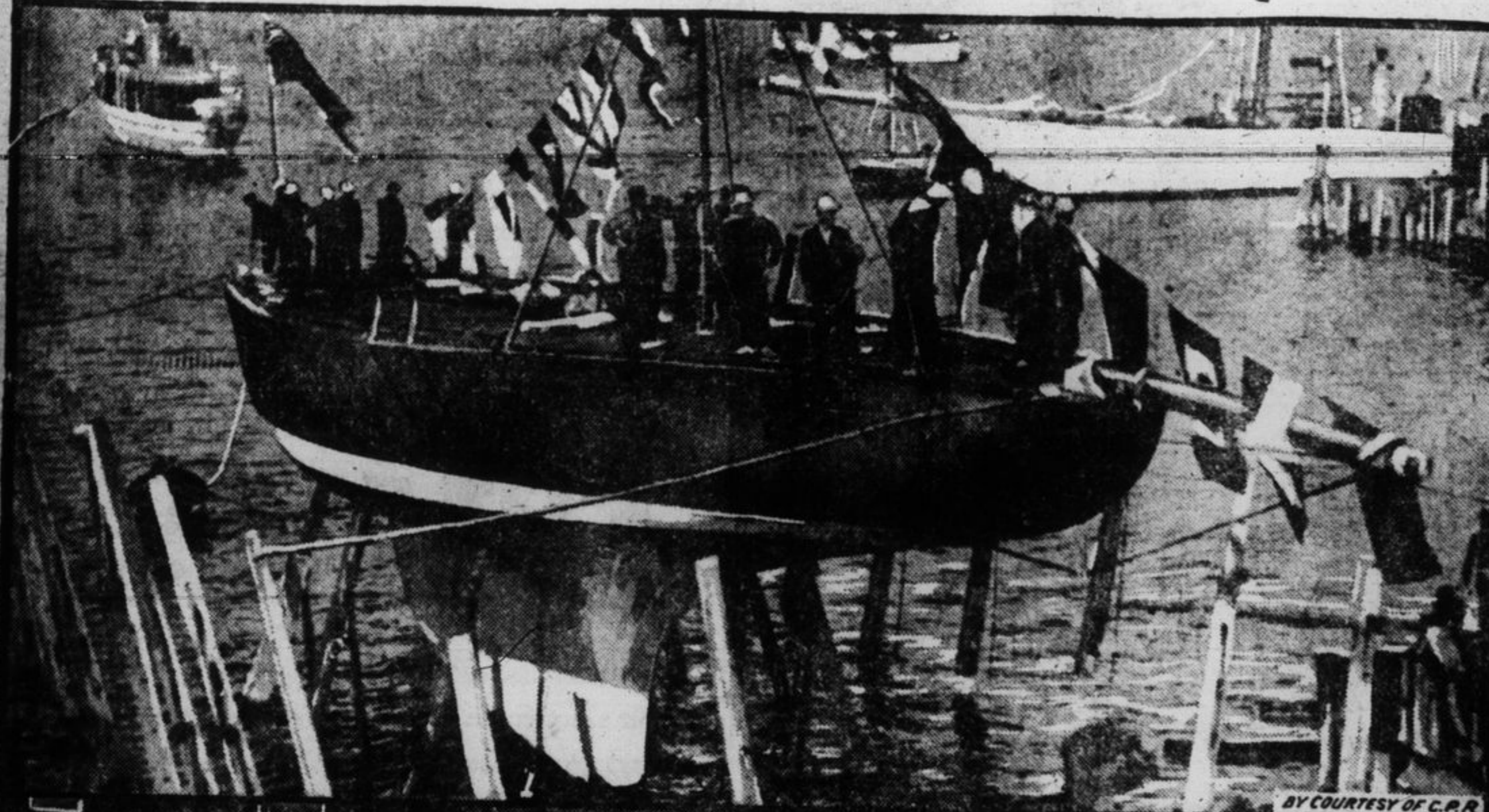


WORLD NEWS IN PICTURES --- LAUNCHING SHAMROCK IV.



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Widening the Market by Creating a Product Standard



"Never had a crop failure in seventy-five years." Such a record is good enough for any country and for any crop, and it might be inferred that the assertion was made in reference to some country that had been settled for generations. But it does not. It refers to a part of Western Canada, a country of which the settlement has largely been accomplished during the present generation, and is still going on. The crop that has never failed in three-quarters of a century is potatoes—the homely spud—and the district in which they have been grown successfully for so long a period surrounds Edmonton—the capital city of the Province of Alberta.

