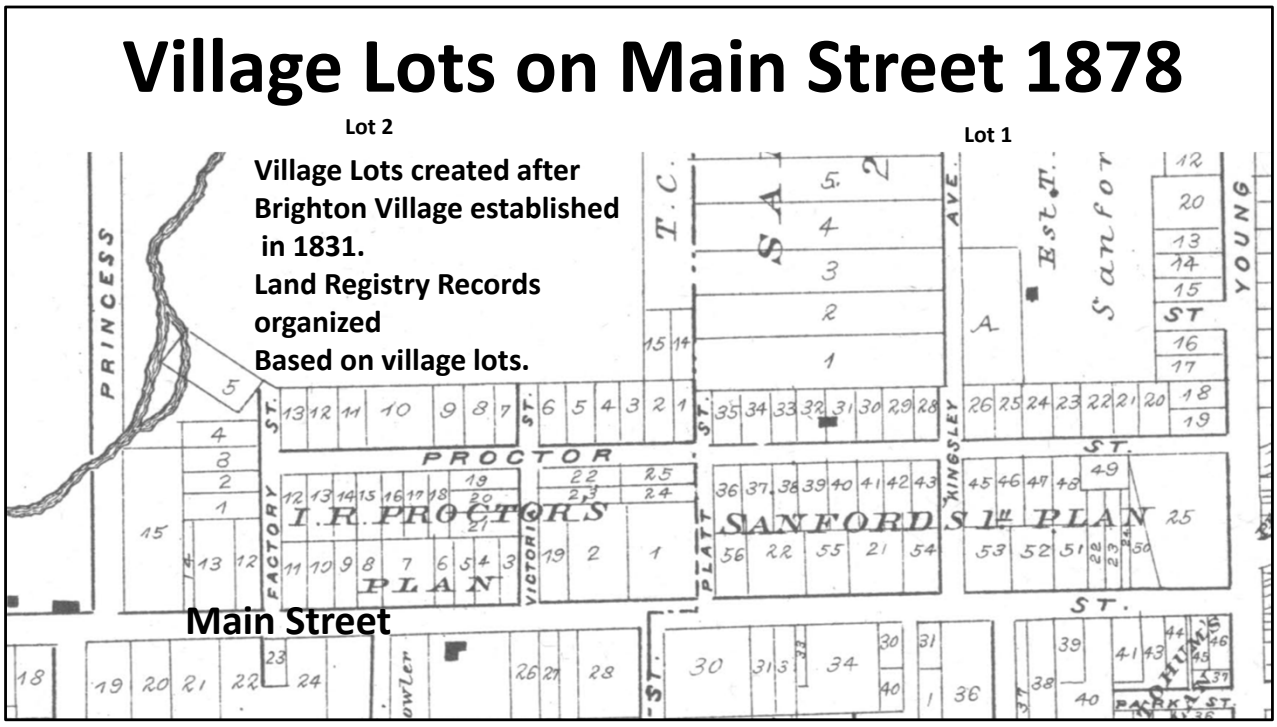
This is the first installment of what I hope will be many similar talks about different parts of Brighton.

Around Town refers to my current project to collection information about the history of every property in Brighton.

Yes, that means, literally, every address on every street.

Tonight we will talk about mostly residential properties on the north side of Main Street.

Village Lots on Main Street 1878



One of the most important documents supporting this work is the map of Brighton Village that is included in the Belden County Atlas of 1878.

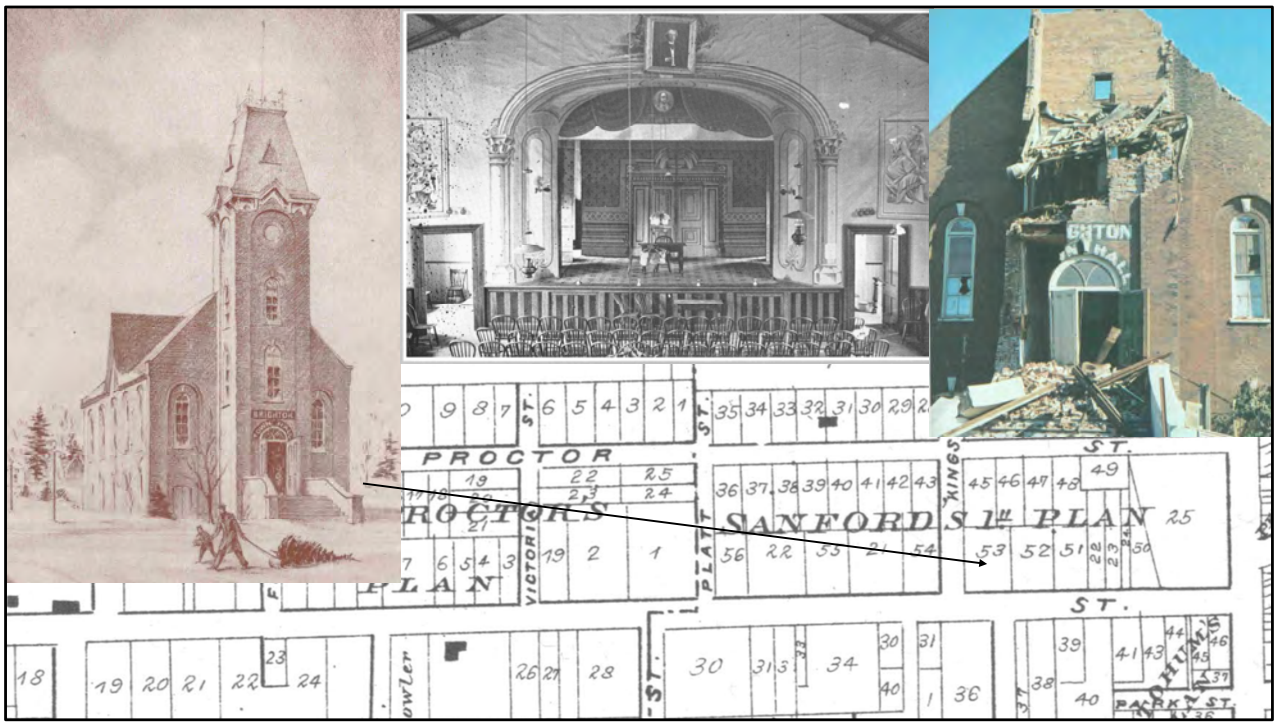
Here is a small snip of that map, focussing on the north side of Main Street.

When we scan the map in high resolution and then expand it on the computer screen, we can see the specific Village Lot numbers.

This is critical because the land registry records are based on these village lot numbers.

Land records were created long before our modern postal address system, so the land records never include street addresses.

The biggest problem when researching individual properties is to establish a link between the village lot number and the street address.



Lets begin by looking at Memorial Park, which is in village lot 53. We must deal with it in two parts.

First, the eastern two-thirds of the park was owned by John Edward Proctor in the early 1880s when it was purchased to build the town hall.

The lower level of the building contained Council chambers, court, jail and police station and the upper level was the Opera House.

The life of the town hall ended on July 13, 1973 when a tornado roared through town, leaving the old structure a pile of rubble.

The space was cleared and a band shell constructed. Recently, a new band shell makes it a great place for Music in the Park on Wednesday nights.

Brighton Cenotaph
First – 1923
Second – 1930s?
Third - 2012

Second, the western one third of the park was unused until, during WWI, when people began to bring stones from their fields in honour of loved ones lost in the war.

By the end of the war, there was a large pile of stones to the west of the town hall and people considered it to be sacred ground.

In the early 1920s, the Legion got started and they raised money to build a proper cenotaph.

In 1923, the town made an arrangement with Ida Lockwood for use of the land and the Legion had a cenotaph built out of the stones.

The cenotaph was upgraded in the 1930s and, in 2012, a brand new cenotaph was built on the spot.

So, in 2023, we can celebrate the 100th birthday of Memorial Park because 1923 was when the two pieces of the park came together to form one public space.

Just across Kingsley, we all recognize the building that hosts the Beer Store and Lola's Café.

This is village lot 54 and there are three Main Street addresses here, 72 for the beer store, 74 for Lola's and 78 for the cottage on the west side.

This building was built in 1947 as a GM dealership by Clayton Smith, but he soon turned It over to Rupert. J. Forrester of Toronto.

1947 – 1950 Clayton Smith GM Dealership
1950 – 1959 Forrester Motors
1959 Forrester Lease to Brewers Retail
Estate of Mrs. Forrester until 2000

Mr. Forrester ran a car dealership here from 1950 to 1959 but then began to lease the rear of this building to Brewers Retail.

He died in 1979 and the lease was renewed by his wife, Ida, and her estate finally sold the property in 2000. The Beer store is still there today.

In the meantime, Lola's has become rather a fixture at the front, a pleasant place to have a coffee.

John B. Young Isaac Brock DeMille

Here is the building that the car dealership replaced in 1947.

This building was constructed in 1851 by John B. Young who was a shoe maker. It was his home and workplace.

Also, the upper floor contained a large meeting hall and United Lodge No. 29 met in this hall for about a decade after it was first established in Brighton.

In 1867, this property was purchased by Isaac Brock DeMille, who conducted a hardware business here for several decades.

It is likely DeMille who built the cottage on the west side.

