

The Ballinafad story History of blacksmith shop, Ferguson family entwined

Miss Beatrice Hills again recalls early days in Ballinafad with this article which dips into memories as far back as 1886 when she began to attend Blue Mountain school. Miss Hills promises to send in more reminiscences to The Free Press of the "good old days."

By Miss B. Hills

In earlier writings I have given some past history of the west corner of Ballinafad such as the log school 1826, the cemetery, the Methodist Church 1842, the old Hall and Grange Hall. Then on the north corner the store, and mill, carriage, on the east corner a hotel which burned in August 1912. This land was idle until Jim Kirkwood bought the property in 1931 and built the chopping mill.

I also gave an account of the Presbyterian church built in 1878. Since June 1925 this had been the United Church.

This time I will describe the south corner as I remember it in 1886 when I began going to Blue Mountain school down the Seventh line.

On the south corner of the "Fad" there was a frame blacksmith shop a few rods in from the seventh line but touching the Erin and Esquimaux townline; also a barn a bit to the West. A few yards south of the shop stood a frame house with an upstairs.

In front of the house was a good well with a pump where the occupants got water for their own use. It was also used by a few others. This property was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ferguson. Members of their family were Duncan, Joann, Peter, Addie, a classmate of mine at school, and Lottie.

In earlier years there was a Hotel on this piece of land.

Mr. Ferguson was a good blacksmith, his son Duncan helping as soon as he was big enough. They were kept very busy putting shoes on horses, setting wagon tires, fixing farm implements, etc. It was hard work, also dirty and hot, as a certain amount of heat was required.

For several years a horse and light wagon were kept in the "Fad" to bring material from Georgetown to carry on their work. Cars were not in use until many years later when Peter, Jr. bought a small truck and Duncan a car.

The old shop was taken down in 1901 and a new brick one erected in less than a week. The bricklayers were Messrs. Puckering and Robinson of Hillsburgh.

A young man by the name of W. T. Stringer was a helper but did not lay the bricks. His home was near the fountain. He is still living or was a short time ago. I was from him I received this information.

Other contractors did the carpenter work. The same bricklayers built the school at Brisbane which was taken down a few years ago.

Duncan Ferguson and Ethel Near were married in December 1911. They lived for a few years with his father, then moved with their son, Fred, to a lot with a house and barn, one quarter mile west of the "Fad" on the Erin side of the Town line.

When Mr. Ferguson became unable to continue with the work, Peter Junior and his wife returned from Toronto to help his brother Duncan.

Mr. Ferguson Senior passed away in March, 1920 at the age of 82 years. His wife predeceased him by 10 years.

Peter Junior and wife lived for some years in the old house then had it taken

down and lived in a one room cabin while a new brick house was being built in 1938 or '39.

Duncan was noted for the good work he did when putting shoes on horses to be shown at Fall Fairs.

The brothers continued working together until October 20, 1953, when after a short illness, Duncan passed away at his home.

A short time after this, Peter took a stroke and was in Guelph General Hospital for a few weeks. He then stayed with Mrs. Duncan Ferguson until he took worse and passed away only six months after his brother. His wife had passed away a few years before.

In 1954, Mrs. D. Ferguson decided to sell her property. In August she sold some of her household goods. Because of some delay in the business the place was not sold until 1955 when Ernie McKim bought it. He and his wife moved in in April that year. Mrs. Ferguson having moved to an apartment in Georgetown where she still lives in March, 1968.

Peter's house remained unoccupied for a year or more when the household goods were auctioned off. In 1957 the property was put up for sale. Archie Lawrs who had been living in a house just east of the mill bought it and with Jean and Peter, moved in, in 1958.

They got rid of the old iron, cleaned up the grounds and built a good porch over the back door. There was a furnace in the house but they added new cupboards and a bathroom.

Mr. Lawrs is a handyman and gets many odd jobs to do beside his regular work. The shop is now a workshop, also keeps his car in there.

He took the old barn down in 1964.

(To be continued)

David Bryden in Cyprus with United Nations forces

By Mrs. D. G. Robertson

Mrs. and Mrs. George Mitchell have sold their farm on the 3rd line, and are moving the end of the month to Georgetown where they have purchased a new home. Mr. and Mrs. David Bowars of Toronto were week end guests with Mr. and Mrs. R. Auld. Mr. and Mrs. George Dixon of Brampton, visited with Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Howard.

Lola, Shirley, Bob and Fred McDonald of Shelburne were holiday visitors with their uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Sinclair. Mr. and Mrs. W. Faulkner and family, and Mr. Norman Clarke, returned home during the week end following two weeks vacation in Florida.

