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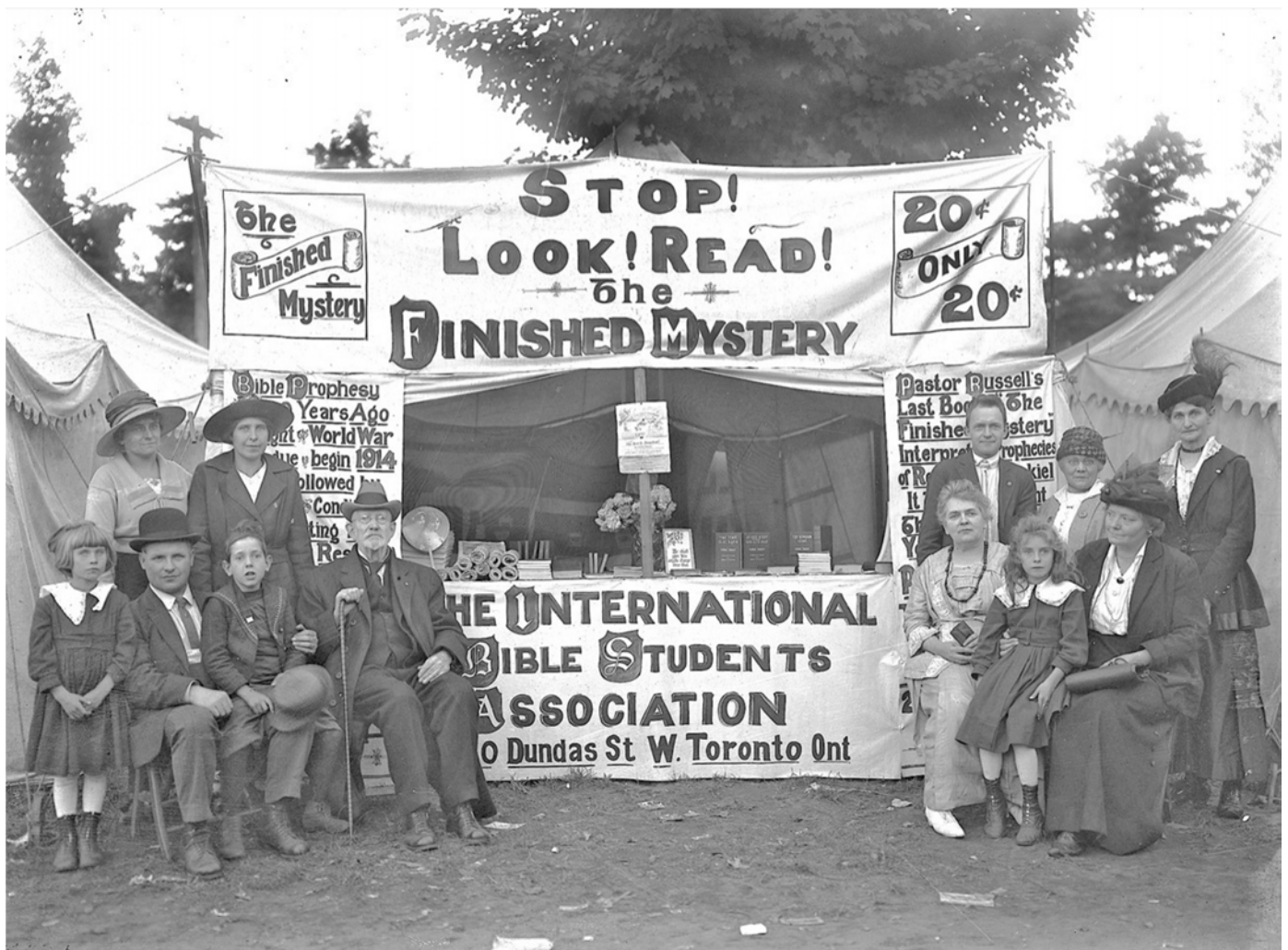
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The Disappearance of Harry Hines

Alan Noon



From the Hines photo collection. Western Fair *circa* 1921. Many religious and service groups followed the lead of commercial entrepreneurs and set up display booths at the Fair to promote their various causes. Several mainline religious groups also ran food concessions and child care facilities.