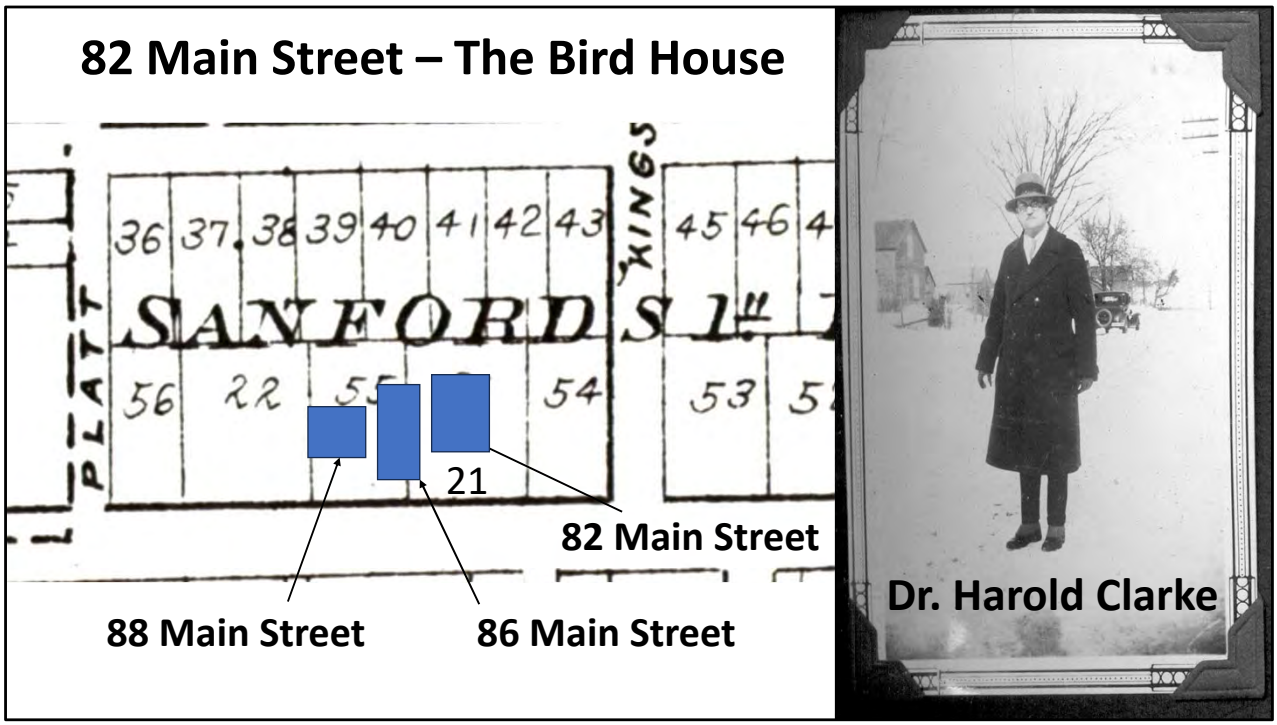
Main Street North No. 82, 86 & 88

Moving along Main Street, we come to an area where we must deal with four addresses together, numbers 82, 86, 88 and 90 Main St.

The white frame house on the right is 82 Main St. and that is now the Bird House. It is on village lot 21.

Dr. Pitkin Gross acquired village lot 21 in 1845 and practiced medicine here until his death in 1874.

It is quite likely that Dr. Gross built the house, probably in the 1860s.



82 Main Street would again come into the hands of a doctor, when Dr. Harold Clarke acquired it in 1922.

Here is Dr. Clarke in one of the Latimer Photos.

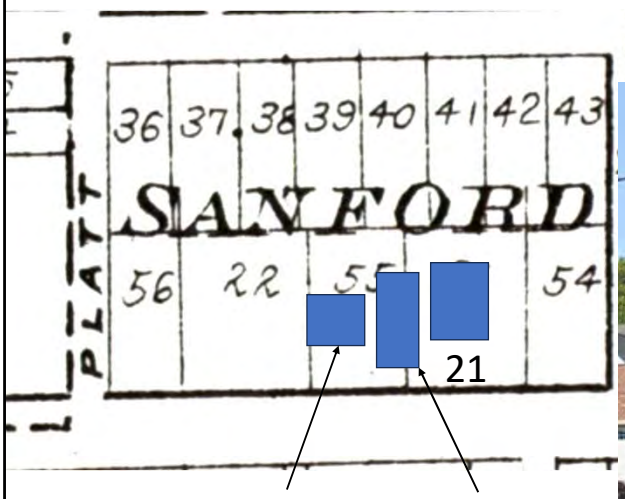
He was here until he retired and sold the place to another doctor, Arnold Andrews.

Then in 1961, Dr. Andrews sold to Dr. Henry Persutti.

I know that he practiced in the clinic at the corner of Main and Centre Streets – where Allen's Insurance is today.

I remember my mother taking me and my siblings there for doctor appointments.

86 Main Street – Whole Health



The new grey brick building at 86 Main Street was built in 2016. It is called Whole Health.

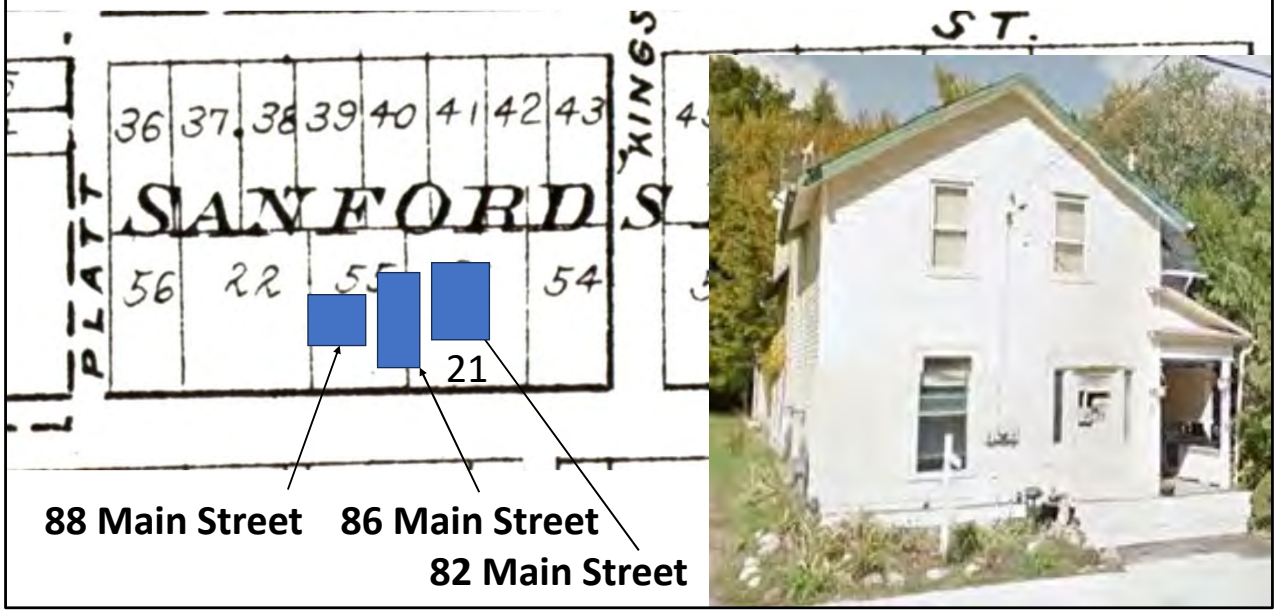
It supports several offices for medical practitioners and these offices were expanded early in 2023 so it is really busy.

I moved into a small apartment upstairs at the back in the spring of 2017.

I am still there and hope to be for a good long time.

It is perfect for me.

86 Main Street – Before Whole Health



Here is the old house that was on 86 Main Street before it was torn down.

Here is a case of a house straddling the boundaries of two village lots.

On the left, lot 55 is where the Presbyterian church used to be; on the right, is lot 21, which contains 82 Main St.

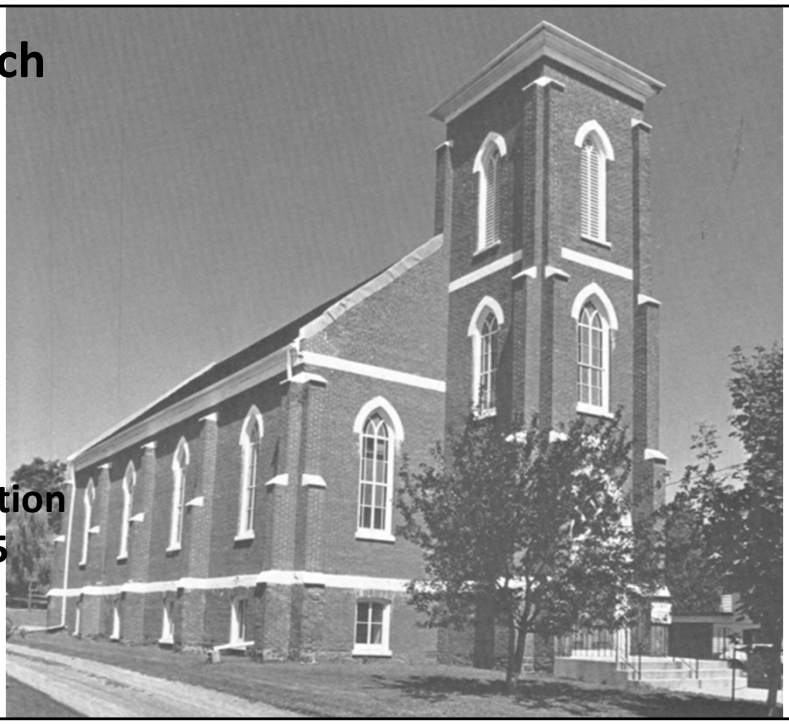
In the middle, 86 Main Street was built long and narrow, to straddle both lots.

It makes the land records annoyingly complex but, that's part of the challenge.

Presbyterian Church
88 Main Street

Built in 1878 by Methodist Episcopal Church

Presbyterian Congregation Purchased Church 1885



The two townhomes at 88 and 90 Main Street are located where the Presbyterian Church use to be.

It was built in 1878 by the Methodist Episcopal Church. However, soon after, the denominations merged, and the church became redundant.

In 1885, the Presbyterians purchased the church.

The Presbyterian church was in the path of the tornado in 1973 and windows were broken, causing considerable internal damage, which was repaired.

More recently, serious structural weaknesses in the old church prompted the decision to sell the property for development.

