

# On The Main Street

May 24<sup>th</sup> with Ford Moynes

A pioneer resident of Islay, once a well known district in the Township of Fenelon, recently remarked: "What about an historical item on Islay?"

Apparently pioneers had to contend with many hardships and handicaps. One historical item has been resurrected. It was a conversation which took place in 1941 when a Mrs. Annie McKay was a resident of the Victoria County Home. It reads as follows:

"My father did not have a horse nor any oxen when he started cutting out for himself a home in the bush. He traded from time to time with the Indians who were plentiful. He then bought a couple of calves at Beaverton and he trained them, and when they were three years old they were teamed and became valuable animals. He built a log home and my mother used to bake with the pots she had brought from England. It was a long time before we had a school or a church. Meetings were held in the home."

When quite young Annie McNabb (for that was her maiden name) went to Chicago as a nurse and there she met her husband, who was a young banker. For several years they lived a happy married life, when he passed away quite suddenly and his young wife returned to her home in Glenarm district and took up practical nursing. She worked long and hard, walked many miles and often received no remuneration. She became familiarly known as "Annie McKay" and was loved because of her

kindness, her charitable qualities and sunny disposition.

At 99 years she recalled vividly going to church in her bare feet. "We children carried our shoes, so that we could have nice shoes for Sunday. We put them on when we reached the church door."

Speaking of the young girls of today, Mrs. McKay said: "I think they are all right; they are smart enough and look nice, but I think they are travelling at too fast a pace. The whole world seems to be going too fast and is in a turmoil."

"I wonder how the girls of today would get along if they had no electricity; if they had to light dry moss by the use of a piece of flint, as we did years



ago. There were no matches and we had no fancy fangled stoves. I used to love the salt bread mother baked — baked over hot coals in a fire box back in the chimney."