

26 The North Bay Nugget,  
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# Recalls "Norde Baye"

By RICK PRASHAW  
Nugget Staff Reporter

"To ye Olden Boyes and  
Girles, far and nygh, yoken  
and unyoken, all and sondry  
who once on a tyme didest  
abyde in ye burgh of Norde  
Baye . . . Greeting."

That introduction isn't the  
feeble effort of a Grade-one  
speller or a bleary-eyed  
reporter the morning after the  
night before. It is the opening  
paragraph of a 1925  
proclamation announcing the  
25th anniversary of Old Home  
Week.

The proclamation was one  
of a number of dated items  
discovered by an Elma Baxter,  
652 Main St. W., as she was  
cleaning her attic while  
moving last week. The clean-  
ing-up task didn't prove to be  
the chore she had anticipated.  
With some of the collectors'  
items she discovered, it was  
more comparable to a treas-  
ure hunt.

First to be discovered under  
a pile of dust and other  
belongings was a stack of 12  
proclamations greeting  
visitors back in 1925 to Old  
Home Week.

She later came upon a  
number of old examinations  
by the Education Department  
in Ontario that go back to  
1896. The amazing fact in  
relation to the papers is that  
they resemble something  
published not more than 10  
years ago. It would almost be  
impossible to detect the age  
of the papers except for a  
bit of yellow that is beginning  
to creep on the pages.

The oldest article found was  
an 1884 textbook from the  
Guelph Agricultural College.

But it is the proclamation  
which Mrs. Baxter shows to  
her friends that is drawing  
keener attention. After a  
greeting from the king,  
George V, of ye House of  
Windsor, the proclamation  
continues spelling out what is  
in store to visitors to the city  
during Old Home Week.

" . . . Know Ye that on ye  
Sunday byforen, ther wyl be  
prechyng by ye alden prestes  
of ye chirche and musik by  
ye syngers of ye olden tyme,  
and on ye weeke dayes merris  
men wyl maken musik on  
instrumentes of brass and  
wyd, and strong and swift  
champions wyl contend in ye  
listes in high aventure, and  
ther shal be sportyng in ye  
lak of Nipyssinge . . ."

Then it slips into a detailed  
portrayal of what should occur  
as night approaches. " . . .  
and in ye shadwyes the  
ghoosts wyl walke all cladde  
in ye robes of richt and ther  
wyl be slitting on ye beech  
with ye olde girle onder ye  
moon that telleth no tayles,  
and thereto wyl be proc-  
essions, and chaunting of  
chylidren, and richt herty  
festes and banguettes, and  
daunsyng on ye streetes, and  
joyes to gleden all ye hertes  
of ye peple."

The proclamation is signed  
by John Ferguson, the  
president of Old Home Week.  
Mr. Ferguson was the first  
mayor of North Bay.

Reason for the excellent  
condition of the Education  
Department papers was that  
they were kept inside a book.  
The tests reveal the strict  
conditions that candidates for  
teaching degrees had to meet.

In big, bold print at the top  
of the 1896 page is Methods  
of Instruction. There follows  
a series of questions asking  
the teaching school's students  
to describe their teaching  
methods.

The other papers found  
include an 1899 English test  
and six 1900 tests, three of  
which are on instruction  
methods, one on science, one  
on school administration and  
the other on school law and  
regulations as well as  
hygiene.

Mrs. Baxter enjoyed the job  
thoroughly. She thinks some  
other "ancient papers" may  
be found in the books she is  
filing through now.