

A Chronological Account of My Role in the 2001 Saga of the Talbot Tot

Dan Brock

The Setting

Today the complex known as Budweiser Gardens proudly sits on what in the 1980s became known as the Talbot Block. Prior to this time, the block was comprised of nineteenth-century structures, many dating back to within a few years after the Great Fire of 1845.



Beginning in 1980 properties were secretly being bought up within this block bounded by Dundas, Ridout, King and Talbot streets. In 1984, it was revealed that Cambridge Shopping Centres, Ltd. of Toronto had been behind the purchasing of these properties and planned a \$250-million development on what became known as the Talbot Block. It was later learned that it wanted all the existing buildings removed. By 1986, however, there was a groundswell of opposition to the destruction of the streetscape along the west side of Talbot Street, between King and Dundas. On Saturday, August 27, 1988, a 1,500 strong human chain was formed from the southwest corner of

Talbot and Dundas streets to City Hall, four blocks away, to save the streetscape. After years of wrangling, City Hall gave in to the developers, on September 16, 1991, and agreed to the demolition of the Talbot Streetscape, with the exception of the façade of the Talbot Inn on the northeast corner of the Block. In the end, the mall/hotel complex failed to materialize and the City took over the property.¹

In March 2001, work began on the \$42-million London Entertainment and Sports Complex which would be named the John Labatt Centre and later the Budweiser Gardens, but, before this, controversy within the Talbot Block would rear its head once more.

Wide-Eyed Innocence

It was on the evening of the Tuesday, March 27, 2001, while at the monthly executive meeting of The London & Middlesex Historical Society at the Middlesex County Administration Building (aka The Old Court House), that I first learned that earlier that day the remains of a child were discovered while excavation was being undertaken on the Talbot Block. As I was parked along the north side of King Street, east of Ridout, I noticed a police cruiser and two female police officers chatting at the gated entrance near the southwest corner of the Block. I was later to learn that Detectives Ron Hettinga and Andy Gradkowski and Detective Constable Rob Brookfield from the Major Crime Section of the London Police, were involved in the investigation following the discovery of the remains in a “almost metre-long, six [eight]-sided coffin that was narrow at the head, wider about one-third of the way down and narrow at the feet”.

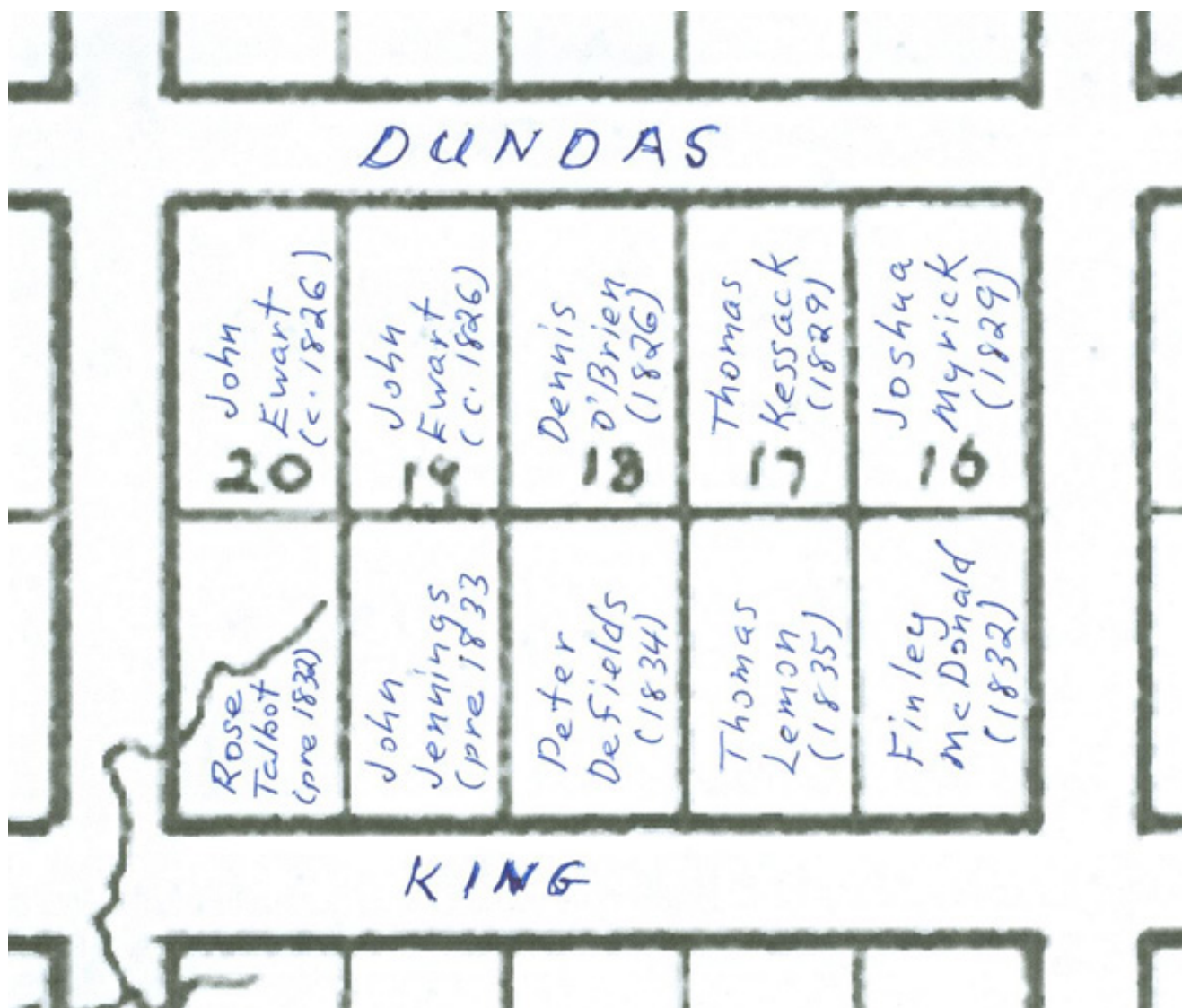
On arriving back home, I returned the telephone call of John Minor of *The London Free Press*. He mentioned today’s discovery and wanted to know whether the block had ever been used as a cemetery. I was able to say definitely not. While there was news on the find at 11:00 p.m., I arrived downstairs too late to watch this on the local television channel.²



The Talbot Block
as superimposed on a portion of Mahlon Burwell's 1826 plan of the town plot of London

Wednesday's *Free Press* carried an article on the previous day's discovery. I was quoted from my conversation with John Minor the previous night and was mentioned on at least one of the local radio stations. Ian Gillespie of the *Free Press* called me at Catholic Central High School (CCH), where I was a teacher, and requested material on London and the Talbot Block prior to the Great Fire of April 13, 1845 which had destroyed most of the structures still standing there after the Great Dundas Street Fire of October 8, 1844. Following classes, I returned home, picked up a few books and my files based on the land records and the Upper Canada Land Petitions for the original town plot of London and met with Ian at the Free Press Building then on the south side of York Street west of Colborne. Ian informed me that the remains had been found on the west half of lot 18 on the north side of King Street. The merchant Dennis O'Brien, had purchased this property from Peter DeFields in 1837 and, in turn, had sold it to his sister-in-law Nancy Ladd in 1842. Ian's second call that evening revealed that, according to Robert G. "Bob" Mayer,³ whose archaeological company, Mayer Heritage Consultants Inc. (MHCI), had discovered the fragile eight-sided wooden coffin and a child's remains some two feet below the surface, the location

was actually the west half of lot 17, on the north side of King Street. Further research on my part revealed that Thomas Lemon was living on the property during the 1830s and that Lemon was a cabinet maker. What better person to build a coffin for his dead child, assuming he was married and had a child who died while residing on this lot? I phoned Dr. Michael Spence, a local police forensic anthropologist, who like Bob Mayer was a good acquaintance of mine and had done the initial forensic evaluation on the child's remains.⁴ A message was left on his answering machine regarding the possibility that Thomas Lemon might have constructed the coffin for his own child.



