

Later Development at Historic 1812 Military Sites near Detroit

By M.B. Walsh

This section makes mention of some interesting developments at or near some of the historic sites near Detroit described in the main section of an article entitled “General Hull's Campaign along the Detroit: Shots Not Fired on 16 August 1812?” The sites mentioned are labeled with numbers in ellipses on two maps:

[Detroit Area ca. 2012](#)

[Detroit Superimposed Detail 1812 & 2012](#)

The discussion starts with the first map and moves in general in a clockwise direction. Later sites are shown in the second map.

(1) Embarkation Place for Invasion of Upper Canada

On 12 July 1812 the main part of General Hull's army marched upriver from the town of Detroit about two miles to near Bloody Bridge, that crossed Bloody Run. Boats had been quietly moved up the shore for transporting the army across the river. There were not enough boats for everybody to cross at once, so multiple trips were made. Bloody Run was another name for Parent's Creek, and was named for the battle that took place there during Pontiac's Rebellion on 31 July 1763. A British force led by Captain James Dalyell was defeated near here by Indians led by Pontiac. Dalyell and a number of others were killed, but the majority of the force escaped back to the protection of the fort at Detroit.

It is likely that Hull's force boarded the boats downriver from Bloody Run. Off the downriver end of Hog Island, or Belle Isle as it is called now, were shallow waters or shoals that might have caused problems for loaded boats. These shallow areas were later filled becoming the downriver tip of modern Belle Isle. It would be improbable that a precise point could be ascertained for where Hull's force embarked because the loading could have been distributed along the shore over a distance. This writer's best estimate is that it took place along the shore in front of what became the Parke Davis pharmaceutical complex. The Parke Davis research laboratory building facing the river, built in 1902, has been considered as the first industrial pharmacological research laboratory in the United States. The building is now a hotel.

The stream known as Bloody Run has disappeared having mostly been replaced by underground sewers. Remnants of the stream-bed can be observed in Elmwood Cemetery.

The Detroit Boat Club, founded in 1839, considered the oldest sport rowing club in the United States and second oldest in the world moved in 1873 to the waterfront in front of what became the Parke Davis complex. Thus the boat club operated near where Hull's army boarded boats for invading Canada. The Boat Club moved to Belle Isle in the early 1890's.

Belle Isle, formerly called Hog Island, is a park operated by the City of Detroit. Its design is partly based upon work of Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of Central Park in New York. The James

Scott Memorial Fountain was designed in part by Cass Gilbert, the architect who designed the United States Supreme Court building and the main branch of the Detroit Public Library. Gilbert was a distant relative of Lewis Cass, who caused so many problems for General Hull. Also on the island is an equestrian statue of Detroit resident General Alpheus Starkey Williams, an interesting character who served as a United States general during the Civil War and as a Member of Congress. The sculptor of the statue, Henry Shrady, was also the sculptor of the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial at the base of Capitol Hill in front of the Capitol Building at the opposite end of the Mall from the Lincoln Memorial. Readers having an interest in Alpheus S. Williams are encouraged to visit a site created by Lowell Boileau named after Williams' horse, Plug Ugly: <http://bhere.com/plugugly/home.htm>

There is currently no historical plaque addressing the embarkation place of the boats for the 1812 invasion of the British province, Upper Canada.

(2) American Invasion Landing Place

The landing place of the invasion boats of the American force in 1812 is marked with an historical plaque. From a military standpoint the landing was nothing remarkable since it was unopposed, but in Canadian history it is notable. The plaque, maintained by the Province of Ontario, is located off Riverside Drive in front of buildings in the Walker Distillery complex. A couple websites that describes the plaque are:

<http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=34302>

http://www.ontarioplaques.com/Plaques_DEF/Plaque_Essex27.html

The plaque specifies that Hull landed on 12 July 1812 with about 2000 men. This writer believes the number was closer to 1500. Hull's army at Detroit in United States service, including the Michigan Detached Militia commanded by Major James Witherell, was about 2200. Witherell's 200 men and officers at Detroit did not cross on 12 July. About 180 drafted Ohio militiamen refused to cross, although some did finally cross on later days. Others remained on the Detroit side including most of the Detroit garrison of regulars, sick, artificers, etc.