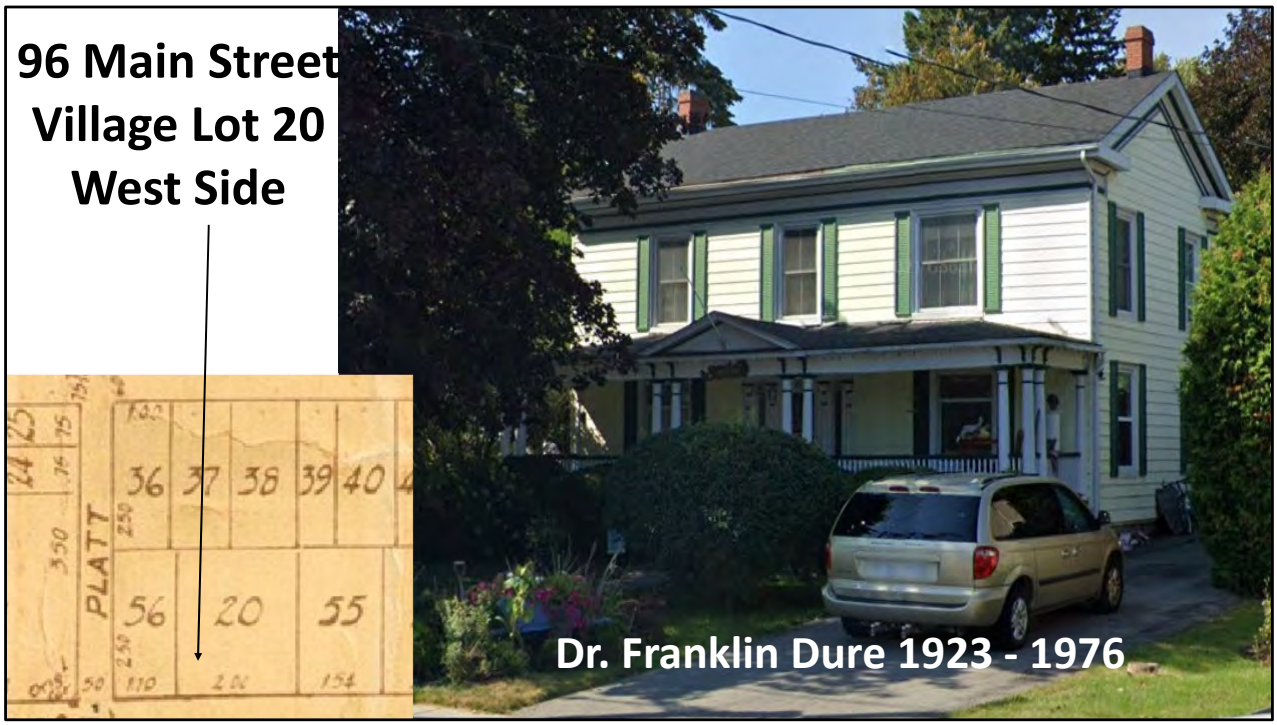
Two new town houses were built there around 2015.

Village Lot 20 – 92 and 96 Main St.

Next is Village Lot 20 which is a larger lot containing two properties, 92 and 96 Main Street.

In 1845, Thomas D. Sanford sold lot 20 to John McAlease, a blacksmith.

He was able to walk across Main Street to his blacksmith's shop for several decades.



It was probably John McAlease who built the house at 96 Main Street.

In 1923, the property was acquired by Dr. Franklin M. Dure and he served Brighton as a much-appreciated doctor until his death in 1954.

The property would remain in the hands of his descendants until 1976.

In fact, I have stayed overnight in this house.

It was a bed and breakfast in 2005 when I had a booth for the Applefest Street Fair.

My booth was right at the end of the driveway, which was extremely convenient.

The house on the east side of village lot 20 is 92 Main Street and current hosts the Sports and Wellness Centre.

The records show that, in 1941, the east half of Lot 20 was purchased by Clive Thompson and his wife Isabel Cope.

Mr. Thompson came from Toronto to set up a new law practice in Brighton, a practice that continues to this day.

Clive and Isabel Thompson owned this property for about two decades, until 1962.

In fact, this couple were the grandparents of Dan Thompson.

At the north east corner of Main and Platt Streets, is 100 Main Street, which houses Brighton Chiropractic and Massage Therapy.

This is village lot 56. It was acquired in 1849 by Hiram Bulkley. That is not Buckley, but Bulkley. It is hard to say but correct nonetheless.

He was a very active merchant and real estate speculator.

His family is shown to be living at village lot 56 in 1850 and the property would be in the family until 1923.

However, word is that this building was built in the 1870s as a dry goods store.

This was just one of many commercial enterprises around Brighton by the Bulkley family.

Village Lot 1 – West of Platt St.

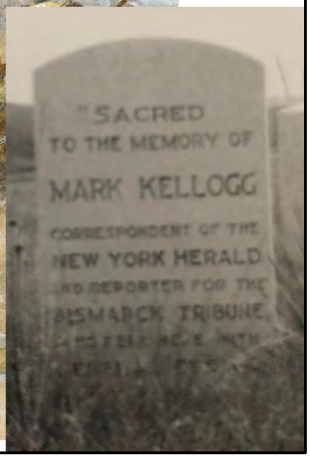
When we cross to the west side of Platt Street, we come to village lot 1.

The Innovex Financial Services office is there on the corner.

The Battle of Little Big Horn

June 25 – 26, 1876 – Big Horn County, Montana

Marcus Henry Kellogg



What? Battle of Little Big Horn? Yes, there is a connection.

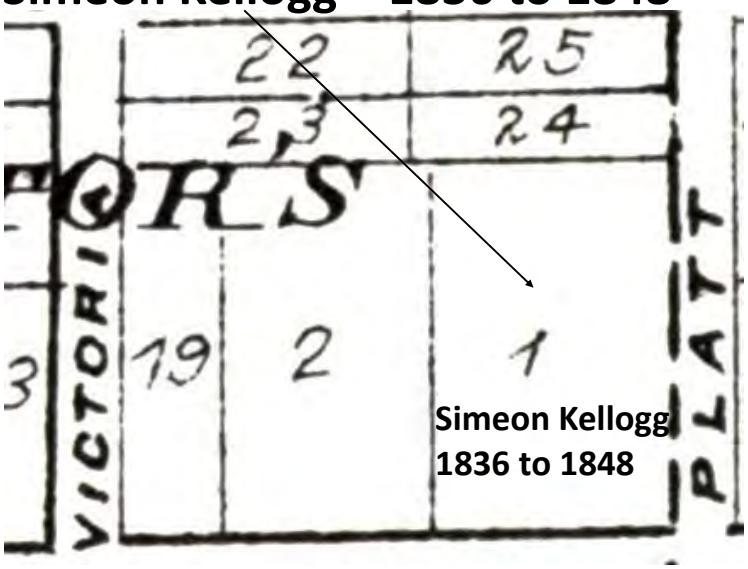
Among all the soldiers who died in that battle, there was one newspaper reporter, by the name of Marcus Henry Kellogg.

He had been born in Brighton, Ontario in 1833.

He was 43 years of age at the time of the battle and was a reporter for the Bismark Tribune and the New York Herald.

He was killed along with all of Custer's men and was buried on the site. A memorial has been set up as you can see.

Village Lot 1, North Main Street
Simeon Kellogg – 1836 to 1848



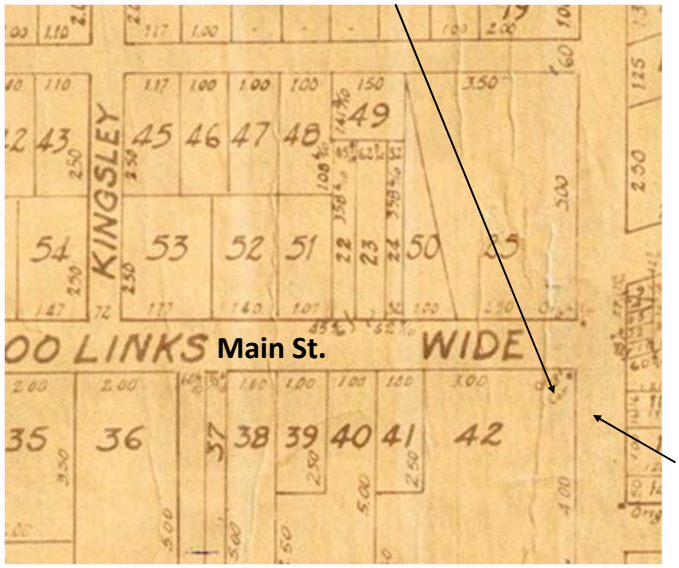
Marcus Henry Kellogg was a son of Simeon Kellogg who is well represented in Brighton history in the 1830s and 1840s.

Land records show that Simeon Kellogg purchased Village Lot 1 from Josiah Proctor in 1836 and his family would live there until 1848.

Simeon Kellogg had been born in Vermont in 1800, was married in Kingston in 1829.

He then came to this settlement to pursue the hotel business.

Simeon Kellogg – Hotel at Main & Prince Edward Streets from 1830 to 1850



To that end, he purchased land in village lot 42, at the south west corner of Main and Prince Edward Streets.

He built a hotel very quickly at this prime location!

The records show that the Kellogg Inn had a large room where community meetings were held. It was called Union Hall.

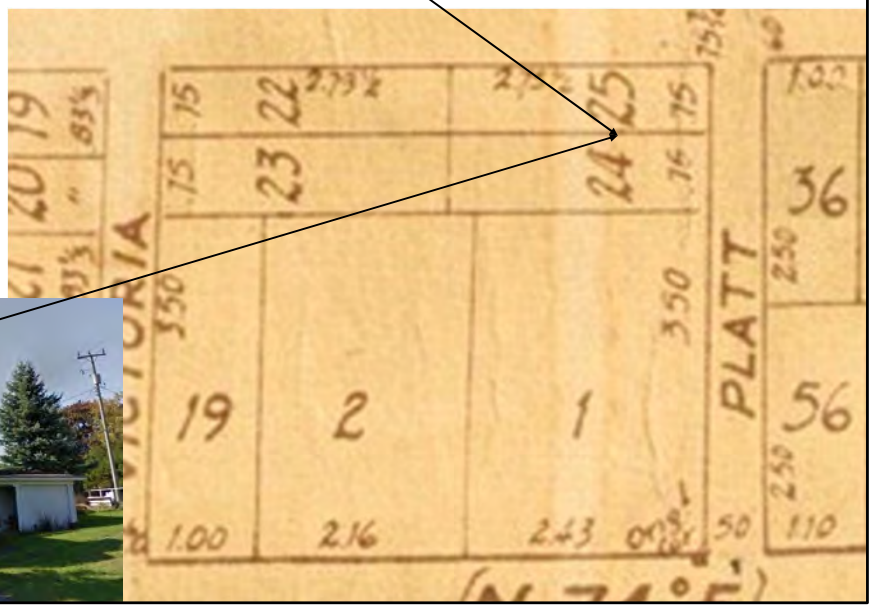
Our records contain two examples of important meetings held at this place.

On April 2, 1831, there was a meeting of community members in Union Hall to establish a name for the village. And they picked “Brighton”.

In 1836, there was a community meeting that passed resolutions to send to the government. They complained that they had no justice of the peace, or constable to keep the peace, in spite of the booming activity at the bay which brought in lots of sailors, who do what sailors do.

These resolutions were ignored in 1836, but were largely resolved when Brighton Township was created on January 1, 1852.

Willett M. Platt (1820-1902) – 20 Platt Street



The next major owner of Village Lot 1 was Willett McConnell Platt, in 1854.

He also acquired village lots 24 and 25 on Platt Street, north of lot 1, all the way to Sanford Street.

Willet Platt was born in Percy Township but came to Brighton as a young man to take up business as a merchant.