Original owners of the lots of the Talbot Block and the year located

After I had left the house that morning, Sandy Mowett of CBC Radio in Toronto, had called in connection with my comments in today's *Free Press*. I returned his call in the late afternoon, but he had already left for the day. The finding of a child's skeleton in a coffin on the site of the proposed London Entertainment and Sports Complex was generating interest beyond the Forest City!⁵

Thursday morning's paper carried three items relating to the discovery of the child's remains. The front page article by Simone Joseph and Randy Richmond noted that, if a body appeared to have been buried intentionally in an irregular burial site, as this certainly was, the Cemetery Act of Ontario required at least a 30-day wait before its removal. The city had hoped to get quick provincial approval to remove the child's remains and Vic Cote, the planning and development commissioner, declared: "We're going to do everything in our power to move this along."⁶ I should have taken serious note of this, as events were quickly to prove, but I did not.

Simone Joseph's article related to Michael Spence's preliminary findings on the remains and Ian Gillespie's article was a whimsical and speculative piece on the tot.⁷

After returning home from school that afternoon, I checked my copy of the Ontario Genealogical Society Directory, found a Catherine Lemon living in St. Thomas and telephoned her. She knew about Thomas Lemon of St. Thomas, said she was a descendant of his, but did not know that he had once lived in London. Catherine also told me that Thomas had been in partnership with a "Mr. Collins" in the cabinet making business in St. Thomas and that he was buried in that city.

Just after supper, Michael Spence returned my telephone call of last night. He said that the child's coffin had been waterlogged, which is why it was preserved as well as it was. He also stated that someone at the Robarts Research Institute had volunteered to do the DNA testing on the body free of charge. This, I later learned was Dr. Robert Hegele, a world-renowned geneticist who worked with a team of first-rate lab technicians and who, with other top anthropologists, including Spence at the University of Western Ontario (UWO), comprised the Bio-archeology Research Facility.⁸ Later that evening, Jane Hughes, an acquaintance of mine living in St. Thomas, sent me two emails pertaining to her research on Thomas Lemon.⁹

The front page headline of the paper for Friday, March 30th, noted that I was inclined to believe that Thomas Lemon may have been the child's father, that Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco favoured "a quiet service before burial in a city cemetery" rather than making "a big media spectacle out of this" and that the City had "applied for leave from the province yesterday to remove the remains."¹⁰

On Friday afternoon, I had a television interview in the school's conference room with two male individuals from The New PL (now CTV London). Fortunately, I had the materials with me to illustrate the location of the child's remains and coffin within the Talbot Block. That morning, I had done telephone interviews with Erica Ridder of CBC Radio in Toronto and Brian Allen of the radio station in Wingham. The story was beginning to receive provincial, if not national, attention.

Meanwhile, I had received a telephone call from Bob Mayer that morning saying that Vic Cote, wanted to see him and me that day. We arranged to meet with Cote at 4:00 p.m.¹¹

I was looking forward to this meeting with great anticipation, as I believed that the City was interested in bringing together experts in their fields to possibly determine the identity of the child through DNA testing and the date of burial through dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) of the wood used in the coffin. How naïve of me!

Coming Face to Face with Reality

It was about 3:50 p.m. on Friday, March 31st, when I left CCH to go to the seventh floor of City Hall for the meeting with Vic Cote and Bob Mayer. When I arrived, I was not surprised to see Michael Spence, but was astounded to see six other individuals, including Clive Matthews who, like Cote, was a municipal officer in charge of the London Entertainment and Sports Complex construction, representatives of the general construction company Ellis-Don and a retired psychologist, Dr. J. Trevor Hawkins, whom I later learned was serving with Mayer Heritage Consultants Inc. (MHCI) as a built-heritage researcher and media-relations officer!¹² The meeting started as soon as I sat down and was mainly a monologue by Cote about how bad the media was, especially the *Free Press* and Randy Richmond in particular. The psychologist went on about how our words to the media are misinterpreted, how people then misinterpret those words and then threw out the red herring that the child could have been buried there because it was illegitimate and that digging into its identity would bring shame and embarrassment to living members of that family! Basically, Cote did not want anyone speaking with the media. “There are 101 ways of saying ‘No comment’”, he said.

When he asked if we were all in agreement, I was the only one who dissented, although I suspected Michael Spence, in his heart, agreed with my position. Cote’s reply was, “We don’t have an agreement. The meeting’s over.” And that was that!

I left fully aware that the entire meeting was intended to get me on side with Cote and the developers. I was angry as I do not appreciate intimidation, and this, in my opinion, had been the whole purpose of the meeting. Only one other person left when I did. It would appear that the meeting continued to determine the course of action in light of the fact that I had not acquiesced to Cote’s wishes.

At 6:00 p.m., my wife and I watched the local news and saw the clip of the interview held at CCH and a view of Thomas Lemon’s gravestone in St. Thomas. Randy Richmond had telephoned me at CCH. I had tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with him a couple of times before leaving the school. He contacted me this evening and I filled him in on what new findings I had learned and what had transpired at City Hall on the promise that it was “off the record” for the present.¹³

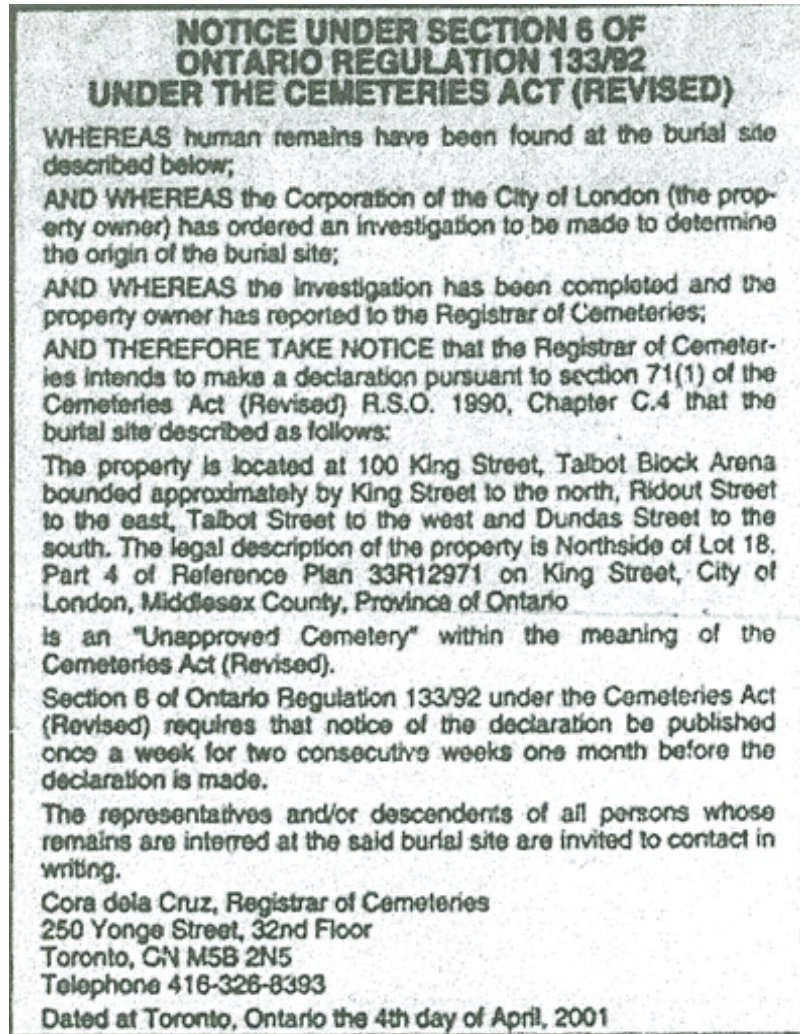
By this time, I had also been approached by another acquaintance, Geoff Anderson of London, who was to provide me with valuable information on the Lemon and Defields/DeFields families over the next several weeks.¹⁴

Interest in the Find on the Talbot Block Expands and Deepens

The article on the front page of the Saturday, March 31st issue revolved around the Lemon family in St. Thomas and their connection with Thomas Lemon. There was even a photograph of John Lemon, Catherine's son, on one knee beside the gravestone of Thomas Lemon, their ancestor. What would have put Vic Cote into orbit, I suspect, was that the Lemons indicated they would be willing to take a DNA test to determine whether the remains were that of a Lemon child. I cannot say I am displeased with this turn of events after Cote's attempt to intimidate me the afternoon before.¹⁵

Over the next couple of days, I continued to be in telephone communication with Randy Richmond. At a grandson's hockey game on the evening of Tuesday, April 3rd, I chatted with Chip Martin, another columnist for the *Free Press* and good acquaintance. He related that the talk among the *Free Press* staff was of my meeting with Vic Cote and the presence of a psychologist. It was also Chip who related to me that some wag suggested the new complex on the Talbot Block be called the Lemon Centre.¹⁶ Not everyone was pleased with its location. Many believed the Western Fair Grounds was preferable owing to parking and what good such a complex could do for East London.

