

1The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., May 1, 1964

ACROSS THE ISLAND

\$1,000 Champ Steer Is Seen 'Dear Eating'

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Provincial - Farm Editor

A STORY I wrote from the First Atlantic Winter Fair in Halifax last November told an interesting tale of a steer Fulton Sanderson, York Point took to the show. But I found last week on a visit to the Sanderson farm that the story has other facets that are even more interesting.

It was more than a year ago that the Sandersons decided to take a steer and a young heifer to Louis MacPhee, Clyde River to have them slaughtered and dressed for their deep freeze at home. Louis took one look at the animal and told them he was too good to kill. Keep him for the Fat Stock show at Charlottetown, he advised.

They left the heifer there but took the Hereford steer home. It was winter time and the snow was fairly deep, so they let the animal out of the trailer at the top of their lane, thinking he would travel down the lane to the barn. But the animal panicked and headed for the bush.

"WE THOUGHT at first that we'd lead one of the cows out of the barn toward him, and he would follow her to the barn", Fulton told me. But the animal took for the woods. When they tried to corner him, the panicky steer would charge at them. Finally he plunged into deep snow and got stuck. So Fulton and one of the boys grabbed him, got a rope on him and got him to the barn.

Late last summer they found the animal weighed close to 900 pounds, so he would clearly be too heavy for the Fat Stock show here in March - weight limit is 1100 pounds. So they stalled him and fed him for the AWF at Halifax. The animal gained an average of three pounds per day and weighed 990 at Halifax.

There he won the reserve championship and sold for \$1 a pound at auction the night following the sale. He brought more than \$1,000 to the Sanderson farm, counting prize money.

He surely would have been expensive eating, Mr. Sanderson observed to me with a smile, as we talked in their kitchen a few days ago.

Press Gang Threatened Him

MRS. FULTON SANDERSON, the former Helen MacKinley of North River, the next district, told me that her greatgrandfather Donald MacKinley came to this province in 1809. He purchased his farm at North River in 1817 and it is one of the several hundred "Centennial Farms", listed in a recent Centennial farm roundup.

One of the more interesting stories told about Greatgrandfather MacKinley is that an English Navy press gang came aboard the boat on which he was sailing for Canada more than 150 years ago, and threatened to take him for the Navy. But the captain of

the ship persuaded the “gang” to leave young MacKinley as they explained he was the sole support of his mother and two younger children.

Mrs. Sanderson told me an interesting story about her maternal grandfather, Mackison Dixon, Clyde River. It was back in 1881 and he had a most important date to keep with Miss Amanda Lowther of Rice Point, for it was a wedding ceremony that had been arranged. But the appointed day found Mr. Dixon aboard a boat that was stuck in the ice somewhere between Charlottetown and Pictou. Mr. Dixon had his horse on board and, though details are missing, the animal was close to starvation, I gathered, before the boat finally shook itself free of the ice and landed on this side. The wedding came off several weeks later. Mrs. Russel Leard and Mrs. J. Lester Douglas, both of Charlottetown are members of the same Lowther family, Mrs. Sanderson tells me.

For readers of “Ellen’s Diary”, the Mackison Dixon home is the one in which Ellen and her husband, George Dixon live now.

Farm Machinery Effort Under Way

I WAS particularly interested in a chat I had with Harold Campbell, Bedeque while I was digging up a few stories for the farm edition. This man and his associates are going ahead with a plan to manufacture farm machinery that might set up a new industry in this province, even if it would be on a small scale. Work is now underway which is more or less of an experimental nature, I gathered. But Mr. Campbell has ideas and dreams which could change some trends in this province, though he’s modest about the possibilities until he sees how they will develop.

One-Man Operation At Montrose

ONE OF the most interesting developments I have noticed in farm work curtailment was seen at Montrose during a visit several months ago. Fred Ramsay, a former member of the legislature, has a steel mill set up to thresh his grain, and the entire threshing operation can be done by one man, though his son, Ronald, 11 was helping the day I was there.

The straw is blown through a pipe into the loft, the grain is piped to a bin, and the whole operation is so simple, it looks easy. I forget the details on the hay harvesting but it was also a one-man operation, as I recall. I believe it was a forage crop harvester he used, then he blew it into the loft.

Fred has a herd of registered Hereford cattle and I hope to bring you the story of its development sometime soon. Foundation stock came from Western Canada and he has had several interesting sires. One of them, Shraden Federal, is an English bull that was brought here by the P.E.I. Hereford Breeders Association.

If memory serves correctly all of the top winners at the Alberton exhibition last fall were of Ramsay breeding, and he has sold many animals to breeders in various parts of these Maritime Provinces.

Like Farming Best, Linkletters State

STILL STICKING to farm subjects, I was interested in the reply I received from Harry Linkletter and his sons, Leigh and Garth, on the Linkletter Road, west of Summerside. These people are enthusiastic about the possibilities in farming. It demands all you have got, but the results are worthwhile if you give the operation the attention it deserves, they said.

They're potato men, the Linkletters, but they have also been dairy farmers. I went there looking for a story on machinery building and improvisation. The likable farmers were modest about that side of their operation, but I think you'll find something interesting in the story in this week's Farm Section.

Breeding Of Black Sheep Is Sought

I CALLED on neighbor Athol Roberts at Southport long enough to talk about his sheep operation and his livestock background. One question I hope some of the veterans can answer is what breed, or what combination of breeding gave us the black sheep we knew so well in the country when I was a boy.

Black sheep are still with us. Athol has one and he tells me she's a hardy type that raises thrifty lambs, and often twins. But, like myself, he's not sure just what breeding combination produced her.

The black wool from these animals made much warmer socks and mitts, people of other days used to insist, and I believe they were right in that claim. I remember in school days that we used to feel pretty proud if we had socks or mitts from that color wool. And, of course, the entire operation was one completed on the farm, from shearing to the finished product. I should add that the carding was normally done at a mill.

Art French did ours at Westmoreland and that reminds me I have a story Art told me which involves a different type of cooperation. I mislaid my notes on it and delayed publication, unfortunately, until Art died. But I still hope to bring you the story of an interesting development of the past which Dr. R. Gordon Lea told me about some time ago.

Seek Plowing Match Information

If anyone can help me dig up information about plowing matches in the distant past, I would appreciate hearing about it. In a moment of weakness I promised to do a story on the history of plowing matches here for the booklet that is being prepared for the Canadian Championship event later this year. I found that I haven't got enough information on the matches of other years - I mean the ones that were held before the Dundas people revived plowing competition in 1940 - so I would appreciate hearing from anyone who can help. I do have information on three or four matches of 100 years ago or so, but I need a great deal more, if I can get it.