

Tangled Beginnings: the Arva Flour Mill Site

Hilary Bates Neary

Introduction

Settlers in Upper Canada wanted and needed gristmills within a reasonable distance of their pioneer farms. Appreciating this basic fact of frontier life, in 1818 Thomas Talbot located the Irish millwright Thomas Martin on the south half of Lot 16, Concession 7, London Township, on the understanding that Martin would construct a mill that would use the water power of Medway Creek to meet the needs of the local inhabitants for grist, flour, and feed. Alas, a series of unforeseen circumstances denied the first settlers who established themselves north of the village of London the services of a local miller; until 1842 they were forced to transport their grain elsewhere for processing. Hence this article, which seeks to explain the long delay and unravel the tangled beginnings of the present day Arva Flour Mill.¹

Background

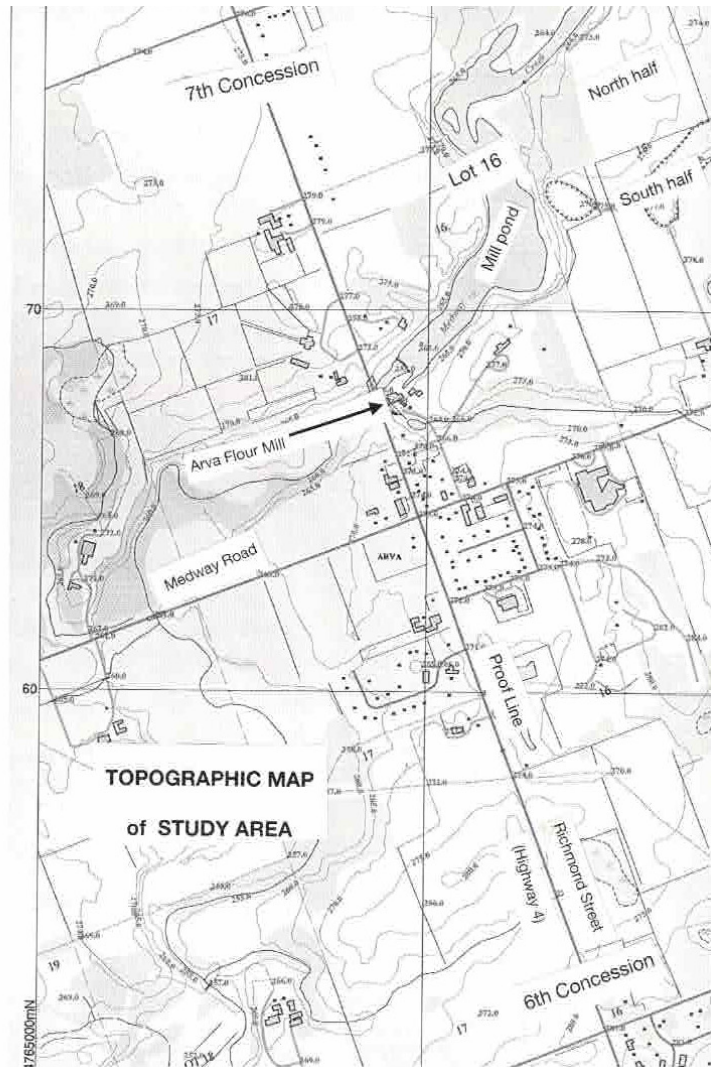
Between September 1818 and October 1819, Mahlon Burwell completed his survey of London Township. He first travelled up the proof line he had established through the centre of the township to lay out concession lines. When he and his chain bearers were 14 chains, 65 links (966.9'), north of the line for the 7th Concession, they came to a creek flowing to the southwest, of which he wrote in his field notes "cannot at this time be forded as trees fallen across." Once the survey party had somehow found its way across the stream, he added: "This is wider now than [at] any other season of the year. It is no doubt a good mill seat."² In the report he subsequently made to the Surveyor General, Burwell described the creek more fully:

A large branch of the River Thames which I have taken liberty to mark on the map "Medway" crosses the Proof Line between lots No 16 & 17 alternatively, and with its tributary streams intersects the different concessions in a most beautiful manner. It is a fair stream of ... water offering eligible seats for Machinery to be wrought by water.³

As events would show, Burwell was correct in his assessment of the water power potential of the Medway Creek. By the time he had completed his survey of the township, his patron, Colonel Thomas Talbot, had already located Thomas Martin, on the potential mill site, his condition of settlement being to build a gristmill there before being granted the Crown patent to the land. Martin was not one of the Irish settlers brought to London Township by Richard Talbot. Nor was his brother-in-law, Michael Flood, who was located by Thomas Talbot on the north half of Lot

16, Concession 7, in 1819. They were Irish Roman Catholic adherents in a growing settlement of Irish, Scottish, and English Protestants.

Whatever his personal eccentricities (and they were many and well documented), Talbot took his settlement responsibilities seriously. One of them was ensuring that he located on mill sites identified by his surveyors men who would develop those sites for the benefit of their fellow settlers. Talbot had experienced the devastation that marauding American troops had wrought on pioneer mills in the more southerly townships under his control during the War of 1812-14. Moreover, he personally invested in this necessary enterprise by buying land on the South branch of the Thames in 1826 and building there the first mill on what would later be called the Meadowlily site.⁴



Like the rest of his pioneering countrymen, Thomas Martin proceeded to clear his land, plant crops, build a shelter and, in his case, consider the best location for his gristmill and his dam on the creek. By the time of his death in 1837, he had cleared around thirty acres of land, built a frame house, a log barn, and the frame of a mill, and had constructed part of a dam on the Medway, which for some time was known locally as Martin's Creek; his efforts constituted a kind of promissory note against the yet unfinished gristmill. The historical record does not explain exactly why Martin was unable to complete the mill, but by 1836 illness overcame his powers to do so. Anticipating death, and wishing to settle his affairs, Martin engaged William Carlill, described variously as a carpenter or millwright. They entered into an arrangement, not on paper but in a verbal bond witnessed by the London lawyer John Wilson, whereby Martin sold Carlill 41½ acres of the south half of Lot 16, including the mill site, land that the two men had already hired William McMillan to survey. In the bond, Carlill undertook to erect a gristmill on the site and to pay Martin £250 by instalment. By the time of Martin's death on 21 May 1837, Carlill had paid him only £50.

Entanglements

Thomas Martin's will, written just before his death, gave bequests to family members — Dignans and Floods — living nearby. Martin directed his executors to fulfil his agreement with Carlill as specified in his bond and to pay out money to beneficiaries as it came in. One bequest of goods, a pair of water wheel gudgeons, left to nephews, James and Thomas Flood, is especially noteworthy in the context of this narrative. In milling machinery, a gudgeon is a metal extension of the shaft or axel of a water wheel, designed to prevent excessive wear on the part of the shaft that sits on bearings. In addition to the gudgeons, the Flood brothers inherited Martin's farming utensils and household goods along with the part of Martin's property not sold to Carlill. One wonders what it was he intended them to do with his gudgeons? Sell them to Carlill who would have needed them once he had completed the mill? Use them to furnish a rival establishment? These are good questions but, unfortunately, cannot be asked of the deceased.

Whatever the relationship, if any, between William Carlill and James and Thomas Flood during the lifetime of Thomas Martin, it quickly worsened after Martin's death. In a petition dated September 1838 to the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada in Council, the Flood brothers claimed that shortly after Martin's death Carlill began boasting that he would get all the land of Lot 16 "and would never pay a shilling for it." This boast threatened the expectations of the Floods under their uncle's will, and they asked that their claims and those of Carlill be referred to the Heir and Devisee Commission in Toronto. This commission was the government body that had jurisdiction to review and adjudicate claims to land in cases where no letters patent had been issued. Thomas Martin had not applied to the Crown for the patent to the south half of Lot 16 because he had not fulfilled the condition of building a gristmill on the property.