The article in the issue of Wednesday, April 4th, dealt with the fact that, the day before, Cora dela Cruz, the Registrar of Cemeteries for the Province, had declared the burial site an "Unapproved Cemetery" and imposed a 30-day delay on the removal of the remains in order that possible relatives might claim them. I was quoted as saying: "This makes a lot of sense. There has been so much publicity, possibly somebody could claim the remains." Vic Cote, who understandably was not pleased with this holdup, stated: "This is a bit of a surprise but that's the decision so we'll live with it ... I can't tell you what it does to the schedule." Jack Stelpstra of Ellis-Don Construction remarked: "I've got to go back to the drawing board."¹⁷ While Cote and Bob Mayer refused to inform the *Free Press*, or the public, exactly on what lot the child's remains were found, Ed Phelps, the former head of the Regional Collection (now the Archives and Research Collections Centre [ARCC]) at The D.B. Weldon Library, UWO, and a good friend of mine, called to say that the provincial government had an advertisement in the *Free Press* in connection with the child's remains. It gave the location of the remains as "Northside [*sic.*] of Lot 18, Part 4 of Reference Plan 33R129071 on King Street." It was only later that I came upon the actual notice.¹⁸



Presumably the coffin and its remains were found in the northeast corner of lot 18, but an examination of the aforesaid plan was necessary to verify this. Phelps was good enough to go to the Land Registry Office for me to search the records for lot 18 and obtain a copy of the plan referred to in the Registrar of Cemeteries' official notice. The plan confirmed my belief that the child's remains were uncovered on what would have been the northeast corner of lot 18.¹⁹ More on this later.

Meanwhile, back at home, after classes on April 4th, I was interviewed by two members of The New PL. Both John Lemon and I appeared in the film clip on the local news at 6:00 p.m. Later, in a telephone call with Randy Richmond, I learned that Vic Cote had met with the *Free Press* brass earlier in the day and attempted to persuade them to cease and desist regarding the matter of the child as the delay was hurting the city! In so many words, Cote was informed he could "Go pound salt." Cote had also stated that possible relatives would not have been contacted had it not been for the provincial ruling.²⁰ Knowing how he was operating, this was not surprising.

Randy Richmond's headline article in the Thursday, April 5th issue of the *Free Press* noted that the previous day's ruling by the Provincial Registrar Cora dela Cruz would certainly have a financial impact on the construction of the \$42-million downtown arena and that it was possibly the media attention in London, by the *Free Press* in particular, which might have frightened dela Cruz, into taking the extra precautions.²¹ It was becoming clear to me that the only reason for the previous Friday's meeting was financial.

Research on the people who had lived, prior to 1845, on or near the site where the coffin and child's remains were found, continued over the next several days. Sue Reed from the *Free Press* arrived early on the evening of Wednesday, April 11th and took several photos of me at the kitchen table, amidst some of my books and papers relating to the Talbot Block.²²

Hank Daniszewski and Randy Richmond's joint article on the child found on the Talbot Block was the feature article on the front page of the Thursday, April 12th issue. It mentioned that Vic Cote had stated that "London's mystery child" would "be buried secretly in two weeks if no relative comes forward." He further noted that the City had posted two notices²³ in the *Free Press* seeking any relatives of the child who was believed to have been anywhere between 18 months and three years old at the time of death. But here was the kicker. According to Cote, DNA testing was not permitted under the Cemeteries Act.²⁴ Without DNA testing, how could relationship be proven? A Catch-22 situation if ever there was one, which is exactly what City Hall wanted!

This remark by Cote, however, prompted Ken Wilson to respond in the *Free Press's* "Vox Pop" in the April 18th issue. Ken was then secretary of the Heritage London Foundation, past president of the London & Middlesex branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS), a former *Free Press* staff member and a good acquaintance of mine, mainly through our joint membership in the local branch of the OGS. Ken began by saying he would like to see documentation for "Victor Cote's assertion DNA testing (on a body) is not permitted under the Cemeteries Act of Ontario."

He then went on to say: "At the least, I suspect it's just another ploy by the city administrator, whose wires are being pulled by certain puppeteers on city council, to ram the Talbot block arena project through to a speedy conclusion, come hell or high water.

"The truth is construction will not be delayed at all by a required 30-day investigation by provincial cemetery authorities, local historians and heritage consultants into the facts surrounding the discovery of this unfortunate child's grave, as Cote himself readily admits. "But the decision to speedily re-bury the body, in secret no less, shows a total lack of respect for a human being whose family was among the earliest pioneers of the Forest City and may very well have descendants still living in the area. DNA testing, a remarkable new procedure, could be the best way to solve the mystery.

"What's the hurry? Let the historians and genealogists do their job.

"The planning and development commissioner seems to be a relative newcomer to this city and shows no appreciation of the importance of the history of people who have lived and worked here for generations."²⁵

Very damning words indeed, and indeed quite accurate!

According to the City, and backed by Bob Mayer, it was finally made public on Wednesday, April 11th that the child was buried before the fire of February 13, 1839, on lot 18, owned by Peter Defields and “close to Lot 17 next door”, i.e., the lot in the possession of Thomas Lemon between 1835 and 1838. The City was then going to “try to determine if Defields has any descendants.”²⁶

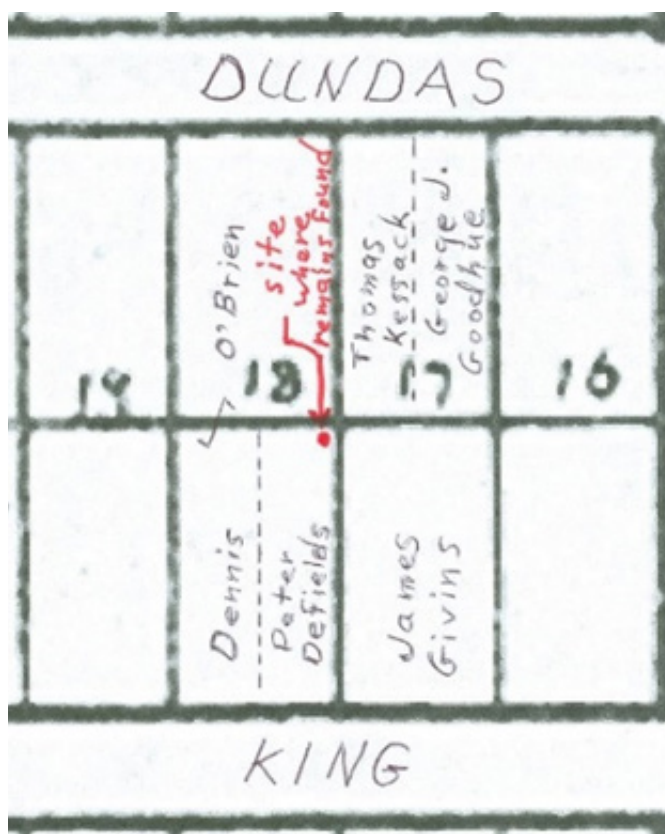
In deceiving the public by saying that the burial could only have taken place before February 1839, and then saying that it was in 1834 in one instance and “prior to 1830” in another, the City had simplified matters by claiming the child to have been that of Peter Defields.²⁷ In fact, while Defields was located on lot 18 in 1834, he did not marry Eliza Matilda Little until March 23, 1842 and had sold off the remaining portion of the lot in March 1839. As for Thomas Lemon he was already living in St. Thomas by August 1838 and did not marry until June 30, 1840. So much for the child being that of either Defields or Lemon. Nevertheless, members of the Lemon and Defields families still persisted in believing they might have a connection with the child in question. As for city officials, they were to further cover their derrieres by saying the burial could have been a squatter family. Based on years of exhaustive study of this block and the fact that the child had been interred in a coffin and facing east, the matter of a squatter family added into the mix was risible to say the least.²⁸

If in fact the remains were found beneath three layers of fill and ash, as Dr. Hawkins seems to imply, then why didn't Bob Mayer and Vic Cote say so publicly. This would have eliminated speculation that the burial could have been as late as 1844 or even 1845. That this was not publicly stated, my knowledge of the three fires on this block, led me, at the time, to believe that the child could have been buried as late as before the Great Dundas Street Fire of October 8, 1844.