Soon, he was involved in the thriving lumber industry and became one of the most successful lumber merchants in the area.

As a result, he became wealthy and was able to build a large two-story brick house at the corner of Sanford and Platt streets.

It was mostly on lot 24, but taking up lot 25 as well.

This house is not on Main Street but it dominated Main Street for many decades.

Willett Platt (1820-1902) – 20 Platt Street

Willett Platt's, daughter, Mary Elizabeth, who grew up in this house, was married to John David Silcox, the contractor for the construction of the Murray Canal.

The property, which had been held in trust, was transferred to Mary in 1889, after she married.

Then, in 1894, the Silcox couple sold the house and property to Dr. Charles M. Sanford and it would remain in the Sanford family until the 1970s.

That is why it is often called the Sanford place. To be more accurate, I would call it the Platt/Sanford place.

I recently had a tour of this house by the new owner who plans to fix it up. Work is underway.

108 Main Street – Village Lot 1

The brick house at 108 Main St. is also in Village Lot 1, so included in the Kellogg, Platt and Silcox ownership.

In 1896, it was sold to William Wallace Porte (with an e on the end) who was a very active businessman in Brighton for many years.

He was, by trade, a jeweller and optician and he operated popular stores.

However, he was also the driving force behind installation of the first telephone service in Brighton.

Mr. Porte's original system was purchased and, with many other systems around the province, amalgamated to create the Bell Telephone system.

The next three properties west on Main street can also been described as being east of Victoria St.

These are 110 Main St., 112 Main Street and 7 Victoria St. The last mentioned fronts on Victoria Street.

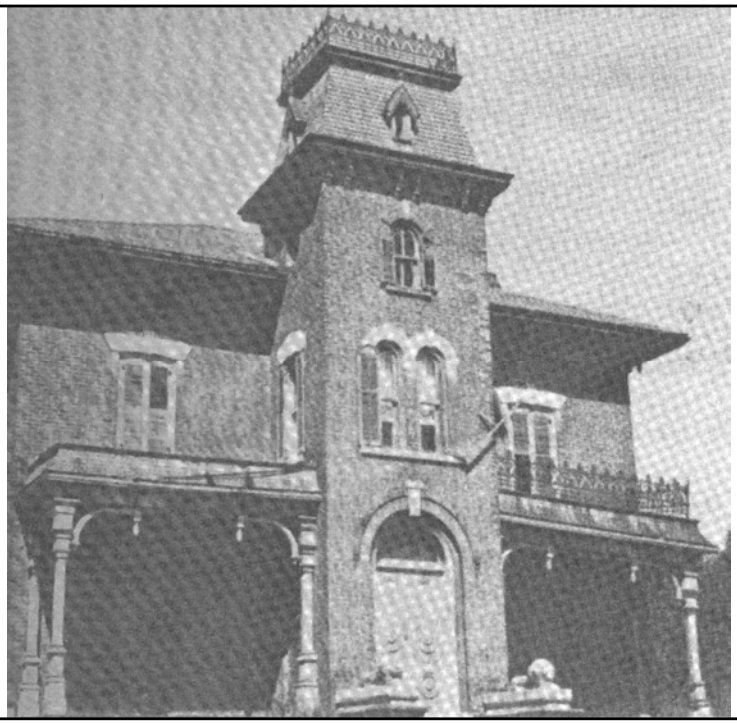
These are all modern homes that were built in the 1980s.

However, before that, there was one very significant building on a large property here.

It was 116 Main Street and it looked like …..

The Webb Place

116 Main St.



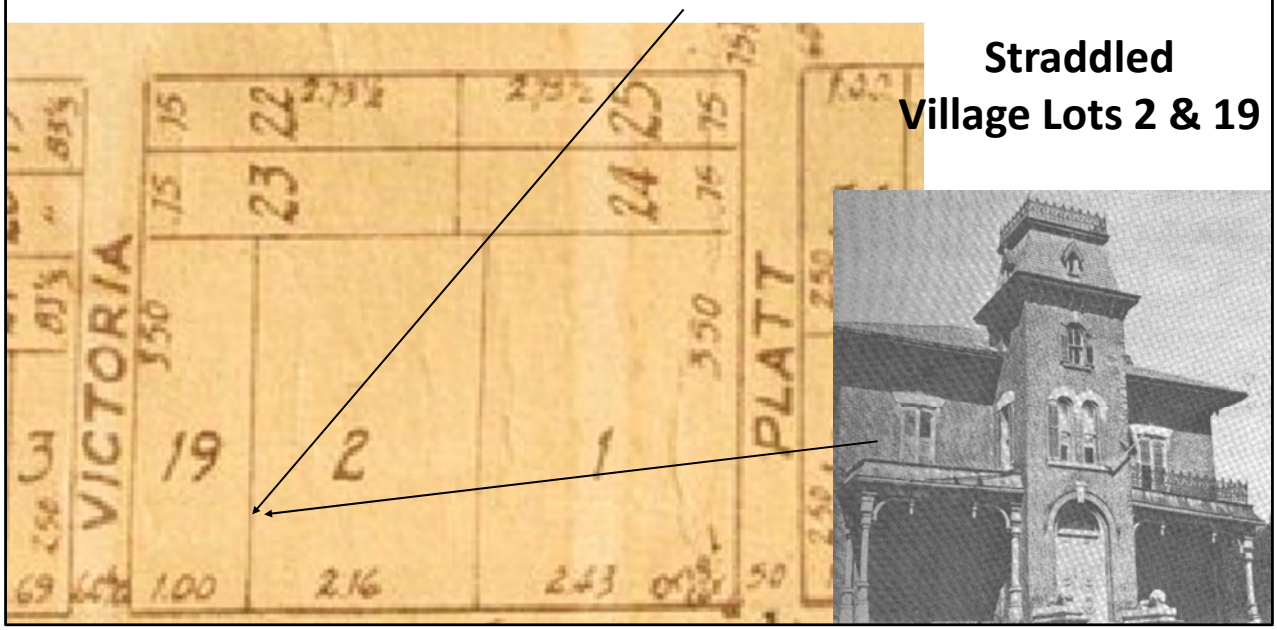
…. this! It was a large, two-story brick house with the roof peaked in the middle.

There was a tower at the front, facing Main Street, and two carved lions keeping watch at the front door.

You can see why people thought of it as a tourist attraction.

Families would come by here on their Sunday drive and slow down as they passed, just to see how the other half lived.

The Webb Place - 116 Main St.



According to the land records, this house straddled village lot 2 and village lot 19.

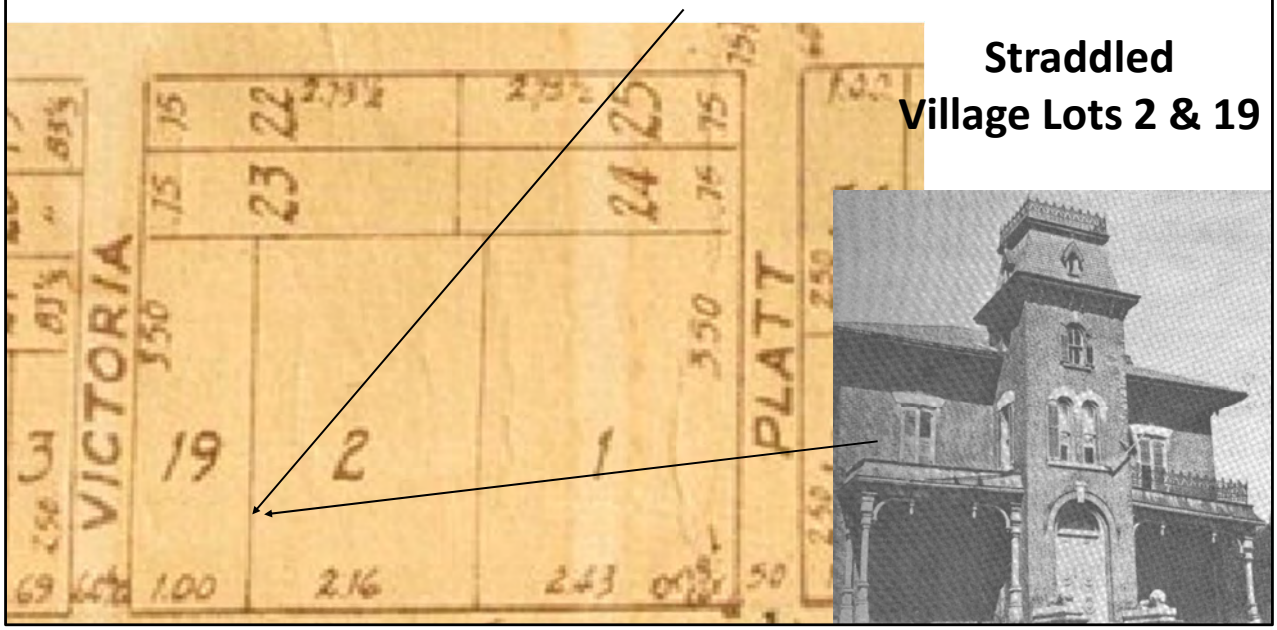
The documents tell us that Village Lot 2 was purchased on 1839 by Hiram Bulkley. We met him before, down at 100 Main Street.

We can assume that Hiram Bulkley built a house for his family on lot 2.

Then, in 1850, he also purchased lot 19 from Ira R. Proctor, to expand his holding and provide easy access to Victoria Street.

This property was inherited by Hiram's son, Stiles Bulkley, and in 1874 and 1875 he sold it to Thomas Webb.

The Webb Place - 116 Main St.



Soon after, Thomas Webb also acquired the west part of lot 23, to the north of lot 19 and 2.

Their barn and driveway onto Victoria Street were located there.

Here was another prosperous merchant and land speculator in Brighton, who was also connected in a family sense.

Thomas Webb had married Charlotte Bulkley, a sister of Stiles and a daughter of Hiram Bulkley.

It is suggested that this house was built in 1880, which means it was built by Thomas Webb.

This property was in the hands of Webb descendants until 1952.

Four years later, the property was acquired by Aric and Viola Gerow and the plan was to make the house into a hotel.

