

House of Industry and Refuge

Now known as Elgin Manor

A BIT OF HISTORY: Lot 39 North Talbot Road, approximately two miles west of St. Thomas, was purchased in 1833 from the Crown by Bryant Wade. The west half Bryant Wade sold to Richard Mandeville. It was later passed on to John and James Mandeville then to Richard Nichols. John Lyle, son of Alexander Lyle, bought it and lived there for many years. Later the west half was sold to his son-in-law, Charles Butler who with his son Kenneth Butler, farmed the land. Bryant Wade sold the east half to John and William Lodge, next to William Chaplow and finally to John Cole. The east fifty acres were sold June 22, 1875 by John Cole to the county for \$3,000 for the establishment of the House of Industry and Refuge. A large brick building was erected and the House of Industry and Refuge was officially opened February 11, 1876 by Mr. George Suffel of Vienna, Warden of Elgin County. At that time there were only two or



three such institutions in the province. This photo of the House of Industry is courtesy of the Elgin County Archives.

The House of Industry and Refuge was a home to many types of people. These individuals were considered 'inmates' and participated in the upkeep of the building and working of the land. Reasons for admission were listed as: weak minds, idiots, insane, destitution, sickness, old age, intemperance, crippled, blind, pregnant, etc. The home held approximately 35-40 female and male inmates.

The house was operated by the County through a committee of three people who were appointed annually. The first manager of the home was Michael Hunsberger, who served a twelve-year term, and resigned due to ill health and retired to St. Thomas. William Aldritt was appointed January 27, 1888 and also served a twelve-year term and retired to Springwater. On January 27 1900, Mr. Aldritt was followed by David Gooding who held this office for almost 27 years. During Mr. Gooding's time there were extensive repairs to buildings, installation of a furnace room, boring of a well, rebuilding of the cottages, installation of an ice refrigerator, two large cook stoves, the building of fire escapes, a chimney, a cement front porch and a root cellar. An orchard of apple and other fruit trees was also planted.

The farm was also increased by the purchase of 50 acres from Mr. Luton for \$4,250. About that time hydro and hot water heaters were installed. During Mr. Gooding's term, people classed as insane were sent to the Ontario Hospital and all children over two years of age were sent to the Children's Home or Shelter, sometimes children were received and placed out to private homes and farms in the county. There was also a notice issued that burials were to be handled through funeral homes. The county and township provided 'strangers grounds' at Fingal Cemetery for some of the subsequent burials. On November 26, 1926, Fred Ingram became manager and served for 16 years. The steel barn was built in 1935 to replace the one destroyed by fire. There was a deep well bored and the old ice refrigerator was replaced by an electric one and hardwood floors were installed. In the spring of 1943, Mr. Ingram was succeeded by Gordon Turnbull, who was Warden of Elgin County in 1941, along with Fred Herman as assistant. George "Bob" Willson was administrator from 1952 to 1958 and then the position passed on to Mr. Ivan Patterson from 1958 to 1968.

The physicians appointed to provide medical care were Dr. Luton 1875, Dr. Guest 1911 and Dr. Ewin 1919 who made weekly visits for 30 years until 1945. Mr. Fox preached at the home for 19 years as well as Dr. Robert McIntyre, Presbyterian Minister of Tempo and Rev. Poulter of the Fingal and Middlemarch circuit.

The name was changed to "Elgin County Home" before it was torn down in 1964, and the modern Elgin Manor for the Aged was opened. This new facility contained 90 beds. In 1969 an additional 60 beds were added to the Manor. In September, 2003 the newly erected Elgin Manor was opened.

The above information was extracted from notes by Mrs. Gordon Turnbull and from "Sims' History of Elgin County Volume II."

From "For Such a Time as This, L. Earl Ludlow and the History of Homes for the Aged in Ontario, Toronto, Ontario Association of Homes for the Aged c. 1987 - House of Refuge and Industrial Farms"

"Farm Cemeteries":

"Most of the early houses of refuge had a cemetery right on the farm. How well it was kept depended on those in charge. In some cases careful records were kept, and the grave sites meticulously cared for. In other less respect was shown.

