

#### BUELL BLOCK 1857

# 87 - 93 King St. West 2 Storefronts

113, 115 King St. (1884)



**DIRECTORY LISTINGS:** 

1857: -----??? -----, William Coates, jewelry 1860: Taylor & Gay bookstore; William Coates, jewelry; Brockville Recorder newspaper 1871: ----- ??? -----, William Coates, jewelry 1884/1887: Robert Jamieson, merchant tailor (87\*), W. Coates & Bro., jewellers & opticians (93\*) 1889/1890: W. Neilson crockery & fancy goods (87\*), W. Coates & Bro., jewellers & opticians (93\*) 1895/1924: Robert Neill Boots & Shoes (87), William Coates & Son, jewellers & opticians (91/93) 1926/1949: Robert Neill Boots & Shoes (87), H.R. Knowlton & Son, jewellers & opticians (93) **1951/1956**: R Neill Shoes (87), Credit Jewellers (93) 1960/1966: Montreal Shoe Store (87), Kerns Jewellry (93) **1968/1970**: Montreal Shoe Store (87), The Gift Lane (93) **1972**: Ross's Ladies Wear (87), The Locker Room (93) **1977/1980**: Ross's Ladies Wear (87), Sam The Record Man (93) 1982/1984: The Kids Castle (87), Sam The Record Man (93) **1986**: vacant (87), BJ's Book World / Book World Plus (93) 1988: R Reid Real Estate & Property Management (87), vacant (93) 1990: R Reid Real Estate & Property Management (87), Thelma Cosmetics & Bridal Bouquet (93) **1990**: ?? (87), Mulberry Hill Books (93) 1992/1997: Copiexpert Plus (87), Mulberry Hill Books (93) 2000/2003: [not in listing] (87), Unique Boutique (93) **2004/2007**: [not in listing] (87), Book Trader (93) **2009**: Pensa (87), Book Trader (93) 2012: TL Annies, maternity, kids toys/gifts (87), Book Trader (93) 2015: The Top Hat Society Thrift Store (87), Book Trader (93) **2018**: Ebb & Flo (87), vacant (93) **2019**: Ebb & Flo (87), Eureka, art shop (93) **2021/2022**: Ebb & Flo (87), vacant (93)

2023+: Flutter N' Fly Makers Cove (87), Castaway Treasures, thrift store (93)

This building was a long time location of a jewelry store, from 1857 until the late 1960s. Located there were Coates, Knowlton's, Credit and finally Kerns Jewelry. **W. Coates & Bro.** were owned by William and his brother Willis, who both lived on Pearl St. Advertised in the early years were "watchmaker and Jeweller, dealer in sewing machines, pianos and melodeons". Also offered at various times were clocks, silverware, fancy articles, optical goods, Eastman Kodak cameras, New Edison phonographs with both cylinder and discs. By 1895, it was William Coates & Son (son, Herbert B.). William Coates at this time lived at <u>74 John St.</u>.

**H.R. Knowlton & Son** (Herman R. & Clarence L.; later years, only Clarence) took over around 1925 and lasted until around 1950. Herman R. Knowlton, who owned the building in the 20th century, lived on an upper floor. The upper floors were named Knowlton Apts. and continued to be known by that name after the store closed. To this day, the Knowlton name is on the sidewalk leading into Knowlton's old jewelry store, now Castaway Treasures.

**Credit Jewelers** was here in the 1950s and managed by Jack Snow. **Kerns Jewelry, Ltd**, 1960s, was managed by Richard Tapping. "Your Family Credit Jewelers, Famous For Diamonds, Name Brand Watches, Giftware For All Occasions". By 1969, Kerns moved to the Brockville Shopping Centre. This ended over century as a jewelry store at this location.

**R.C. Jamieson**, Robert Jamieson, who had a merchant tailor business in the 1880s, featured tweeds, wordsteds (seems to be wool), shirts, "gents underclothing", etc. He lived on Broad St.

Jacob Robinson ran his **Billiard & Pool Parlors** on the second floor of this building in the early 1880s.

This was **William Nielson's** second and last location for his fancy goods store. After a decade, he moved here from the north side of King St around 1888, closing the store in 1890. A short stay here.