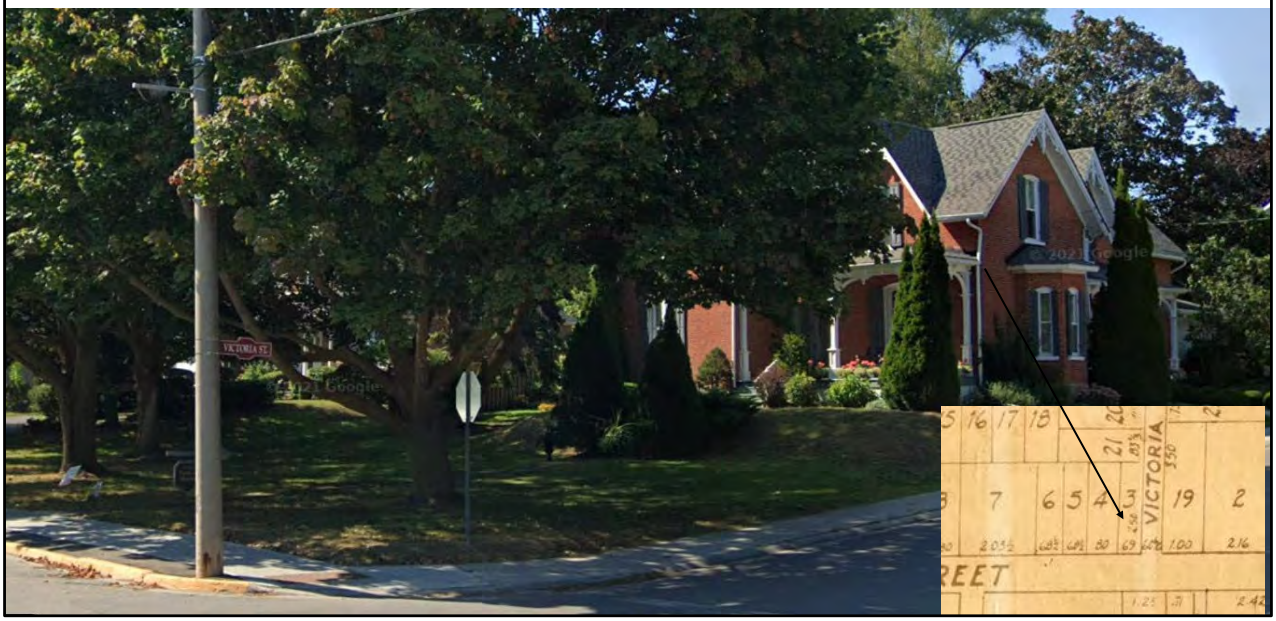
The hotel scheme failed and, in 1981, the partnership of Al Zinck and Doug Haig acquired the whole property under Power of Sale, and they had development in mind.

The old house was torn down in April of 1982 and several modern houses were built in the space in the next few years.

That is why today we see 110 and 112 Main street and 7 and 15 Victoria Street.

So, we can call that old house the Webb place, but let's not forget the Bulkley family because they played an important role in the history of the area.

Valleau House – 120 Main Street



As we cross Victoria Street, to 120 Main Street, we see the Valleau House. It says so right on the sign out front, and for good reason.

This house was built by Cornelius Valleau in the 1860s. It sits on village lots 3 and 4, which each are small, narrow lots.

He was a member of a very large Huguenot family that were Loyalists in Prince Edward County before spreading into the townships to the north.

Siblings of Cornelius Valleau settled in the north part of Brighton Township, which means I can count them as cousins, but let's not get into that.

Cornelius Valleau became one of the most prolific builders in Brighton during a major growth spurt in the area.

He was particularly known for building substantial two-story brick homes and we have many of them still standing in Brighton today.

Valleau House – 120 Main Street

The property at 120 Main Street is still, to this day in 2023, in the extended family line.

Cornelius Valleau's daughter, Martha, married Burton Becker, a well-known merchant in Brighton. Remember Becker's Bazaar?

Their daughter, Marie, married Keith Roblin after he came back from harrowing service in WWI.

Their daughter, Eleanor Roblin married John Stephens in 1956 and that couple owns the property to this day.

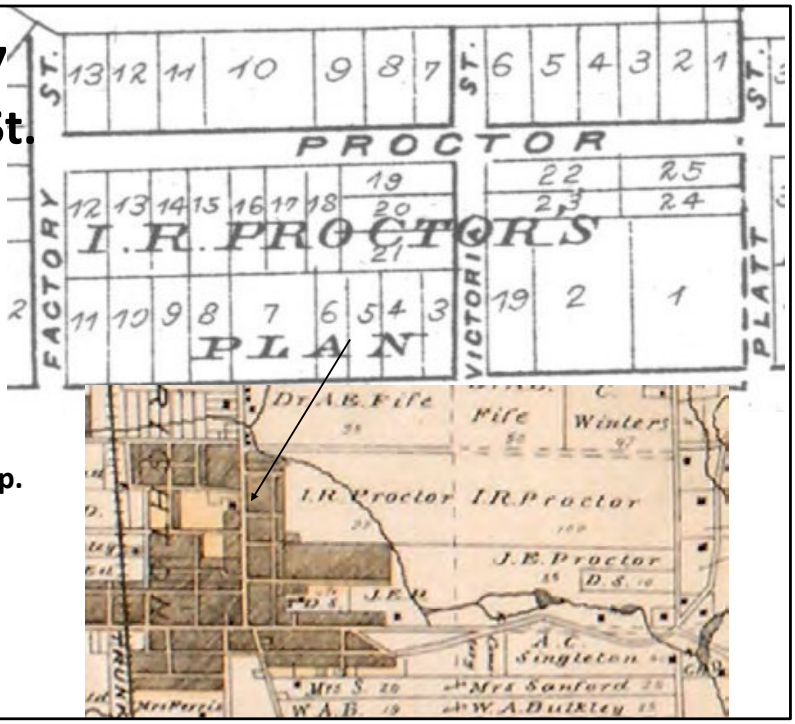
So, in terms of family connections, this is an historic house in Brighton.

Immediately west of 120 Main Street is 124 Main Street which is a lovely modern home.

As we see here, the Valleau house is just to its east and the funeral home is on its west side.

This property is historically significant.

Village Lots 5, 6 & 7 North Side of Main St.



Concession 2, Lot 2, Cramahe Twp.

Josiah Proctor farm from 1814

We know about John Edward Proctor and Proctor House Museum, but let's go back a couple of generations.

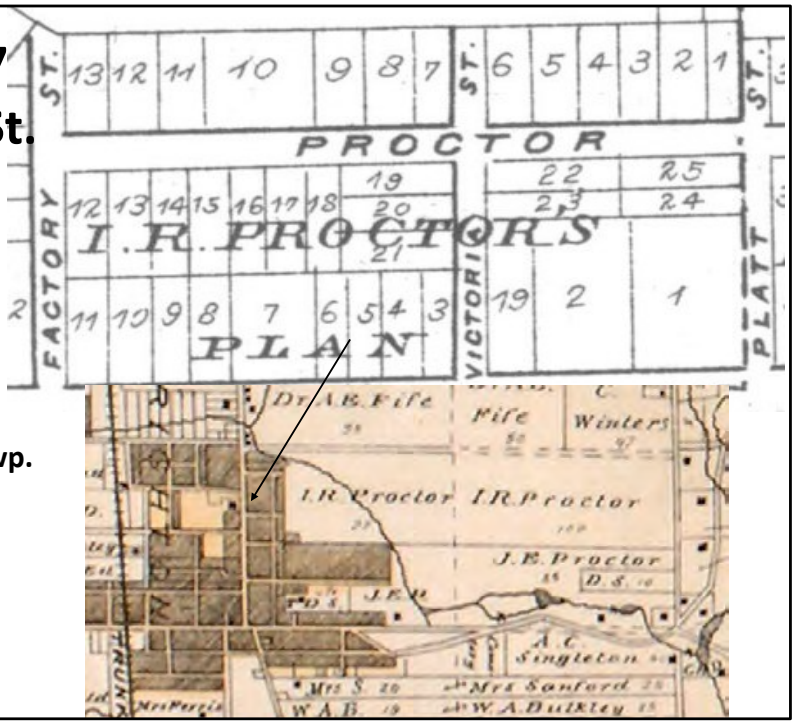
Josiah Proctor, John E.'s grandfather, came from Vermont in 1810 and settled in the south end of Cramahe Township.

In 1814 Josiah Proctor purchased all 200 acres of lot 2, conc. 2, Cramahe Twp.

That is north of Main Street, between Platt and Princess Streets, all the way to the next concession line.

This was the Proctor farm well into the middle of the 1800s.

Village Lots 5, 6 & 7 North Side of Main St.



Concession 2, Lot 2, Cramahe Twp.

Josiah Proctor Farm from 1814

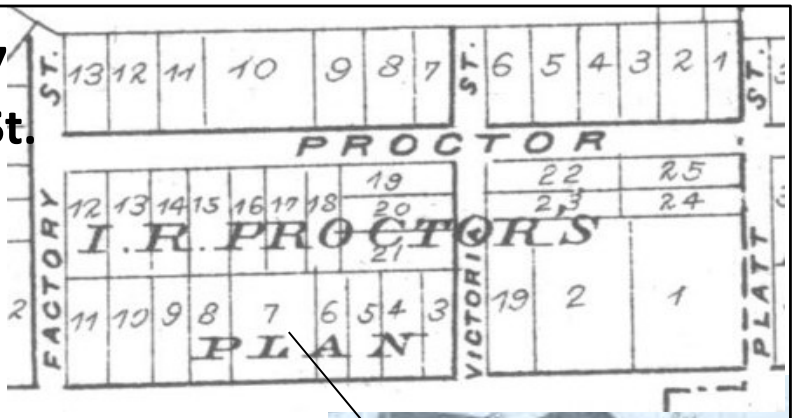
To my delight, I have recently been able to confirm that the first Proctor homestead, was in village lots 5 and 6, north side of Main Street.

There is a direct reference to this in The Tobey Book which I had not taken very seriously when I read it years ago.

But the detail of the land records point to this area as the last land on Main Street sold by the Proctor family, in the 1880s.

Nothing remains of the original Proctor homestead, except for the records and writings that help guide us to a more complete picture.

Village Lots 5, 6 & 7
North Side of Main St.



Josiah Proctor Farm - 1814

1886 Lots 5, 6 & 7 - Thomas G. Murphy

House built by Thomas G. Murphy c 1887

In 1886, village lots 5, 6 and 7 were sold by the Proctor estate to Thomas G. Murphy, a prosperous farmer from Cramahe Twp.

It is probable that the first version of the house on lot 7 was built by Thomas G. Murphy, in the 1880s, although much enhanced in later years.

In 1897, lot 7 was passed on to his daughter, Deborah, who had married James Walker.

In 1904, lot 7 was sold to Eva P. Bullock, wife of Arthur David Bullock, a prosperous merchant in Brighton.