American businessman Hiram Walker founded a distillery here in the mid-nineteenth century, which still operates. It is here where the famous Canadian Club whiskey is produced. For a time the village here was known as Walkerville, but it is now a part of the City of Windsor.

Ford Motor Company built its first Canadian factories nearby, as did Studebaker.

(3) American Encampment at Property of Francois Baby

After landing on 12 July 1812 the American forces marched downriver and made an encampment on the property of Francois Baby, across the river from the town of Detroit. The large brick house recently built, but not finished, was taken over by General Hull as the headquarters building. This building still stands in downtown Windsor and is occupied by the Windsor Community Museum, which is highly recommended for a visit. A plaque stands in front of the museum. This building is the only building still standing on either side of the river of interest to the military events in 1812.

Large picket fences already on the property helped protect some of the perimeter of the encampment. Artillery pieces were placed along the bank protecting the encampment and making interdiction of river traffic along the river more effective.

An extract of a letter probably written by an Ohio militia officer on 16 July 1812 was printed in the *Western Intelligencer* in Worthington, Ohio. The writer observes that the large brick house of Colonel Baby stood back from the river so as to be in the center of the camp. He continues:

“Fortunately he happened to have forty or fifty acres of good timothy and clover meadow, which makes excellent pasture for our horses---”¹⁶⁵

James Taylor, Quartermaster General of the army and cousin of President Madison, wrote to Madison: “I think this one of the handsomest banks I ever saw, and indeed the country is most beautiful; as level as the neighborhood of Washington. I never in all my life saw such grain (wheat), timothy and clover. The apple and pear trees are larger than I ever saw before, and the cider is fine.”¹⁶⁶

A ferry crossing, connecting with Detroit, later became the focus of a village that evolved into a city, Windsor, Canada.

A website describing Windsor's Community Museum is:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windsor%27s_Community_Museum

(4) Fortification on Property of Robert Gouie

The trading establishment of Robert Gouie was located along the Detroit River on lot 76. Lieutenant John Anderson, a graduate of the academy at West Point, supervised construction of a small picketed fort here. The fort was manned by about 250 men and two artillery pieces starting on 7 August 1812 and was evacuated and burned on 11 August 1812.

This site located upriver from Crawford Avenue was later developed as a salt mine with rail access.

Later the site was the location of the CKLW broadcast station. Its AM radio signal was famous for its strong reception in some United States media markets. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation now occupies the site.

(5) Huron Church and Village of Sandwich

In the mid-18th century the Jesuit Mission to the Hurons located across and downriver from Detroit near a Huron [Wyandot] village. In the early 1790's the British extinguished Indian title to most of the lands on the eastern side of Detroit River, with the exception of two reservations for the Hurons. One reservation was a roughly triangular tract downriver from the Huron Mission and the second larger tract was located downriver from the River Canard. After the British agreed in Jay's Treaty to evacuate Detroit and other posts, the British platted two new villages and planned a new fortification. To do so the British extinguished Indian title to the triangular reservation adjacent to the Huron Mission and to a strip off the other reservation downriver. By now most of the Wyandot Indians were living on the American side of the Detroit River, but the Catholics continued to cross the river to attend Mass at the Huron Mission church.

The British platted the village of Sandwich on the former Huron reservation adjacent to the Huron Mission and the village of Amherstburg near the mouth of Detroit River. A fort and naval yard were developed a short distance upriver from the village of Amherstburg. Over time the Huron Mission

church was attended by more and more persons of European heritage. An observer in 1807 wrote back East to a friend:

“It is curious to contemplate the numerous congregation which assembles in that church! one portion whispering their devotions in French, another in English, and another in two or three different Indian tongues, while at intervals the priest pronounces homilies and benedictions in Latin.”¹⁶⁷

On 5 July 1812, hours before the arrival of Hull's army at Spring Wells, artillery were fired by the Americans across the river. Canadian militia had been posted across the river and apparently breastworks were being constructed on the riverbank. Captain John Whistler, commanding the regulars at Detroit, ordered the 24-pounders at the shore batteries to fire upon the British shore. Also, some Michigan men, acting without orders from either Governor Hull or the previously acting governor, Secretary Reuben Attwater, took at least one field piece (reportedly a four-pounder) to the high ground at Spring Wells and fired across the river at the village of Sandwich. Ohio militia surgeon Dr. James Reynolds, who had arrived at Detroit two days before the artillery fired with a boat filled with invalid soldiers, wrote home to Zanesville, Ohio:

“On the 5th inst. the artillery opened on the British dogs in Sandwich, and we continued firing 24 pounders on them till 10 o'clock, while they were forcing their way with boats, loaded with produce out of their ware house. We have reason to believe that a number of them were killed. I saw one of the balls strike among a great crowd of them—one ball made its way through their meeting house—it was a pleasing scene to me.”¹⁶⁸

The meeting house referred to by Dr. Reynolds was probably the Huron Mission church.¹⁶⁹ Although balls fired from the field piece(s) at Spring Wells could have hit the village of Sandwich, it is doubtful they would have reached the church located upriver. It would have been more likely that a 24-pounder at the storehouse battery was fired in the direction of the church. Although Dr. Reynolds thought a number of “British dogs” were killed, nobody was killed or wounded. Some houses in the village of Sandwich were hit. The Huron Mission church is located about a mile and half downriver from Detroit. How did Dr. Reynolds observe a ball going through the church at such a distance? One has to suspect that Dr. Reynolds had a vivid imagination. If the church had indeed been hit by American artillery fire, we probably would have heard about it in the propaganda battles that followed.

This same Dr. Reynolds, who was so pleased with the American artillery attack on the British shore on 5 July, was himself killed by a ball fired by the “British dogs” on the morning of 16 August 1812.

One of the excuses used for the firing was that the British reportedly were discovered by Captain Whistler to have been building an artillery battery. As it turns out the British at the time had no artillery pieces at or near Sandwich. The breastworks being built by the Canadian militia were probably being built for defensive purposes. After the artillery attack Lieutenant Colonel St. George, commanding at Amherstburg, sent some regulars and two six-pound field pieces to augment the militia and bolster their confidence.

The Huron Mission church evolved into what is today Our Lady of the Assumption, Windsor, Ontario. A new structure was during the 1840's built at a site further away from the river and has been added onto over the years. An historical plaque, located near the original site can be viewed at: <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=37386>

Ambassador Bridge, opened in 1929, is between the church and the village of Sandwich. It connects

with Huron Church Road. An entrance ramp to the bridge on the Canadian side runs close to the church cemetery, the location of graves of some of the people involved in the War of 1812.

Although many of the letters written by Americans in 1812 were identified as originating at Sandwich, they were mostly written from the encampment across the river from Detroit and not from the actual village of Sandwich. The area across from Detroit, that later developed into the separate village of Windsor, had no distinguishing geographic name at the time, so Sandwich was used.

The stone school within the village of Sandwich was used during the War of 1812 as barracks. Evidently several successive structures were built at the same location for what has been called the General Brock Public School. A modern school today operates there.

Nearby is the house of James (Jacques) Baby, older brother of Francois Baby, whose brick house was occupied by General Hull as a headquarters. James Baby's wooden house is one of the oldest on either side of the river.

The village of Sandwich was later absorbed into the growing city of Windsor, Ontario.

(6) Embarkation of Indian and British Invasion Forces

For many years a rock cairn and plaque have commemorated the embarkation of invasion forces under the command of General Isaac Brock. It appears that the location of the marker has been moved over the years. The original shoreline has been obscured by considerable fill and industrial development and the location of the embarkation cannot be known with precision, making an exact placement of a marker impractical. Public access and vehicular parking also needs to be considered in placing a marker. The original shoreline is located on private property without convenient and safe access by the public.

This writer believes that the most likely embarkation place was near a point in the shoreline downriver from the village of Sandwich and across from Spring Wells on the American side of the river. The General Order issued by General Brock specified that the troops be in readiness "to embark at McGee's Point."¹⁷⁰ It certainly made sense for the Indian warriors to rendezvous and rest at Thomas McKee's farm (lot 59) downriver from this point. McKee, whose mother was an Indian, was an Indian Department official for many years and was well liked and respected. Maps showing McKee's farm indicated a straight shoreline in front of his farm without any sign of a point. There is a point a short distance upriver from McKee's property, which is probably the point specified in the orders. It does not make sense for the Indians to embark at McKee's farm and paddle against the river current (three knots) in order to make their landing at the upriver side of River Rouge. Embarking at the point upriver from McKee's farm seems to be a good choice.