Records show that one of the duties of the surgeons at Oxford County Homes was to see "that

sufficient ground in some suitable part of the farm shall be set apart for a burial ground, to be fenced in neatly and planted with trees and otherwise beautified, properly laid out in tiers, or rows and the graves plainly numbered.” It also indicated that a plan of the ground should be made and kept together with a proper register of the burials in the office of the inspector. ... *When a death occurred in a house of Industry prior to 1907 the body would either be removed to the cemetery or a local church with whom the individual was connected or be buried in the cemetery of the house of industry. However in 1907 the passing of the Anatomy Act required that the bodies of persons who died in a house of industry and refuge, which were still unclaimed by relatives or friends after thirty-four hours should be sent to a medical college to be used by students in scientific research. “*

It appears that this was the case in Elgin County although it seems that some of the bodies went to the School of Anatomy before 1907.

It also states that:

“Some insights into life within the home, and more specifically the illnesses and medical problems which occurred can be gleaned from careful records kept by Dr. L. Luton, Surgeon to Elgin County House of Industry. His notes cover a time span from 1890 to 1910 and provide an accurate glimpse of what occurred medically in that facility during those twenty years.

He recorded attending to the injuries of residents who had been fighting as well as problems he had with mentally disturbed residents. ...

Dr. Luton’s records tell about bouts of flu and outbreaks of typhoid fever of which there were three during his time. The most serious was in 1891 when he had five cases at one time. Because of his methods of sanitation and isolation he was able to keep the typhoid fever from spreading throughout the house. Only one inmate died.”

DEATHS AND CEMETERY RECORDS:

The House of Industry registers can be found on microfilm at the Elgin County Archives. Other information that can be found in the Registers are: the township which people came from, who put them in the home (usually the doctor’s name), the reason they are in the home, how long they have been in the home, cause of death, a visitor’s list, etc. Please consult these microfilms at the Archives for more details.

Mrs. Turnball makes reference to a cemetery on the property but nothing else and the location of the cemetery on the House of Industry property is not known.

The names in this article are the people who died only between 1876 and 1901 while at the House of Industry and Refuge. It is noted below whether or not they were buried at the House of Industry by the Tier-Grave number. These numbered entries are from Register No. 1 and Register No. 2 of the House of Industry Records. Where there is no Tier-Grave mentioned in the original records there are usually notations to indicate the body was taken by relatives or friends to be buried elsewhere.

Entries without a number in the Register (Reg. #) column are from the Surgeon’s reports to County Council and these records are also available at the Elgin County Archives. On the Cemetery Plot Plan in the back of Register #1, Tier 1 graves start at the South fence, and graves proceed to the north – again where the cemetery is located is unknown.

* “Robert” in the Register and on the plot plan - “Albert” McCormick in Surgeon’s report

** Annie McGaw & James B. Bennett are on the Plot plan, but not in the list of deaths
- note the Bennett date is out of sequence.

*** The name “Acker” or “Eecker” appears twice, in plot 2-12 and 2-16 - no first name given

**** On the Plot Plan #5-12 the name Dougherty appears to have been crossed off -
in Register #1 beside the Dougherty name appears R.C. Cemetery but is crossed off.
The name Thomas Fox also appears in grave 5-12.

□ On the plot plan it indicates these bodies were released to the School of Anatomy.

() Brackets indicate various spellings used between the Plot Plan, the Register, the Surgeon’s report and the vital records.

On the plot plan, between the tiers (6 rows) is written: “Walk with Names of Inmate/Child and No. of Tier”. The *Italic font* is used to indicate the information was extracted from the Vital Stats, or Funeral Home Records. Unfortunately, not all of these names appeared in the Vital Stats.

