

June 25, 1965

ON THE MAIN STREET

with FORD MOYNES

Mr. Ernest (Ernie) Perry will observe his 93rd birthday on June 25th. For well over half a century he has resided at the family residence, 114 Queen Street and he was interviewed at his home where he was sitting soldier-like in his easy chair on the sun porch which faces directly east. An almost uninterrupted stream of motor vehicles came out from the east and this fine old gentleman, who is exceedingly alert and has very acute hearing remarked. "What a difference in transportation in recent years. The whole world seems to be riding on wheels. About one hundred cars pass down Queen Street every five minutes on a busy day."

Ernie Perry was a mere lad of 11 years when he kissed his mother, father, brothers and sisters goodbye in London, the city of his birth. He was far from being timid and looked forward to adventure as he crossed the gang plank of the Str. Parisian, a palatial Allan liner, heard the rolling of the ocean against the high hull of the steamer and finally waved his cap to his loved ones on shore as the journey across the Atlantic got under way. It was an uneventful voyage until the shore line of Montreal came into view and he remembers the big ship being manoeuvred along a long dock, the final clanging of bells and the running out of the gang-plank.

"That was almost 80 years ago", said Mr. Perry. "I am looking forward to my 95th birthday for that will be Canada's Centennial year — in fact the way I feel today I may reach the century mark myself", he said, "Canada has been good to me. I can never forget old England, but the

Province of Ontario and the fine people of Victoria County have been good to me".

Young Ernie Perry bought a railway ticket and his destination was Cobourg where he worked for some time on a farm with a man named Crossen. A few years later he enlisted for Manilla and for a long number of years worked for a Mr. Crossen, a brother of his first employer.

It was hard work but Ernie Perry took this in his stride. Up in the morning when the dew was still on the grass and the delightful smell of new mown hay was still in the air. He learned the knack of farming with horses and had the thrill of handling one of the first grain reapers. The Crossen farm was located about three miles south of Manilla and it was a sight in those days to see the farmers driving down the rough dirt roads in clouds of dust with wagons loaded with grain. Many were on their way to Port Perry and some to Whitby.

"We also hauled grain to Cresswell to be shipped across the country, mostly destined for Montreal".

Always loyal to his British background Ernie Perry returned to London in 1897 and was one of many thousands to celebrate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

Another voyage across the briny ocean was in 1915 when he was wearing the uniform of a Canadian soldier and the insignia of the 109th Battalion of Victoria and Haliburton. He was connected with the army for three years and among his warmest friends were Sir Sam Hughes, Col. J. Havelock Fee, Col. Frank J. Carew, and others. "This 109th Battalion was one of the finest on parade

with a grand band and many of the men of the battalion saw service in Flanders".

Mr. Perry became one of the returned men who took an interest in the organization of the Canadian Legion in Lindsay.

On his return from overseas Mr. Perry took up the trade of a baker, his apprenticeship being spent with Jimmy Allan who ran a bakery on Victoria Avenue, later taken over by W. J. Bryson and now in the hands of Trent Valley Bakery.

For a time Mr. Perry ran a bakery of his own on Caroline Street. Later however, he joined the staff of Horn Bros. Woollen Mills on William Street north. His retentive memory goes back to the days when bread sold for 5 cents and later 10 cents a loaf, butter was 13 cents, canned salmon was a quarter the price today, haircuts were 25 cents.

Sports were not for me, recalled Ernest Perry, but I had one of the first bicycles around Manilla. "In fact my girlfriend was Miss Dixon of Manilla, whom I was fortunate enough to marry, and I thought nothing of riding my bicycle from Manilla on dirt roads, to Lindsay to see my best girl. She worked at Morton's confectionery store."

Mr. Perry, although not a "joiner", has been a member of Cour 100 of the I.O.O.F. in Lindsay for many years.

Mr. Perry smiled when he recalled how he earned his first dollar bill. "I climbed to the top of a tall tree to rescue a pet cat. I wished then that more cats would climb trees!" My first big money was when I worked for \$15 a month, with board and saved money.

This fine gentleman is happy in that three of his family

live near him; Mrs. Lila Teatro, Mrs. Roy (Della) Head and his son Andrew Perry. Another daughter Mrs. Charles (Olive) Murtagh lives in Hamilton and a son W. Al Perry is CNR agent at Trenton.