The mystery that began in 1950 when Edith Guthrie, widow of the late John W. Guthrie, sold her house at 31 Victoria Street, London, Ontario to The University of Western Ontario (UWO)¹ horticulturist John Johannesen² has finally been solved.

Stored in one corner of the mud basement were a dozen cardboard boxes each containing about one hundred photographic glass plate negatives. Mrs Guthrie had no use for them when she moved and suggested that perhaps Johannesen could use them to build cold frames for his vegetables. Fortunately, he did not heed this suggestion and the negatives remained undisturbed for another two decades. In 1971 several boxes were removed following a flood in the home. Some of these damaged negatives were examined by Alan Noon, UWO Media Specialist in Photography,³ who determined that they were likely from a professional studio and covered a period from 1907-1930. UWO archivist and librarian Edward Phelps⁴ arranged to have the negatives inspected by a representative from Archives Canada who incorrectly assumed they were a gift from Johannesen and subsequently transported about 168 of them back to Ottawa.

In 1981 Phelps negotiated their return to UWO but instead of risking further damage to the fragile emulsion of the glass plates it was agreed that high quality copy negatives would be acceptable and that these original plates would remain in Ottawa. Johannesen realized the seriousness of the continued degradation of the remaining negatives. He turned the entire collection over to Noon who would attempt identification of the photographer, restoration of the images and documentation for the collection.

Why these particular negatives came to be placed in the basement of the home is unknown. In 1973 Mrs Guthrie's daughter recalled that when she was a young child a grey haired man visited her mother on several occasions, possibly leaving some boxes. Once a negative was printed it usually held little value for a professional studio. It was common practice to salvage discarded plates for cash because high quality scratch free glass was in high demand for recycling into new photographic plates.⁵



Typical appearance of the damaged glass plates found in Mrs Guthrie's basement.

Of the original collection, over two hundred negatives were smashed beyond repair while others were so badly damaged and decomposed they could not be printed.

After much tedious work a little over four hundred images were compiled. Extraordinary scenes depicted streetscapes, retail establishments (both interior and exterior), cars, trucks, trains, streetcars, family portraits, weddings and funerals. Most of the images seemed to have originated in the working-class district of east London. A survey of London business directories indicated that the only studio in this location that more or less coincided with the time frame of the collection was the Hines Photo Studio. It was established in 1905 by Henry (Harry) Hines and his son William (Bill) Hines at 633 Dundas Street then moved to 729 Dundas Street and finally in 1910 to the second floor of 666 Dundas Street where it remained until it closed in 1930.⁶

Noon continued to clean and stabilize the negatives and produce paper prints which were shown to members of the public, particularly senior citizens and east London business people to help identify the photos. In 1978 UWO Professor Emeritus Helen Battle,⁷ who had lived her entire life in east London, recognized a portrait of herself taken in 1926 by the Hines Studio. Ken Tye, an amateur genealogist familiar with east London, further confirmed the origin of the negatives when he discovered several printed photographs held in private collections bearing the Hines Studio embossed stamp that matched negatives found in Mrs Guthrie's basement. Historians Professor Fred Armstrong,⁸ Glen Curnoe⁹ and Guy St Denis¹⁰ made important contributions to the ongoing research to find information about Harry and Bill Hines. It soon became apparent however that this was going to be a difficult task.



The label featuring an image of Harry Hines found on the back of many early Hines Studio printed original photos 1905-1908.

Meanwhile under the supervision of Peter Mitchell, Preparator with the London Historical Museum, and the talents of Catherine Morrissey, Assistant Curator, Exhibitions, a public display of the restored images entitled *East of Adelaide* was mounted at the London Regional Art Gallery.

The exhibition ran from September 12 to November 22, 1987, attracting 25,000 visitors, many of whom were first time patrons from east London to the Museum/Gallery. Although a great deal of new information was gleaned from these visitors, Harry and Bill Hines remained somewhat shrouded in mystery. The exhibition was viewed by a representative of the Honourable Lily Oddie Munroe, Minister of Culture and Communications for the Ontario Govern-

ment.¹¹ Munroe subsequently offered financial support for the publication of a book featuring selected images from the Hines Collection. London Historical Museum General Manager Christopher Severance¹² negotiated a matching grant from the London Public Library Board and with guidance from Nancy Poole,¹³ Executive Director of the London Regional Art Gallery, the book bearing the same title as the exhibition was published in 1989.¹⁴ A special guest at the book launch was 90 year old Vera (Constable) Sutter. As a young girl she had worked as a model for the Hines Studio and was featured in a number of commercial illustrations throughout the pages of the book including the two scenes photographed in 1907 and 1912 with her father blacksmith Bill Constable.