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY and REFUGE, continued

Register No. 1 House of Industry Deaths 1876 - 1901

Reg #1	Tier-Grave	Name	Death Date	Age
1.	2-1	Doolittle, stillborn	April 13 1876	0 days
2.	-	Saundres, Mrs.	August 6 1876	80 years
3.				1-3 Smith, William October, 26, 1876 80 years
4.	1-2	Van Winklin, Mary	February 15 1877	80 years
5.	1-4	Brockway, R.C.	February 19, 1877	44 years
6.	-	McIntyre, Catherine	February 22, 1877	58 years
7.	2-2	Briggs, twins	April 22, 1877	0 days
8	2-2	Briggs, twins	April 22, 1877	stillborn
9.	1-5	Kell(e)y, Peter	July 19, 1877	35 years
10	2-3	Little, W. H.	September 6, 1877	9 months
11	2-4	Vennor, Dora	September 19 1877	3 months
12	2-5	Carter, Lena	September 22, 1877	1 day
13	-	McKeller, Nancy	Oct. 28, 1877	107 years
14.	1-7	McCormick, Robert *	November 10, 1877	77 years
15	1-8	Wedge, Lucy Ann	March 22, 1878	78 years.
16	1-9	Johnson, Peter	April 30, 1878	94 years
17	1-6	Balcom, Sylvestor	May 14, 1878	78 years.
18	1-10	Hakes, L.. P.	August 25 1878	52 years
19	1-11	Stor(e)y, Ann	October 28, 1878	62 years.
20	1-12	McCormick, Archibald	January 20, 1879	81 years.
21	1-13	Peters, David	January 26, 1879	48 years.
22	1-14	Hepburn, Sarah	February 11, 1879	33 years.
23	3-1	Sinclair, Archibald	March 13, 1879	78 years
24	-	Ross, Catherine	March 22, 1879	95 years.
25	3-2	Pender, John	April 20, 1879	73 years.
26.	-	McCormick, Archibald	June 3, 1879,	22 years.
27	3-3	Rhodes, Edward	July 5, 1879	31 years.
28	3-4	McIntosh, John	July 15, 1879	54 years,
29	3-5	Wellington, Ashley	August 29, 1879	87 years,
30	3-6	Thomas, John	October 7, 1879	69 years.
31	3-7	Sinclair, Mary	October 26, 1879	100 years.
32	3-8	Williams, Rowley	November 10, 1879	80 years.
33.	-	Boughner, Francis	January 6, 1880	70 years.
34.	3-9	Whitburn, George	January 19, 1880	78 years.
35.	3-10	Thrower, Eliza B.	March 28, 1880	29 years
36	2-6	Lorne, Louise	April 26, 1880	3 months
37	2-7	Buston, Maggie L.	May 20, 1880	3 months
38	2-8	Hammond, Edeth	June 9, 1880	18 months
39	3-11	Hagerman, David	June 29, 1880	79 years.
40	3-12	Graham, William	July 25, 1880	96 years.
41	-	Thayer, Simeon,	August 1, 1880	50 years.
42	-	McIntyre, Isabella	August 15, 1880	58 years.
43	2-9	Woods, John K.	September 16, 1880	16 days
44	3-13	Coghill, Robert	February 6, 1881	76 years.
45.	3-14	Belcher, William	February 10, 1881	49 years.
46	-	Powers, Patrick	March 13, 1881	50 years

