

two week stay in a first class hotel in Toronto as well as other exciting prizes and benefits. We would greatly appreciate hearing from anyone interested in such a competition.

While our fair is relatively small compared to some other fairs in Ontario, our community spirit is big and our fair is growing with our new township. We are reaching out to all the residents of Loyalist Township and especially to the rural communities. Your unique rural island community has a great deal to offer a small fair like Odessa's. We welcome your participation and your patronage this year and for many years to come. If you have any comments, please phone or write me at the address below.

Yours truly,

Ontario Agricultural Society

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Barbara McKibbin President

Memories of Amherst Island

- V. Garth Orchard -

[Issue 54- July 15, 1982]

It is such a pleasure to read all the Island news in each issue of the Beacon we receive, that I thought it might be of some interest to its present readers to recall some of the pleasant memories of my early life there. They could fill many installments!

As a lad of fourteen, fresh out of high school, times were very hard in England, with few opportunities for good employment, so I opted for the promise of the new land of Canada. I was the youngest of a group of forty emigrant youths who were contracted to be placed with farmers here. After a stormy ten day crossing of the Atlantic, and a two day train ride, then a two mile walk from Ernestown station, I had my first glimpse of Amherst Island, only to find that there was no way across till the mail boat

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next day!

That was undoubtedly the loneliest moment of my life! Thousands of miles from the home and family I had left to seek my fortune in the New World, without any idea of the farm family I was directed to, or what the future held, I must have presented a forlorn spectacle! Then the friendliness of this new land took over. I was told to go to the Fred Wemp farm (now the

Millhaven Inn) where Mrs. Wemp served up the heartiest supper I could remember, then led me up to a deep feather bed, warmed by a hot brick out of her oven. If life in Canada was like this I was going to love it.

Next morning I woke with the sun and hurried out with Mr. Wemp to watch the morning milking and help with chores. Breakfast seemed like a feast when Mrs. Wemp set down a dish of boiled eggs and a platter of bacon, saying "Dig in and eat hearty." (At that time, in England, eggs were sixpence each, and once a week we each had half an egg, as a treat!) It seemed certain then that my 84 lb. frame was soon due to expand.

As noon approached I met the mail boat at Millhaven, driven by Art Drumgoole, and was surprised to see him towing a flat platform built on oil drums, surrounded by a fence of farm gates. They backed this to the flimsy dock and carefully loaded a new 1929 Chev. car on to the 'Lighter'. Tucking my bag, and a couple of sacks of mail in the boat, with a cheery "Hop in!", Art pulled out for the Island with a few curious onlookers grinning at the sight of the car riding the gentle waves, like a miniature dry-dock hooked to a tug. I had made many small boat trips off the Welsh coast, but never one quite like this! The bay was relatively calm and we landed safely at Neilson's dock, where several Stella residents waited curiously to see the unloading of the car. Art told me that this would probably be his last haul like this, because the Island was due to get a new ferry that summer

which could carry four or five cars across the bay. I must have presented a curious sight to the villagers also, with my school cap and short English pants!

William Hill was the farmer I had been directed to and he was at the store with his team and spring wagon to meet me. He suggested that the first thing should be to outfit



A very quiet Ernestown Station.

photo by DT