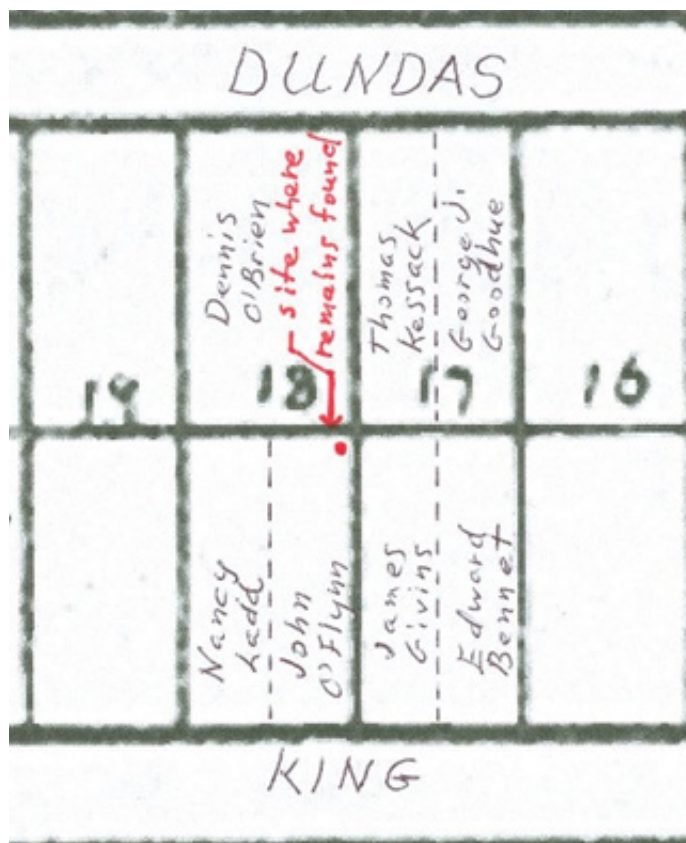
Fast forwarding to today, if we go with the scenario that the child was buried in the far northeastern corner of lot 18 on the north side of King Street before the fire of February 13, 1839, then given that the back of the lots could have still been treed—covered with stumps at least—and boundary lines not being clear, the burial could have been the child of one of the adjacent families, namely that of James Givens, Thomas Kessack or Dennis O'Brien. James Givens, a lawyer, was married and had at least two living children by 1839. As he was a member of the Church of England, there was no need to bury his child at the back of his lot as St. Paul's Church had a burial ground. Thomas Kessack, a tailor, married Jane McQueen in 1832. Their oldest three children who survived to adulthood were Christianna (b. April 1833), John (b.c. 1837) and Jane (b. Dec. 1838). There could have been children being born and dying between 1834 and 1836, but again, Kessack was a member of the Church of England and there was no necessity for him to bury his child on his property. Dennis O'Brien married Jane Shotwell in 1834. The couple are said to have had at least six children. Five, Michael (b. 1835), Ann (b.c. 1837), Mary (b. 1840), Dennis (b.c. 1842) and Edward (b.c. 1844), are known to have lived to adulthood. Dennis and the children were Roman Catholic, while Jane was a member of the Church of England.²⁹ The Catholics had a chapel and churchyard on

the southwest corner of Hitchcock Steet (now Dufferin Avenue) and Mark Lane (now Richmond Street) by August 1834 and a resident priest by September 1836. Given the existence of this burial ground and the years of birth of the children who lived to adulthood, it is rather doubtful that the O'Briens would have buried a deceased child in the back corner of their lot.

If we go with the scenario that the child was buried in the far northeastern corner of lot 18 on the north side of King Street before the Great Dundas Street Fire of October 8, 1844, then the only change we have in the immediate vicinity of where the remains were found is John O'Flynn who purchased the east half of the lot from Peter Defields on March 30, 1839, less than seven weeks after the fire in February. John and his wife Mary, who were presumably married by this time, were Catholics. If any of their children died between 1839 and 1844, it again is doubtful they would have been buried other than in St. Laurence the Martyr Churchyard at the corner of Hitchcock Street and Mark Lane. This leaves me at a loss as to who the parents of the child buried at the far northeast corner of lot 18, north side of King Street could have been.



Property ownership of selected lots on the eve of the fire of February 13, 1839



Property ownership of selected lots on the eve of the fire of October 8, 1844

Returning to the *Free Press* issue of Thursday, April 12, 2001, mention was made of the fact that, unbeknownst to me, Rose Marie Wagner, the owner of a cleaning business in London and my youngest sister, had had her employees and dozens of her customers pressing her to find some way to help. “We decided we want to raise some funds together to get a new casket, or help with the funeral.”³⁰

Even schoolchildren were getting involved. A grade 7 class at Knollwood Park Public School had begun studying the subject when stories first appeared in the *Free Press*. Betty Spicer, the former head of the London Room at the London Public Library, declared: “Perhaps we should give the child a respectful memorial, nothing very elaborate. The discovery takes us back to the early days of London. It gives us a sense of something we can touch. We don’t have too much from those early days.”³¹

On Easter Monday, April 16th, I learned that Randy Richmond had tried to find out where on lot 18 the child’s remains were found but Bob Mayers declined to reveal this. Meanwhile, I had been working on a draft of a letter to Cora dela Cruz and Ed Phelps had offered to go to the Land Registry Office the next day to make a copy of the plan referred to in dela Cruz’s notice.³² Phelps

telephoned on Tuesday to say that he had obtained the required plan from the Registry Office and that the location of the grave site would have been to the rear of the east half of lot 18 on the north side of King Street. This would have been the lot portion sold by Peter Defields to John O’Flynn in March 1839. City Hall would have known all this as Norma Martin had been hired to do a title search of lot 18, and yet Vic Cote and his cronies chose not to do anything with this information.³³

Jonathan Sher’s front page article in the Wednesday, April 18th issue of the *Free Press* noted that Melody (DeFields) McMillian, a possible descendant of Peter Defields, was interested in the possibility of the child found on lot 18 being related to the Defields family.³⁴

Meanwhile, I had already pointed out to Sher, that it did not appear that Peter Defields was married at the time he had possession of this lot but it could be a child of relatives of his. I had also noted that, as property lines were not precise, the child could have also belonged to that of the John O’Flynn, Dennis O’Brien or Thomas Kessask families. As already noted, O’Brien occupied lot 18 on the south side of Dundas Street, immediately north of the lot on which the child’s remains had been found, and Kessask resided on the adjacent lot 17.

All this did not sit well with City Hall and its spokesperson Vic Cote who was overseeing construction of the \$42-million arena on the Talbot Block. He was opposed to DNA testing of families not connected to the Defields. I could just picture him and other city officials putting their hands over their ears and refusing to hear anything more regarding my ongoing research. Meanwhile, the Provincial Registrar Cora dela Cruz had stated that any claim by a family to represent the child could be accepted by the city or rejected and taken to arbitrators. If a family were deemed to represent the child, its consent would be needed before the body could be removed.³⁵ Of course, any possible further delay on the removal of the remains could be costly to the City and money was the prime, if not the only, consideration of City Hall. The swelling interest of the public, in London and beyond, in the finding of the coffin and remains of the child be damned!

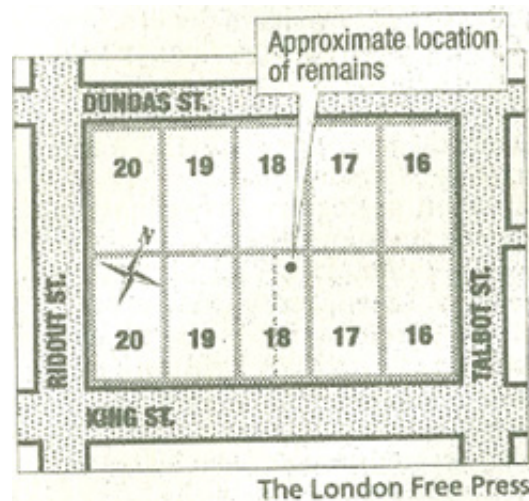
Ken Wilson’s piece in the “**Vox Pop**” section of the *Free Press*, already noted, also appeared in the issue of April 18th.³⁶

Randy Richmond’s article of Thursday, April 19th pointed out that, based on conversations with Cora dela Cruz, “Multiple claims on London’s mystery tot could lead to a lengthy arbitration process that might delay removal of the remains from the downtown arena site for years.” Dela Cruz further stated, however, that the “solution to the problem may come from a church ... If too many competing interests come forward, the province can order the remains handed over to a representative of the church of the family that likely buried the child.”³⁷

Randy Richmond was present at the Thursday afternoon session I had with the students at the Montessori Junior High School, on the southeast corner of Waterloo and Piccadilly streets, where the coffin, the child’s remains and the controversy surrounding all of this were discussed.