Eva Bullock was living in the upstairs of the house when it was sold to Burton E. Brintnell in 1934.

Mr. Brintnell had, for several years, conducted an undertaking business at 20 Main Street.

Now, the business was move to that large house at 130 Main Street.

Village Lots 5, 6 & 7 North Side of Main St.

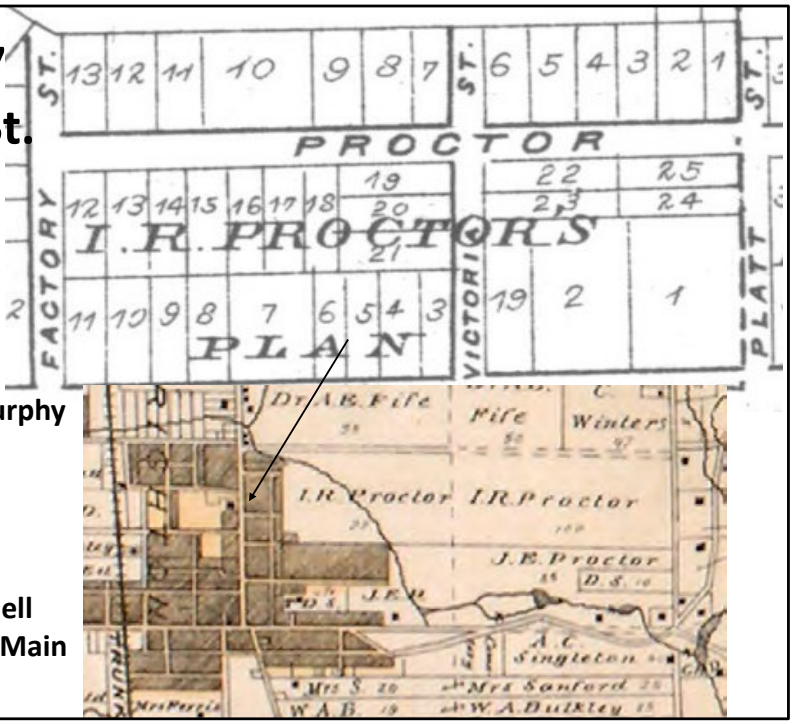
Josiah Proctor Homestead - 1814

1886 Lots 5, 6 & 7 - Thomas G. Murphy

1897 – Lots 5 & 6 – Lydia Brintnell

1933 James Hales moved his shoe repair shop to 128 Main St.

1934 – 5, 6 & 7 to Burton E. Brintnell Undertaking moved here from 20 Main



As to lots 5 and 6, in 1897, Mr. Murphy sold them to another daughter, Lydia, who was the wife of Robert Austin Brintnell, the father of Burton E. Brintnell.

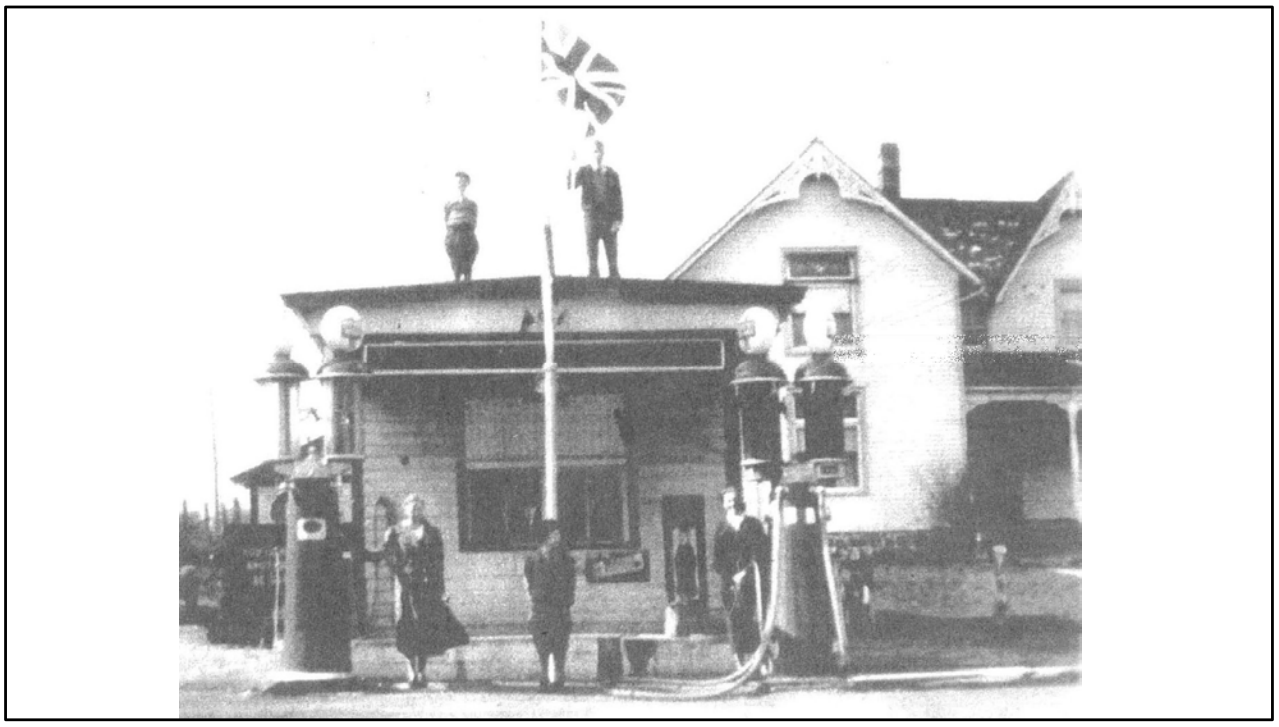
With the advent of automobiles in the early 1920s, Burton Brintnell set up a gas station and auto repair business in lot 6, called 128 Main Street.

As was the habit in those early days of gas stations, the gas pumps were placed right at the side of the road.

In 1933, James Hales moved his shoe repair shop from 13 Young St. to 128 Main St. and rented space from the Brintnells.

It was soon determined that Jimmy Hales was a reliable and handy fellow, so he took over the Brintnell gas station.

Please note that the correct spelling of the name is Hales, with an s on the end. In spite of what has been recorded so often.



Here is Jimmy Hales standing on top of his shoe repair shop, probably in the late 1930s. Note that the gas pumps are right at the street.

We can see the Hales house on the right in the background, which was 124 Main St. The shoe repair and gas station was 128.

Finally, in 1960, Jimmy Hales was able to purchase village lots 5 and 6 from the estate of Burton Brintnell.

Jimmy Hales' place was a gathering spot for locals who were looking for some news or maybe just gossip.

The host was a very social fellow, greeting folks with a smile and a good story.

The kids loved to stop here for a pop and chocolate bar and were often late for dinner.

However, Jimmy Hales died in 1966 and the gas pumps were soon removed, but it was not until 1995 that the property was sold to Mark Walas.

Brighton Funeral Home

And, speaking of the funeral home, let's follow up.

It was in the hands of the Brintnell family until 1945.

Then it became the Ridley Funeral Home, then Cummings in 1947, then Snider in 1956, and Mackey in 1967.

It became the Walas Funeral home in 1987 and then Rushnell in 2007.

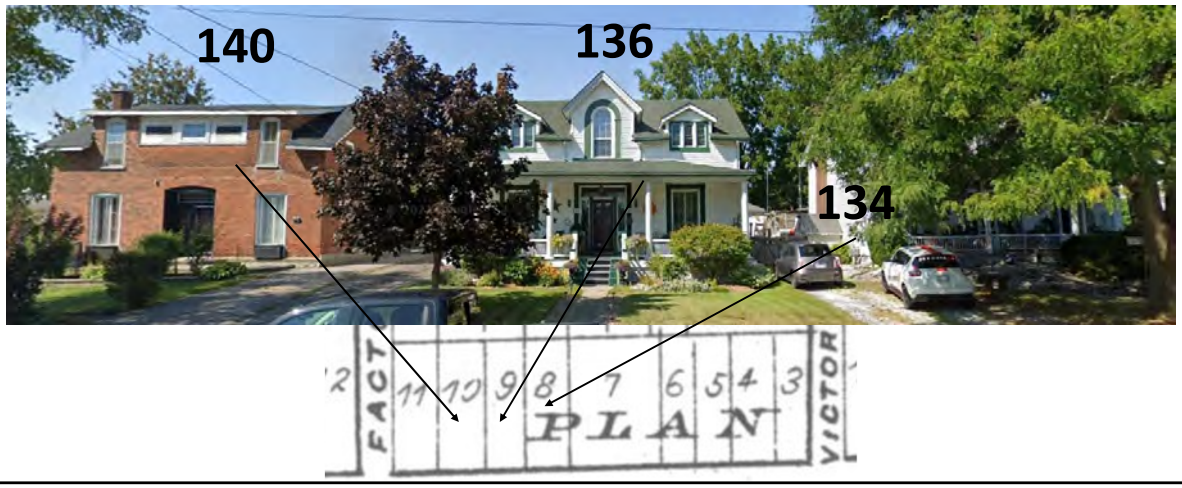
The funeral home expanded to the east, into lot 6, during the Walas ownership …

.. And Tony Walas, father of former Mayor of Brighton, Mark Walas, built this lovely house on lots 5 and 6, which is 124 Main Street today.

But, keep in mind, this was the first Proctor homestead.

Main Street North Side – West of Funeral Home

Village Lot 10 Village Lot 9 Village Lot 8



The next few properties are smaller lots and each contains one modest sized house.

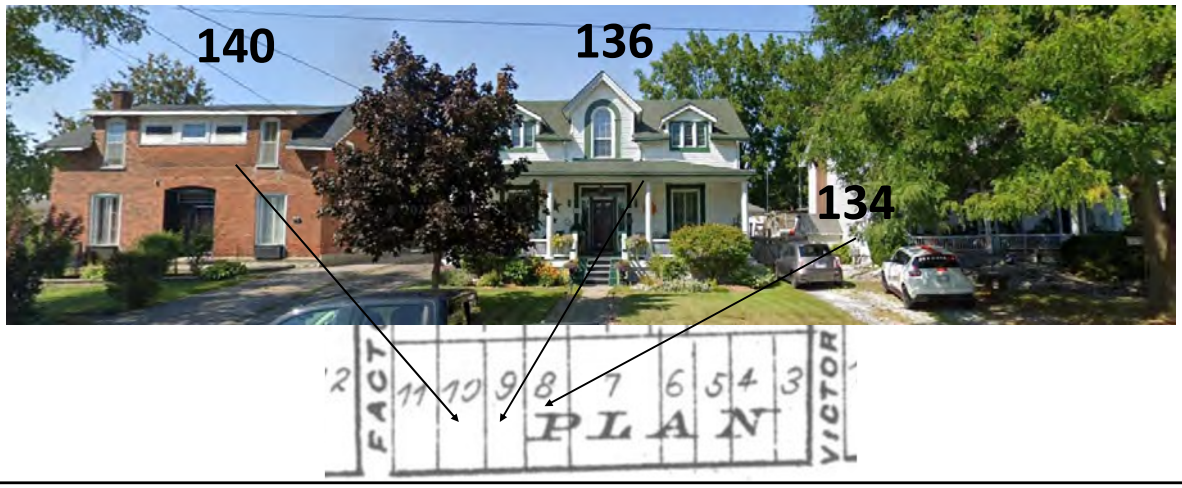
Village Lot 8, containing 134 Main Street was owned by William W. Webb from 1852 to 1881.