At the opening of the *East of Adelaide* exhibition on September 12, 1987, in The London Regional Art Gallery, Professor Helen Battle views her 1926 portrait taken by the Hines Studio.



Left. Vera (Constable) Sutter at the book launch of *EAST of ADELAIDE* in 1989.

Right. Vera is featured in this 1915 promotional photo for Kodak cameras, taken in Port Stanley.

During the book launch ceremony, held in the London Regional Art Gallery, Vera signed several dozen copies of *EAST of ADELAIDE* opposite her photo on page 40.

EAST of ADELAIDE continued to generate new information about the identity of the many locations and individuals depicted in the photographs. Background notes were included in the book shedding some light on Bill Hines but what became of his father Harry Hines remained a mystery. In 2005 after all 3,000 copies had sold out, the Hines glass plate negatives along with the returned Archives Canada copies and some original Hines Studio prints were placed in the UWO Archives.

In November 2016, Alan Noon received an email from Nichole Vanover, the great-great-granddaughter of Harry Hines. She was compiling a family history and was searching for more information. Vanover had extensive background information on several members of her family but knew very little

about Harry and Bill Hines or their London photo studio. Indeed, according to Vanover, family folklore purported that Harry Hines married a Jewish actress from Broadway and had gambled away and won several fortunes. Noon explained that most of the research on the collection had been completed over thirty years ago and none of it supported these stories. After further cross referencing his files with those of Vanover and access to internet resources not available in 1987, it was decided to make a final effort to solve the mystery of the disappearance of Harry Hines.

The initial quest to provide background information about the studio had been stifled by the reluctance of many individuals to discuss the family. There had been several references to a 'Mrs Hines' noted by various researchers but it was not clear at the time which one: i.e. Gertrude, wife of Harry or Regina, wife of Bill. Numerous errors contained in public documents had further complicated and muddled the search.

Researchers turned the search to members of the east London business community where the Hines studio was located. While the downtown London district attracted both city wide and surrounding counties residents, east London retained more of its original ‘village atmosphere’. Its shops and services tended to cater to and rely upon local residents and their needs. The Hines Studio was no exception and it was hoped this would glean new details. Unfortunately, several long-established business owners in east London who would have known both the Hines photographers and their wives had claimed they did not remember them. The proprietor from Ashplant Shoes (located on the ground floor of 666 Dundas Street - the same building as the former second floor Hines photo studio), was so incensed at the mention of the name ‘Hines’ that he physically removed the researcher from his premises. A few doors to the east at Elizabeth Street is The Church of Christ Disciples. For more than five decades the sometimes controversial lay preacher Rev. Benny Eckert had served the congregation. When researchers were told that Eckert was ‘out of town’ a phone message was left asking if he had any knowledge or could he help with any information about the Hines family. Again the researchers were met with a negative reaction when a very irate Eckert returned the call within a few minutes and stated quite bluntly he *“did not know anything about any Mrs Hines”* and *“not to call again”*. When showing some of the Hines Studio photos to residents of the Dearness Seniors Home one gentleman had sat motionless in a wheelchair while prints were passed around until one depicting the Hines studio at 666 Dundas Street passed in front of him. He grabbed hold of it. Quite visible on the streetscape was the nearby Fawkes Bakery.

He pointed to the store and said,

“I used to work there as a young boy. When Mrs Hines came into the store, the boss told me to wait on the sidewalk until she left.”

The reference to a ‘Mrs Hines’ was again noted but it remained undetermined which one!



Dundas Street looking west from Elizabeth Street *circa* 1912. The Hines Studio sign is visible at the upper right hand side of the streetscape.

As the research continued, information gathered about Bill Hines and his eventual departure to the USA, abandoning his wife Regina and children in London, had led researchers to erroneously believe that his father Harry had also travelled to Pennsylvania leaving his wife Gertrude in London. With the expertise of Glen Curnoe and new clues provided by Nichole Vanover, Noon came to realize that earlier attempts to find Harry Hines had failed because everyone was looking in the wrong place!