Probably the most reliable source for this information is the Journal of Charles Askin. Askin, one of the sons of John Askin, Sr., grew up along the Detroit River and was a member of Brock's invasion force. Askin's journal reveals that he was awake long before day on 16 August:

"---the 2d Brigade was halted a short time at Sandwich then marched down near to Parks Mill, where we embarked, when marching down we saw the 3d Brigade and the General, and his staff crossing the River just below the Spring-well---."¹⁷¹

By "marching down," Askin was probably referring to marching in a downriver direction. The point

upriver from McKee's farm was probably a little less than one mile from the stone schoolhouse in the village of Sandwich. Some of the invasion force had probably rested the night before in various buildings in the village, including the schoolhouse.

The question arises; what was Park's Mill? William Park and George Meldrum had been prominent British merchants in Detroit before the Americans assumed control. Both men decided to remain British Subjects. Park moved across to the Canadian side of the river and remained staunchly pro-British. Meldrum remained on the American side and his sons became American Citizens. A number of properties were owned by Park and Meldrum, either jointly or separately. The mill referred to was apparently owned by Park alone. Park died before the war, but was survived by a widow.

A 1796 map reproduced in Frontier Metropolis shows a structure located at the point along the shoreline discussed above, but there is no indication if it is a mill, a residence or something else.¹⁷² A copy of a manuscript map at Windsor's Community Museum of County of Essex shows a windmill at the point. Another two windmills are located downriver along Petite Cote.¹⁷³

As the village of Sandwich grew additional streets were opened. The street running to the point is labeled in 19th century and early 20th century maps as "Park Street." To further confuse matters, another parallel street upriver from Park Street was named "Lot Street." When the village of Sandwich was platted, the village lots were called lots and larger outlots in the back were called parks. Neither the names Park Street, nor Lot Street remain today.

The section of McKee's farm (lot 59) near the river shows up in some later maps as a fish hatchery. Later it became a property of the Canadian Salt Company. The point above discussed is labeled in later maps as owned by Pittsburgh Coal Company. The cove or indentation in the shoreline at the village of Sandwich has been filled obscuring the original shape of the shoreline.

A website describing the present historical marker is: <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=34321>

(7) Landing places of Indian and British Invasion Forces at Spring Wells

The name "Spring Wells" in 1812 referred to a sand and gravel ridge running parallel with the Detroit River. It was at comparatively high elevation above the river and surrounding ground and three Indian burial mounds were located in its vicinity. Detroit residents enjoyed visiting, bathing and picnicking at Spring Wells. Several ribbon farms included parts of the ridge. Sometimes maps would place the name in one of the farms, but this was misleading because the ridge crossed several farms. Local government official Matthew Ernest, collector of customs, defaulted on his government account and the United States government took possession of his farm, Private Claim 30. This property, called Spring Hill Farm, was leased by Father Gabriel Richard in order to host a school for Indian children. The next farm downriver was owned by Detroit resident and native of England, John Harvey. This farm, Private Claim 39, later known as the Reeder Farm, was the object of a famous legal battle that took place over many years, Crane vs. Reeder. The next farm downriver from the Reeder Farm in the 1840s became the site of a United States Army fortification named "Fort Wayne," which still stands.

For many years sand and gravel were excavated and transported for fill elsewhere. The prominent ridge disappeared over time. A township was named "Springwells," covering many square miles in the vicinity. Springwells Avenue is far from the original "Spring Wells."

Smelters and rolling mills, a very large facility for the time, were established upriver from Fort Wayne

on the Reeder Farm by the Michigan Copper and Brass Company.

An historic plaque marks the location of one of the former Indian burial mounds located within the Fort Wayne tract. There is not a plaque or marker describing the landing of the Indians and British invasion force on 16 August 1812. It is likely that the boats landed at several places along the American shoreline. Charles Askin observed that General Brock and staff were crossing just below the Spring Well. John Richardson asserts that the landing took place above Spring Wells. Richardson's writings are of limited reliability and his reminiscences conflict with the general order specifying that the troops embark at the point and land between River Rouge and Spring Wells.

(8) River Road and Whitmore Knaggs Property

After collecting more than 700 of his invasion force, Brock marched the force upriver along the river road. Several newspapers reports assert that the British marched twelve abreast.¹⁷⁴ They might have marched twelve abreast as they approached Fort Detroit during the surrender formalities later that day, but it is unlikely that they were able to march along the narrow river road in a column that wide.

