

May 1987



LIGHT MY FIRE

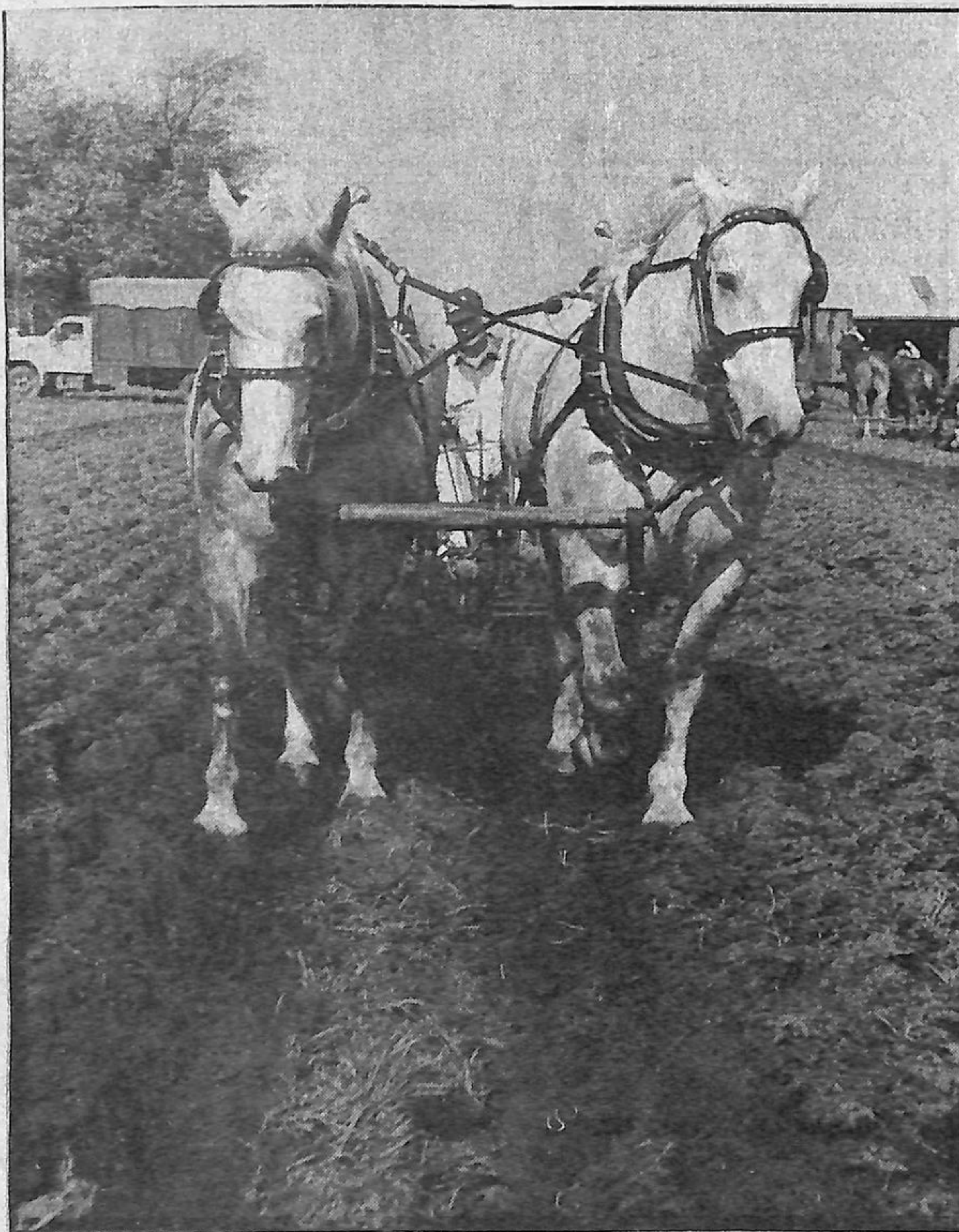
Margaret Fleming dons a late 1800 costume for her part in a play at the 90th anniversary celebration of the Zorra 10th Line Women. Members celebrated the anniversary at Chalmers United Church Tuesday afternoon. The play was about one of the first meetings that might have taken place, interspersed with some light humor. Here, Fleming prepares to start a fire in the old wood stove. (Staff Photo by Ria Dieleman)



BIRTHDAY BUDDIES

Elizabeth Kane, right, and Clarissa Meadows are celebrating today as the two friends both reach their 90th birthdays. The pair met and discovered their common Sept. 6 birthdate at the Khaki Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. Mrs. Kane emigrated from Ayrshire, Scotland some 60 years ago while Mrs. Meadows is a native of Braemar, near Woodstock.

(Staff photo by Ted Rhodes)



VICTOR LYONS enjoys a bumpy ride behind the tails of Andy and Pride, a pair of grey Pershons.

Quest for furrow perfection

Story and photo by MARILYN SMULDERS of The Sentinel-Review

HICKSON — Ah, the trick to plowing a perfect furrow!

About 15 centimetres deep and 25 cms wide? Or, 25 cms deep and 45 cms wide? It all depends on what kind of horsepower you've got and what's rigged behind.

Cecil Wells, a farmer from the Paris area, left all his high-powered tractors at home when he arrived at the Oxford County Plowing Match on Saturday. He opted instead for the old-fashioned variety of horsepower — a two tonne team of Belgians by the names of *Chief* and *Hank*.

There's real technique in plowing with horses, as there is with the equipment of modern farming. But with horses, it's just more obvious.

For example, the plowing match judges watch *Chief's* touch. With hooves as big as frisbees, he delicately puts one foot in the narrow groove left by the plow last time around. His other foot rests momentarily on the top of the furrow.

At the end of each row, Wells

steers the pair in a wide loop to begin again — whistling when he's ready. He deftly tucks the blade of the plow in the ground for another round.

Working the neighboring plot of sandy loam soil is Victor Lyons. Sitting atop an antique Massey Harris riding plough, Lyons directs a mammoth grey pair of Pershons, *Andy* and *Pride*. Lyons relies on levers and gears to control the depth and width of each furrow.

Back a 100 or so years ago, it would've taken farmers about a day to work one acre of land. With today's seven-furrowed plows, a farmer can do his whole farm.

George Odell doesn't even have to worry about fall planning this year. With more than 40 expert plowers carefully working his 26 acre plot of land, he's almost ready for Spring. Odell's dairy farm was the site of 44th annual Oxford County Plowing Match.

"It's a social event really," said Kathryn Dickout, secretary-treasurer for the Oxford organization and former *Queen of the Furrow*. "And, the farmers get to show off how good they are."