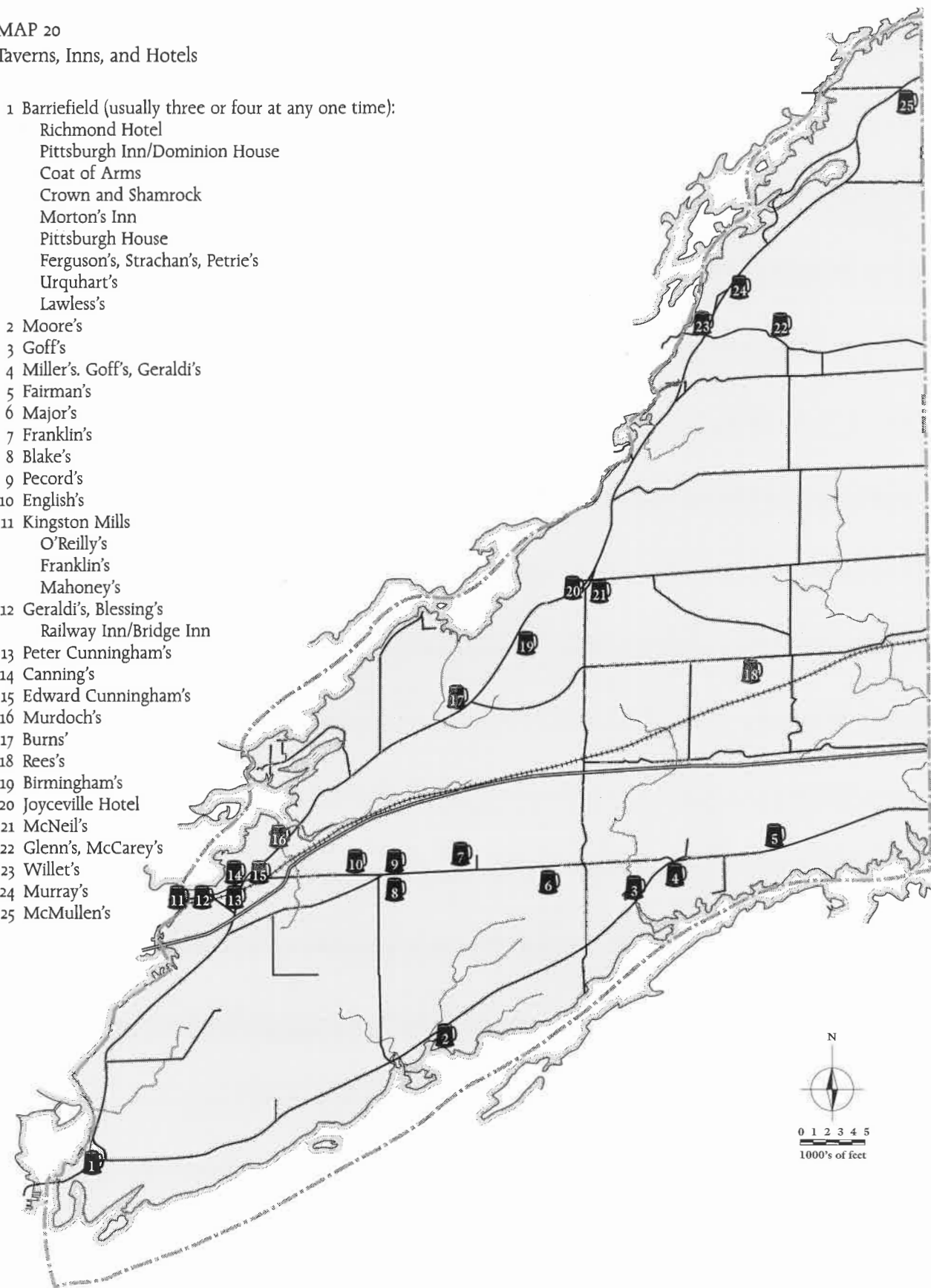


- 1 Barriefield (usually three or four at any one time):
Richmond Hotel
Pittsburgh Inn/Dominion House
Coat of Arms
Crown and Shamrock
Morton's Inn
Pittsburgh House
Ferguson's, Strachan's, Petrie's
Urquhart's
Lawless's
- 2 Moore's
- 3 Goff's
- 4 Miller's, Goff's, Gerald's
- 5 Fairman's
- 6 Major's
- 7 Franklin's
- 8 Blake's
- 9 Pecord's
- 10 English's
- 11 Kingston Mills
O'Reilly's
Franklin's
Mahoney's
- 12 Gerald's, Blessing's
Railway Inn/Bridge Inn
- 13 Peter Cunningham's
- 14 Canning's
- 15 Edward Cunningham's
- 16 Murdoch's
- 17 Burns'
- 18 Rees's
- 19 Birmingham's
- 20 Joyceville Hotel
- 21 McNeil's
- 22 Glenn's, McCarey's
- 23 Willet's
- 24 Murray's
- 25 McMullen's



Taverns



WHEN PITTSBURGH TOWNSHIP was legally constituted on 1 January 1850, the very first by-law enacted (18 April 1850) concerned the licensing of taverns. Unfortunately, the by-laws from 1850–1855 were stolen; but it is possible to reconstruct the regulations from the inspection reports and later by-laws. (See Table, page 214) The licensing of taverns had been in effect since 1793, but previously it had been the prerogative of the Midland District Council.

As early as 4 February 1850 Charles Lane, Sarah Franklin, and William Beggs petitioned the new Council to check into illegal taverns in Barriefield. As legal owners they had to pay a £8 licence with extras annually, and were losing business. The first list of licenced taverns comes in the Inspectors' Report for 1851 for "Inns, Taverns, Beer Houses and Other Houses of Entertainment." The inspectors Robert Anglin, Adam Laidlaw, and Thomas Scott recommended the fee for 1852 be £4 in the rural areas and £8 in Barriefield.

In the 1852 Inspector's Report Mrs Lawless was not recommended, nor was William Beggs, who was categorized as "indifferent," nor was James Miller. One year later there were two new taverns – John Urquhart's in Barriefield, and John Burns's (C4 L11) – and two new requests, from Patrick Glenn (C8 L29) and Patrick Murray (C9 L28). Fees were changed: £8 continued for Barriefield, but a lower rate of £3 or £3 10s was set for rural taverns. The inspectors were William Medley, Martin Strachan, and John Ruttan. Burns' Tavern was described as built of "Flattened Logs, size 32 x 22 feet."

In 1853 Beggs kept his licence after an appeal to the Council; he called his establishment The Coat of Arms.



177 Morton's Inn, 246–248 James St., Barriefield, built c. 1830. was one of the earliest taverns. [R. Cardwell]