The river road was later widened and improved and became known as Jefferson Avenue. The strip between Jefferson Avenue and Detroit River developed into an industrial area.

As they marched upriver they passed what later became called the Clark farm (Private Claim 583). Mr. Clark operated a shipbuilding yard and drydock along the river. Later an automobile assembly plant was built on the side of the road away from the river, where the infamous Flanders automobile was assembled. This later became one of Studebaker's factories. Further inland is a city park called Clark Park. Clark Street runs along the downriver boundary of the former Clark farm. Less than two miles along Clark from the river was located the complex where Cadillac automobiles were assembled for a number of decades.

At Knagg's Creek the British invading force would have crossed a wooden bridge. A windmill was constructed sometime after 1812 near the mouth of Knagg's Creek. Knagg's Creek was later filled and replaced with underground sewers. The farm of Whitmore Knaggs (Private Claim 77) was later acquired and occupied by businessman and naturalist, Bela Hubbard.

(9) Position Occupied by British Invasion Force

General Brock's British and Canadian invasion force marched along the river road until reaching the tan-yard of James Henry (1771-1812). They then turned inland following the gully or valley of May's Creek, where the British remained in place until the capitulation was signed. Henry came to Detroit in the 1790's as an agent for the contractor supplying the army garrison and constructed the tan-yard as a separate private investment. James Henry's father, William Henry (1729-1786), was a gunsmith from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and delegate to Continental Congress.¹⁷⁵ William Henry developed ideas for building a steamboat, but didn't build. Henry shared his notebooks with John Fitch (1743-1798), who constructed the first American steamboat at Philadelphia. Fitch had been captured by Indians during the Revolutionary War and was taken to Detroit, where he was held prisoner by the British. After the war he settled at Philadelphia and started his steamboat adventures. Several members of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 witnessed Fitch's first full-size steamboat operating in Delaware River. Fitch's company later built another steamboat that operated commercially, but not profitably, along Delaware River.

Edward Brooks (1784-1859), a United States Army officer who settled in Detroit, acquired the tan-yard property. Brooks, born into a Quaker family at Bordentown, New Jersey, was nephew and namesake of Quaker merchant Edward Brooks (-d.1795). The senior Brooks was treasurer for John Fitch's steamboat company and was one of Fitch's few backers that stayed with Fitch over the long term. Brooks died without wife or children and left a bequest to nephew Edward Brooks. The principal part of his estate was left to the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.¹⁷⁶

The younger Brooks transferred the tan-yard property to James May, his father-in-law. May operated a grist mill further up the creek. A water-driven mill had operated here in the middle 1700's, probably the first in the Detroit area.

Due to the threat of flooding, construction of buildings near May's Creek was impractical. The original Central Railroad, built by the State of Michigan, terminated at Michigan Avenue near Campus Martius in Detroit. The Central Railroad was sold to private investors, who laid new tracks generally following the valley of May's Creek to Detroit River and turning parallel to the shoreline along newly filled land to a new depot at Third Street. Following the creek valley assured a gentle grade and minimized the removal of existing buildings.

The first attempt at constructing a tunnel under Detroit River was made in 1872 and 1873 by boring through clay using the then conventional technologies of driving a shield and working in compressed air. Troublesome high pressure water leaks were encountered and the backers aborted the project. Another attempt, initiated downriver across from Grosse Ile, involving excavation of rock, was also canceled. A rail tunnel built using conventional techniques was completed under St. Clair River between Sarnia, Ontario and Port Huron, Michigan in the 1890s. A new attempt was initiated in 1906 to tunnel under Detroit River. This time, a novel technique was applied that had been used earlier for water and sewer lines, but not for a transportation tunnel. The subaqueous portion of the tunnel was built using the sunken tube or immersed tube method. Two tubes were built allowing rail traffic in both directions simultaneously. Sections of dual metal tubes were constructed at a yard upstream within wooden enclosures that were floated downriver and lowered into a trench dredged into the river bottom. The sections were carefully flooded and lowered into place one at a time. Measures were taken to handle the river current. Divers connected tube sections and a considerable amount of concrete was poured. This method reduced accidents and fatalities. The tunnel was electrified so that electric locomotives could pull trains through without the obvious problems of steam locomotion. The immersed tube method provided a gentler grade than that obtained with a deep bored tunnel. It opened for service in 1910 and is in use today. Later, a ventilation system was installed for diesel-electric locomotives and electric operations were discontinued. A modern ventilation tower is visible between Jefferson Avenue and the river.