In September 1838 also, the Lieutenant-Governor received a petition from 96 inhabitants of the London Township, praying that the mill site be given to William Carlill, and that, if he was unable to build a “good and sufficient Grist Mill,” it be given to someone who could, “so that your petitioners may not in the end be deprived of so requisite an improvement for themselves and the public at large.” This petition is a reminder that the dispute between Carlill and the Floods was more than a matter of individual concern; settlers nearby looked forward to the construction of a working mill, long promised and long anticipated, on the disputed land.

According to John Wilson, the London lawyer who had witnessed the bond between Martin and Carlill, relations between the two feuding parties deteriorated further when the Flood brothers attempted to retrieve the frame of the mill that Martin had erected but had not sold to Carlill. A corner of the frame stood on Carlill’s side of the line, and the Floods and the neighbours who were assisting them had to trespass to take possession. In response, Carlill began an action in the Court of King’s Bench against six Floods and seven other men, but they were fined only a few shillings, a sum that did not even cover Carlill’s costs. Yet, though Carlill lost financially, his action had the effect of establishing, at least locally, that he was the legal owner of the mill site.

For its part, the Executive Council decided that it did not want to interfere in the “private bargains” between Martin and Carlill, recommending that the land should be forfeited if a mill wasn’t built within twelve months. An Order-in-Council was issued to this effect in November 1838. Seeing opportunity in this document, James and Thomas Flood consulted lawyer John Wilson on whether they could now reclaim the land that their uncle had sold to Carlill. His advice was to desist, lest Carlill prosecute them again for trespass. Later, in a letter to the Toronto land agent Joseph Spragge, Wilson wrote about this case: “Carlill was like a dog in a manger. He would neither build nor let others do it.” When it came to fulfilling the condition of their uncle’s location on the mill site, the hands of the Floods were tied.

In April 1839, James and Thomas Flood submitted a claim to the Heir and Devisee Commission for the entire south half of Lot 16, Concession 7, London Township. But their claim did not succeed, the Commission declining to make any grant of the land until the conditions of settlement were completely met. The Flood brothers were back where they started: unable to legally force Carlill from the land and thus unable to build the mill that would give them title to their uncle’s land.

In October 1839, with time running out on their twelve-month opportunity to build, the Floods again petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor, making the case that as the “representatives of the original locatee” they were willing to carry out the settlement duties that Colonel Talbot had required of their uncle. The petition referred to the bond between Thomas Martin and William Carlill but claimed that the agreement was now void because Carlill had “failed both to build the Mill and put the same in full operation, and to pay any of the instalments except the first in hand, or interest thereon.” Nor could anything better be expected of him:

All Carlill has done toward the Mill is raising the frame which stands there unenclosed, and building a part of a dam which the Waters has since washed away – is in embarrassed circumstances, totally unable himself either to proceed with the work of the Mill or pay the consideration money agreed upon as aforesaid, having no property now either in the Town or Township of London or thereabouts and depending entirely upon his daily labour as a Carpenter for support.

The Floods' entreaty also cast doubt upon a petition that Carlill was busy circulating; it, they declared, had been signed by men who were not resident in the part of the township that would be served by the much-anticipated mill.

It was now the turn of William Carlill to up the ante in the war of words surrounding the ownership of the mill site. Sometime between November 1838 and November 1839, as recorded by the Floods, he had begun the work of building the mill and dam, spending, he claimed, around £500. In the process of his labour, he concluded that he required all of the south half of Lot 16, not just that 4½-acre portion that William McMillan had surveyed at his and Martin's behest in 1836. His reasoning was that there was insufficient water in the Medway (or Martin's) Creek to supply a sufficient head of water to power a mill. Additional water would be needed from a spring creek flowing across the south half of Lot 16 to the Medway. This water, he maintained, should be added to the mill privilege. In other words, he now angled for all of the south half of Lot 16, in keeping with his boast after Martin's death that he would get the whole property without paying any further instalments to the Floods.

