



**ARTHUR ERNEST BLASHILL**  
**(1876-1957)**

Arthur was born in Watford on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1876, and grew up in Delaware. Arthur worked on fencing and determined that he wanted to build his own machine for weaving wire fences. His machine shop was located in London and the first machine, sold in 1898 could weave 600 lineal feet of fence per day. Arthur was granted a number of patents in Canada and the US. While selling 1500 machines each year, he continued to improve on them. The London Fence Machine Company was both owned and managed by Arthur for 8 years. Throughout his career he sold fence weaving machines in North America, England, Ireland, South Africa and Australia.

**Arthur Ernest Blashill**  
**(1876-1957)**

Arthur, the youngest of six children, of Tyndall and Delphine Blashill was born at Watford in Lambton County on the 20th day of August 1876. Soon after he was born the family moved to Lot 7 Conc. 3 of Delaware Township.

Arthur received his primary education at the school in Delaware and at the age of 11 he entered high school with the distinction of being top student in Middlesex County.

Following this he also graduated from the Forest City Business College.

Upon graduating Arthur took up fence building using the relatively new system of woven wire. One of his first contracts was to build a wire fence around his old school in Delaware. After working with a small American machine Mr. Blashill decided he would try to build his own for weaving wire fences. He did so after working many long hours in his little machine shop which was on York Street just west of Richmond. The first machine weighed only 27 pounds and one man could weave 600 lineal feet of fence per day. It was first sold in 1898 with US Patents being granted in 1900. This fence machine was exhibited at the Ohio State Fair in 1901 resulting in sales of 1500 machines per year. Through his company, the London Fence Machine Company, Arthur continued to improve and upsize his machines for woven and chain-link fence, with some weighing more than ten tons.

After eight years in London, Arthur and his wife moved to Montreal where he worked with a large steel company. He was in charge of their fence productions and sales. Fifteen years later they moved to Belgium where the Canadian went to fulfill a contract. Then it was on to England where he opened his own work-shop in Birmingham. When the war came he was called upon to supply machinery for making special matting used on airfields. In 1943 he returned to London, Ontario but was back in England in 1945 and did not return until 1947.

On his return Arthur and his wife settled in Woodstock where he opened up another work-shop. Much of the machinery went to England, Ireland, South Africa and Australia, but when the dollar exchange rate dropped he decided to move to the United States where his machines were most in demand. This time Arthur set up shop in Worcester Mass..

Through-out his life Arthur Blashill designed and built many automatic machines for wire fence work, including spooled wire for verticals, helical coiled wire for line wires, fence staples, and fence hooks, forming gate frames, barbed wire(single strand),field fencing and chain link fencing.

Arthur married Margaret Norma Boyd on Aug. 31, 1904. They had two children, Edythe and Keith. Arthur died in Birmingham, England on the 15th of May, 1957 during one of his inspection trips to check his working machinery. Arthur is buried in Birmingham, England, his wife is buried here in London's Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

There is an old saying that good fences make good neighbours. Today we have come together to acknowledge the life of **Arthur Ernest Basil**, the man who built the machines that made those good fences, by inducting him to the Middlesex County Agricultural Hall of Fame.