The immersed tube technique, pioneered with the Michigan Central Railway Tunnel, has been since used in numerous transportation tunnels around the world. The Detroit-Windsor tunnel, using a single tube for two opposing lanes of auto traffic, was built using the immersed tube technique and incorporated a ventilation system similar to that used earlier by the Holland tunnel at New York City.

Civil engineer Eliot Channing Clarke (1845-1921), great-grandson of General William Hull, was employed in the first tunnel project at Detroit in 1872 and 1873.¹⁷⁷ Clarke moved to Chicago, where his uncle, William Hull Clarke (1812-1878), had built Chicago's first water supply tunnel under Lake Michigan in 1864-1865. He later became involved with the sewer system of Boston.¹⁷⁸

In 1913 the new Michigan Central Station was opened, designed by the same firms as New York's

Grand Central Terminal. This prominent multistory building, no longer in use, awaits redevelopment.

Most persons are unaware of the significance of this area in the history of the War of 1812. There are no historic plaques. This writer estimates that General Brock's invasion force turned inland at what is today Jefferson Avenue near the vehicular entrance gate for a former Detroit Free Press printing plant, since demolished. The ventilation tower for the railway tunnel is a prominent nearby landmark.

(10) Position Occupied by American Militia in United States Service

The fence line where the militiamen in United States service were located on the morning of 16 August 1812, was along the downriver boundary of the William Macomb farm. Macomb left the property ultimately to his sons at his death in 1796. During 1812, James May was leasing from the estate and residing on the property. After the war Lewis Cass purchased the property and it became known as the Cass Farm. Cass resided in the large old house next to the river road. A brewery and a distillery operated within the downriver portion near the Savoyard. This became a matter of controversy during the Cass candidacy for the Presidency of the United States in 1848. During the speculative land bubble of the mid-1830's, the Cass mansion house was moved away from the river to a new location and the Cass Farm waterfront was sold to an association of investors for development. The mansion, for many years the oldest building in Detroit, was demolished in 1882.¹⁷⁹ The riverbank was graded and additional fill brought in to create new land along the riverfront. During the subsequent economic downturn, most of the waterfront property reverted to Cass.

In the summer of 1837, while Cass was in Europe, Daniel Webster came to Detroit to visit his son and view his investments. Webster gave a speech on the Cass Farm near the orchard to a crowd of about 1500.

The location of the fence line today runs through the downtown campus of Wayne County Community College. The six-pound field artillery piece placed by Lieutenant John Anderson under cover of the militiamen at the fence line appears to be close to where a southbound exit ramp of the Lodge Expressway (Michigan route M-10) enters a large parking structure serving the Joe Lewis Arena. Joe Louis Arena, built mostly on land filled over what was formerly Detroit River, aside from being the home of the Detroit Red Wings, was the location of the nomination of former Governor Ronald Reagan for the Presidency in 1980.

There are no historic plaques describing this line of defense downriver from the town of Detroit in August 1812.

(11) Fort Detroit

The Citadel and buildings within Fort Detroit, renamed Fort Shelby by the returning Americans, were burned by the British during their evacuation of Detroit in late September 1813. After the war a new arsenal building was built along the main street which by then was called Jefferson Avenue. Other places further west in the United States were considered more important for troop garrisons and the combat forces at Detroit were withdrawn. During the mid-1820's most of the Detroit military reservation was granted to the City of Detroit and platted into building lots.

Two roads bisect the ground on which the fort was situated. They are appropriately named Fort Street and Shelby Street, after the fort named Fort Shelby during its last years. An historical plaque commemorating the Fort, originally called Fort Lernoult, is located near the intersection of the two

streets: <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/hso/sites/15567.htm>

At the northwest corner a building was built in 1896 housing the post office, federal courts, and custom house. This building was replaced by a federal building in the 1930's that is today called the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse.

At the northeast corner the Detroit Branch Building of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago was built in 1927. The bank has moved its operations to another site and the building is now privately owned.