He was a brother of Thomas Webb, also very active in business, particularly in the area of Main and Railroad Street, now Maplewood.

Later, Harry Snider owned this house for a time as his family were busy merchants across Main Street at the south-west corner of Railroad St.

Main Street North Side – West of Funeral Home

Village Lot 10 Village Lot 9 Village Lot 8



Number 134 changed hands a lot but, I will mention one more owner.

In 1947 this property was purchased by Oscar and Flossie Dingman. They had married in 1926, his third marriage and her first.

Flossie was Flossie May Town, from the Orland and Codrington area.

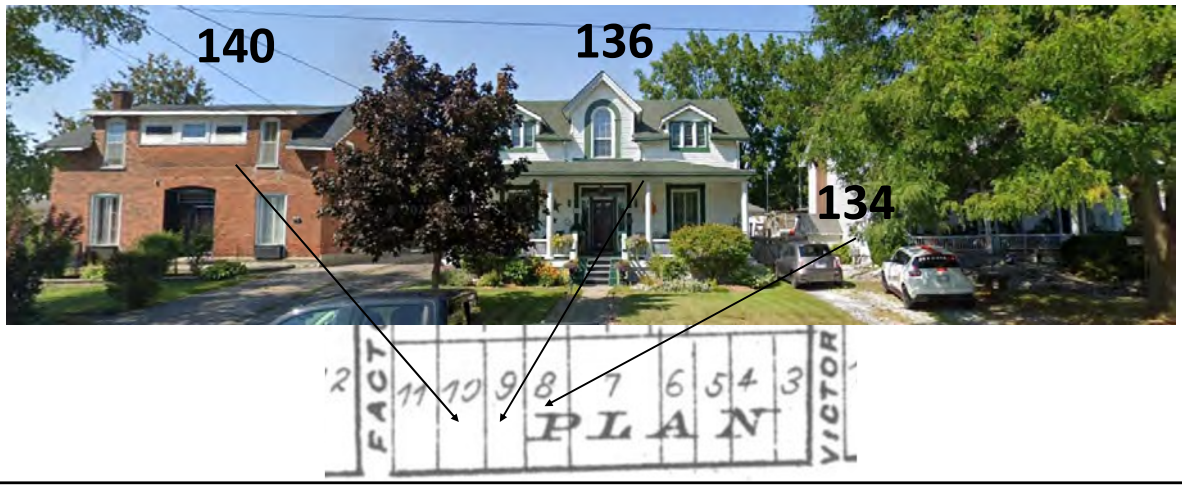
She had been the last of three generations of young women in her family who worked as maids for the Proctor family.

Proctor family history says she went with the family when they moved to Alberta and came back to Brighton in 1926.

The home at 134 Main Street would have been much more modest, but also much less busy.

Main Street North Side – West of Funeral Home

Village Lot 10 Village Lot 9 Village Lot 8



Number 136 Main Street is a lovely frame house, which has recently changed hands, prompting an enquiry to the History Guy.

This house acted as a manse for St. Paul's Anglican church for many years.

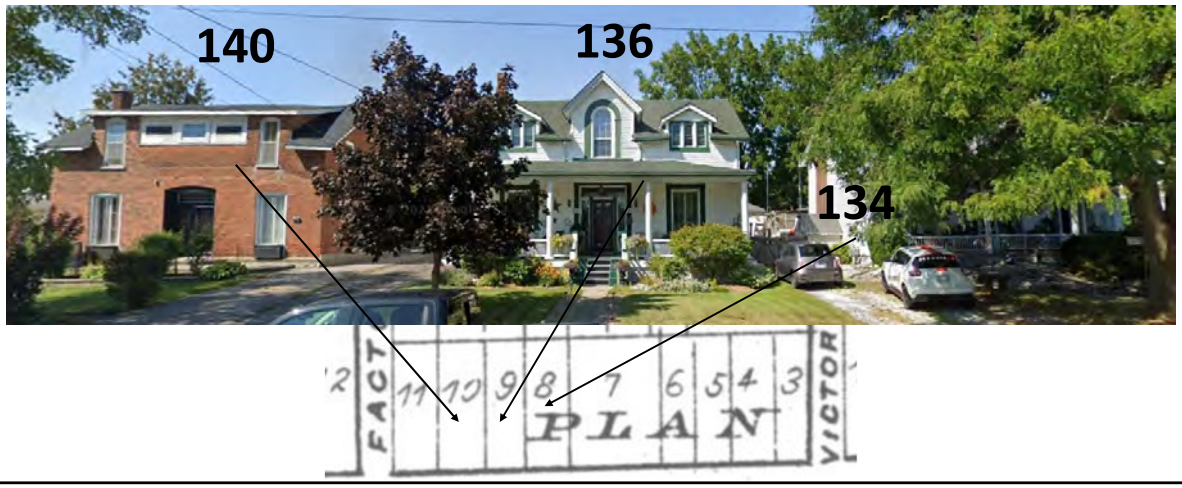
It started in 1885 when Rev. Richard Harris purchased the property and, in 1893, sold it to the church.

In 1927, Adelaide Pickford, widow of Rev. Edgar William Pickford, purchased it and passed it to her son in 1935.

Rev. Pickford wrote on of two histories of the Masonic Lodge we found in the vault when the Masonic Temple was sold in 2017.

Main Street North Side – West of Funeral Home

Village Lot 10 Village Lot 9 Village Lot 8



The brick house at 140 Main Street looks like it has undergone some serious renovations and restructuring, at some point.

From 1874 to 1898, this property was owned by Frederick and Henry Auston, the family that ran the laces factory at the corner of Russell and Napier Streets.

It can be expected that the Auston's build this brick house, although it probably had a full second story originally.

From 1915 to 1946, 140 was owned by Emma McNeill, widow of Malcolm McNeill.

Then Morley Simpson owned it until 1967 and it has changed hands a lot.

The house at 144 Main Street may have been built by John Lear, a prosperous farmer from Hillier Twp.

He purchased the property and moved here in 1877 after the death of his wife, Rhoda Slight.

He lived alone except for Mary Slight, Rhoda's sister, who was there to "look after the house".

In his will, in 1889, the property was left to Mary and Nancy Slight, sisters of Rhoda, for their natural lives.

Then, the will stipulated the property would go to the Presbyterian Church.

Later it went to St. Andrew's United Church who sold it in 1931.

Frank and Edith Dunnett would live here from 1964 to 1975.

148 Main Street

The small brick house at 148 Main Street is on the west side of what was Factory Street and is now Francis Street. It is in Village lot 12.

In 1890, this property came into the hands of Samuel and Sophia Tackaberry.

This family was best know for the farm they had on the north-east part of Brighton. Part of that land is where the high school is today.

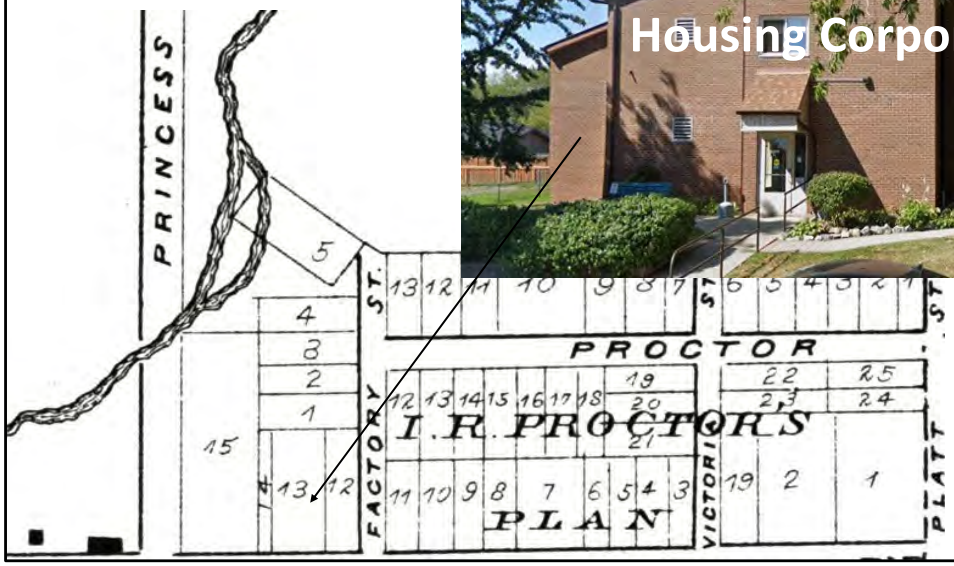
Recently, a housing development at the east end of Singleton Street is called Tackaberry Ridge.

This house remained in the hands of Samuel's descendants, Willard and then Harry Tackaberry.

Willard Tackaberry was in Public Works for a long time and belonged to the fired department.

His son Harry was fire chief for 25 years.

154 Main Street



The next property west of 148 Main Street is called 154 Main Street in Google maps at least.

It contains a large multi-unit residence which occupies parts of village lots 12, 13 and 14. It is operated by the Northumberland County Housing Corporation.

Looking at the details, we can see that Josiah Proctor sold small pieces of land on the Kingston Road, in 1832 and 1834, to Bidald Franklin.

He had just recently come from New York State and had married Catherine Spafford, a daughter of Smalley Spafford and Rebecca Proctor.

So, he was well connected in the Brighton area.

