

# The Bennetts reflect on 55 years of marriage

Nov. 28/84

It was 55 years ago this week when the following wedding announcement first appeared on the pages of The Cobden Sun:

"A very quiet but pretty wedding was solemnized at the Holiness Movement Parsonage on Wednesday, November 20th, by the Reverend S. Jeffrey, when Ruby, daughter of Mr. John Robinson and the late Mrs. Robinson of Grant's Settlement, became the bride of Derwood Bennett, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Jas. A. Bennett of Queen's Line.

The bride looked lovely in a gown of resida green flat crepe, and wore shoes and hose to match. The bridesmaid, Miss Vera Bennett, sister of the groom, was prettily dressed in sand georgette trimmed with brown velvet, and wore shoes and hose to match.

The groom was supported by Mr. Newton Ireton.

In the evening a reception was held at the bride's home, Grant's Settlement.

The happy couple will reside on the groom's farm, Queen's Line."

Looking back over their 55 years of marriage, that's pretty much the way

Derwood and Ruby Bennett remember their wedding day all those years ago. The Cobden couple recalled the events of that happy occasion as they celebrated their anniversary with family and friends during a party at their Simpson Street home Saturday.

Enjoying the balmy November weather Saturday, the Bennetts recalled that things were much different 55 years ago. "It wasn't as nice a day as this," said Mr. Bennett. Mrs. Bennett remembers that it was very cold "and there was lots of snow."

The Bennetts, both 75 years old now, said that their wedding was very small and quiet by today's standards, but quite typical of the times. Mrs. Bennett said that the reception held at her family home in Grant's Settlement following the wedding was attended by most of the neighbours. "It was a big party."

Honeymoons were also somewhat uncommon in the area back in those days, and the newly married Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were quite happy to move right

into their farm on the Queen's Line and go straight to work.

It was not a whirlwind romance for the pair by any means. They dated each other for about four years before finally deciding to settle down together. Now neither one can agree on when and where it was that they first actually met.

"I guess it was at the Beachburg Fair," Mrs. Bennett recalled. "I think it was at the skating rink," Mr. Bennett said. Both agreed that they'd had their eyes on each other for quite some time. Mrs. Bennett laughed trying to remember that first encounter, saying that "maybe he regrets it now".

The Bennetts spent most of their married life on the same farm on the Queen's Line, moving into Cobden where they now reside in 1971. They worked at mixed farming, growing crops and raising dairy and beef cattle on their 100 acres of land. Mr. Bennett said it wasn't a big farm compared to the farms of today, but it was an average size in those days when farming had not yet become so mechanized.

On the farm, the Bennetts made a very comfortable home for themselves in a sturdy little log cabin. In the early years, Mrs. Bennett remembers that "it had none of the modern conveniences". And things started to get a bit crowded when all of the little Bennetts began coming along. Soon the family that had started out with two, grew to the number of ten.

Darwin, who now lives in Alberta, and who made the trip to celebrate with his parents Saturday, was the first born, coming along three years after Mr. and Mrs. Bennett wed.

Then there was Rita (Mrs. Percy Hawthorne of Beachburg), Christine (Mrs. Keith Dorschner), and Helen (Mrs. Ander VanDerhorne of Ottawa). Ruth, their fifth child, was killed 24 years ago in a car crash. Following Ruth, Joan (Mrs. David Reid of Admaston) was born, then Jim, who now lives in Cobden, and finally Mary (Mrs. Murray Crozier of Northcote).

Besides their seven surviving children, the Bennetts now have 25 grandchildren and eight great-