(12) Lower and Storehouse Batteries

The ground occupied by both the Lower and Storehouse Batteries is now covered by Cobo Center, a convention center constructed in the 1950's and since expanded. Cobo Center and Cobo Arena were part of a complex previously called Cobo Hall. Cobo Center also covers the ground previously occupied by the Citadel, the government warehouse, and the privately-built stone house that was later expanded and operated as a hotel named the Mansion House. In addition, the house of Henry Jackson Hunt, where the two British aides to General Brock were held on 15 August 1812, was near what is now the upriver edge of Cobo Center. Numerous visitors from local as well as distant places visit the center every year. Many of these visitors would undoubtedly be interested in knowing about some of the historic events that took place here in 1812. A graphic display within the center could be helpful, supplemented by markers in the floor indicating locations of historic features.

(13) Wharf and Pear Tree Battery

The first shore battery built in the spring of 1812 was located near the downriver end of the government storehouse. Although located on high ground its effectiveness was limited in the upriver direction by buildings. A second battery was built near the privately owned and operated Berthelet's wharf. This battery, closer to the river at a low elevation, was not blocked by buildings. Several years after the war a new wharf, also named Berthelet's wharf, was built a short distance upriver at the end of Randolph Street.

The three 24-pound artillery pieces at the wharf battery were moved on 14-15 August 1812 to a new battery location constructed on high ground in what had been decades before the commanding officer's garden. This was the pear tree battery commanded by Lieutenant James Dalliba on 15 and 16 August.

Both battery locations are within the general area of what is today Hart Plaza, named after Philip Hart, formerly U. S. Senator. The wharf battery appears close to a building constructed as the Veterans Memorial Building, now occupied by the United Auto Workers. The pear tree battery is said to have been located in the rear of a notable building, constructed about 1836, for the Bank of Michigan. This building was located at the southwest corner of Jefferson Avenue and Griswold Street. The building was faced with polished fossil-bearing limestone, quarried from the Great Lakes. The Bank of Michigan, like almost all Michigan banks, closed during the economic disaster endured during the late 1830's and early 1840's. The building was later used as a federal building, housing for a time the federal court, post office and other federal offices. Later the building was occupied by various financial institutions into the 1900's.

Lieutenant John Anderson, who commanded the battery at the downriver edge of town, was reinstated in the Army after the war and lived in a house at the northwest corner of Woodward Avenue and Woodbridge Street. He died in 1834, his highest rank being brevet lieutenant colonel, having

honorably served as a major for ten years. His widow, Julia Ann Anderson, and her sister, bequeathed the lot and funds for building Mariners' Church. The stone Mariners' Church was completed in 1849 on the lot of the former Anderson residence. In 1955, the structure was moved close to 900 feet in the upriver direction. The former site of the Anderson residence and Mariners' Church is now within Hart Plaza. Mariners' Church continues in operation today at the new location.

(14) Governor Hull's Residence and Indian Council House

The town of Detroit was consumed by fire in June, 1805. While in Massachusetts during the following winter, Governor Hull recruited skilled tradesmen from Boston to emigrate to Detroit. Although the Governor needed a suitable residence for his family, the builders were first employed in building a solid building for the newly formed Detroit Bank at the northwest corner of what became called Jefferson Avenue and Randolph streets. The Boston businessmen behind the bank evidently were attracted to the difficulty of transporting banknotes from the East for redemption into specie at Detroit. In the end the bank put into circulation large quantities of notes without adequate backing and the bank developed a scandalous reputation. The Detroit Bank became part of a network of financial institutions being exploited to finance the construction of the largest building yet built in the United States, the Exchange Coffee House of Boston. This multistory building served as a hotel, coffee house and business meeting place. The book, Exchange Artist, by Jane Kamensky tells the story of this ambitious project.¹⁸⁰

Governor Hull, as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the region was tasked by the Secretary of War with building a new Indian council house. The previous wooden council house, located close to the river had burned in the 1805 conflagration. Hull, rather than building a small log structure, built a large gambrel-roofed structure with stone walls, 47 by 25 foot in the lower level for meeting room and offices and a narrower upper level for storage of Indian goods.¹⁸¹ The building was situated at the southwest corner of Jefferson Avenue and Randolph Streets. Secretary of War Dearborn was evidently unhappy with the expense, but the building provided good service for many years. The walls and roof were complete in February, 1807, and the building was used for barracks later that year during the crisis following the attack by the Royal Navy on the United States frigate *Chesapeake*. In later years the building served as a location for civic meetings.