Finally, in September 2017, the mystery surrounding the disappearance of Harry Hines was solved along with probable reasons as to why the research had been so difficult.

Henry (Harry) Gratin Hines (1874-1937)
Gertrude Anna Hines (1871-1940)

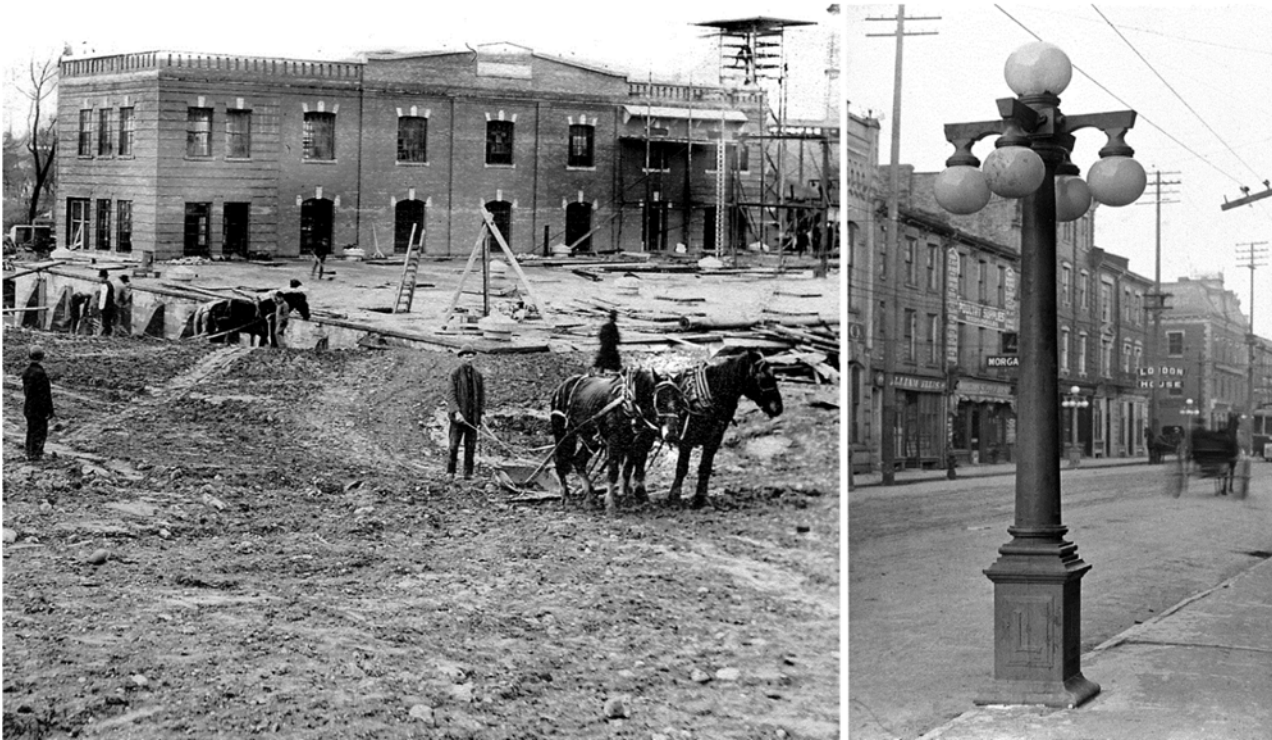
Born in Reading, PA, Harry Gratin Hine, a 19-year-old Presbyterian, with the consent of his father, William Harry Hine, married Gertrude Anna Schulte, a 23-year-old Roman Catholic dressmaker. They were married in a civil ceremony, on August 15, 1894, in St. Louis, MO.¹⁵ Following the birth of their first son, William (Bill), on January 1, 1895, in St. Louis, a second son, Harry Michael was born a year later but died when only a few weeks old. In 1899 Harry, Gertrude and Bill headed north to London, Ontario and changed their family name to Hines. Harry briefly worked as a bicycle repairman before becoming a conductor for the London Street

Railway. Somewhere along the way he became knowledgeable about the commercial photography industry and in 1905 opened a small studio in east London. Two years later his son Bill joined him as a full partner.