Meanwhile, Andrew Nelson, an anthropologist at the University of Western Ontario, had called to say his team was willing to do a DNA analysis of the child's remains free of charge. This in turn led me to call the Lemon family in St. Thomas where I learned that John Lemon's daughter, Nancy Lemon Whitney of London, was prepared to have her DNA tested against that of the child in question. All this information was relayed to Randy Richmond.³⁸

Randy had two articles in the Sunday, April 22nd issue of the *Free Press*. One dealt with the interest of students at Montessori Junior High and Knollwood Park Public schools in what had come to be known as "the mystery tot." The other noted that members of the DeFields family had notified the Province of their interest in their possible connection with the child and Mayor Ann Marie DeCicco's announcement, after consultation with Planning Commissioner Vic Cote, "about some way for the public to honour the child." DeCicco, however, "stood firm on the city's desire to bury the child in a private ceremony, but said the location of the gravesite might be revealed after so people can pay their respects."³⁹ This latter article also had a plan showing the approximate location of the remains on the Talbot Block.



Earlier, the *Free Press* had asked the public to weigh in on how tribute should be paid to the memory of the tot. It then offered three possibilities: hold a public funeral, erect a bronze plaque commemorating the child at the arena site on the Talbot Block or hold a private reburial at an undisclosed site.⁴⁰

Randy also noted that, while Bob Mayer put the burial before the fire of February 13, 1839, which destroyed several buildings on the Talbot Block, based on his own extensive research, I, on the other hand, did not believe that fire had spread as far as the site where the coffin had been found. As noted earlier, Randy stated that I believed the burial took place sometime before the Great Dundas Street Fire of October 15, 1844, beneath the ashes of which the coffin and child had been found some two feet beneath the surface. Randy further stated that, based on my most recent research

of the ownership of the east half of the lot on which the discovery had been made, this could very well be that of a daughter of John O’Flynn and his wife Mary. O’Flynn had purchased this parcel of land in 1839, built a house and resided there for several years. He appears to have had at least three children. There are records showing O’Flynn’s older children survived into adulthood but nothing found for a daughter born before 1842.⁴¹

On Monday, April 24th, my letter to Cora dela Cruz, requesting that we might have the coffin examined for dating and the child’s remains given a DNA test, was sent by Priority Courier.⁴² By this time, I had also been in contact with a genealogical network known as RootsWeb, the Ontario Genealogical Society and City Council where I shared “my findings and the stonewalling we were receiving from the bureaucracy at City Hall. Meanwhile, Steve Peters of St. Thomas, a local MPP, and Stephen Harding, who was working at what was then known as the J.J. Talman Regional Collection (now ARCC), both good acquaintances of mine, “offered encouragement and assistance.”⁴³

What’s to Be Done with the Child’s Remains

Randy’s article in the *Free Press* the next day, noted that the descendants of the Lemon family, like that of the DeFields, had notified dela Cruz that “they would like to undergo DNA testing to see if they’re related to the child...” The family also wanted to attend the burial, if only out of respect to the child and the past. Nancy Lemon Whitney “would like the descendants of families who lived near the child to attend the funeral” as well. It was noted that, as of yet, “City officials have not settled on any burial plans.”

Randy also pointed out that I had informed him that, given the closeness of the burial site to the far northeastern corner of the property, its proximity to three other properties and that at best the area was littered with stumps or still in primeval woods, “Any number of people living in the area before 1844 could have buried the child” on this particular spot. Presently, my money was either on a child of John O’Flynn or Dennis O’Brien. The O’Briens lived on the lot immediately north of the burial site and I had adult records for all but one of the O’Brien children.⁴⁴

Joe Matyas’ article in the *Free Press* on Wednesday, April 25th revealed to the public that the Bio-archeology Research Facility, under the leadership of Professor Andrew Nelson had “offered to find answers to questions about the remains” of “the mystery tot.” This could include the sex of the child. Matyas noted that: “The team of four anthropologists and two research scientists work with state-of-the-art technology on genetic and chemical analysis of human remains.”⁴⁵ It was also pointed out that today [April 25th] was “the last day for anyone to claim the child’s bones” and that so far two families, i.e., the DeFields and Lemon, had “declared an interest to the registrar of the provincial Cemeteries Act.”⁴⁶

Simone Joseph's article of Friday, April 27th was also revealing in that it noted that Kathleen McDonald had submitted a letter and genealogical data to Cora dela Cruz the previous Friday but, to date, had received no response. A letter had also been submitted to dela Cruz, by Karen Young DeZorzi who stated that her grandmother was a sister of Thomas Lemon who owned lot 17, on the north side of King Street between 1835 and 1838. In DeZorzi's case, she had received a telephone call "from a city official," presumably Vic Cote, who "who tried to dissuade her from getting DNA testing, citing high cost and concerns of other possible relatives." According to DeZorzi, "They (the city) are discouraging people from doing the DNA testing. They just want to hurry up and get the baby in the ground."⁴⁷

The editor of the *Free Press*, Larry Cornies, weighed in with his own article in the Saturday, April 28th issue. In it he summarized all that had transpired to date and agreed that something should be done to pay tribute to this child as a "teachable moment...but making a circus of its recovery would be the wrong thing to do."⁴⁸

As noted earlier, I had been in correspondence with Geoff Anderson, mainly in connection with the Defields family. On April 24th he had written to Cornies "to contribute to the discussion of memorializing the 'Talbot tot' in the event that no family claims him/her".⁴⁹ The editor ended his article by printing Geoff's following tribute which might be placed on "a simple memorial marker" on the subsequent new burial spot for the child's remains.

"We mark this unknown child's resting place to honour and abidingly recognize the pioneer children of our community, whose lives, regrettably, were never fully lived. As Londoners, we stand together, hand in hand with this young child, whose reach through time has found us. By this remembrance, may all generations, both current and future, be reminded to cherish, nurture and celebrate the children of our great city."⁵⁰

By Sunday, April 29th, I learned that Charles Addington, an acquaintance of mine of many years standing who was also very interested in London's past, had sent a letter to City Hall supporting the work of myself and others in uncovering as much as possible from a study of the child's remains and the coffin itself.⁵¹

I also wrote an email to Geoff Anderson, expressing how moved I was by his tribute to the "mystery tot" as appeared in Cornies column, that I was on the trail of identifying John O'Flynn's wife, that the O'Flynn's, like the O'Briens were Roman Catholics and that "opens up a whole new can of worms as to where the child's remains should be interred."⁵²

A *Free Press* staff article in the Monday, April 30th issue noted that, although the deadline for potential relatives to make contact with Cora dela Cruz had expired the previous Wednesday, city officials were still waiting word as to what might happen with the child's remains.⁵³

As previously arranged, I met with Heather Cohen of CBC radio Windsor, in the staffroom at CCH on the afternoon of the same day for an interview relating to all the interest and controversy surrounding the remains of “the mystery tot.” A fax also arrived at the school this afternoon from Cora dela Cruz. As expected, it stated that the responsibility for the testing of the coffin wood and the child’s remains rested with the representative of the child, in this case the city. I made a photocopy of the fax and, on the way home, stopped off at the Free Press Building on York Street, where it was given to Randy Richmond. I later noted in my diary that: “As the city will not permit DNA testing, we may never learn the sex of the child, let alone its identity.”⁵⁴

Randy’s article in the Tuesday, May 1st issue of the *Free Press* gave further details on how, the previous week, before the Wednesday, April 25th provincial deadline for claimants to come forward, Karen Young Dezorzi, had been pressured by a city official, again presumably Vic Cote, “to stop her request for DNA testing on the remains” owing to “the cost and damage to the body.” “They were really kind of rude,” Dezorzi told Randy on Monday, April 30th. “They kept saying, ‘I don’t want to see this in the press tomorrow.’ Three times they said that.” Again, this harked back to Cote’s attempt to intimidate me at that meeting at City Hall on the afternoon of Friday, March 31st. Again, while Dezorzi would not identify the individual, she said that this person called to apologize after her story had appeared in the Friday, April 27th issue of the *Free Press* as already noted.