Advocacy and Opposition

Against this backdrop, Carlill began assembling evidence to support his case, urging friends and colleagues to write supportive affidavits and sign petitions to be forwarded to the Executive Council on his behalf. In July 1839, Daniel Springer, a surveyor from Delaware, wrote that, in order to raise a sufficient head of water to power the mill, Carlill's dam was likely to flood upstream past the limit between the north and south halves of Lot 16 — in other words onto the land owned by Michael Flood, father of James and Thomas. To avoid this, the mill would need water from the spring creek on the south half of the lot.

On 7 November 1839, Carlill sent two petitions to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, one from himself praying that the location be forfeited and then granted to him, whereupon he would "file security to complete the mills within twelve months." The second petition was purportedly signed by one hundred and four inhabitants of London Township; it prayed that should Carlill be required to pay the Floods for any improvements done on the lot, the £50 that he had already paid Thomas Martin be considered sufficient to cover that charge.

The members of the Executive Council who advised the Lieutenant-Governor certainly had a tempest in a local teapot on their hands. Their inclination was to return to the well-trodden path of believing that their first decision in the case was the correct one. In other words, once Colonel Talbot, as the superintendent of settlement for the London area, had located Thomas Martin on the lot in question, a patent could be obtained only when settlement duties had been performed; and since those duties had not been completed, the location should therefore be forfeited and the land put up for sale by public auction. This was the advice the councillors had given in 1838 and reiterated in 1839, the tsunami of petitions and affidavits on the subject sent to Toronto notwithstanding. Their decision was communicated to the Lieutenant-Governor in a minute dated 14 November 1839.

A disputed mill site on a small stream in London Township was not at the top of the agenda of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Arthur. At the time, he was deeply engaged by military and judicial business arising from the Rebellion of 1837-38, and by the administrative and political reforms that would soon lead to the union of Upper and Lower Canada. Acting on advice, however, he quickly issued an Order-in-Council by which the land on which Martin had been settled was forfeited and its sale at public auction ordered. This seemed final, but his order was disputed both in London and London Township, where citizens on both sides of the issue continued to make their opinions known.

Several London worthies weighed in on the side of the Floods. In early November, Justice of the Peace Lawrence Lawrason, lawyer John Wilson, and district Treasurer John Harris had certified that the Floods were “well conducted and well disposed people and ... able to build a Grist Mill.” In early December, Wilson and Harris were joined by Rev. Benjamin Cronyn in a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor: they pleaded that if the whole of the south half of Lot 16 was auctioned, the Floods would be deprived of land on which they had made improvements and had every right to consider their own. The petitioners disputed Carlill’s assertion that he required all of the south half of the lot — asserting that, like the Medway, the creek flowing from the southeast would also provide less water in summer — and reminded the Lieutenant-Governor that Carlill had not carried out the conditions he had entered into with Martin. Carlill’s actual improvements on the mill site were far less than he had boasted and had been carried out with much volunteer labour. John Harris, a former naval surveyor, had taken measurements of the fall of water available on the Medway, and had calculated that it would be sufficient to run a gristmill except in the driest of seasons. Cronyn, Wilson, and Harris also contradicted Carlill’s claim that he had met with such hindrance from the Floods that he had been discouraged from proceeding with the mill; this assertion belied Carlill’s own history of suing for trespass. The London intervenors likewise cast doubt on the bona fides of many of the signatories to the petitions that Carlill had submitted, claiming many signatures were of “Children and of people not known to Your Petitioners as Residents of London.”

