

The Village

The two-block shopping street on Richmond Street between the CPR tracks and Oxford Street is known as *The Village*, or sometimes, *The Richmond Village*. As with many commercial centres, it formed at a crossroads: the corner of Oxford and Richmond.

The deep narrow lots which mark *The Village* as a commercial strip are largely unchanged since the early 1850s. Small shops make it more economical to start a business, encouraging local entrepreneurship. In 1871, there was a general store, a shoemaker, two grocers, a butcher, and a saloon.

The Village has always been physically separated from the more southerly businesses of Richmond Street, first by water, later by industrial facilities, and, starting in 1887, by the railroad.

By 1895, *The Village* was home to Mrs. Hudson's stables and Mr. Neville's smithy, Mrs. Hitchcock ran a fancy goods store, and Mr. Lewis, a furniture store. The Cairncross & Lawrence drug store was conveniently across the street from Dr. Hutchinson, the physician.

By 1925, the complexion of *The Village* had expanded to include a stationary, a fireproof warehouse, and a coal company, as well as laundries and drug stores.

A dominant feature of the mid-20th century were gas stations. Mark Pittam, of Oxford Books, recalls: "The Village used to be gas stations. . . . There was a gas station on the corner. There was a gas station across the street. The restaurant on the corner was a gas station. The Supertest down the street was a gas station . . . It was all gas stations, because this was the edge of the city." Drug stores were another conspicuous feature of the 20th Century. Both gas stations and drug stores had disappeared by the 21st.

As transport improved, this village, like others, became increasingly specialized. Gas stations, pharmacies, and stores selling durable goods, have given way to boutiques, cafés, and hair salons. The tradition of local proprietors has remained.

The Village retains the hallmarks of an urban village—human-scale storefronts with parking at the back and picture windows abutting the sidewalk. The picture windows provide eyes on the street while inviting passersby inside, giving shoppers a safe and welcoming place to walk.

The Village Heritage Interpretive Sign - Pictures with captions

1. The 4th Earl of Richmond

Richmond Street was named after the 4th Earl of Richmond, Charles Lennox (9 December 1764 – 28 August 1819), who was appointed Governor in Chief of British North America in 1818. While touring Upper and Lower Canada in 1819, Richmond was bitten by a tame (but rabid) fox, and died of the resulting hydrophobia. Painting by Henry Collen (1797–1879) after Henry Hoppner Meyer. Courtesy: Wikimedia Commons. (68 words).

2. 1855 Plan of London (cropped)

1855 plan of London, by Samuel Peters Jr., illustrating the narrow lots that have made it easy to start businesses in *The Village*. Industries built up along Carling's Creek, which ran south of *The Village*. These industries included Water's Mill, Carling's Tannery and Carling's Brewery. In the mid-19th Century, Carling's Creek was dammed to create Lake Horn, which allowed for swimming, regattas and ice-skating. Courtesy: Map and Data Centre, Western University.

[A cropped version of the 1855 plan might be displayed similarly to the map on the "Richmond Row" plaque, on both the front and back of the sign, with the location of *The Village* highlighted with a red line. The map is not attached, because it is too large, but the full TIFF can be downloaded by clicking "Download TIFF" at <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/mdc-London-maps/21/>]

3. Aerial view of The Village 1961, annotated

1961 aerial view of Richmond Street, with stores labelled using data from the 1961 City Directory. Richmond Street was originally four streets: Sarnia (or Great Burlington) Road, Mark Lane, Richmond Street, and Church Street (where The Village is today). Aerial view courtesy: Western Archives Western University. (46 words)

4. The Davis Taxi Building (742 Richmond Street)

Advertising "all new day and night service", Davis Taxi opened at 742 Richmond Street on November 23, 1925 (see inset). The roofline is a distinct feature of the streetscape, with four chimneys, and a central pediment containing a datestone ("1925"). It later became home to an early supermarket (A&P), which merged the functions of the butcher and the traditional grocery. Courtesy: Western Archives, Western University, London Free Press Image Archives - January 25, 1955.