Two licences were transferred. James Redfearn took over from Charles Lane in Barriefield, and Louis Gerald's from James Miller at the Fingerboard. Taverns were always located at accessible places. Burns was at the junction of the Woodburn and Perth roads. James Blake was the junction of Abbey Dawn and the Middle Road; James Birmingham was on the Perth Road; Wallace Fairman was on the Front Road, as was George Moore. James McMullen and Patrick Murray were on the Perth Road.¹

By 1853 the licensing forms were printed. Schedule A was the licence to operate a tavern. Schedule B was the

REPORT OF INSPECTORS OF TAVERN LICENCES FOR 1851

Name	Type	Date of Licence	Grantee	Fee	Where Con	Lot	Size	Bed Rooms	#Beds	Horse Stalls	Barn	Distance from next public house	Characater of keeper	Owned Rented	Continue Licence
James McMullin	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido*	£3/0/0	11	38	36×36	7	14	10	36×26	12 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
James Blake	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/10/0	2	7	24×18	2	4		24×20	6 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
William Major	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/10/0	2	16	24×30	2	3		36×18	2 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
James Miller	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/12/6	2	24	33×24	3	3	5	30×18	2 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
James Birmingham	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/10/0	5	16	45×45	8	8	24	50×18	12 miles	Good	Rented	Yes
Wallace Fairman	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/14/0	1	30	52×52	8	14	12	36×45	8 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
George Moore	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£3/10/0	1	10	21×34	5	7	3	15×30	6 miles	Good	Owner	Yes
Michael Lawless	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£8/0/0	Barriefield		20×40	4	5	5	30×20		Good	Rented	Yes
William Beggs	Tavern	5 Jan 1850	A.Thibido	£8/0/0	Barriefield		48×24	3	6	4	56×24		Good	Rented	Yes
Thomas Patrick [new application]					Barriefield										

* A. Thibido was Inspector of Licences in 1850.

inspector's certification as to the innkeeper's fitness to hold a licence. A Tavern Licence Bond was a surety that the licence holder was financially responsible. The innkeeper had to bond himself for £200, and have two other freeholders bond themselves for £100 each.