Having made this case, Cronyn, Wilson, and Harris proposed a just solution to the issue: that Carlill be granted “that part of the Land sold to him subject to the Building of a Grist Mill; and the payment of the sum he agreed to pay Martin; and that Your Excellency do grant the remainder of the Lot to the Devises of Martin [i.e., the Floods] and in case said Carlill do not choose to accept of it on these terms, that the Lot be granted to the Floods on condition of repaying Carlill the money paid to Martin and paying for his Improvements, and on condition that they forthwith build a Grist Mill.” In this way, “ample justice will be done all parties: the Government will be released from the Imputation of acting in an unusual way and on *ex parte* statements: for Your Petitioners are strongly inclined to believe that the conduct of Carlill evinces a desire to evade his own solemn agreement and mislead His Excellency.” In sum, this petition, which was backed by Justice of the Peace Lawrence Lawrason, London District Clerk of the Peace John B. Askin, and Colonel Thomas Talbot himself, asked the Lieutenant-Governor to act with the entire history of human activity on the lot in mind, not with just the original intention behind government land policy and the expectation of the local settlement agent.

A few of their neighbours were also heard from in support of the Flood brothers. James Corsault, who lived north of the mill site on Lot 15 in the 8th Concession, swore an affidavit describing the improvements that both the Floods and Carlill had made on the south half of Lot 16. Of those improvements, Carlill, he asserted, had done nothing within the past year, and had “no settled place of residence” and was “not considered a man able to build a Mill.”

William Haskett, one of Richard Talbot’s Irish immigrants to London Township, lived in the 4th Concession and knew the township well, being one of its first wardens and a collector of assessment rates. He swore an affidavit declaring that some of the signatories to Carlill’s petition lived too far away “to feel an interest ... in a mill which might be erected on Martins Lot.” Another township resident, John W. Stewart, swore a statement that he had visited many persons who had signed Carlill’s petitions. “They all expressed their astonishment and surprise,” he told the Lieutenant-Governor, “to find their names attached to a petition containing a clause which prayed for the whole of the said lot to be granted to William Carlill,” when “all that they ever meant was that William Carlill should get the original quantity of land bought from Thomas Martin in his lifetime, and therefore they seemed to consider that they had been imposed on at the time of signing or that this clause had been inserted afterwards.” Still others claimed that they had never signed a petition for Carlill, and one declared that he himself was a minor “and did not know what he signed.” Another informant claimed that he had signed “the petition for the same reason as one of the Donaldsons, ... that he had done so to get rid of the said William Carlill and to avoid his importunity.”

William Carlill was incensed by the petition of John Wilson, Benjamin Cronyn, and John Harris, and by John Stewart’s affidavit. “It is *notorious* in London & elsewhere,” he cautioned the Lieutenant-Governor in January 1840, “wherever said Stuart is known that He is a trifling, meddling person.”

Carlill again asserted his claim to the mill site and defended his ability to build a mill if he were given the land containing the spring creek. Redoubling his efforts to obtain all of the south half of Lot 16, he persuaded several millwrights in the area to intervene on his behalf by writing land officials in Toronto.

Nearby resident Daniel Moore suggested that “a Mill cannot be driven under a five feet and a half head more than six months in the year with any profit.” Daniel Hine had built a mill downstream on the Medway in the 3rd Concession that enjoyed six feet head of water, but he had found that “in a dry season the mill was deficient for want of water.” Similarly, James Russell Osgood wrote from Oxford County that, having worked as a millwright in the vicinity of Martin’s Creek for the past decade, he well appreciated the advantage of having water from the spring creek available to augment that of the Medway. William Robb, the proprietor of a grist and a saw mill on the Medway for the previous six years, reported: “I can only say that in the summer season I was obliged to stop the saw mill, and for the grist mill to grind by ponds, and by the experience I have had of it, the creek is not sufficient under that head of 5ft 6in. to drive a Grist Mill.”

