

Turkeys can be half wild. Grandfather kept about twenty. They would disappear into the bush in the spring. In the fall, just before freeze-up, they would return each with six or seven young turkeys. You would lose half the original flock while they were in the bush. Foxes were blamed.

Grandfather, who dragged one leg, took care of a quarter acre garden. It grew a good crop as it was loaded with manure. If any of his children earned money he took it mainly to pay for land. My mother taught school and stayed at home. Her cheques, for around \$300 per year, were mailed directly to grandfather. The boys worked in the camps in the winter and cleared \$500 if they had a team of horses. This went into the family pot as was often at that time the custom. This prompted a large family to get away from home as rapidly as possible. They went west and their train fare was paid and money was mailed to them if they found themselves stranded, or needed to purchase equipment.

Grandfather took care of the poultry. He bought his roosters from the Ontario Agricultural College, and was justly proud of them. He also took care of two pigs each year, which they bought as young pigs in the spring. He took the garden weeds, plus some bran and shorts, plus some skim milk and he boiled this and fed it to the pigs. He fed the pigs at 6:00 p.m. If he was not around by 6:00 p.m. these young pigs squealed something awful. Sometimes at night the pigs covered themselves completely with straw and then we knew that a bad storm was on the way.

Each year an acre of Prussian Blue field peas was grown. Grandfather flailed out the peas by hand and the straw was fed to the sheep. These peas made marvellous hot soup, especially when it was cold inside the house.

Many a time Parry Sound District, at Trout Creek, has won the Ontario champion yield for potatoes. This is possible because potatoes like a cool soil. Uncle Billie Oastler always had around four acres in potatoes. In good years, aside from having his own potatoes for the home, he would clear around \$400 per year selling potatoes in Parry Sound. He kept potatoes in the winter in his basement, along with carrots, beets, turnips, and eggs. The family killed its own sheep, cattle, deer, hogs, turkeys, and poultry and even the stomach of the cows was used in the preparation of haggis.

Because of the acres of burnt over forest land wild fruit was plentiful. The women and the kids often went picking. Wild strawberries and raspberries were picked by the milk pail full.

Colts were raised for the lumber camps. There were always colts to pet, as well as kittens, and the odd dog.

Grandmother rented out row boats, mostly to American tourists. Uncle Billie came to Parry Sound District so early, as a boy, there was no school for him to go to. Even at that, from his earliest recollections, he remembers American tourists and American money. In the early days the lakes were full of fish but the Oastlers were too busy scratching a living to have time for fishing. They all swam though, and the beach the family cleaned up over 100 years ago is now part of Oastler Park and hundreds swim in it each year.

If you were a stranger and called at the farm around 1914 you could have a meal for 25¢. Generally Uncle Billie Oastler dropped out for the resulting meal and killed a hen. No one ever kicked at the price.