The majority of their clients came from the surrounding businesses and family residences. The studio was regularly commissioned to provide illustrative photographs for numerous civic and commercial publications particularly the electrification of London by the Public Utilities Commission and the development of city parks.



Harry and Gertrude Hines.



As part of a continuing contract with the City of London the Hines Studio documented the construction of the Horton Street substation beginning in 1909. Later the cheap electric power generated from Niagara Falls led to widespread use of electrical gadgets in the home as well as installation of fancy street lights in the downtown area.

Many of the unaccredited illustrations depicting London's growth and development published in the 1915 edition of *London And Its Men Of Affairs* were taken by the Hines Studio. During the early 1920s, Harry Hines was the official photographer for the Western Fair and many of his original prints are still held by the Western Fair Archives. The partnership continued until 1929 when Bill left the studio to permanently return to the United States. In 1930 the east end studio closed. Harry and Gertrude began to experience difficulties with their marriage and eventually separated. In January 1933 Harry was arrested on three fraud charges totalling \$4.50. It was charged that on "January 23, he did by false pretence and fraud obtain the sum of \$1.50 from H. J. Brock, the sum of \$1.50 from Miss Letty Elsom and the sum of \$2.00 from Fred Pugsly."

Hines stated he was taking photographs of businesses to be published in a book but his equipment had broken. After spending several days in custody unable to raise the \$400 bail he was released on a surety from his estranged wife Gertrude. On March 9, 1933, he appeared before Police Magistrate Thomas W. Scandrett who convicted him on all charges but gave him a complete discharge and allowed him to go free.¹⁶

Soon afterwards, Harry slipped out of London. New research confirmed that he did not, in fact, travel to Pennsylvania or elsewhere in the USA. Instead, Harry moved to St Catharines, Ontario, where he began working as a photographer for the Peninsula Photo Company. The 1936 St Catharines city directory lists him as living in a rooming house on Lyman Street with his 'wife' Helen.



Victoria Lawn Cemetery, St Catharines, Ontario. The unmarked Harry Hines grave is to the immediate left of the dark marker at the right.

On February 9, 1937, Harry suffered a fatal heart attack.¹⁷ Declared destitute, he was interred in a single grave with no headstone or marker in Victoria Lawn Cemetery whose records show his burial was paid for by the City of St Catharines. It remains unknown why Harry Hines was interred in Section P of the Old Roman Catholic Section of the cemetery instead of the adjacent Old Protestant Section Q.

Three years later Gertrude Hines, penniless and in poor health, was placed in the care of House of Providence (later known as Marian Villa), London. She died on April 9, 1940 and was interred in the St Bridget Ward of St Peter's Cemetery, London.¹⁸ A small brick, half buried in the ground, bearing the inscription "Hines" marks her grave.

Edward Phelps in the Foreword to *EAST of ADELAIDE* described Harry Hines as:

"A diamond in the rough" who married the technical quality of the 'uptown' society photographers, whose ranks he apparently never achieved, to a prescient, even accidental awareness of the documentary and human interest of his own work. The richness of the surviving fragments of his legacy leave a tinge of lasting regret for the irredeemable loss of what did not survive from the images of his time . . ."



In 1988 researchers discovered a small brick that had sunk into the ground and become completely buried near the grave of Gertrude Hines. Along one side there was a single inscription "HINES".

William (Bill) Henry Hines (1895-1979)
Regina Alberta Hines (1902-1962)

Born in St. Louis, MO, Bill became a full partner in the Hines Studio in 1907 at the age of 13. He had a talent for portraiture and when clients saw the young boy in the studio they would frequently ask, "Where is the photographer?"¹⁹ Bill enlisted in the US Air Corps during World War I. He saw action in France as an intelligence aerial photographer flying over enemy lines strapped to the wing of a reconnaissance plane.²⁰

In 1919 after returning to London, he married 17-year-old Regina Alberta Shildrick of St Thomas who lied about her age by claiming to be nineteen at the time.²¹ The marriage certificate also contains other errors, listing Regina as Ru-Jena, Bill's mother as Gertrude Chilty, not Schulte and her brother as Harold instead of Howard Shildrick. The marriage produced two sons, Eugene and Keith.



Regina Hines photographed in 1929 with her two sons (l-r) Eugene and Keith shortly before Bill Hines left the family.



Bill Hines photographed at a 1970 Kiwanis Convention in Harrisburg, PA.