Two regional notables also weighed in on Carlill’s side. The first was Mahlon Burwell, the original surveyor of London Township and now member of the House of Assembly for London. Carlill visited Burwell in Toronto, bringing with him a letter from Archibald and James McFarlane, Burwell’s chain bearers in 1818-19, who were settled in the 8th Concession. The McFarlane brothers reminded Burwell that when he had identified Lot 16 as a mill site, he had intended the whole 200 acres of the lot for that purpose, not just the south half. Now that the north half was owned by Michael Flood, the McFarlane brothers saw the need for the spring creek to be part of the mill site on the south half and urged Burwell’s influence. Carlill also brought Burwell a letter to him from Edward Matthews, as well as an affidavit from him to be added to the growing collection of petitions and affidavits from the Floods and Carlill in government files.

Edward Matthews, who became important player in the history of the Arva Flour Mill site, now enters the fray. He lived in the town of London, where he was a builder, architect, and general man of business. In 1842-43, he became president of London’s Board of Police, the equivalent of mayor. Matthews had built Eldon House for the Harris family, as well as the barracks that housed the British troops stationed in London. It is quite likely that he was acquainted with William Carlill through the building trade. He now wrote Burwell to solicit his efforts on behalf of Carlill’s object, to obtain the whole of the south half of Lot 16 so that he could build the promised mill. In his affidavit, Matthews wrote highly of Carlill’s character and skills, and reported that he himself had endeavoured to arbitrate between the disputing parties, without success.

Resolution

A torrent of petitions and affidavits had flowed from London to Toronto in the dispute between the Floods and William Carlill. In November 1839, an Order-in-Council was issued that the location be forfeited and the land sold by public auction. Such an auction would have to take place in London. In August 1840, when nothing had been done to put the south half of Lot 16 up for sale as required by vice-regal order, the Executive Council extended the time for performing the settlement duties for three more months, after which the land would be forfeited. But this reprieve did nothing to settle the dispute between the parties or to further the efforts of either of them to construct a “good and sufficient” gristmill.

Mirabile dictu, between the intervention of Edward Matthews as advocate for William Carlill in mid-January 1840 and a seemingly final Order-in-Council in August, something new happened: Matthews saw an opportunity for himself to acquire the land and build the desired gristmill. Whether that object would include the vaunted skills of William Carlill, we will never know, unless historical research reveals some document that I have been unable to find. But I suspect that mutually beneficial financial arrangements were made between these two major players in the controversy. Sometime after the August Order-in-Council was issued, the south half of Lot 16, Concession 7, was auctioned off in London, likely by John Askin who acted locally for such transactions on land under Talbot’s agency. Matthews must have been the successful bidder. In September 1840 he bought seventeen acres of the southeast corner of the north half of Lot 16 from Michael Flood.⁵ Presumably this land was necessary so that Matthews could flood it once his dam downstream on the Medway was completed. The following May, a lot on King Street in London on which Carlill had performed settlement duties, and for which he had applied for a patent in February, was granted instead to Matthews.⁶ It seems quite likely that he had arranged to buy out Carlill’s interests in both the town and township of London. Perhaps Carlill was fortunate to have had such a patron.

Fulfilment — A Mill on the Medway

The final Order-in-Council in this convoluted story was issued on 17 August 1842: it granted to Matthews the whole south half of Lot 16 on which he had performed the settlement duties of “erecting and completing a good and sufficient Grist Mill.” He paid fees of £6.6s.9d, and was now the owner of a mill long hoped for by the inhabitants of London Township.⁷ In December 1842, he did the right thing by the Floods when he sold 17 acres at the northwest corner of the south half of Lot 16 to Michael Flood.⁸ He also subdivided the southwest corner into building lots for the growing village of St. John’s (present-day Arva) at the crossroads of the Proof Line and the road fronting on the 7th Concession.⁹