Taverns could be a problem. On 29 April 1853 the inspector made a report to Council concerning a mob scene at Thomas Patrick's Crown and Shamrock tavern in Barriefield. Apparently Patrick was selling liquor on Sunday and the mob was simply a group trying to get in for a drink! Patrick was fined 5s and costs – a total of 15s 3d.

In 1856 Peter Cunningham opened his tavern on the southwest corner of the Perth/Philipsville Road and the Montreal Road (KT C4 L41). This corner soon became known as Cunningham's Corners; it was a popular stopping-off place because there was also a toll gate there. In 1857 a John Clarke applied for a beer-house licence for lot 18 on the 2nd concession on the grounds that William Major (C2 L16) was going out of business and there would otherwise be no tavern on the Middle Road. The licence was not granted because of opposition by Charles Franklin (C3 L8) and others. In 1859 James Birmingham complained about the price of a tavern licence, but Council said it was a provincially legislated amount, which for that year was £7 10s.²

Beecham Trotter had great memories of Birmingham Hotel. It was a large house stuccoed on the outside and

walnut-panelled on the inside. It was the centre of a little community – post office, church, and school – all of which has disappeared (the hotel burnt in 1876). Trotter remembers the circus stopping there, and also the square-timber men who went through the bush cutting down the big trees. It was a great place for square dances, jigs, and reels. Music was supplied by a fiddler, or sometimes by someone playing on a primitive kazoo, a comb with tissue-paper.³

Innkeepers seemed to be constantly moving. By 1859 James Redfearn was operating at C2 L7 on the Middle Road. Also in 1859 William Blessing (KT C4 L40) opened up his tavern near the junction of the Montreal Road and the Station Road. Bernard McCarey took over Patrick Glenn's tavern on the Brewers Mill Road.

The rates for tavern licences changed in 1859 to conform to decimal currency. A tavern licence was \$30 plus a 75-cent fee, but only a \$20 licence was required for a shopkeeper to sell liquor. At a minimum a tavern had to have one bedroom, three beds, and stabling for four horses with sheds for six. These regulations changed almost every year.⁴

A new tavern opened up at C3 L1 in 1860, run by Martin Murdock. Murdock had three-quarters of an acre on the north side of the highway, about half a mile north of Cunningham's Corners. In Barriefield William Reid had taken over the Pittsburgh Inn, which had been operating more or less for thirty years. Also in 1860 Patrick McNeil

TOWNSHIP OF PITTSBURGH.

TAVERN LICENSE BOND.

Know all men these presents, that we *George Moore* of the Township of Pittsburgh, *John Graham* of the said Township and *Robert Goughart* of the said Township, Freeholders, are severally held and firmly bound unto the Municipal Council of the Township of Pittsburgh, and their successors, in the penal sums following—that is to say, *George Moore* in the sum of Two Hundred Dollars, and the said *John Graham* and the said *Robert Goughart* in the sum of One Hundred Dollars each, to be paid to the Municipal Council of the Township of Pittsburgh, and their successors, for which payments, well and truly to be made, we severally bind ourselves, our Heirs Executors and Administrators, firmly by these presents.

Sealed with our Seals, and dated this *5th* day of *March* 186*2*

WHEREAS, the said *George Moore* hath been granted a Certificate, to keep a Tavern in the said Township for the current year; Now, the condition of this obligation is such, that if the said *George Moore* shall, in all matters and things, faithfully observe and obey the Laws of the Province of Canada, and the By-Laws and Regulations of the Municipal Council touching the Duties and Obligations of Keepers of Taverns and Houses of Public Entertainment, then this obligation to be void, else to remain in full force and virtue.]