Meanwhile, Cote had refused to answer Dezorzi’s charges or to name a third claimant concerning the child’s remains. He did inform Randy that “he should have a report on the remains ready for a board of control meeting tomorrow [Tuesday, May 1st]. The city should know the province’s ruling on the remains soon after...” Cote added that “Crews can continue to work around the remains for another three weeks without delaying the arena project” and that “The city hopes to avoid the cost and time required to test the remains to determine sex, age or possible relations of the child.”⁵⁵ And this is the same City Hall which claims to support and maintain London’s heritage!

Chip Martin, the City Hall reporter for the *Free Press*, had an article in the issue of Friday, May 4th. In it he argued that the remains, lying on site “under a tarp and temporary earth cover to protect it from the elements” amid the rumbling and sound of heavy equipment surrounding it, “must be moved and reburied as soon as possible.” He also suggested that “A marker or plaque should be placed at the grave and at the new downtown project.”⁵⁶

Sometime before this, there had been an article in the *Globe and Mail* of Toronto on the child’s remains and coffin found on the Talbot Block. I stopped by Fred Armstrong’s place on my way home from another day of teaching and was given a copy. Fred was a former history professor of mine at Western and later collaborated on several research and writing projects.

May 4th also saw the Province decide to allow the City to represent the child’s remains. City Hall, in turn, announced that it was determined not to proceed with any DNA testing, not even to

determine the sex of the child. I was called upon by the New PL, about 4:00 p.m., for my reaction to this. The interview was conducted by Bryan Bicknell on our veranda in time for the 6 o'clock news.⁵⁷

Moving at warp speed in anticipation that the Province would rule "Metropolitan United church represented the child because the original landowners were linked to the Methodist Church a forerunner of the United Church,"⁵⁸ discussions between City Hall and the Rev. Robert Ripley, the senior minister at Metropolitan United Church were held without any points of disagreement. There would be no DNA testing of the child's remains; the remains would be reinterred in a private service to which the three families that claimed a connection to the child would be invited to attend; and a public memorial service "would be held later to honour the unknown child and celebrate the tot's life." Karen Young DeZorzi was angered the DNA testing would not be permitted to determine at least the age and the sex of the child. I agreed with Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco that at least the public memorial service would "give residents a chance to pay their respects...." All this was reported in the *Free Press*, the next day, by John Miner.⁵⁹

The Saturday, May 5th issue also carried a very fine article by Dr. Andrew Nelson of Western's Department of Anthropology on the limitations of DNA testing with a special emphasis on solving "the mystery of the Talbot tot."⁶⁰ Unfortunately, all this was after the fact as City Hall and the Rev. Robert Ripley had agreed there would be no DNA testing of the child's remains.

Jim Chapman had a fanciful letter in the same issue. He dated the letter "London, Canada West Summer, 1834" and spoke of the town at the time and the burial of a tiny coffin in "the far side of a rough garden" behind a house. In a footnote, Jim stated: "Provincial regulation notwithstanding, the casket should be quietly re-interred under a suitable memorial in the Fanshawe Pioneer Village. Another suggestion at the time was the Peace Garden at the Forks of the Thames."⁶¹

Nelson's and Chapman's articles moved Geoff Anderson to send off an email to Larry Cornies and James Reaney, the latter a reporter for the *Free Press*. Geoff commended the paper on "doing an excellent job of not only covering the Talbot tot story, but of being a forum to public opinion." He went on to suggest Siloam Cemetery on Fanshawe Park Road East would be the best place for the re-interment of the child's remains and provided reasons for this location.⁶²

Late on the afternoon of Sunday, May 6th, the "much deteriorated wooden coffin" and child's remains were disinterred.⁶³ "Present at the disinterment were municipal officials, representatives of Ellis-Don Construction Ltd., representatives of the Medical Officer of Health, Rev. Ripley of Metropolitan United Church, members of the staff of the James A. Harris Funeral Home, physical anthropologist Megan Cook who briefly examined the remains to confirm the early conclusion of the police investigation, and MHCI personnel who conducted the disinterment." The new wooden casket, into which the old coffin and remains were placed, had been donated by the Funeral Home. All was "given into the care and custody of Steve Harris, the funeral director, to be safeguarded until the time of re-interment."⁶⁴

The Final Outcome

On Monday, May 7th, Karen Young Dezorzi revealed to the Free Press that the date for the reburial of the remains found on the Talbot Block would take place later in the week. She could not reveal the date, saying that “the city has asked her to keep the information secret.” She was angry that “The city is doing too little to involve families in planning the private service.” The Rev. Robert Ripley confirmed that “families that may be related to the child can’t add anything to the public service” and “would not confirm when or where the private reburial will be held.” He did say that “There will be a public service at a separate time to honor the child and other pioneer children”. Ripley further added that the four individuals representing the DeFields and Lemon families were invited to both the private and public ceremonies and would “be consulted about the proper wording for the headstone”.⁶⁵

About 10 people attended the private burial for the child on Wednesday, May 9th. These included Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco, Karen Young DeZorzi and her mother who had Lemon connections and at least one member of the DeFields family. The service was conducted by Rev. Robert Ripley. The honey oak casket, containing the child’s remains and original wooden coffin, was buried in the children’s section of Oakland Cemetery on the south side of Oxford Street West. There was a promise that the grave site would be later marked with a memorial plaque. Even DeZorzi, who earlier had been critical of the City’s handling of the matter of the child’s remains, had praise for the way the service was organized.

The City had conducted the plans for the re-interment of the remains and the burial service itself in secrecy and it was only after the service that a statement was issued. This was reported in the *Free Press* the next day.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, Chris Grosskurth of CBC Radio in Toronto had done an interview with me at CCH in the early afternoon. It was he who informed me of the heretofore memorial service for the child at Metropolitan United Church, late this morning, and the interment in Oakland Cemetery.

I was both hurt and angry that I had not been invited to attend, considering all the research I had done to learn of the possible identity of the child, but then was keenly aware that it was because of what I had uncovered over more than a month and the media frenzy it produced that I was kept in the dark about the secret service and burial. Sometime later I learned that a certain local female freelance writer was quite pleased that I had been excluded from such an invite.

After supper, the same day, my wife and I took a drive to Oakland Cemetery and, based on Grosskurth’s directions—he having visited the plot before meeting me this afternoon—were able to locate the grave. Photographs were taken.⁶⁷

The interview with Chris Grosskurth on Wednesday was aired between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 12th and I taped it.⁶⁸

As announced in the *Free Press* the previous Thursday, a public service for the “Talbot Tot” was held at noon, on Monday, May 14th, at Metropolitan United Church, with Rev. Robert Ripley officiating. Some 80 persons attended, including DeCicco, who gave an address, Jan Trimble, an historian from Western, nine pupils from Knollwood Park Public School—one of whom “read the poem she had written to express her thoughts, *Free Press* reporter Joe Matyas and photographer Susan Bradnam.⁶⁹ I did not attend as I was still reeling from being slighted by Cote, DeCicco and Ripley for not being invited to the service held the previous Wednesday. I would certainly have given assurances that I would not reveal beforehand the time and location of the service. Cote and DeCicco may not have appreciated the fact that my research had caused difficulties in keeping the City’s \$42-million project on schedule, but one would think they could rise above such pettiness at a time like this. Apparently not! I did, however, watch the video clip on the 6:00 p.m. news.⁷⁰

In addition to Matyas’ article and DeCicco’s address, the Tuesday, May 15th issue of the *Free Press* had an editorial which described the memorial of the previous day as “A fitting farewell.”⁷¹

Saturday, May 19th saw two articles in the *Free Press* relating to the “Talbot Tot.” One was the “meditation” delivered by Rev. Robert Ripley at the service the previous Monday and the other was by Helen Connell.

I certainly took issue with Ripley’s statement that “what could be done was done” by “historians, archeologists, anthropologists, geneticists, officials of provincial and municipal government and families of those who once lived on the Talbot block”.⁷² Certainly, City Hall officials did all in their power to block the work of historians, archeologists, anthropologists and geneticists, and Provincial Registrar Cora dela Cruz caved in to the wishes of City Hall.

