



**McLaren Store  
opened Oct  
1, 1869 v2**

**Description:**

**McLaren Store, Watford, opened Oct 1, 1869. From Alex McLaren: This is the building where my Grandfather, W.P. McLaren, opened his business in October of 1869. I am not able to connect the men pictured with the names on the back, except that the one in the shirt sleeves is my grandfather. I am not sure whether the Medical Hall was on the present location of the pharmacy, but for some reason-most likely fire, he did not use it for long, because in 1870 he was in a 2 storey brick building at the present location of the pharmacy. I have a copy of a mortgage on the present location, dated March 1871, and a newspaper account dated Oct. 1870 which describes the new building - also have a photo of it.**



# ***McLaren Pharmacy***

McLaren Pharmacy was first opened in Watford in the fall of 1868, or early in 1869, by William Peter McLaren. It was operated from the Medical Hall, a one-storey frame building on Main St. (Nauvoo Rd).

In 1870 the pharmacy was relocated to a newly-built two-storey brick building which was part of the McLeay Block, with the pharmacy below and an apartment above.

The pharmacy was seriously damaged in Watford's disastrous fire of 1880. The business was again struck by a fire in 1886. This time, the fire had been set by burglars to cover their tracks.

James Walker McLaren, oldest son of William Peter, took over the business in 1904, due to his father's deteriorating health. In 1917 a new glass and copper storefront was installed on the building, replacing the original wooden one. There were also some interior improvements at that time.

Following the death of James Walker in 1928, the business was operated as the J. W. McLaren Estate by Mrs. McLaren. Harold C. Crowe was pharmacist until 1938, when son James Alexander McLaren, a licensed pharmacist since 1936, returned home to take over the management. In 1950 Alex purchased the business from his mother, and it was later incorporated under the name of Alex McLaren Pharmacy Ltd.

In 1956 another new storefront was installed and extensive renovations were made inside. The work was just nicely completed when fire struck again. A defective chimney in the common wall between the pharmacy and the building to the south allowed fire to spread into the upper storey of the pharmacy building. Although there was no actual fire in the lower level, the smoke and steam damage was so extensive that the stock and fixtures were declared a total loss. The business received smoke and water damage from yet another fire in 1979 when the Roche House was destroyed by fire. Fortunately the damage from this event was not as serious as from the previous fire.

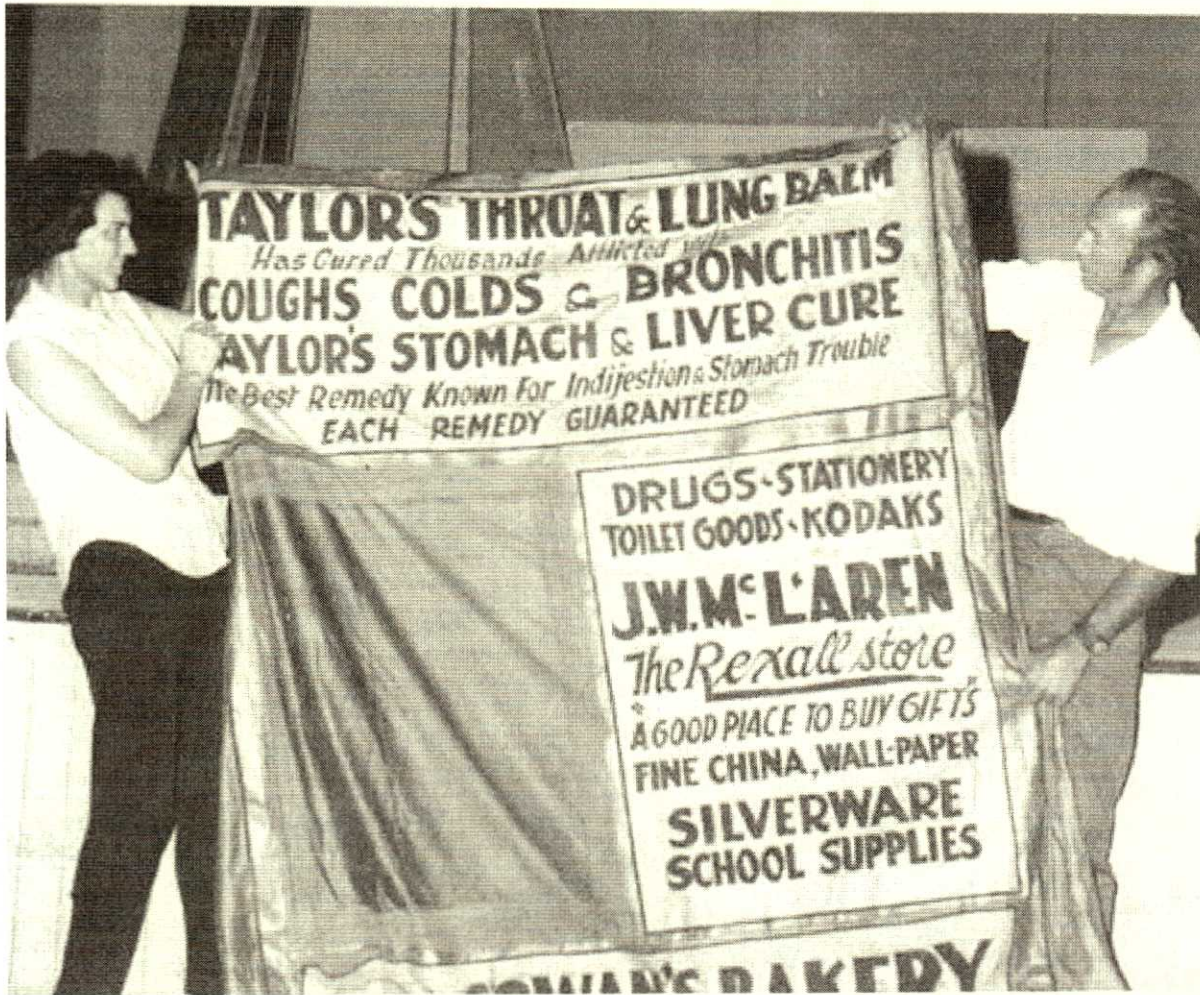
By 1984, Alex had operated the pharmacy for 46 years, with the exception of three years serving in the RCAF overseas. He sold the business to Zul Somani in 1985, who in 2000 sold it to Nilesh and Neeta Yadav, who continue to serve Watford and community in 2008.

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IF EVERYBODY HAD ONLY LEARNED HOW "CAREFUL" WE ARE IN FILLING PRESCRIPTIONS AND IN "CHECKING UP" EVERYTHING WE SEND OUT OF OUR STORE, WE WOULD DO ALL THE DRUG STORE BUSINESS IN THIS TOWN.

COME IN OR SEND THE CHILDREN FOR THE SCHOOL BOOKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES THEY WILL SOON NEED. WE'VE GOT EVERYTHING THEY WANT FOR SCHOOL USE.

**J. W. McLAREN**

DRUGGIST

*The Rexall Store*

STATIONER

Issuer of Marriage Licenses