This district is acquiring for its potatoes a reputation far beyond the limit of its immediate neighborhood. Farmers here may not be able to grow oranges and lemons and grape fruit, but they are growing spuds and sending them where those fruits are grown, and probably making as much money out of them as the other fellows are out of their oranges. This may seem a tall statement, but it must be remembered that for the capital invested the farmer has much more land to grow his potatoes on than the latter has to grow his oranges on. Consignments of Alberta potatoes have this year been sent to California, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Missouri, Illinois, North Dakota, and Minnesota, as well as to the eastern provinces of Canada and British Columbia.

The peculiar qualities of the soil and the climate that have made Western Canada's grain famous all over the world no doubt, have something to do with the excellence of the potatoes grown here. The early settlers who grew potatoes seventy-five years ago on the land—where now the magnificent buildings of the Provincial Government stand—noted the excellent qualities of their crop and the heavy yields; and so have those who have grown them in the surrounding country ever since in steadily increasing quantities. At first only sufficient for domestic use were grown; then with the coming of the railway outside points began to be supplied and in 1917 an export trade was begun.

The success of the potato industry in Central Alberta is due to four excellent qualities which tubers grown here possess; they yield heavily, they are free from disease, they cook well and they are good eating. Moreover, growers are not troubled with the potato bug, that spoiler of many crops in other parts of the continent. Those who have been growing potatoes on a fairly large scale, planting from fifty to sixty acres annually say their yields have been from 350 to 500 bushels to the acre. These are yields that will compare favorably with any obtained anywhere. And the eagerness with which these potatoes are bought by buyers from all parts of the continent is sufficient evidence of their quality.

The potato industry in Central Alberta, however, is still in its infancy. It is only during the last year or two that any steps have been taken to



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(1) The Farmer Takes Pride in his Potato Field. (2) In an Alberta Potato Field.

ascertain the best varieties to grow. For a long time almost every farmer grew a different variety of potato, so that when carloads were required they had to be made up of mixed lots. This naturally resulted in the grower receiving a lower price than if a few standard varieties had been grown. Expert advice was sought and was exceedingly well adapted to potato growing and reached the conclusion that if the number of varieties should be reduced to one or two of the best suited to the district, the industry would be immeasurably advanced.

This matter of finding the most suitable varieties of potatoes was taken up by the faculty of agriculture of the University of Alberta. In 1914 Professor E. A. Howes, Dean of the faculty, distributed nine varieties of seed potatoes among a number of farmers. A careful record was made of the growth and yield and after they were harvested a cooking test was made. The "Wee Magregor" was proved to be the best all-around potato, and Carman No. 1 the second best. Ninety per cent of the farmers in the district are now growing these two varieties, and the demand for their potatoes has since increased a hundredfold.

Experiments are still being conducted at the University chiefly with a view of finding the best conditions under which the potatoes should be grown and the best form of rotation. It has been found that potatoes following corn yield 171 bushels more than when grown following oats, the acre yield being 629 bushels and 458 bushels respectively.

The growing importance of the industry led to the formation last February of a potato growers' association. The objects of this association are to encourage the members to grow as high a quality of potatoes as possible, to find the best markets for their crops, and, if necessary, to establish a co-operative marketing system. During the winter months lectures on the best methods of growing potatoes have been given; and at all times the association keeps in touch with and assists in the experimental work of the Provincial Government. The association has begun by making the quality idea prominent. They have adopted a high standard and intend to maintain it. With such a standard and in a country which is developing so rapidly as Western Canada is, the industry is sure of a steady growth.



BY COURTESY OF C.R.R.

(1) Launching the Shamrock IV, at City Island, New York, May 26, 1920.
 (2) Princess Mary inspecting Guard of Honor of Red Cross Division.
 (3) A novel method of transporting the Royal swans; they are going from England to South Wales. A present from King George.
 (4) Major Lockett, selected by England as captain of the English Polo Team, in contest with America.
 (5) Salvaging a seaplane at Felkstone, England, in which four lives were lost. The seaplane was carrying 45 passengers and a crew of 8 and while at practice nose-dived into the sea about half a mile from the beach.
 (6) Llamas are a novel seaside attraction for children at Folkestone, England.
 (7) Children of notables who danced at Australia House for the Royal Caledonia Charity Fair.
 (8) Dignity vs. Impudence.—A youthful messenger inquires the way from a Guardsman.



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