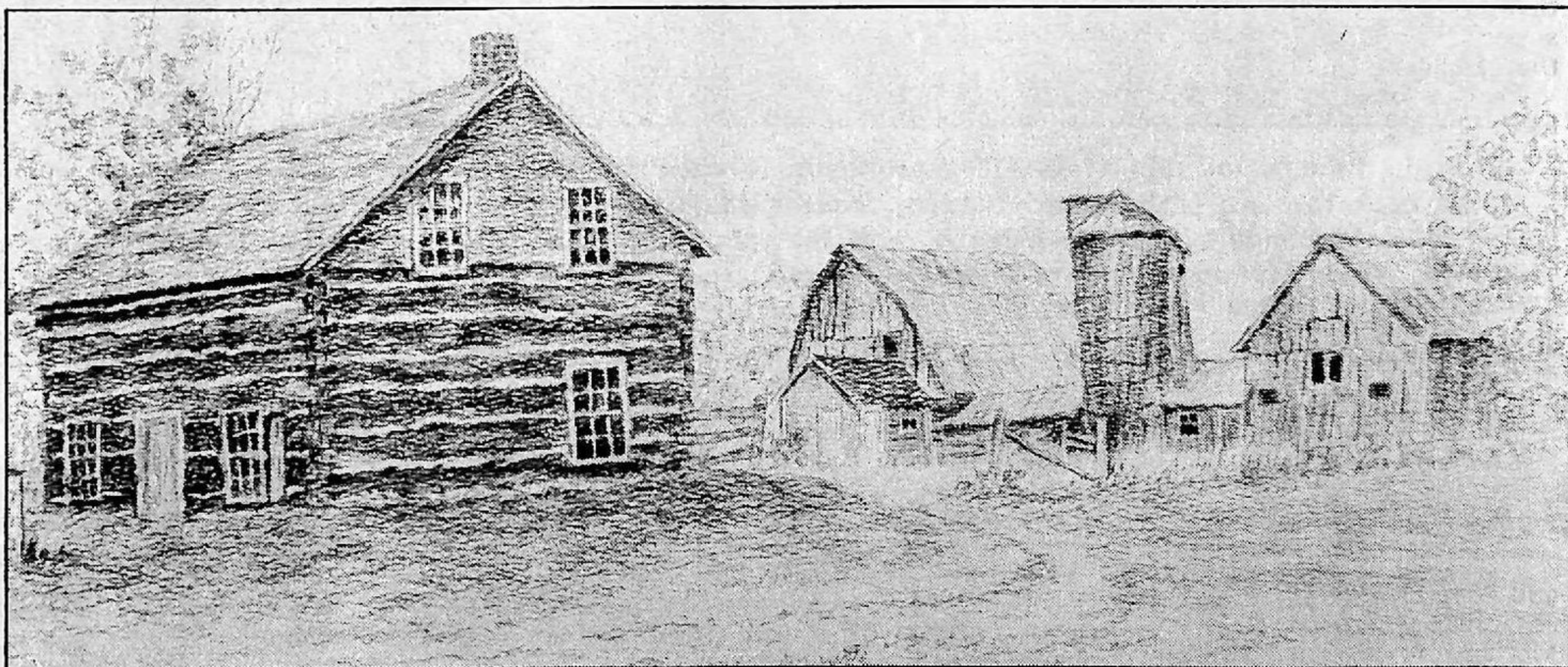
grandchildren. Mrs. Bennett, in speaking of her children, said that all but two of her children were born at home in the log cabin. Joan and Mary were born at a nursing home, which she said didn't make much difference to her, but proved to be less stressful for her first son Darwin. Darwin felt that he had enough sisters and Mrs. Bennett said her son "cried everytime a girl came".

It was a big family certainly, but Mrs. Bennett said "We always got along and the table was always full". Mr. Bennett was happy to have the extra hands on the farm, and everyone in the family worked. In summer there were the regular farm duties, and in the winter the men cut wood in the bush.

The Bennetts have made a lot of changes to their lifestyle since moving to Cobden and entering their retirement. "The first thing you've got to do," Mr. Bennett said, "is learn to sleep in in the morning". Mrs. Bennett said that she is busy these days enjoying all of her grandchildren. And the pair now have the time to visit their many friends in the area. Mr. Bennett reported that "We only have friends, We've outlived all our enemies". The two are still in very good health.

Among those friends are the bestman and bridesmaid who stood up with the Bennetts at their wedding 55 years ago. Mr. Newton Ireton (formerly of Queen's Line) and Vera Bennett were both on hand Saturday to help the Bennetts celebrate.

Looking out over their large family and all of their friends who gathered to bid them well, the Bennetts, surrounded by cards, flowers and gifts of congratulations, agreed that life has been very good to them. "There were good times and some rough times too," said Mrs. Bennett. "But we've enjoyed life all through."



On the wall in their Cobden home, Mr. and Mrs. Derwood Bennett have this sketch of their old homestead on the Queen's Line. The farm, where

the Bennetts raised eight children, consisted of 100 acres. They moved to Cobden from the farm in 1971.