



*Circa 1909. Fred (who turned 90 in 1989), Gwen and Alice Lazier.*

Toronto, staying at the Albany Club during the week and returning by train to Belleville for the weekends.

With the failed music and singing lessons behind her, Gwen had to have some social grace, her mother felt. At Gwen's request she took Scottish dancing from Professor Johnson in Belleville, and later took a two-week, eight-hour-per-day course for teachers at the Aura Lee Club in Toronto from Miss Sternberg who had been a member of the Russian Ballet.

Back home in Belleville, Gwen offered dancing lessons in her own home. Children came with their 50¢ on Saturday afternoons and for about a year, she taught ballet.

The lessons were held in the long living room where Gwen had turned the chairs around so that the students could use the backs of them as a barre.

Returning home from Toronto one weekend in early spring, Gwen was told by her sister that Belleville's mayor wanted someone to ride a horse to Washington. He thought the town needed a little bit of amusement for the summer, something a little different to advertise the 140th anniversary of the landing of the Loyalists.

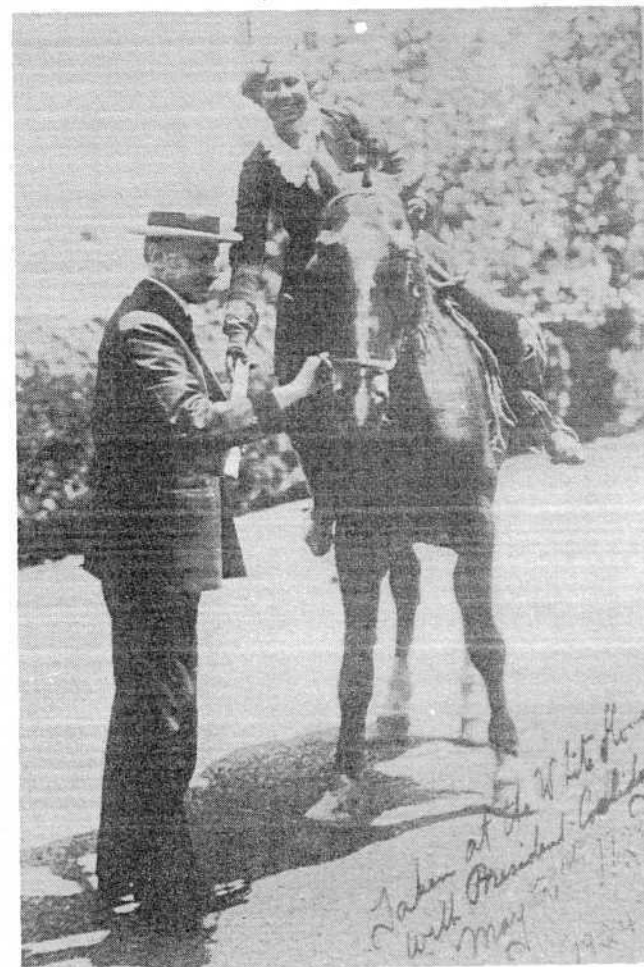
Gwen's sister, Alice, was going to apply. She was 22 and she rode very well. Gwen who was 18 said, "You can't go; you're not strong enough."

"You can't go; you've never been on a horse!" was Alice's retort.

But that was the kind of comment that only made Gwen more determined to do the impossible. She went to see the mayor whose first reaction was to wonder if her father would allow her to go.

"I suggested he drop into the Albany Club in Toronto and have a drink with him, and I think he'll say yes. Which is what happened."

A man by the name of Alec Moore from north of Belleville had an aged horse which had been in the army during the First World War.



*Taken at the White House, Washington D.C. at the end of Gwen's ride from Belleville with 'Tip' and President Calvin Coolidge.*