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY and REFUGE, continued

47	3-15	Perry, William	July 22, 1881	70 years.
48	2-10	Winter, Sylva Maude	August 9, 1881	7 months.
49	2-11	Westover, Harrietta	August 18, 1881	4 months.
51	3-16	McEwen, Donald	August 23, 1881	80 years
52	3-17	Walters, Cornelias	September 12, 1881	76 years
53	-	Cameron, Thomas	October 5, 1881	19 years.
54	3-18	Baxter, William	November 18, 1881	58 years
55	-	Smith, John	February 8, 1882	6 years.
56	-	Saddler, Eliza	April 15, 1882	75 years.
57	3-19	Hunt, Hannah	June 19, 1882	86 years.
58	3-20	Growden, William	July 4 1882	84 years
59	-	Killean, Edward	Sept 18, 1882	36 years.
60	3-21	Victor, John	November 26, 1882	74 years
61	3-22	Mustard, George	March 12, 1883	42 years
62	2-12	Acker, ***	August 12, 1883	-
	2-16	Acker/Eecker ***		
63	3-23	Brann, Thomas	October 4. 1883	74 years.
64	3-24	Mitchell, Thadeus	October 28, 1883	49 years
65	3-25	Boughner, Martin	November 24 1883	81 years.
66	1-15	Hill, Charles	December 25 1883	66 years.
67	1-16	Secord, Joseph	January 11, 1884	76 years.
68	1-17	Peer, Matthew	January 21, 1884	84 years
69	1-18	Woolley, Demeris	January 22 1884	30 years.
70	4-1	Hart, William	February 18, 1884	71 years.
71	1-1	Quinn, Joseph	March 27, 1884	80 years .
72	4-2	Dartwith, William	March 27 1884	82 years.
73	4-3	Widdifield, Phoebe	March 29, 1884	87 years.
74	4-4	Hart, Adeline	July 6, 1884	27 years.
75	1-19	Van Wicklin, Jacob	August 14, 1884	81 years.
76	1-20	Koechel(l), Henry	September 12, 1884	68 years.
77	1-21	Procure, Alexander	September 28 1884	28 years.
78	1-22	Caswell, Isaac	January 25, 1885	81 years.
79	1-23	Drake, Cynthia	February 7, 1885	84 years.
80	1-24	Colby, Mary Maria	February 16, 1885	27 years.
81	4-5	McKinney, John S.	February 20, 1885	71 years
82	4-6	Garner, Mary	February 20, 1885	65 years.
83	4-7	Duncanson, Duncan	September 4, 1885	79 years..
84	4-8	Gowen, William	November 19, 1885	63 years.
85	4-9	Arnold, Maria	December 3 1885	78 years.
86	4-10	Kinnon, Henry	January 11. 1886	92 years
87	2-13	Bennett, Frank G.	April 2, 1886	20 months.
88	4-11	Foster, Ellen	April 11. 1886	80 years
89	4-12	Bratt, Christopher	May 4, 1886	83 years.
90	4-13	Tait, Benjamin S.	May 18, 1886	62 years.
91	4-14	McConnell, Thomas	June 26, 1886	90 years.
92	4-14	Connell, Bella	August 9 1886	32 years.
93	2-14	Aylmer, Maud	September 11. 1886	5 months.
94	4-15	Johnson, Thomas	December 15, 1886	60 years.
95	4-16	Cook, Ellen	December 26. 1886	47 years.
-	2-15	Bennett, James B. **	March 29, 1897	
96	4-17	Korander, Saphrona	April 18, 1887	88 years.
97	4-18	Ekerlin, Thomas	June 28, 1887	62 years.

