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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Boat Builders List Prepared

By NEIL A. MATHESON

A MOUNT STEWART neighbor Edwin P. Clark died last week. I had talked with him several weeks ago about doing a column on his achievement as a boat builder, and he had accepted the idea.

Mr. Clark went away for a trip and became ill so that he came home to enter the hospital here. He underwent a serious operation and did not recover.

When I learned a few days ago that Mr. Clark was not expected to recover, I had word sent to his daughter, Marion, that should be brighten just a little, enough for him to talk with me, I would like to write the column, so that he would have the pleasure of reading it while he was still alive.

Such was not to be, however, and Mr. Clark was buried last Friday. His daughter was good enough to pass on to me a list of boat builders which her father had been writing in long hand.

That list I am publishing here today, in the hopes that many of you readers will know of other people who built boats. I hope that enough of you will do just that so that I can publish another column on the boat builders about whom you will tell me.

If you do, we'll dedicate the column to Eddie Clark, as his friends knew him.

Here are the names Mr. Clark's daughter gave to me. The list did not include his own name, that of his father, George R. Clark, nor his son George, though all three of them belong in such a list.

Really Fine Workman

EDWIN CLARK was a really fine workman, with the hands of an artist in shaping wood to his will.

In some cases Mr. Clark did not have the first names of the men whose names he had written on the list.

Under the heading "Boat builders who have retired or passed on", Edwin Clark wrote:

Peter Roberts, Charlottetown; Spurgeon Hickox, West River; James Steele, Montague and Charlottetown; Mr. Stewart, Guernsey Cove; Mr. Bell, Murray Harbor; Herbert Lewellyn, Gaspereaux; Mr. Burke, Lower Montague; Angus MacLean, Georgetown; Capt. Charles Fitzgerald, Georgetown.

There were five men from Souris Mr. Clark has listed. They were Mr. Chennel, Mr. Paquet, George Stubbert, Herbert Stubbert, and Benjamin Bushey.

Reginald Rose was from South Lake, a Mr. Stewart was from the same place.

Elisha Hynes, Frank MacEwen, Charles Mosher, Sr. were from Morrell.

MacMillan Brothers, Canavoy; Paul Gallant, Dundee and Randolph MacEachern, Canavoy.

Glovers, McIntyre

JAMES J. MACINTYRE, Robert Glover and his son, Howard Glover were from Mount Stewart.

Allan H. MacDonald, John MacDonald and Gus MacDonald were from West St. Peter's; Ben Fogarty, Afton Road; John Misener, Stanhope; Mr. Gallant, Rustico; Charles Drake, New London; William Aubrey, Alberton.

A Mr. Mosher, Tignish; Captain Sam Smith, West Point; Eddie Chappell and Hugh Walters were from Summerside; Leo Campbell from Cape Traverse and Captain James Strait from Summerside.

I remember the last named builder well, and that memory goes back to the days when we had regular sailing regattas in the Charlottetown harbor waters. I recall that Strait built several racing yachts which were competing in those years.

I'm far from being knowledgeable about Island boat builders but I can't resist the temptation to insert here the name of Malcolm (Mack) Irwin, Charlottetown who in my humble estimation has built more yachts here than any other man I know.

I leave it at that. I hope to hear from many knowledgeable people with the names of P.E.I. boat builders. If some of you have the names of the boats, and any other particulars so much the better.

Mrs. Matheson and I spent a day at Mt. Stewart last week and I spent some of the time sifting through some of the dozens of files in my cabinet. I found a number of items I intend to use in future columns.

Sharbell's Geese

ONE OF THEM had to do with a chat I had nearly 10 years ago, I think it was, with Eddie Sharbell who operates one of the finest country stores in the province at Portage.

My questions were about the many geese his father used to gather up in the fall of the year. His story of the geese was interesting.

His father used to ship the geese by rail to the Boston area. He stopped doing that, Eddie explained, when the price changed so that dressed geese here on the Island brought as much as they did in Boston.

Mr. Sharbell would gather the geese, most of them from the area between Ellerslie and Tignish.

Most of the geese were east of Portage, though sometimes he would have to go as far East as Hunter River to get enough.

The goal was 2,500 geese, and they would be fed for one and one-half months in Portage before they were shipped. The geese would be fed grain to strengthen them for the trip, I am sure Eddie Sharbell told me, though that is not in the notes I have on our talk.

The geese would average nine to 10 pounds here. They would be shipped to Boston and driven seven to eight miles to the Austen goose farm for final fattening. Then they would average 15 to 16 pounds.

150 Bushels Grain

THE GEESE would eat up to 150 bushels of grain per day.

When the 2,500 geese were loaded into railroad cars for shipment to Boston, the Sharbells would put 75 bushels of turnips into the car with them, to eat while in transit.

I remember Mr. Sharbell telling me that they used to drive the geese on the road in groups of 300 birds.