In 1929 Bill Hines abandoned Regina and his children to establish a new studio in Harrisburg, PA where he lived with his new 'wife' Jeanne. During World War II he became a civilian military photographer and worked for General George Paton. Another well known client at the time was bandleader and former Londoner Guy Lombardo. Bill Hines' prominent position and influence in the business community was reflected by his 1947 election as President of the Professional Photographers Association of Pennsylvania. Nine years later he left Jeanne.

When contacted in the early 1980's, Jeanne Hines initially refused to be interviewed as she mistook the researcher for a bill collector. Eventually convinced otherwise she said, "*Bill took all my money and ran off with another woman.*"

That other woman was Dorothy Hines. Bill and Dorothy moved to St Clair, PA and opened a photographic studio specializing in factories and commercial work. He remained a prominent businessman and served a four year term as President of the Saint Clair Kiwanis Club which ended in 1973.

Bill died on March 4, 1979 and was interred in the German Protestant Cemetery, Mahanoy City, PA.²² In a 1982 interview, Dorothy admitted that she knew very little about Bill's past but unlike Jeanne she was very cooperative and provided several examples of his most recent work including a portrait and some large panoramas.

There were relatively few divorces in Canada prior to the 1960's. It was difficult to get one as the application had to be approved and passed by the Senate. A search of the *Debates of the Senate* (Hansard) revealed that neither Harry nor Bill had applied for or were granted a Canadian divorce. It was a common practice on census forms to declare a live-in partner as being husband or wife in order to preserve dignity.

In 1933, four years after Bill Hines had left London his wife Regina gave birth to a daughter, MariLynne Luella who shared the following about her family.

"All my mother's children were born in London, Ontario. She had several more than us three (myself, Eugene and Keith) including a set of twins but they all died as infants. When I was five or six she told me that I was not a Hines. My biological father was a prominent London surgeon who declined any child support. She persuaded the Registrar to write in 'Hines' so that all three of her children had

the same name. In those days it was a terrible thing to be illegitimate. The Hines family really is 57 Varieties which is what I was teased with when I went to school."

MariLynne Luella Abbott (Hines)



MariLynne (Hines) Abbott circa 2004 who helped solve the mystery of the disappearance of Harry Hines.

In a separate note, MariLynne Abbott again spoke about her parents and inadvertently provided the "smoking gun" that helped to explain the many mysteries and difficulties with earlier enquiries about the family:

"My mother Regina Hines was quite a lady around town and had many suitors. Bill Hines was a n'ere do well and was a lady chaser."

Regina Hines remained in London although there was little contact with her estranged husband. She died in Victoria Hospital on August 16, 1962, aged 60. The disconnect within the family is quite evident when reading her obituary which lists the family name as Hinds, her husband Bill as 'deceased' and misspells the name of her daughter MariLynne as Marlyn. Regina was interred in the Shildrick family plot in the St. Thomas Cemetery alongside her parents and siblings.²³

The Hines Studio like other contemporary establishments of the time did not photograph for posterity but almost inadvertently has left us a remarkable pictorial record of the urban working-class of early twentieth century London. By following new leads in the last few years, our knowledge of the talented photographers, Harry and Bill Hines, have brought a satisfying conclusion to their families, local historians and the author.



Regina Hines photographed in 1956 (a few years before her death) with her grand-daughter Deborah Hines on her knee. This little girl is the mother of Nichole Vanover whose email to me revived my search to solve the mystery of Harry Hines' disappearance.



Briggs Bicycle circa 1925 at 768 Dundas Street. They supplied bicycles for the telegraph delivery boys.



Taken in 1915 for the London Free Press to advertise a promotional tour. Fred Benson sits on the bike.



London Street Railway blacksmith shop in 1907 before electrification. Vera Constable watches her father Bill (in the middle). The calendar on the wall enabled accurate dating of the photo.

Below:

After the London Street Railway blacksmith shop was electrified in 1912. Vera Constable photographs her father (centre) using a folding camera as part of a Kodak promotion.





Woolworth's Store *circa* 1927. Located downtown at 143-7 Dundas Street. This is one of many window displays photographed by Harry Hines to be included in a book but was never published.



The Royal Canadian Regiment *circa* 1910 followed by the 7th Fusiliers of the City of London, leads a parade along Dundas Street between Talbot and Ridout Streets celebrating the opening of the Supreme Court of Canada.