**Robert Neill Boots & Shoes** was a chain store by the Robert Neill Company. It was a very early chain store, in a time when there really were not many. It actually manufactured most of its products, although not in Brockville. The company also had a mail order branch to get product directly to its customers. Neill (1827 to 1892) opened his first store in 1833, in Verulam township, near Peterborough. He lived in a large mansion in <u>Peterborough</u>. It was a long time local boots/shoe store, opened around 1894 by George A. Sanderson and lasted to the end of the 1950s, well over half a century. Sanderson lived at 40 Broad St. (demolished). By 1914, it was managed by W.J. Clements, who was there through the 1920s. Future managers were W.S. Cooper (1930s) and Mrs. Della McLaren (1940s, 1950s).

**Montreal Shoe Store**, here in the 1960s, was managed by Henry Gagne. It was part of a chain, more then likely out of Montreal, but nothing can be found on it at this point. They probably acquired the entire Neill business.

**Sam the Record Man** was Canada's biggest and most famous record store chain for decades. It was founded in Toronto by Sam Sniderman, on Yonge St. in 1937. Over time, it had grown to 140 locations across the country and the iconic flagship store grew to take over an entire block with 4 stories. A Brockville location was finally opened up by Edward R. Alexander, a local music teacher, around 1977. It was a family business, with his children also working at the store. The chain and the Brockville store were most famous for their Saturday morning specials, a new release album at a fraction of the price. Also for their Boxing Day specials once a year, where everything in the store was slashed to low prices, igniting outside line-ups before the store opened, to get the best selections. Around 1986 the store moved across the street. The Brockville location closed about 1996.

**Mulberry Hill Books** opened here June 15, 1990. Matt Chatelaine learned the used book trade in Ottawa, working for "Book Market". He had also written a series of books with the fictional accident prone detective "Eddy Brock". After closing, it reopened as **Book Trader** and Chatelaine was joined by Charmaine Hache in 2001. The business stayed at this location until Jan. 2017 when it moved to its current location of 152 King St. W., in the Central Block.

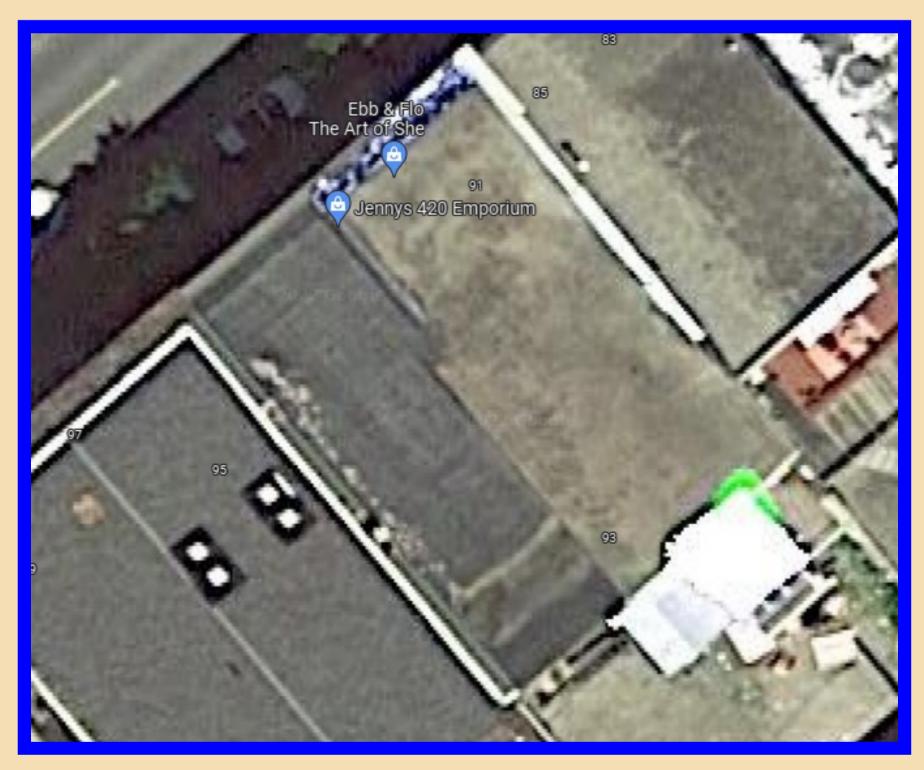
**Unique Boutique** originally opened in the Steacy Block, upstairs at #58 around 1996. It moved here at #93 around 1998 to 2003 and was was managed by Ms Heidi Vaserman. The store engaged in "retail sale of clothing, footwear and leather articles in specialized stores, women's clothing". (Unique Boutique appears 2001/2003)

**Ebb & Flo** billed themselves as "The Art of She" and originally opened in Brockville in 2014 and were at this location shortly after. They are Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Retailers. A second store later opened in Ottawa. The business permanently closed March, 2023.