5. 1949 - Standard Drug Store and Quong Lee Laundry

The oldest building in *The Village*, on the north-west corner of Piccadilly and Richmond, dates to the 1860s. In the 19th Century, it operated as a hotel and saloon. In 1949, it housed the Quong Lee laundry and a Standard Drug Store. Standard Drugs was a London company established in 1913. Courtesy: Western Archives Western University - February 1949.

6. 1954 15 August - Water Sprinkler Burst at Murray-Selby Shoes London Ontario

The few large lots shaped *The Village* in ways different from the many narrow lots. The Murray-Selby shoe factory building was built in 1909 on the sizable lot on the south-east corner of Richmond and Piccadilly. This photograph shows the day when crews responded to a sprinkler burst which "sent hundred of gallons of water out third story windows." Courtesy: Western Archives, Western University. London Free Press Photo Archives - August 15, 1954.

7. View looking south along east side of Richmond Street from Oxford Street.

Businesses on the east side of Richmond in the 1950s, looking south from Oxford. In 1949, *The Village* retailers formed the *North London Merchants Association*. Topics discussed over coffee included "traffic problems, store hours, Christmas decoration, and district-wide sales." Courtesy: Western Archives Western University London Free Press Image Archives - November 11, 1955.

8. View looking north along Richmond from Piccadilly Street.

The Village retains the feel of its early-to-mid-20th Century streetscape, as seen in this 1957 view looking north along Richmond from Piccadilly. It is easy to see what might have prompted the moniker, "The Village". The stretch appears self-contained, like the crossroads of a small town. Courtesy: Western Archives Western University London Free Press Image Archives - September 24 1957.

9. La Jolie Jupe. April 12, 1967.

Cindy Kydd in her store, La Jolie Jupe, when it was located at 711 Richmond Street. The Murray-Selby shoe factory and the CPR train station can be glimpsed through the plate glass windows typical of shops on the street. Courtesy: Western Archives, Western University. London Free Press Photo Archives - April 12, 1967. (53 words).



CEEPS

Mill St.

Hyman Tannery

Murray-Selby
Shoe Factory

Metropolitan
Stores Warehouse

Ann St.

CPR Tracks

Piccadilly St.

Standard Drug Store
Coral Hi Fidelity
Stan C. Reade Photo

Fenwick-Cochran Floor and Wall Coverings
Good Food Restaurant
Henson's Smoke Shop

Esso

Campus Food Bar
Oxford Books
Bob Turnbull Flowers
Irving Appliances
Bank of Nova Scotia

Richmond Bakery
Cosy Lunch

Fisher Drugs
Firestone

Richmond St.

Oxford St.







The BANK of NOVA SCOTIA

FRIGIDAIRE

LEVI'S OVERPAJAMAS

SELF SERVICE A&P FOOD STORES

2-49

STANDARD
DRUG
LIMITED
SAVE YOU MONEY

STANDARD DRUG LIMITED

PICCADILLY ST.

PHARMACEUTICALS
TO CHEMICAL
FOOD TOILET

PHOTOGRAPHY
3

QUONG LEE CO.
723 1/2
LAUNDRY
WORK CALLED for & DELIVERED

LAUNDRY





THE COSY
FINE FOOD

SODA FOUNTAIN · LUNCHES · SODA FOUNTAIN



B. & HOLT'S PHARMACY

**BILL HOLT
DRUGS**

PRESCRIPTIONS

AND
DRY

THE BANK OF
NOVA SCOTIA

BUS STOP

Esso



STAN READE
PHOTOGRAPHIC AND
ART SUPPLIES

BOB
GOD

NO PARKING
HERE TO
CORNER

FLOOR & WALL
COVERINGS

FEEDING COCKRATS

bob
turnbull
FLOWERS

DRUGS

SUNDAE
BAKERY
MEAT

THE BANK
NOVA SCOTIA

FRIGIDAIRE

LOUISIANA
WHISKY

CAMPUS
FOOD BAR

IMPERIAL
Esso
DEALER

DRINK
Coca-Cola

CAMPUS HI-
FOOD BAR



RELL
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2-3618
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