

P. Brian Skerrett

Dear Heritage Guelph,

I have read with interest the proposal to designate the Kidd Barn and Blair Farmhouse at 2187 Gordon St. and I would urge you to recommend designation of 2187 Gordon St and its structures to City Council.

To that end, I would like to provide you with some information, background material and small corrections that may provide support and context for the designation.

- Page 2 the staff report suggests the Kidd property “abutted Brock Rd.”, which is true today, but historically Brock Rd wasn’t identified that way. I hope the report before Council should it be recommended, will reflect that at the time of settlement the road was referred to as the Aboukir Rd, and then the Dundas Road, as it was the road to Dundas. It only became known as the Brock Road after 1848.
- .The attached 1891 Census (Mary Wood era) identifies the house on the property at the time as a one story four room house. This is likely the foundation referred to on page 5 of the staff report linking it to the Mary Wood family specifically.

**CENSUS OF CANADA, 1891.**

Province Ontario

PAGE 28

SCHEDULE No.

TABLEAU No. 1.—Dénombrement des Vivants.


NUMBERED IN THE ORDER OF VISITATION.					NAMES.	Sex.	Age.
Vessels and Shanties.	Houses in construction.	Houses uninhabited.	Houses inhabited.	Families.			
NUMÉRÉS DANS L'ORDRE DES VISITES.					NOMS.	SEX.	AGE.
Bâtimens et Chantiers.	Maisons en voie de construction.	Maisons inhabitées.	Maisons habitées.	Familles.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1					Maltby, Charles.	M	15
2			S. 6	417	Cott, James.	"	48
3					" Isabella	F	46
4					Canon James	M	14
5			W. 4	418	Wood, Mary	F	56
6				121	" David	M	32
7					" Jermot	F	33

- While the staff report suggests the house was built “about 1907” the attached Guelph Mercury article from August 1957 specifically says John Wood “ built the house there 50 years ago.” This aligns with the title record.

- The build date is important because this is very early days for concrete house construction. For context, Thomas Edison didn't file his patent for a concrete house design until 1908.
- Locally, we may consider this house in the direct lineage of the Dario Pagani House at 49 Metcalfe St.

**LORE OF BYGONE DAYS**

# Blairs Of Puslinch Age Range 71 To 89



By FINDLAY WEAVER

One of the most appealing of pioneer homes in Puslinch township is that of the late James Blair on the Hamilton highway, just north of Aberfoyle. James Blair and his wife, the former Elizabeth Galloway, settled on the 100-acre farm there 80 years ago. Eldest of their family is Mary, 89, wife of John Patterson, living in Flint, Michigan. Eldest son is John, 87, whose 100-acre farm is just across the highway. He purchased this farm and built the house there 50 years ago. He and his wife, the former Mina Hunt, 80, daughter of the late Jeremiah Hunt, of East Flamborough, now live there in practical retirement.

Next in age of the Blair family, is Helen, 85, who is Mrs. R. V. Bingham, of Toronto. Fourth is Frederick, 83, a former federal minister of agriculture, who has been living in retirement in Ottawa for the past 23 years. Fifth is William George Blair, 80, living on the old homestead, who is to be seen reading the Daily Mercury, as shown in an accompanying picture. His son, William Jr., now has chief operation of the farm.

Sixth in the line is Clarence Blair, who will be 78 next month. He lives in Preston. Youngest is George, 71, who lives at Glen Orchard, near Port Carling, Muskoka.

Original owner of the farm now occupied by William G. Blair, was Kidd McFarlane, who acquired lot 14, concession 8, in 1830, the same year James Kidd took up lot 14, concession 7, the farm which John Kidd purchased 50 years ago.

Mr. and Mrs. John Blair are shown in the garden of their home. They were married 65 years ago at the Hunt family home in East Flamborough.

It was from that township that the pioneer James Blair came to the farm in Puslinch 80 years ago. Wife of William Blair, now on the homestead, is the former Lucy Harper, daughter of Charles Harper, of East Flamborough.

**NOTED THRESHER**  
John Blair ran a threshing outfit for about 40 years, covering extensive portions of Puslinch and Guelph townships. For years this was with a steam engine driven by horses, before being replaced by a tractor. As a boy John Blair recalls attending school at section 4, his first teacher was named Jamieson.

**FINE GARDEN**  
Mr. and Mrs. John Blair have an ideal farm garden and an interesting orchard. Mr. Blair has been famed for his grafting of trees, some of which have several varieties of apples, one having a graft of pears as well. There are grapes in the garden and a patch of strawberries from which this year's yield lasted five weeks, made all the more palatable with Jersey cream, a Jersey cow being the only one of the animals still kept in the barn stable. Mrs. Blair's garden specialty

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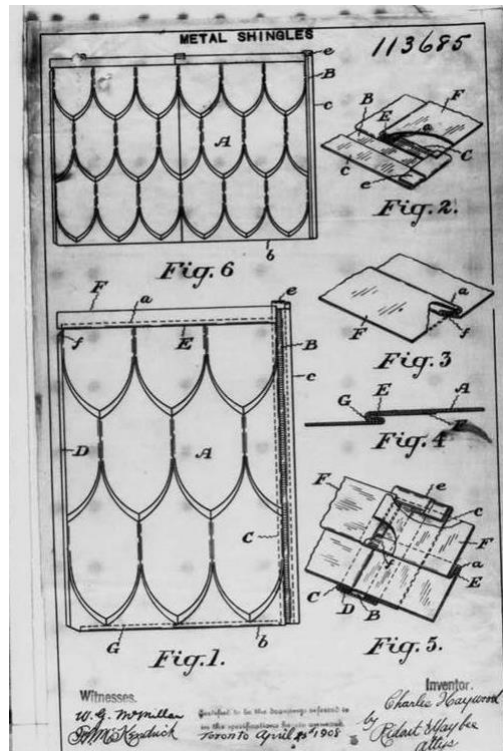
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- The 1921 Census (attached) confirms the building material is a "concrete", four rooms house.

16						
17	11	Cunnington	Clarence			
18	166	Blair	John	0	BB	8 Concrete (4)
19	173	Hunt	Emma	0	BB	8 Wood (4)
20	167	Hunt	Emma			

- The contextual link to the Marcolongo Farm Cultural Heritage Landscape extends to building material: The roof material of the timber barn at 2187 Gordon Street is found as repairing the rear of the barn at 2162 Gordon St.
- Below images are of the rear of the Marcolongo Barn, a Kidd barn roof shingle and the original roof shingle patent drawing.



In the Kidd Barn Historical Docs file: I would ask that some corrections be recommended by Heritage Guelph prior to submission to Council.

- Figure 8 is labelled as 1874 Township of Puslinch Tax Assessment.

I suspect this is the 1877 Assessment since James Kidd is identified as being 77 years old. He died in 1878 at age 78, so the 1874 Assessment would have him list as age 74.

- The 1874 Assessment header is illustrated below and the page attached.



In the Kidd Barn Historic Docs file

a few transcription errors be corrected

- Pg 6 Fig 11 transcribes the physician who sign James Kidd's death record as "Richard Ortow". This is more likely Dr Richard Orton who practiced in Guelph and Puslinch in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Pg 7 Fig 13 transcribes the occupation of Mrs. James Kidd as "window". I would read that as "widow".

I trust these comments will be received in the spirit int which they are intended and will contribute to a strong case for Designation.

Thank you

P. Brian Skerrett