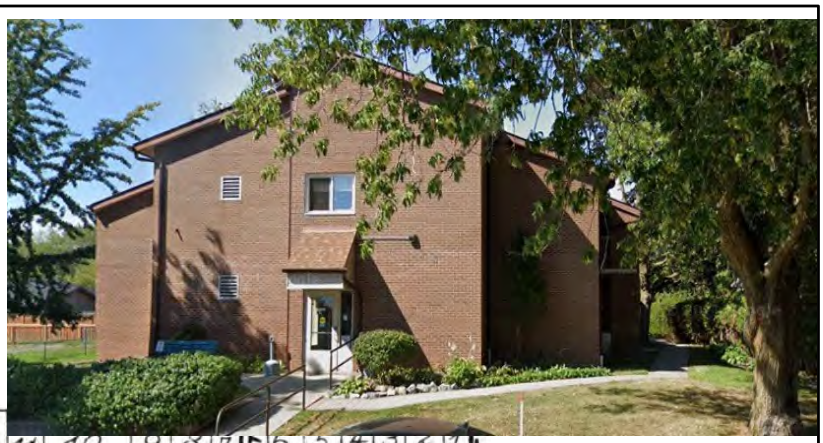
From as early as 1832, he was located on Village lot 13, just east of the Hodges Inn, and he was described as being a tanner.

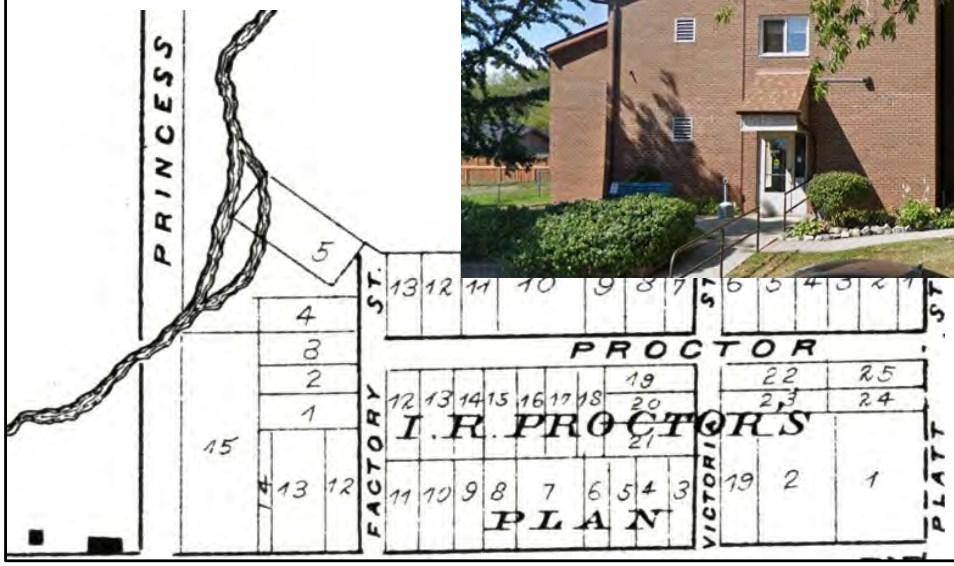
That is, he processed animal hides into leather for use in harnesses, clothing and all sorts of useful products.

The tanner was a critical part of a community in the middle decades of the 1800s, but there was one nasty problem.

The tanning process generated a lot of very bad smells and were usually located well away from homes or public spaces.

154 Main Street

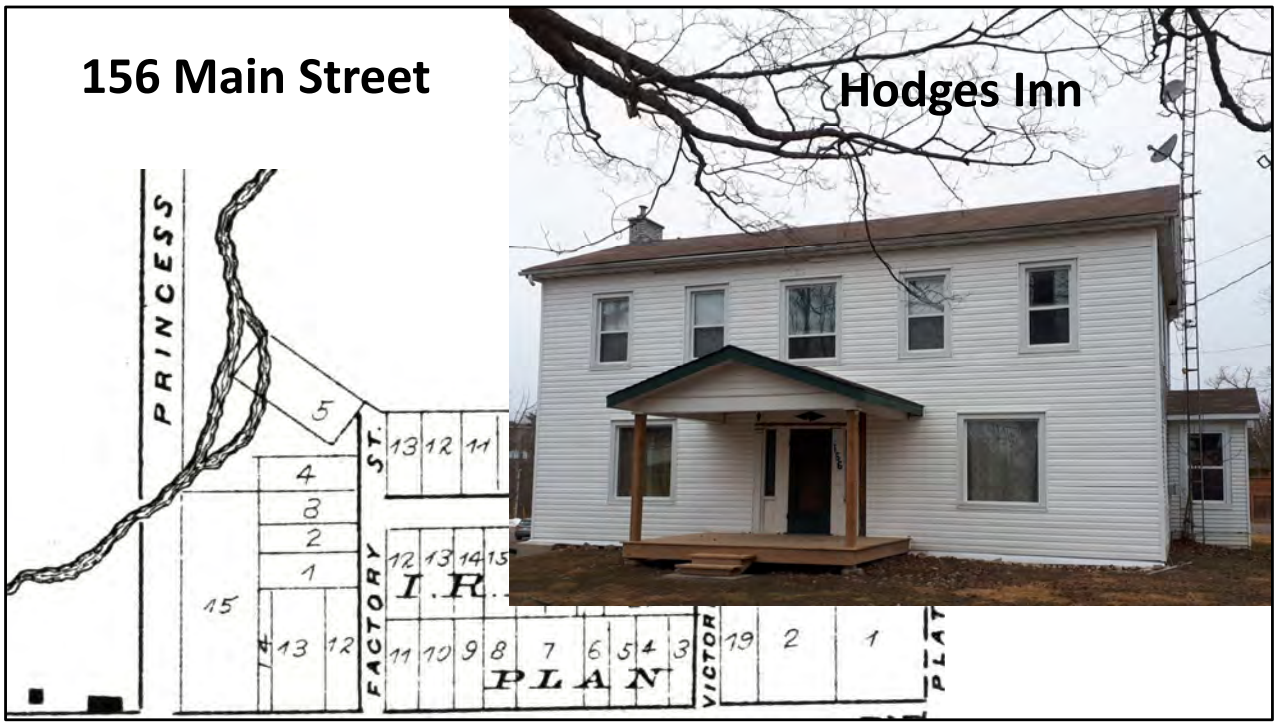




In any case, Bidald Franklin was engaged in the tanning business at this location for three decades.

Records show that he got into mortgage problems in the 1860s and, by the end of the decade, he is living with one of his sons in Iowa.

Thankfully for the neighbours, the tannery business was at an end.



This rather plain house at 156 Main Street is dignified by longevity. It is one of the oldest buildings in Brighton.

It sits on village lot 15, at the corner of Main and Princess Streets and was known for decades as Hodges Inn.

Records show that Sanders Hodges operated a tavern near here as early as the War of 1812.

He died in 1816 and his son, Ira, took over the business. In 1824, Ira Hodges built a new hotel, which is this building we see today.

Land records show that, in 1835, Josiah Proctor sold one and one third acres at the south end of this lot to Ira Hodges.

Now he owned the property he had been renting.

156 Main Street

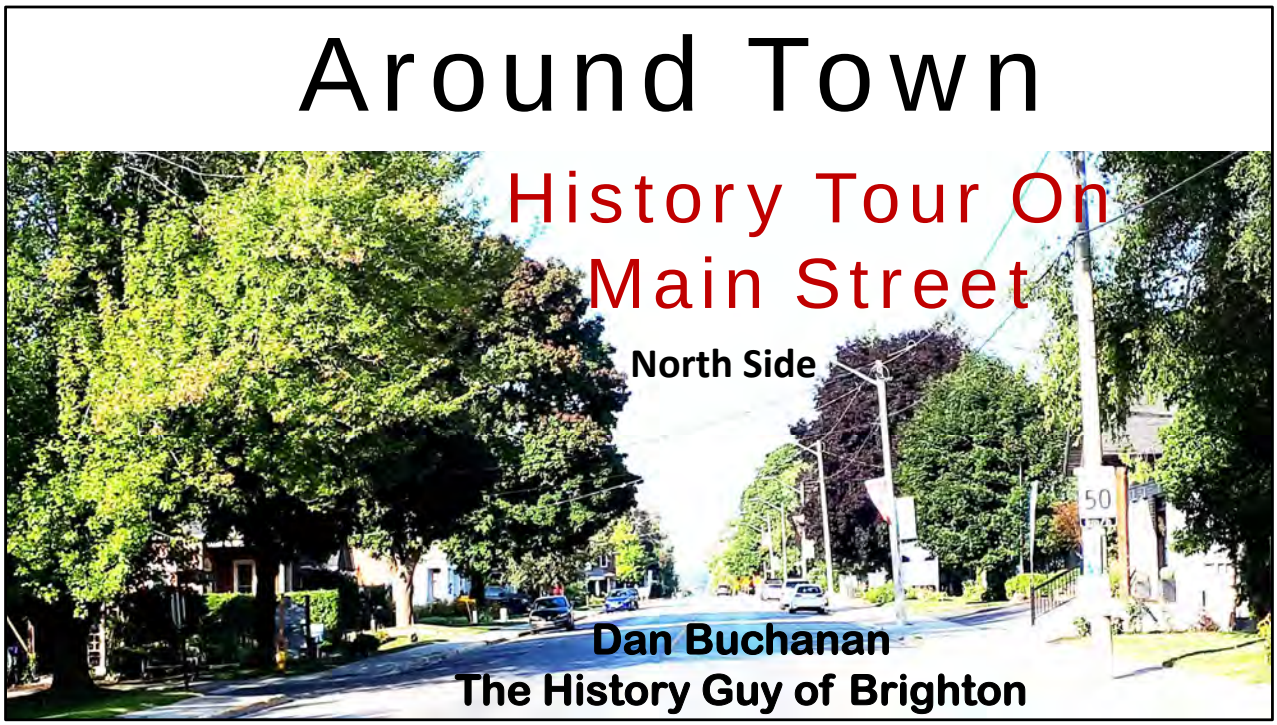
Ira Hodge's sister, Almira, had married Josiah Proctor, Jr., which linked these two early families in terms of family and real estate.

The Hodges Inn was an important stage stop on the main road as well as a hotel and tavern at the corner of the road leading down to Presqu'ile Bay.

After the death of Ira Hodges in 1866, this building would serve as a home for several families or, more recently, it provided apartments.

More recently, it has been carefully renovated and is looking very good, especially considering its age.

It is one of our most important heritage properties.



That brings us to the end of Around Town, A History Tour Down Main Street, North side.

Stay tuned for the south side, coming soon. Maybe our February event.

I want to thank the Brighton Public Library for hosting this event.

Thanks very much for your attention.

I'll be happy to try to answer any questions you might have.

Thank you!