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY and REFUGE, continued

98	4-19	Caswell, Mary	July 4, 1887	89 years.
99	4-20	Murphy, Anna	July 13, 1887	20 years.
100	-	McPhail, Duncan	August 28, 1887	74 years
101	-	Mackenzie, Alexander	November 11 1887	84 years.
102	4-21	Nicholson, Phillip	November 19 1887	57 years.
103	4-22	Cobourn, James or Scott J.	February 7, 1888	50 years.
104	4-23	Hall, Thomas.	March 10 1888	69 years.
105	4-24	Martin, John B.	March 22, 1888	38 years.
106	4-25	Dorr/Door, Peter	May 11, 1888	86 years.
107	5-1	McBride, Robert	June 20 1888	76 years
108	5-2	Tabor, Emma A..	July 8, 1888	30 years
109	5-3	Brown, Neil	September 23, 1888	91 years .
110	5-4	Rogers, David	October 7, 1889	79 years.
111	5-6	Bennett, Emma,	November 2, 1889	22 years
112	5-7	Wilson, William	June 1. 1889	74 years?
113	5-6	Ireland, Jane	December 19, 1889	45 years.
114	5-8	Irvine, George	June 28, 1889	84 years
115	5-9	Nichol(s), David	July 30, 1889	76 years .
116	5-10	Fletcher, Joseph	September 4, 1889	87 years.
117	5-11	Dunn, John	October 30 1889	46 years.
118	5-12?	Dougherty Thomas ****	November 6 1889	90 years.
119	5-12?	Fox, Thomas ****	December 18, 1889	92 years.
120	5-13	Cline, Peter	February 8 1890	82 years.
121	5-14	McPherson, John	February 9 1890	63 years.
122	-	Hill, George	February 9, 1890	78 years .
123	Union Cem.	Mo(u)ntgomery, Robert	February 12, 1890	89 years.
124	5-16	Ca(r)ruth, Samuel	February 15 1890	58 years
125	5-15	Bain, George	February 28, 1890	76 years.
126	-	Loomus, Hulda(h)	May 9, 1890	55 years.
127	5-17	McKenn(e)y, Thomas	June 6 1890	68 years.
128	5-18	Hartsell, John	September 21, 1890	82 years.
153		numbers go out of sequence at this point		
				-
				Par(r)is,
				Williams
				August 15,
				1890 46 years
154	2-17	Pitt, Florence	October 25, 1890	28 days
155	-	Stocton, Mahlon	July 15, 1890	71 years.
156	-	Clark, Mary	January 22, 1891	77 years.
157	5-19	Smith, Nancy	February 8 1891	82 years
158	5-20	McEachern, Daniel	February 16, 1891	74 years.
159	2-18	Peer, G.H.	April 29, 1891	five weeks.
160	-	McPhail, Archibald	May 11 1891	65 years.
161	5-21	Little, David	August 10, 1891	48 years
162	5-22	Prichard, Stephen	October 16, 1891	86 years.
162a	-	Cudney, Norah?	November 7 1891	16 years
163	2-19	Alteman, Willie	November 19, 1891	--
164	6-1	Little, John	December 5 1891	70 years
165	-	Clifford, William	December 2 1891	82 years
166	5-23	Allison, Flora	December 31 1891	83 years
167	6-2	Butcher, Martha	January 1 1892	60 years.
168	6-3	Titus, Brock	March 31 1892	59 years.

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY and REFUGE, continued

Register No. 2 & Surgeon's Reports to County Council House of Industry - 1876 - 1901

-		Cudney, Gertrude died in care of George Buck	January 8, 1892	child
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chappell(Cappelle/Kapilla) Louis	January 12, 1894	58 years.
-	<input type="checkbox"/>	Younglove, Mary	December 27, 1892	86 years
-	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tyrnell, Mary	February 23, 1893	67 years
-	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gregg, Andrew	March 11, 1893	57 years
-		Crossett, Isabella	January 2, 1893	72 years
-		Oliver, Elizabeth	February 24, 1893	80 years
-		McPherson, Archibald	February 24, 1893	80 years
-		Schmetz, Catherine	April 11, 1893	89 years
-		Harper, Rachel	April 12, 1893	25 years
-	2-20	McGaw, Annie **	September 20, 1893	5 months
-		Leitch, Alex	September 25, 1893	13 years
-		Wallace, Margaret	October 7, 1893	63 years
		Millard, Rachel	January 9 1894	78 years.
		Hutchinson, William	January 25, 1894	57 years.
		O'Connor, John	September 15, 1894	76 years
No Record of grave	Williams FP	Winslow, John	February 16, 1894	76 years
		McKay, Lachlin	June 27, 1894	81 years
		Deo, Thomas	September 1, 1894	61 years.
		Quick, John	September 15, 1894	71 years
		McPherson, Flora	September 17, 1894	80 years.
		Baxter, Joseph	November 3 1894	50 years.
		Williamson, John	December 14, 1894	81 years.
		Hillborn, Thomas	December 15, 1894	76 years.
		Phillips, Thomas	March 21, 1895	86 years.
		McIntyre, John	April 17, 1895	53 years.
		Wilton, William	May 19, 1895	52 years.
		Purdy, Thomas	July 13 1895	74 years.
		Wallace, Effie	July 24 1895	96 years.
		McPhail, Duncan	August 7, 1895	76 years
		Elbing, William	August 14, 1895	73 years.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clark, Samuel	September 9. 1895	86 years.
		Rochester, James	October 6, 1895	76 years
		Glover, Mary Ann	no day or month 1896	60 years.
		Irwin, James	February 18, 1896	90 years
		Hamilton, John	March 12, 1896	83 years
		Doolittle, Victoria	no date found	61 years
		Walker, Archibald	May 11, 1896	69 years
		Taylor, George	May 11, 1896	69 years.
		Nicholson, Frederick	June 27, 1896	67 years
		Snider, Stephen	July 16, 1896	81 years.
		Ferguson, Nathaniel	July 21, 1896	77 years.
		Spellman, Eugene	August 3, 1896	73 years.
		Gre(a)y, Charles	September 21, 1896	56 years
		Jones, Nellie	October 15, 1896	42 years
		Shore(s), Arthur	December 16, 1896	71 years
		Robertson, Edward/Edwin	April 26, 1897	34 years.
		Clock, David	June 8 1897	82 years.
		Frederick, Mary	June 12, 1897	72 years.

