

History of Paquette Corners and Church of the Redeemer - Part 1

by Richard Parkinson

The following is the first in a short series of articles, leading up to the Centennial Anniversary of the Church of the Redeemer, located in the former-Colchester North Township.

This article explores the history of Cyril Paquette, the founder of Paquette Corners. The Church of the

Redeemer was the spiritual focal point for that community.

The church will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Sunday, July 2nd.

The information in the following articles comes from two key sources.

Much of it consists of the recollections of Harry

Pettipiece which was documented and compiled in book form by his daughter Diane Jensen. Eleanor Mergle also provided important information.

Cyril Paquette was born 163 years ago on April 5th, 1837, near Windsor.

The world into which he was born differed greatly from today's world. There were no automobiles and quick modes of long distance communication.

The pace of life was slower and people dwelt on and enjoyed the simpler aspects of life much more than we do today. Entertainment consisted of family and other gatherings where dancing, card playing, and primarily conversation took place.

One can imagine that Paquette sat around the fire with his family in the evening, tired from the days chores, chatting about the weather, the crops, what-have-you.

Like many area residents at the time he came from a family which lived off the land.

He was baptized at Assumption Catholic Church and settled in River Canard.

When he was twenty-two years old he married Cecilia Odette and, while living in River Canard, the couple had four children.

In 1869, ten years after they were married, Paquette, his wife, and their four children made the trek to what is now known as Paquette's Corners. There, they set up their family



Cyril and Cecilia Paquette (pictured above) were the original founders of what is today known as Paquette Corners.

homestead.

The Paquettes would have seven more children but back then large families were important.

Paquette was primarily a farmer but he also dabbled in local politics and was a Colchester Councillor for two years.

More to the point, he quickly realized how important the location of his home was, as it was in the middle of both Windsor and the Harrow community.

For this reason he set up a kind of public house, a stop over for people hauling grain to the city, where they could kick up their heels and rest their horses. It became a

gathering place and was soon referred to as "Paquette's Corner".

In April, 1924, Paquette's wife passed away at the age of 83.

Five year's later, at the ripe old age of 92, Paquette himself followed.

Many of his descendants still live in the vicinity of Paquette's Corners and his mark on local geography and history is still evident.