Though owning the mill, Matthews did not practise the craft of milling grain, and for most of the next thirty years the premises were leased to a line of professional millers. The names of the early millers who leased from Matthews are unknown, but the township assessment rolls, which have survived from 1854 onwards, record John Leary as miller that year, followed by William Saunby, Francis Saunby, James O’Gorman, and Arthur Osborne.¹⁰ This practice of leasehold continued for many years after the shocking death by suicide of Edward Matthews on 22 June 1850. A coroner’s inquest, reported in the *Canadian Free Press*, stated that Matthews’ body had been found in a pool of blood in his office, clutching a gun in one hand and a ramrod in the other. He had been suffering the previous week from a case of mumps and was said to have been afflicted with melancholy. The inquest “gave a verdict of self-destruction, while under a fit of temporary insanity.”¹¹

Matthews had been deeply engaged in London’s civic life and in a host of business interests. By his will, dated 4 September 1841, he named his wife Catherine and his sister Elizabeth as Executrices, and Rev. Benjamin Cronyn as Executor, and directed that his real estate holdings be sold to pay his debts and to support his wife, sister, children, and Samuel Sexton Pomroy, his stepson. The executors had much work to do. Matthews died in possession of large real estate holdings in the town and township of London, in the townships of West Oxford, North Dorchester, Colchester, and Westminster, and in the villages of Ingersoll, St. John’s, and Edwardsburgh (or Dorchester Station). Eventually, the parties of executors, heirs, and agents of the same suffered such “differences and disputes” in regard to the management of the estate that, to avoid costly litigation and settle their outstanding questions, they agreed on a deed of partition. This deed was signed by all parties on 6 December 1869, almost twenty years after the unfortunate death of Edward Matthews.¹²

By this act, the mill site became the property of John Cooke Meredith of London, a local businessman. On 31 May 1870, he sold it to Jacob Hawkins of London Township for \$5,075.¹³ According to the township assessment rolls, Hawkins had been the miller in charge of the site since 1867 or 1868. A subsequent history of the mill site would describe his capable development of a modern flour mill, a story that is waiting to be told.

With the single exception of the Arva Flour Mill, all other local mills in the Thames watershed have failed or closed due to floods, fires, changing technologies, market competition, or government labour regulations. Meadowlily, Blackfriars, the Hunt brothers’ City Mills, Doty, Hine, Cronyn, O’Brien, Waters, Strangman, Fysh, Plewes, Saunby, Turville, Dexter, Hall, Ross: the list of mills and millers whose stories form part of the history of industrial development in the London area is long. But none of the other mills had beginnings as complex as the tangle to be found in the history of the Arva flour Mill site.



“Best flour by a dam site!” (Photograph courtesy of Joe O’Neil.)

The Outlook for the Arva Mill

Today the Arva mill retains its historic ambiance, inviting folk from London and Middlesex County and beyond to shop for flour and associated foodstuffs and to note the pride with which the present owner Mike Matthews displays photographs from yesteryear along with artifacts from the mill’s past. Amongst the latter is a framed flour bag from the years that Jacob Hawkins owned and operated the mill. “Best flour by a dam site!” is the motto of a mill both steeped in history and anticipating a bright future.

Mike Matthews has been resident miller since 1999, and his family have operated the mill since 1917. In September 2021, he sold the Arva Flour Mill to Mark Rinker, a businessman with deep roots in the area. It is Rinker’s stated intention to continue operating the mill (though with technical changes) and to expand the operations to include the processing of gluten-free flours. This regional landmark has served the baking public for almost 180 years. Long may it thrive and prosper!



Scale used to weigh the various components of feed and the finished by-products of milling. (Photograph courtesy of Joe O’Neil.)