William Hull had his new brick residence built on a one acre building site at the southeast corner of what later became called Jefferson Avenue and Randolph Street. Most of the building site had been carved out of the Brush Farm (Private Claim 1) and was therefore not part of the Governor and Judges' new plan for the town of Detroit. Hull, described his temporary quarters to Secretary Dearborn in 1807: "There is not a barn in Massachusetts more open, than the room, I have slept in this winter."¹⁸² The new residence was palatial for its time and place. General Hull hosted an entertainment on 9 July 1812 for the officers of the North West Army at his mansion. After this event he received the letter from the Secretary of War authorizing the invasion of Upper Canada. After the war Hull sold the property to Elkanah Watson, who sold it to Mrs. Alexander Macomb, wife and first cousin of the future commanding general of the U. S. Army. Later John Biddle, former army major and younger brother of Nicholas Biddle, purchased the property and resided there. Mrs. Abigail Snelling, daughter of Thomas Hunt, formerly a company officer under Hull, and widow of Josiah Snelling, one of Hull's principal accusers at the trial by court martial, operated a boarding house in the building. Afterwards the building became The American, a popular hotel. In 1842, former President Martin Van Buren stayed here during his visit to Detroit. This is the same Martin Van Buren who prosecuted Hull at his trial by court martial in 1814. This building, as well as the Indian Council House, burned in the great fire of 1848. A new hotel, the Biddle House, was built on the same site.

In the mid-Twentieth Century Jefferson Avenue was widened in the direction of the river and the locations of the former Indian Council House and Hull residence appear to be covered by the present eastbound lanes of Jefferson Avenue. The present location of Mariners' Church is nearby, but not exactly on the site of the Indian Council House.

¹⁶⁵ *Western Intelligencer*, Worthington, OH, 31 July 1812, gentleman in the army to his friend, 16 July.

¹⁶⁶ *National Intelligencer*, Washington, DC, 4 August 1812, officer in the North Western army to a gentleman in this city, 14 July.

¹⁶⁷ *Political Observatory*, Walpole, NH, 27 March 1807, gentleman at Detroit.

¹⁶⁸ [*Muskingum Messenger and Ohio Intelligencer*], Zanesville, OH, 22 July 1812, copied in *The Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 1 August, Reynolds letter of 7 July 1812.

¹⁶⁹ Gilpin, Alec R., General William Hull and the War on the Detroit in 1812, University of Michigan dissertation, 1949: 94.

¹⁷⁰ District General Orders, 15 August 1812 in William Wood, Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812 [SBD], Toronto, 1920, v. 1: 462;

Cruikshank, E., "General Hull's Invasion of Canada in 1812," in Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada Third Series Volume 1, Toronto, 1907, Transactions Section II: 279.

¹⁷¹ Journal of Charles Askin, 16 August 1812 entry, in SBD, v 1: 536.

¹⁷² Dunnigan, Brian Leigh, Frontier Metropolis Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838 [FM], Detroit, 2001: 106-107, Figure 6.2.

¹⁷³ Windsor Community Museum, map of County of Essex W. D., scale 2 miles to one inch.

¹⁷⁴ *National Intelligencer*, Washington, DC, 15 September 1812, Cass to Secretary of War.

¹⁷⁵ Rau, Louise, Detroit Biographies: James Henry, in Burton Historical Collection Leaflet, May, 1929, v. 7, no. 5: 65-80.

¹⁷⁶ *United States Gazette*, Philadelphia, 5 Sep 1795.

¹⁷⁷ Harvard Graduates Magazine, 1921, v. 30: 101-103.

¹⁷⁸ Kirkland, Joseph, *The Story of Chicago*, Chicago, 1892: 274-275.

¹⁷⁹ Quaife, M. M., The Mansion of St. Martin, in Burton Historical Collection Leaflet, January, 1925, v. 3, no. 3: 33-48.

¹⁸⁰ Kamensky, Jane, Exchange Artist, 2008.

¹⁸¹ FM: 120.

¹⁸² MPHC 40: 104-106.