I had an even greater disagreement with the content of Connell’s article. She stated that: “It was a relief when the city decided against spending tax dollars” to use “DNA testing to find out how our mystery child died.” In fact, the main point of DNA testing was to determine the family identity and sex of the child. Of course, in her position as executive director of the United Way of London and Middlesex, it was understandable that Connell would declare: “If there’s money burning holes in anyone’s pocket, then invest it with organizations, such as the Thames Valley Children’s Centre....”⁷³

With these two articles, media coverage of the “Talbot Tot” virtually ceased.

Later in the year, the City came through on its intentions and placed a granite stone with a bronze plaque at the gravesite of the “Talbot Tot” in Oakland Cemetery. For this, City Hall officials have my full praise!



On October 11th I gave a talk, in part relating the saga of the Talbot Tot, to the Elgin St. Thomas Archives Association in St. Thomas. This was followed on February 12, 2002 with a similar presentation to the London and southwestern Branch: United Empire Loyalists in London.⁷⁴ Later in 2001, there was an academic article by Dr. J. Trevor Hawkins and Robert G. Mayer dealing with the professional and social responsibilities pertaining to the controversy surrounding what should have been done after the coffin and remains were uncovered. They concluded by siding with City Hall, which is understandable, as they were in the pockets of City Hall and basically relied on City Hall officials or in the employ of City Hall for their information. Certainly, I was not consulted and only learned of this article this year!⁷⁵

A few years later, I was asked to do a brief write-up on "The Talbot Tot." This appeared as the first of the *100 Fascinating Londoners* in 2005.⁷⁶

Conclusion

It is my firm belief that City Hall, represented by Vic Cote and Anne Marie DeCicco in particular, dropped the ball on this occasion. With the great outpouring of interest in who the child might be, City Hall could have taken a leadership role in providing Londoners with a greater insight

into their past. Instead, the City set up roadblocks or attempted to do so at every turn, starting with Vic Cote's unsuccessful attempt to muzzle me by means of having Dr. Trevor Hawkins throwing out red herrings and Cote's own intimidation tactics. Money and development were the prime motivators for City Hall and heritage and the expressed wishes of the public be damned! We also see Provincial Registrar Cora dela Cruz and the Church, represented by the Rev. Robert Ripley, siding with City Hall and ignoring the general wishes of Londoners, namely that further investigation be done to learn something of the child's sex, age and identity.

It is also my firm belief, in all humility, that just as with the removal of the Rev. John Connelly from the equation there would have been no massacre of the Donnelly family in 1880, so with my removal from research into the identity of the child, there would have been no memorial service or memorial plaque dedicated to the child discovered on the Talbot Block. One has only to research what has become of other human remains, especially of single individuals, uncovered within the City, to see this played out.⁷³ In this instance at least, the devil must be given his due, but this was only because of the outpouring of public interest in the "Talbot Tot."

Endnotes

1. Herman Goodden, "Maybe it's not too late for the Talbot streetscape dream," *The London Free Press [LFP]*, July 5, 1986, A11; Debora Van Brenk, "1,500 form human chain to save streetscape," *LFP*, August 29, 1988, B1, B2; Hank Daniszewski, "Sun may have set on Talbot streetscape," *LFP*, September 17, 1991, B1; Chip Martin, "A dream dies, Cambridge set to quit the city," *LFP*, July 10, 1991, A1, A2.
2. Dan Brock, Diary [hereinafter cited as Diary], *Wtorek, 27 marzec 2001 r.*; John Milner and Simone Joseph, "Coffin find seals arena site," *LFP*, March 28, 2001, A1, A9; Simone Joseph, "Grave find stirs mystery," *LFP*, March 29, 2001, A3; Dr. J. Trevor Hawkins and Robert G. Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," Ontario Archaeological Society *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 13; John Lisowski to Dan Brock, email, September 19, 2022. During the first half of the 1980s, I studied Polish at the University of Western Ontario, and tend to interject Polish words and phrases into my diary so as not to completely lose what I had learned.
3. Back in 1991, Mayer, who was chairperson of the archeological subcommittee of the Local Architectural conservation Advisory committee (LACAC), had advocated for an archeological study of this block. "If we are not going to mitigate the loss of these resources, then heritage means nothing in this city." I had noted that in the past, "We missed some opportunities (to excavate archeological remains), like the new court house." Shelley Lawson, "Talbot block a last chance to uncover past," *LFP*, July 10, 1991, A1, A2
4. Milner and Joseph, "Coffin find seals arena site," *LFP*, March 28, 2001, A1, A9; Simone Joseph, "Grave find stirs mystery," *LFP*, March 29, 2001, A3. Andrew Nelson, DNA testing limits must be recognized," *LFP*, May 5, 2001, F8.
5. Diary, *Środa, 28 marzec 2001 r.*; Hawkins and Mayer, 11.
6. Milner and Joseph, "Coffin find seals arena site," *LFP*, March 28, 2001, A1, A9.

7. Joseph, "Grave find stirs mystery," *LFP*, March 29, 2001, A3; Ian Gillespie, "Discovery of tot's casket new verse in Talbot lore," *LFP*, March 29, 2011.
8. Joe Matyas, "Profs offering help to ID mystery tot," *LFP*, April 25, 2001, A3
9. Diary, *Czwartek*, 29 marzec 2001 r.
10. Randy Richmond, "Mystery tot's kin sought," *LFP*, March 30, 2001, A1; A8
11. Diary, *Piątek*, 30 marzec 2001 r.
12. Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 12, 13.
13. Diary, *Piątek*, 30 marzec 2001 r. Dr. Hawkins was later to write that the meeting had been "private and confidential" but I certainly was not aware of this! Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 14.
14. Dan Brock, "Babies' Bones, Local Politics, and the Value of Archival Data," 3, published paper prepared for talk given on October 11, 2001, to the Elgin St. Thomas Archives Association at the St. Thomas Public Library, Dan Brock, private collection.
15. Randy Richmond, "St. Thomas man believes he may be child's relative," *LFP*, March 31, 2001, A1, A14; Diary, *Sobota*, 31 marzec 2001 r.
16. Diary, *Wtorek*, 3 kwiecień 2001 r.; Brock, "Babies' Bones, Local Politics, and the Value of Archival Data," 5. On a more serious note, Daph Bolton of Komoka, in a brief letter to the editor, suggested the new arena be named after the child whose remains were found on the site. Daph Bolton, "Name new arena after buried child," *LFP*, April 30, 2001, A10.
17. Randy Richmond, "Mystery tot must stay put 30 days," *LFP*, April 4, 2001, A1, A8.
18. Diary, *Środa*, 4 kwiecień 2001 r.; "Notice..." *LFP*, April 4, 2001, E7. This notice also appeared in the issue of April 11, 2001, D6
19. Brock, "Babies' Bones, Local Politics, and the Value of Archival Data," 5.
20. Diary, *Środa*, 4 kwiecień 2001 r.
21. Randy Richmond, "Body find stalls arena work," *LFP*, April 5, 2001, A1, A10.
22. Diary, *Środa*, 11 kwiecień 2001 r.
23. These notices appear to be the ones cited in n. 17.
24. Hank Daniszewski and Randy Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2001, A1, A8.
25. Ken Wilson, "Haste over tot, arena issue questioned," *LFP*, April 18, 2001, A13.
26. Daniszewski and Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2001, A8.
27. Daniszewski and Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2001, A8; Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/-December 2001), 13. Bob Mayer had read my work on the fires of 1839, 1844 and 1845 which had occurred on this block. But I did not believe the 1839 fire had reached the area where the remains were found and believe that of 1844 was more likely the one which had deposited the ashes over the site. Daniel J. Brock, "Half of London in Ruin! London's Great Fires of 1844 and 1845," Guy St-Denis, ed., *Simcoe's Choice Celebrating London's Bicentennial 1793-1993* (1992: Dundurn Press), 116-136.
28. My findings here and elsewhere are based on a study of the land registry records, Upper Canada land petitions, contemporary newsletters and genealogy web sites such as Ancestry and the former RootsWeb.