Hines frequently posed his subjects with their prized possessions. One example is this couple in their 1912 McLaughlin Buick on the Western Fair Grounds. It was not unusual at that time for automobile manufacturers to place the steering wheel on the right hand side. The Crystal Palace Building seen in the background was destroyed by fire on December 30, 1927.

End Notes

1. In 2012 the university ended its use of the acronym UWO (University of Western Ontario) replacing it with “Western University” or “Western” for official communications and branded materials. However, the legal name remains The University of Western Ontario.
2. John K. Johannesen emigrated from Denmark and in 1946 was appointed Greenhouse Manager in the Department of Botany, a position he held until his retirement in 1969. In 1956 he was responsible for the design and establishment of the larger and expanded greenhouse that became part of the new Biological-Geological Sciences Building.
3. Staff photographer at UWO from 1962-2013, Alan Noon’s area of expertise includes the restoration of photographic negatives, prints and historical documents.
4. Edward Charles Howard Phelps was appointed Librarian-in-Charge of the Regional Collection, a division of UWO Archives, in 1972, a position he held until his retirement in 2004. Historian, author and collector extraordinaire, his ability to find obscure documents and information for researchers was legendary.
5. During a 1978 interview, a resident of the Dearness Home described how he worked part-time for the Hines Studio scraping emulsions off old negatives in order to reclaim the glass. He recalled the unpleasant experience of working with a strong acid to completely clean the glass of any remaining residue.
6. Vernon’s City of London Directories 1905-1930.
7. Professor Helen Irene Battle was a London native, distinguished international scientist and teacher at UWO for over fifty years. In 1972 she was conferred the title Professor Emeritus by the university.
8. Frederick Armstrong, a prolific author and Professor in UWO’S History Department from 1963-1991, specialized in 19th century Canadian political history.
9. Glen Curnoe was Librarian-in-Charge of the London Room in the London Public Library from 1981-1998. He remains active in researching and writing about local history with a special interest in the preservation of historic buildings and cemeteries.
10. Guy St Denis London author and historian was a Reference Assistant in the Regional Collection at UWO from 1986-1996.
11. Lily Oddie Munro was Minister of Citizenship and Culture from 1985-87 and Minister of Culture and Communications from 1987-89 for the Province of Ontario.
12. In 1986 the London Historical Museum moved from its Central Library location at 305 Queens Avenue into the London Regional Art Gallery building at 421 Ridout Street North. Staff, programs and resources from the Gallery and Museum were subsequently merged into a single operating unit. Although the London Public Library Board had originally awarded a grant to the Historical Museum towards producing *EAST of ADELAIDE*, when the book was completed in 1989 it became one of the first publications of the newly established London Regional Art and Historical Museum (now Museum London).

13. Nancy Poole became Director of the London Regional Art Gallery in 1985 just prior to its merger. She remained Executive Director of the London Regional Art and Historical Museum until her retirement in 1995.

14. The full title of the 1989 book is '*EAST of ADELAIDE: Photographs of commercial, industrial and working-class urban Ontario, 1905-1930*'. The 1987 exhibition was entitled *East of Adelaide* as originally suggested by Chris Severance.

15. State of Missouri. City of St Louis. *Document #57170*. Also signed by Roman Catholic priest James Thomas Coffey "that on August 15, 1894 did unite in marriage the named persons."

16. Researched by Edward Phelps from the *Criminal Court Case File Records* formerly held by the Regional Collection, which along with other Middlesex County records were transferred to Archives Ontario in 2008.

17. Province of Ontario. *Certificate of Registration of Death #023127*. February 12, 1937. His 1894 Marriage Certificate listed him as a Protestant.

18. Documented in the office records of St Peter's Cemetery, London, Ontario.

19. *Keystone Photographer 1953* Vol 5, no. 1, p. 3. Published by the Professional Photographers Association of Pennsylvania.

20. Dorothy Hines. Personal correspondence. 1985.

21. Province of Ontario. *Affidavit #016899* to permit marriage, issued November 5, 1919.

22. Department of Veterans' Affairs. Schuylkill County Pennsylvania. *Record of Burial of Veteran #194287747*. March 7, 1979.

23. Obituary. *London Free Press*. August 17, 1962.