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the presence of *George Moore*
John Graham
Township Clerk
Robert Goughart

opened up his tavern at C5 E1/2 L19, on the southeast corner of the Perth Road and the 6th-concession road (Joyceville). In 1861 Edward Cunningham asked to have a licence. It would appear he wanted to open a tavern on the northeast corner, opposite his brother. In 1861 Henry Rees opened a tavern at C4 L29, on the Woodburn Road.

The regulations in 1861 stated there could be no more than one tavern for every 250 persons: Pittsburgh could thus have about twelve – and only if thirty resident electors petitioned for it.⁵ In 1863, thirty-nine persons on the Middle Road petitioned against Thomas Blake (C2 L8) getting a licence. Henry Wilson asked to take over the William Blessing establishment, known as the Railway Inn, in 1863.

By-law 100 (1866) set out the regulations governing taverns in great detail. (The by-law was the local follow-up of the Temperance Act of 1864). Each holder had to submit a favourable petition signed by thirty electors by February each year. Each holder had to deposit a bond of \$200, with two sureties of \$100 each. Licences, which had to be reviewed each year, cost \$20 if the alcohol was consumed on the premises, \$25 if it was sold to be consumed elsewhere. Taverns could sell alcohol to take out, but shops could not sell drinks to be consumed on the premises. There were fines and imprisonment for infractions.

Each tavern must have a bar-room, dining room, and at least four bedrooms, stabling for six horses, and sheds for four carriages. They had to be able to serve meals. There could be no intoxication, no gambling, no immoral persons, no noise on Sunday, no profane language. Taverns were closed from 9 pm Saturday evening until 6 am Monday, except to residents of the tavern. Rules applied to male and female alike. Inspectors were paid eight dollars per year; taverns were inspected every three months. In 1866 John Hysop and Thomas Wafer were appointed inspectors.

Over the years the number of taverns decreased as the number of residents did. The Temperance Acts of 1864 and 1878 also gave power to the Township Council to curb excessive drinking. By-law 235 (1879) made it unlawful to sell or give intoxicating liquors to a child, apprentice, or servant without the consent of parent or master. It was unlawful to be drunk or “to make use of any obscene,

blasphemous or grossly insulting language or other immorality or indecency or disorderly conduct in any of the public streets ...” It was unlawful to post indecent pictures, to gamble, or to litter. There was to be no indecent exposure: bathers must have a “proper bathing dress.” It was unlawful for “any persons or persons to keep support or frequent any house of ill-fame, within the municipality.” Such laws made tavern-keeping more onerous. Also, as roads improved, there was less need for local taverns.

The Joyceville Hotel had a long run from 1865 to 1917. It was opened by Samuel Smith on the southwest corner of Highway 15 and the Swamp Road. Operated for a long time by John Murphy, it was destroyed by fire in this century. Peter Cunningham’s tavern was destroyed by fire and replaced by the Berryman Hotel, which in turn became Coyle’s. The other Cunningham tavern was converted to a residence and also destroyed by fire, in 1970. Its business was taken over by Canning’s tavern, located on the northwest corner. It later became Dean’s store.

179 The Pittsburgh Inn, 236 James St., Barriefield, built c. 1840. Later renamed the Dominion House, it was operated by William Hutton from 1867 to c. 1900. [D. McCallum]



180 Myles Byrnes and family (Laura and Dovie with little Frances Knapp) on the verandah of Pittsburgh House, 210 Main St., Barriefield, c. 1910. [Clarke Collection]

At Kingston Mills the Blessing tavern/Railway Inn was renamed the Bridge Inn and run by Charles Harrison. It gave up business in 1880. The Middle Road and Front Road taverns seem to have died away about the same time. The Barriefield hotels existed longer, Myles Byrnes operated his hotel at 211–213 Main Street, from 1881 to c. 1910; while William Hutton operated the Pittsburgh Inn, renamed the Dominion House, at 236 James Street, from 1867 to c. 1900.⁶

It would appear that the Temperance Act of 1878, which replaced that of 1864, had a dampening effect on the number of taverns. During the hundred years from 1825 to 1925 the forces of temperance waged war against alcohol and all its abuses. While originally for mere temperance the movement more and more became one

for total abstinence. By the end of the nineteenth century organizations such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union had been formed and were leading a political campaign to have not only drinking-places closed but also the manufacture of alcohol prohibited. This move was thwarted by the legal fact (established by the Privy Council) that control of the manufacture of alcoholic beverages was a federal responsibility, whereas the licensing and control of hotels and taverns was a provincial responsibility. Although local municipalities could by the Act of 1878 hold a vote to decide whether to be “wet or dry,” Pittsburgh did not do so; and in not doing so reflected the feeling of the nation, which in the plebiscite of 1898 did not give a clear yes to prohibition.