Endnotes

¹ Unless otherwise cited, most of this tangled tale is told in documents contained in several files of the Upper Canada Land Petitions (UCLP, RG 1, L 3). Thomas Flood’s petition is in 1838, Vol. 195, “F” Bundle 21, #60 [reel C-2022]. Carlill’s petitions are in 1839, Vol. 123, “C” Bundle 22, #54, and 1840, Vol. 125, “C” Bundle 22, #226 [reels C-1730 and C-1731]. John Wilson’s petition is in 1839, Vol. 124, “C” Bundle 22, #146 [reel C-1731]. The petition of Benjamin Cronyn, John Harris and John Wilson is in 1839, Vol. 124, “C” Bundle 22, #146 [reel C-1731]. The petition of the inhabitants of London Township is in 1837-38, Vol. 296, “L” Bundle 21, #50 [reel C-2131]. Edward Matthews’ petition to receive his Crown patent is in 1842, Vol. 366, “M” Bundle 1, #63 [reel C-2220]. Interested readers are encouraged to consult ALL the petitions cited, as they contain multiple fascinating documents. The UCLP can be consulted online at Library and Archives Canada: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-petitions-upper-canada-1763-1865/Pages/land-petitions-upper-canada.aspx> For local researchers, the UCLP microfilm reels are available at the London Room, London Public Library. In many of the above documents the spelling of William Carlill’s surname varies considerably, but his signature was “Carlill.”

- ² Ontario. Ministry of Natural Resources. Surveys and Mapping Branch. Surveyor's Report and Field Notes Books. (Notes taken in the Township of London by orders from the Surveyor General Office to complete the same bearing date the 17th day of September 1818 by Mahlon Burwell, Deputy Surveyor. "Proof Line through the Township of London," p. 3.) (London Public Library, microfilm in London Room, r526.9 ON8SU. This microfilm resource is also available at the D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario, London at: CA2ON LF S76. The index to this can be found there at: JL272.9.N32R432.
- ³ Archives of Ontario. Correspondence and Memoranda relating to surveys received by the Surveyor General's Office arranged by correspondent. (RG 1-2-1) Correspondence from Mahlon Burwell, Volume 4, MS 30, reel 8, p. 61, letter written from Port Talbot 31 May 1819.
- ⁴ Middlesex Land Registry Office, London. (Hereafter: LRO, London.) Records for Lot 8, Concession A, London Township. Instrument #895, 1 December 1826. Bargain and Sale from Anna Service to Thomas Talbot, registered 16 April 1857.
- ⁵ LRO, London. Records for Lot 16, Concession 7, London Township. Instrument #5291, 23 September 1840, Bargain and Sale, Michael and Ann Flood, London Township to Edward Matthews, London, architect. (Registered 20 August 1841.
- ⁶ LRO. London. Crown Patent Book. City Lots. Edward Matthews, Lot 10, N. Side of York Street, 1/2 acre, 11 May 1841.
- ⁷ Library and Archives Canada. Upper Canada Land Books. Volume A, 17 August 1842, p. 315, #M63. [reel C-107]
- ⁸ LRO. London. Records for Lot 16, Concession 7, London Township. Instrument #331, 10 December 1842, Bargain & Sale, Edward Matthews to Michael Flood, 17 acres, registered 5 Dec.1849.
- ⁹ LRO. London. Registered Plan #85. Edward Matthews (owner) and William McMillan (land surveyor) Plan of the Village of St. John's on the southwest corner of Lot 16 in Concession 7, London Township. 6 January 1850. (St. John's was renamed "Arva" after the first post office was established there in 1852.)
- ¹⁰ Surviving London Township Assessment rolls can be consulted on microfilm in Archives and Special Collections, D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario. (Reels M1614-1623).
- ¹¹ "Coroner's Inquest", Canadian Free Press (London), 27 June 1850, p. 3, col.1.
- ¹² LRO. London. This deed of partition of the estate of Edward Matthews was printed rather than handwritten, and copies are found in the land records of all townships and municipalities in which he owned land. 6 December 1869, Indenture #4377.
- ¹³ LRO. London. Records for Lot 16, Concession 7, London Township. Bargain & Sale, John Cooke Meredith to Jacob Hawkins, 31 May 1870, \$5,075.