**Castaway Treasures**, thrift store & more opened in May 2022. Their information states "We carry used items, and try to keep our prices cheapest in town. We offer pick up of donations as well as delivery on bigger items for a small fee for gas. Every month we donate to a different local charity. ".

**Flutter N' Fly Makers Cove** had it's Grand Opening on June 24, 2023. They are a crafts, home decor and gift shop and "showcase and sell local creater and makers products." The business offers locally made, created and crafted items.

## **OTHER VIEWS**



The satellite view shows the building not as far back as the one on the corner, roof covering different between the two sections indicating separate ownership.

#### **THE 1856 FIRE**

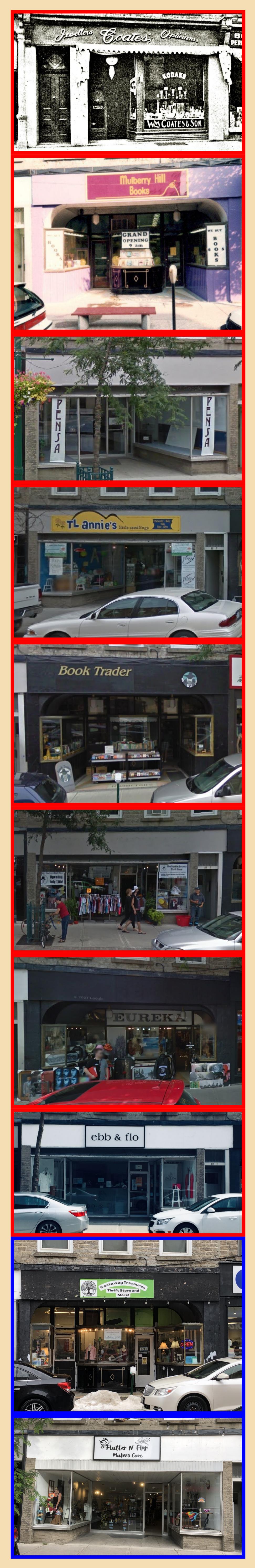


A fire broke out in early July 1856, in a frame building on Main St. and because it was windy spread quickly to other buildings. In an 1852 map, Doug Grant has the area of the fire circled. It spread to a Buell owned house, rented out, and to Buell's stone commercial building. It took place in the block between Apple and St. Andrew.