The First World War provided impetus to the abstinence movement. A combination of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant zeal (mainly Methodist), women fighting for political and social recognition, and the desire to put everything into the war effort made it possible to force prohibition on the provinces and the banning of the manufacture of alcohol on the federal government. The non-production of alcohol was part of the War Measures Act (1918) but it was rescinded in 1919. The Ontario Temperance Act of 1917 forbade the sale of alcoholic beverages (except native wine) and was repealed only by the Liquor Control Act of 1927, which had very restrictive regulations on the sale of alcohol. Pittsburgh became “dry” by the Act of 1917 and did not become “wet” until 1977.⁷

No discussion of prohibition in Pittsburgh would be complete without the story of “Dollar Bill.”

One of the most colourful characters to grace the Kingston/Pittsburgh scene was William Allen, alias “Dollar Bill.” He suddenly appeared at Queen’s University around 1925, where he became known as a “talkative” waiter in the cafeteria. His background was a mystery – perhaps an ex-convict, a circus performer, a “speeler,” an acrobat; or perhaps none of those. He loved engaging aspiring students in conversation, during which he would make some immortal, original, and puzzling statements; for example, “To use his own words he doesn’t desire the platitudes nor the applauds of the mass aggregate,” or “Chiropractically speaking, he could die, starve, or go to the other extremes for smart people, but he has an abomination for titillation,” or (his most famous) so-and-so could attain “the apex of the pinnacle.”

Allen was a big, clean-shaven man who showered daily with laundry soap. He became a mascot for the Queen’s football team and travelled with them; but he never bought a train ticket, in fact never paid to get into anything. After a short stay at Queen’s, Bill took advantage of prohibition and became a bootlegger in Barriefield.

He eventually moved into an abandoned seaplane hanger on Green Bay, which he converted into small “apartments” using blankets on wire. Decoration was achieved with pictures of bathing beauties. He catered to small private parties serving a delicious chicken dish that some claimed was rabbit. His drinks were priced



181 Dollar Bill. [Queen’s Journal]

reasonably – beer twenty-five cents, the house speciality (a collins with three ounces of gin) fifty cents. The liquor, of Quebec origin, was hidden in the Cataraqui River. Bill’s favourite trick was to don a bathing suit and roller skates and, splashing down the seaplane ramp, come up with a bottle in each hand.

His establishment, which was well-run (Bill kept a shotgun), was well known even to the police, who raided him often. He was fined but never jailed (some sources say he was). Every day he rode his bicycle into Kingston. He usually wore rubber hip-boots, into which were

stuffed empty pop bottles. He died suddenly of a heart attack in November 1945, at an indeterminate age, leaving no will, no heirs, and \$14,000.

Since his death he has been the subject of a forty-seven-stanza poem by Wallace Havelock Robb which began:

Dollar Bill was on the level
And he had a lickker hoard
He consorted with the devil
In the service of the Lord

Robertson Davies, in his play *Fortune My Foe*, featured Dollar Bill as Chilly Jim, who had a record of giving to the poor.

Dollar Bill is remembered to this day, perhaps, because he was a mysterious person who was a colourful character of some literary merit, with enough basic decency and capability to appeal to the common man in all of us.⁸

After the taverns closed in 1917, places of entertainment were dry. There were unofficial places for dancing. The Township Hall in Barriefield, St James Hall on Highway 15, Farquharson’s Barn on the Middle Road all had dances. There was Murray’s Hotel and Dance Hall in Brewers Mills, which dated back to 1891 (and prior to that to Patrick Murray’s tavern of 1852).

The most famous, however, was the Golden Slipper.

182 Dollar Bill’s establishment. [AMS, Queen’s]