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY and REFUGE, continued

McCull, Archibald	July 10, 1897	87 years
Coleman, Elizabeth	no date found	82 years.
Gavett, Jane	October 31, 1897	66 years
Tyrell, George	December 27, 1897	80 years
Beaty/Beattie, John	March 11, 1898	82 years .
Peerson, John	no date found	80 years.
Freeman, Henry	no date found	80 years
Allen, Thomas	May 4, 1898	70 years.
Oswat, James	July 15, 1898	79 years
Herman, Thomas	July 26, 1896	50 years.
Ryckman, William	September 17, 1898	
Clark, Mrs.	September 24, 1898	Died at Amasa Wood
Smith, Joseph	November 5, 1898	72 years
McLeod, Mary	December 6 1898	72 years
McMaster, Lucius	February 12, 1899	76 years
Thompson, John	February 15, 1899	90 years
Avard, Thomas	February 18 1899	76 years
Disher, Sarah	March 25, 1899	69 years
Barrett, Michael	May 26, 1899	72 years
House, Isaac	May 31, 1899	90 years
Follick, Alex	June 7, 1899	65 years
Trothan, Joshua	June 7 1899	75? years
Baxter, Etta	September 20 1899	18 years
Adams, Jeanette	May 15, 1899	66 years
Taylor, Flora	October 16, 1899	14 years
Jones, Ernest	October 2, 1899	16 years .
Mudge, Aley	November 13 1899	89 years
McKenzie, Christina	November 26, 1899	63 years.
Lewis, Alfred	December 26, 1899	62 years
Hopkins, Thomas	February 12, 1900	76 years
McPherson, Alexander	March 21, 1900	74 years
Vinegar, Joseph	April 17, 1900	72 years
Loop, Margaret	December 6, 1900	41 years
Coleman, James	December 6 1900	49 years
Coombs, John	April 16, 1901	-
Markle, Robert	September 11 ?	73 years .
Harris, Richard .	March 1 1901 .	
Phillips, Sophia	December 14, ?	53 years
Doolittle, Hiram	March 20, 1901	91 years
Walters, Cynthia Amelia	March 5, 1901	94 years
Edon, Mark	October 22 1901	70 years
Coombs, Emma	December 31, 1901	61 years
Handcook , Cornelius	July 25 ?	61 years
Payne, Ann	July 19 1901	69 years.
Ferguson, Emory	February 13 1901	40 years

Thanks goes to the Elgin County Archives, St. Thomas Public Library, Linda Cosens and Pat Temple for their assistance with regard to this article for the Newsletter. I apologize if any errors are found.

Brenda Edmonds