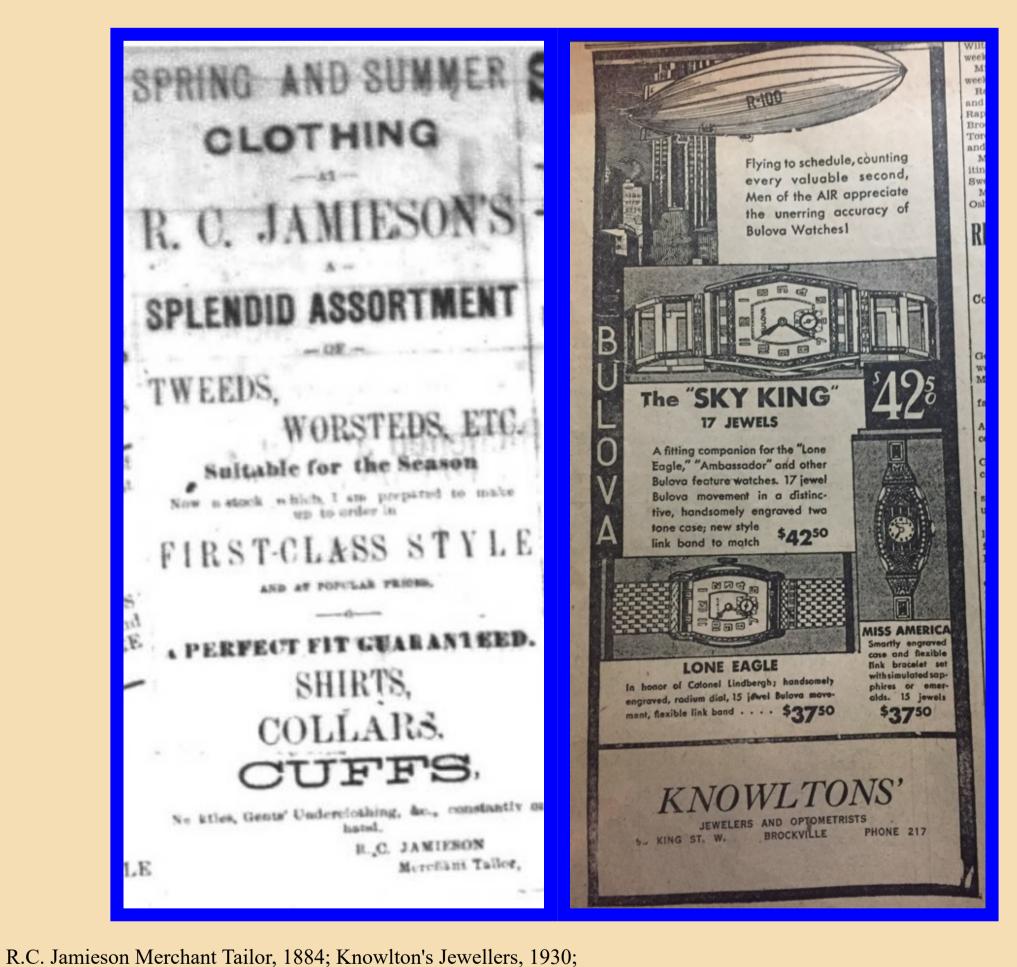
**Brockville Recorder, June 3, 1856:** "... Mr. buell's stone block, occupied by Mr. Johnston as a grocery and provision store, and by G.R. Griffin & Co. as a dry goods store. ... Messrs. Chidester, dentists, and J.D. Buell, barrister have also been burnt out. The places mentioned, with the buildings in rear, have been burnt to the ground - the walls having fallen during the fire. The loss will be heavy, as only part of the property is insured."

Buell's previous building was stone and the walls usually are savable with a new building constructed around them. It does not seem to be the case here, as the article states the walls "having fallen". This means a new building, the one above, was erected.

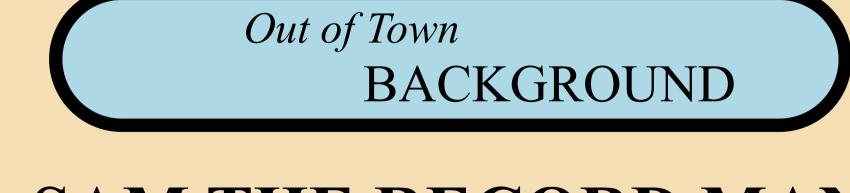
# **STOREFRONTS**



## ADVERTISING







#### SAM THE RECORD MAN FLAGSHIP STORE Yonge St., Toronto 330 km from Brockville



This was the most iconic record store location in Canada, famous both inside and outside the country. Sam Sniderman launched 'Sniderman's Music Hall' in 1837 after working in his fathers' music store since 1920. It moved to its longtime location on Yonge St. in 1961 with its more famous name. The first of those giant 'records' on the front, designed by the Markle Brothers, was put up in 1970 with the second added in 1987. The store expanded both ways, down to the corner and up three floors. The chain expanded to over 140 locations across the country. With a major expansion to the Toronto store as late as 1991, it was the largest and most famous chain with the largest store. If Sam's didn't have it, it didn't exist.

It would be easy to say that illegal downloading, Napster, took them down, but the chain went bankrupt in 2001. This was really the dawn of downloading and was only the straw that broke the camel's back. The main culprit was antique business practices, relying more on paper than computers. They could not compete with their main competitor during this period, HMV, who eventually succumbed in 2017. The Toronto flagship store was taken over by Sam's two sons, but folded in 2007. The buildings were demolished and one of the two large 'records' were moved to another part of the city for historical display. Only one store remained, in the Belleville Quinte Mall, and remains open to this day. (Photo: Wikipedia)