

Elwood is justifiably proud of his grandfather, a man who was at least 20 years ahead of his time. He was a great planner. It was Art's theory that, if they built a larger school in Castleton, they could close the smaller one-room schools and bring the kids in. Some parents couldn't imagine that eventually bussing would be used. Castleton Continuation School opened in September 1930 and almost immediately car-buses rolled into the school in the hamlet.

It was a three-mile walk to school in the 1920's and Elwood stayed for lunch. He lived some of those years in Art's home in Castleton where Elwood continues to live today. He was there on the pretence of helping his grandfather, but Elwood acknowledged the help wasn't needed. Every evening after supper his grandfather would head to the post office to look after the needs of farmers who weren't able to get in during the day. There was no tv to sit in front of for an evening. In fact, there was no electrical service during the pre-war period.

Elwood says you knew everyone then. You might see one person a week who you didn't know. Now you don't know who lives next door. He guesses he knows between 10 and 20% of the residents of Castleton now.

He doesn't recommend the fast track he took through the elementary grades. It made high school much more difficult, even with his older brother Alan around. At 15, he walked out a high school graduate, happy to leave school. Life was too short to spend your time in school. He immediately started work as a farm labourer on area farms. The pay wasn't great. Farmhands got paid for eight months, and were given their board for the rest of the year when there was less to do. His first job paid \$10 a month. Back then during the busy planting and harvesting seasons, a top farm labour, paid by the day, would receive a dollar a day.

Life at work

In 1938 Elwood took to the water, sailing the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence for one year as a deckhand on the 250-foot-long oil tanker called The Warrior. His travels took him west on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie to Toledo & Chicago and east down the St Lawrence River and up the Saguenay River which had 20-foot tides. He admits he learned a lot and was terribly seasick in rough weather. He was on duty 24 hours a day. It took eight hours for the boat to negotiate the Welland Canal if there were no delays. Those were the days before the St. Lawrence Seaway, when ships had to navigate the St. Lawrence River.