29. 1861 Census, Canada West, Middlesex, Westminster, Enumeration District 2, p. 13, lines 36-42; O'Brien monument, St. Mary's Ward, St. Peter's Cemetery, London.
30. Daniszewski and Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2001, A8; I learned the next day that Rose had gotten a number of people, including our mother, to telephone the *Free Press* and comment on what should be done to honour the child whose resting place has been disturbed after some 160 years. Diary, *Piątek*, 13 kwiecień 2001 r. I was also to learn that other telephone calls, emails and letters from the public, concerning this tot, were being received by City Hall as well as the *Free Press*.
31. Daniszewski and Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2001, A1, A8.
32. Diary, *Poniedziałek*, 16 kwiecień 2001 r.
33. Diary, *Wtorek*, 17 kwiecień 2001 r.; *Sobota*, 19 mai 2001 r.
34. Jonathan Sher, "Family seeks link to dead tot," *LFP*, April 18, 2001, A1, A7.
35. Randy Richmond, "Settling mystery tot claims may take time," *LFP*, April 19, 2001, A3.
36. Wilson, "Haste over tot, arena issue questioned," *LFP*, April 18, 2001, A13.
37. Richmond, "Settling mystery tot claims may take time," *LFP*, April 19, 2001, A3.
38. Diary, *Czwartek*, 19 kwiecień 2001 r.
39. Randy Richmond, "Family alerts province to link to buried tot," *LFP*, April 22, 2001, A1, A3; Randy Richmond, "Make mystery tot's dignity No. 1: Kids," *LFP*, April 22, 2001, A3.
40. Daniszewski and Richmond, "Secrecy shrouds tot's burial," *LFP*, April 12, 2021, A8.
41. Richmond, "Family alerts province to link to buried tot," *LFP*, April 22, 2001, A3.
42. Diary, *Poniedziałek*, 23 kwiecień 2001 r.
43. Dan Brock, "Pioneer Tots and Local Politics," 9, unpublished paper prepared for talk given on February 12, 2002, to the London and Southwestern Branch: United Empire Loyalists, 790 Wonderland Rd., Dan Brock, private collection.
44. Randy Richmond, "Family seeks tests for link to buried tot," *LFP*, April 24, 2001, A3.
45. Among the team of anthropologists were Doctors Michael Spence and Robert Hegele. Andrew Nelson, DNA testing limits must be recognized," *LFP*, May 5, 2001, F8.
46. Joe Matyas, "Profs offering help to ID mystery tot," *LFP*, April 25, 2001, A3.
47. Simone Joseph, "Mystery top case remains unsettled," *LFP*, April 27, 2001, A3
48. Larry Cornies, "Child's remains unifying symbol for city," *LFP*, April 28, 2001, H1
49. G.R. Anderson to Larry Cornies, April 24, 2001, Talbot Tot file, Cindy Hartman, private collection.
50. Cornies, "Child's remains," *LFP*, April 28, 2001, H1
51. Diary, *Niedziela*, 29 kwiecień 2001 r.
52. Dan Brock to Geoff Anderson, email, April 29, 2001, Talbot Tot file, Cindy Hartman, private collection.
53. Free Press staff, "Talbot tot's fate not yet decided," *LFP*, April 30, 2001, A3.
54. Diary, *Poniedziałek*, 30 kwiecień 2001 r.
55. Randy Richmond, "Three parties claim links to mystery tot," *LFP*, May 1, 2001, A1, A7.
56. Chip Martin, "Respect for tot demands burial soon," *LFP*, May 4, 2001, A12.
57. Diary, *Piątek*, 4 mai 2001 r.
58. This may have been true for Thomas Lemon the cabinet maker, who had been located on lot 17 on the north side of King Street but was living in St. Thomas by August 1838, and Peter Defields who was located on the adjacent lot 18 in 1834 but had completely sold off the remaining portion of his lot by March 1839. The City, however, deliberately chose to ignore my findings, that John O'Flynn, who had purchased the east half of lot 18 from Defields in late March 1839, and Dennis O'Brien, who had settled immediately north on lot 18 south side of Dundas Street—both being Roman Catholics—

had far stronger claims to being the father of the child's remains found in the far northeast corner of O'Flynn's property. Therefore, in my opinion, **at the time**, it would have made more sense for City Hall to have approached the rector of St. Peter's Basilica regarding the service and place of burial of the child's remains.

59. John Miner, "United Church to decide fate of mystery tot," *LFP*, May 5, 2001, A1, A16. Mayor DeCicco agreed that photographs of the coffin on my part "was a reasonable request," but this never happened. Dan Brock, "Pioneer Tots and Local Politics," 11.
60. Nelson, DNA testing limits must be recognized," *LFP*, May 5, 2001, F8.
61. Jim Chapman, "Pioneer's letter laments child's death," *LFP*, May 5, 2001, F9.
62. Geoff Anderson to Larry Cornies and James Reaney, email, c. May 5, 2001, Talbot Tot file, Cindy Hartman, private collection.
63. Doing something on a Sunday, when the least number of people would be around to see what was being done, is a ploy often used. As Barry Wells, aka Butch McLarty, was to post on Facebook on March 27, 2022. "The discovery of the tot's human remains delayed the construction of the John Labatt Centre to the point that the old Talbot Inn at the southwest corner of Dundas and Talbot was suddenly demolished by the City of London on a Sunday morning, with the heritage easement on the building's façade still in place, thereby misusing a purported 'heritage alteration permit.' Originally, the old bricks from the Talbot Inn were to be used on the new facade of the JLC, but after a power-washing were too wet. Instead, new "retumbled bricks" (artificially scuffed-up bricks) were used. It was a local heritage fiasco that should have attracted charges under the Ontario Heritage Act, but didn't, since the City of London, normally the local heritage authority, was the transgressor. "I wrote an article about this heritage fiasco in SCENE magazine, criticizing the City of London, called "Heritage Bozos" which really set Vic Cote off. I was subsequently informed by London planning lawyer Alan Patton that Cote wanted to sue me and SCENE for libel but he realized I was correct in my assessment, regarding the Sunday morning demo of the Talbot Inn."
64. Simone Joseph, "Mystery tot reburial scheduled this week," *LFP*, May 8, 2001, A3.
65. Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 15.
66. John Miner, Arena tot reburied in private service," *LFP*, May 10, 2001, A1, A11.
67. Diary, *Środa*, 9 mai 2001 r.
68. Diary, *Sobota*, 12 mai 2001 r.
69. Miner, Arena tot reburied in private service, May 10, 2001, A11; Joe Matyas, "City bids mystery tot final farewell," *LFP*, May 15, 2001, A1, A7; "Mayor's words honour Talbot child," *LFP*, May 15, 2001, A11; Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 15.
70. Diary, *Poniedziałek*, 14 mai 2001 r.
71. Matyas, "City bids mystery tot final farewell," *LFP*, May 15, 2001, A1, A7; "Mayor's words honour Talbot child," *LFP*, May 15, 2001, A11; "A fitting farewell," *LFP*, May 15, 2001, A10.
72. Robert Ripley, "A farewell to London's Talbot Tot," *LFP*, May 19, 2001, F3.
73. Helen Connell, "Direct passion for tot to today's children," *LFP*, May 19, 2001, F3.
74. See the already noted Dan Brock, "Babies' Bones, Local Politics, and the Value of Archival Data" and "Pioneer Tots and Local Politics." The latter was published in *the Update*, vol. iv, no. 2 (Spring 2002) by the London and Western Ontario Branch, United Empire Loyalist's Association of Canada.
75. Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 13. A copy of this article was in the file labelled "Talbot Tot" and had been given to Cindy Hartman, past president of this society, by Geoff Anderson.

76. Dan Brock, "The Talbot Tot," Michael Baker and Hilary Bates Neary, eds., *100 Fascinating Londoners* (2005: James Lorimer & Company Ltd.), 7
77. Hawkins and Mayer, "The Talbot Tot Being an Account of Professional and Social Responsibilities," *Arch Notes* (November/December 2001), 15. As a case in point, the only mention of the bones of "a very small infant" who "was buried in the cellar of whatever structure once occupied the site," sometime between 1800 and 1815 on what is now the northeast corner of Westdel Bourne and Commissioners Road West, is that which appeared in the *Free Press* on August 29, 2001. Peter Geigen-Miller, "Infant bones discovered in field," *LFP*, August 29, 2001, A1, A8. This was in fact, lot 50, concession A, Westminster Township, occupied by Joseph Kilburn, Sr. who crossed over from Delaware Township in December 1807.