



Walkerville Landmark Bombed!

by Currie Bednarick, Issue #19 November 2001

The Peabody Building, once located on the southwest corner of Riverside and Devonshire, was a Walkerville landmark for many years. Situated beside the Peabody bridge, the familiar complex was the home of many companies and associations over the years, despite the attack it endured during World War I close to a century ago.

The building first housed the Peabody Leather Label Overall Company, which produced the Peabody brand overalls, known by the shiny buckles on their shoulder straps. During World War I, the company manufactured uniforms for the British Army. The company had only been in business a few years when American-based German sympathizers tried to blow up the building at 3 a.m. on June 21st, 1915.

The sympathizers placed a bomb in a hole under the building, next to the old wooden Peabody Bridge. The framework on one side of the bridge was blown away, and the other side was twisted and bent; the concrete crumbled to powder. The force of the explosion also was strong enough to blow out every window in the building. Some of the window sashes also broke and a few sills snapped.

Repairs were made, and the building went on to live a long life, becoming the starting place for several companies. R.P. Scherer produced gelatin for pharmaceutical companies, occupied the building for several years, as well



as Butcher Engineering Enterprises, Lorence Enterprises, Reid Industries, and the McCord Corporation. The building also provided space for Junior Achievement of Windsor; it was demolished in 1985.

Above: German sympathizers bungled the job when they tried to blow up the Peabody Ltd. factory in 1915. The factory manufactured uniforms for the British Army. The explosion was strong enough to blow out most of the windows. Below: The bomb was placed in the hole under the boarding of the building.