Heather and Greg Milson, Guelph, spent a few days of their holidays with Mrs. M. Jackson. Mrs. Freeman was in Toronto recently taking her daughter Doenna back to the Crippled Children's Hospital for further treatment.

D. G. and Mrs. Robertson visited on Tuesday with the former's aunt Mrs. Rose Robertson, Preston.

We welcome Mr. and Mrs. George Cordona and family from Toronto, to our community. They have bought the house and barn and 27 acres of the former Russell Smith farm, 15 sideroad at the 1st. Line.

Mr. and Mrs. David Bryden, 3rd. Line, were in Trenton on Sunday to bid good-bye to their son David, who is with the Canadian services, United Nations, who left for Cyprus.

Mrs. Gordon Atken was hostess for the monthly meeting of the Ladies' Aid.

Mrs. E. Fisher presided and Mrs. H. Pankrat read the minutes and correspondence.

Plans were made for a lunch booth at Mr. Robert Strachan's sale.

The Study book and devotional were reviewed by Mrs. E. Fisher. Mrs. Byron Bruce sang an Irish number, accompanied by Mrs. Gordon Atken.

Miss Brenda Bruce gave her speech on "I.S.D." that she had given in competition and won awards for.

A Shairrock contest was won

by Mrs. S. Fuller and Mrs. G. Jackson.

The hostess assisted by Mrs. Byron Bruce and Mrs. George Grundy served a dainty lunch and a social chat was enjoyed.

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BALLINAFAD

B6 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, March 27, 1968

Centennial medal, meetings, anniversary in district news

By Mrs. R. Shortill

We are glad to know Mrs. Phidela Snow is progressing nicely after recovering from surgery.

Many Ballinafad people called to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. David Russel on the occasion of their sixtieth Wedding Anniversary. All of us here extend our best wishes to them.

We are saddened to hear of the tragic death of Brian Carriere. Brian had been a Blue Mt. school pupil.

The afternoon unit of the U. C. W. met at the home of Mrs. Healey on Tuesday last, Mrs. Marshal taking the devotion and Miss Hills, the topic on Japan. A social time over the tea cups closed the meeting, lunch served by Mrs. Marshal and the hostess.

The evening unit met at the home of Mrs. Harry Shortill. Mrs. Reg. French had the devotion and Mrs. Elwood Snow the topic on Japan on Christian Profiles.

Lunch was served by Mrs. Lawr and Mrs. Jamieson assisted by the hostess.

Mr. and Mrs. Misoner moved on Friday to their new home on Highway 24. They had been renting rooms with F. W. Shortill's.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Drysdale on the arrival of their baby daughter.

Miss Jessie McKay has been

very ill after surgery but latest reports are that she is much better. Jessie lives in Toronto but was a Ballinafad girl, who has had a very successful teaching career.

Ballinafad boys gave a good account of them selves on Friday night in a game of hockey at Acton Arena.

Mr. and Mrs. Reg. French visited in London on Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Dan Campbell, Wayne, Kathy and Debbie returning home with them after spending the holidays there with their grandparents.

Master Blake French spent a few days last week with his uncle and aunt and cousin Mr. and Mrs. Delmar French and Kimberly, at Georgetown.

The intermediate girls choir sang an anthem at church on Sunday. Kathryn Sinclair at the organ.

Miss Helen Akitt, a well-known and outstanding Erin township teacher was recently awarded a centennial medal by the Federal Government, one in the 25 teachers across Canada to receive the same. Miss Akitt has taught primary grades in Hillsburgh school for thirty-eight years, holds a Primary Methods Certificate and a Supervisor's Certificate in Primary Education. We congratulate Helen, who is familiar to Ballinafad friends and close relatives here and in Acton.

O.P.P. locate missing boy

Milton O.P.P. report 37 general occurrences during the past week, including one break and enter and theft investigation, two thefts and one other criminal code offence being investigated, one minor assault, one fraud investigation, one missing youth from Nassagaweya Township located in Kingston, two Liquor Control Act investigations resulting in one person being charged, one premises found insecure at night. Several other occurrences were of a minor nature.

Mr. and Mrs. John Pearson and boys of Tara visited their parents Mr. and Mrs. Jessie McNery last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shortill visited Mr. John Pearce at Branson Hospital, North York on Sunday.

The Scout Mothers sponsored a dance in the Community Centre on Friday night.

4-H girls met in the hall on Saturday.

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The exchange procedure is simple. Take your 1959 Canada Savings Bonds to your bank, authorized investment dealer, trust or loan company. They will make all arrangements for you. Exchange your 1959 Canada Savings Bonds for the new high-yielding Special Replacement Bonds without delay. This offer expires on May 15, 1968.

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