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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Boat Builders List Is Extended

By NEIL A. MATHESON

I WANT to express my thanks and appreciation to those of you who were kind enough to send me information on boats and builders as I requested on Monday, February 21.

Mrs. Connie (Hemphill) Kent of Fairfield, Souris RR 2 writes:

"Eddie Clark was a dear friend; he was married to my cousin, Mary Gotell, Georgetown and Eddie, Mary and the grandchildren, whom they adored, visited us in Fairfield many times since we moved here in 1966. Pat and Eddie spent many pleasant hours talking about the boat-building business.

"As a child in Georgetown, I remember my Dad speak of many of the builders on your list (the list Edwin Clark had prepared before he died). Dad started working on a vessel for Captain Fitzgerald in 1924.

For 'Captain Charlie'

"SHORTLY AFTERWARD the Captain started his own boat-building yard; my Dad and his old cronie, Bert Skinner, an excellent carpenter, worked for Captain Charlie in the shipyard for many years.

"Some of the boats I recall being built: the ferry boats between Georgetown and Lower Montague, and between Georgetown and Newport and if memory serves me correctly, the boat between Charlottetown and Rocky Point.

"Many fine boats were built at the Fitzgerald yard.

"Work became scarce in the hungry Thirties, especially the latter part. When the war started Dad had 10 children to support, and he was forced to look for work elsewhere.

Worked At Pictou, N.S.

"WE MOVED to Pictou in 1941, along with Bert, who lived with us during the war years. They started work for Ferguson Industries building Life Boats in the West end boat-building shop. Dad was made foreman shortly afterwards.

"When the war ended, they moved to the main Ferguson yard, working on refit and building many fine boats. Bert didn't stay long at the main yard. He had become lonely for "good old P.E.I." and returned to Georgetown, where he still resides.

"Dad never lost touch with his birthplace and visited the Island as often as possible, hoping eventually to retire in Georgetown.

"Dad's last job was 'The Lord Selkirk', on the Caribou-Wood Islands run. A lot of the finishing work was done by Dad, a glowing tribute, I think, to a fine carpenter.

"He died in 1958," recalls his daughter who was evidently so proud of her Dad.

Her Closing Lines

I LIKE particularly those lines of Mrs. Kent's story of her dad and Edwin Clark.

"Eddie and Dad had a lot of things in common. They were true craftsmen. They loved their work, their family and their host of friends.

"Sleep peacefully dear ones. May you greet in that land beyond and yarn about the boats . . . and the memories."

Mike Moony Calls

MIKE MOONEY, 126 Hillsboro Street, Charlottetown is one of the railway men I liked best when he was a conductor. Many's the time I admired this fine looking man, who combined dignity of person, and an open friendly kindness in his work that made him unique.

He told of two boat builders he knew. One Willard Leard of Borden built a yacht for Ray Sherry, Borden, and also built a number of other boats.

Charles Ellsworth, East Baltic was the other boat builder he recalled. Mr. Ellsworth had moved to the United States but built boats at Souris after he had returned to the Island.

Dale Judson, Georgetown wrote me a newsy letter in which she told me "My father, George R. Judson of Alexandra, was a carpenter. He also built a number of boats."

Names Are Recalled

A FEW NAMES she recalled were The Wanderer, Stranger, Swallow, Alexandra, Maggie and Rangelight.

"The last three named, Mr. Judson had built for a Charlottetown businessman, Charles Paton. I think he had a clothing store," Dale says.

I am just wondering if Mr. Paton's name wasn't James.

Memory tells me that a friend tells me that James Paton – the surname is still on the stone front of the Richmond Street building where I worked for many years for the Patriot – crossed the Atlantic Ocean 89 times on buying trips for his business.

Mr. Judson raced some of the boats for Mr. Paton and won his share of races, Dale writes.

The Maggie was burned at a wharf in Charlottetown, but that was before my time, his daughter explains.

"The only boat he built that I can remember was for my Uncle Seymour MacLennan", Dale concludes her letter.

My neighbor and brother-in-law, Wendell Glover, tells me about two boats that were built and shipped to Boston.

The year 1909 was in the early part of gasoline engines in boats. That summer a Mr. and Mrs. Devine from Boston were vacationing at Mrs. Devine's former home at Head of Hillsboro. Her maiden name was Maude Bambrick, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Bambrick.

Robert Glover Built Three

THEY ARRIVED at Savage Harbor where Robert Glover was fishing from a sail boat. And it was agreed that Mr. Glover – Wendell's father – was to build two boats and send them to Boston where motors would be installed.

During the following winter Mr. Glover built the boats with cabins, launched them at Mt. Stewart in the spring, put temporary sails on them, and sailed them to Charlottetown, from where they were shipped on the steamer 'Evangeline' plying between Charlottetown and Boston, operated by the Plant Line Steamer Company.

Next year Mr. Glover built a boat for himself and had an engine installed.

In 1912 Mr. Glover was to build a boat for John MacIntyre of St. Andrews. But he passed away that spring.

Two other boat builders were Benjamin Pigott and Capt. David Pigott. They produced the lumber Mr. Glover had assembled and built the boat for Mr. MacIntyre.

Wendell adds that these two men fished at Savage Harbor. They were two of the men mentioned in the Pirates story in this column several weeks ago.