

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., Feb. 28, 1964

## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Shovel, Horses, Carts Built Island Railway

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Provincial - Farm Editor

"MY FATHER. David Kaye Shaw, worked with a horse and cart, hauling clay fill for the railroad when it was built in the 1870's, Cyril Shaw told me when I called on him recently at his home in Brudenell.

Mr. Shaw couldn't recall for sure but he believes that the pay for the man, the horse and vehicle was \$1.50 per day. His father, who was born in 1847, worked in the area from Cardigan east, and all of the fill was hauled by carts that were filled by men with shovels. Imagine the hand labor that was entailed and the length of time it would take to complete even a reasonably-sized fill. That would probably be in the early 1870's.

Today huge "Carryalls" move up to 15 tons, load themselves and move along the road at high speeds.

"I RECALL as a boy", Mr. Shaw told me, "that the men would plow the side of the road and then would pull clay up on the road surface with a plank that was pulled by horses, and held, or guided by two men gripping the handles." The plank, I gathered, was used much as the split-log drag though it wouldn't be so effective.

Mr. Shaw recalled that a man from East Royalty was the first to run a road machine. "It was a wonderful thing for us youngsters to see four teams of horses harnessed together to pull it ."That would probably be in the early 1890's, he estimated, and the road machine and the self-binder for grain came at the same time, he told me.

Before I leave the road machine reference, I have found that the East Royalty man was William Connolly, who lived at the junction of the Union Road and the St. Peter's Road. He was the father of Mrs. Edgar Hertz, and the grandfather of Harold C. Hertz whom many people know as the senior livestock fieldman, Canada department of agriculture.

### Shaw Binder Bought In 1892

"MY FATHER bought an Alexander Harris binder about 1892" said Mr. Shaw who explained that Harris later joined forces with the Massey family, and a man by the name of Knox, and it became the Massey-Harris company. James D. Dewar had been the first to buy a binder in that area.

There had been a binder made prior to that but it was never satisfactory, as it used a fine wire to tie the sheaves.

The first hay-mower that came to the district was a combined mower and reaper, and that must have been about 100 years ago, he estimated. The reaper table could be removed for the hay cutting operation.

“But my father cut grain with a cradle scythe when he was 17,” Mr. Shaw recalled. Benjamin Dockendorff in the North River - York Point area grew 40 acres of grain and all of it was cut by scythe. There was no other way in the early days.

I believe it was the late Thomas Moyse, Bedeque who told me that three acres per day was really good cutting with a scythe. And that reminds me that I saw considerable grain cut with a scythe in an area close to Guysborough when I worked on a railroad construction job in 1931 and 1932.

LARGE QUANTITIES of oats were shipped from this province to the Old Country in early days, much to the detriment of the land. John Robertson who ran Inkerman farm for the owner who also owned a brewery, was asked once, “Did you sell your oats yet?” The reply was “I have already shipped the top three inches of soil to the Old Country.”

Humor crept into Mr. Shaw’s reminiscences at times. He told me, for example, of a small man who was trying to get on the police force of Charlottetown. He could not compare in physique with the six or seven other applicants but he was an unusually gifted writer. A friend who had influence persuaded the authorities that the ability to write such a fine hand was “most important”, as the man would be writing summonses and other legal documents, so the small chap was chosen.

I’m purposely leaving the man nameless, but he often got into difficulty in attempts to arrest husky wrong doers. Once, after losing the struggle with a quarrelsome drunk, the little policeman arrived back at the police station without his prisoner and explained to an enquiring superior “The man was perfectly sober so I let him go.”

#### Panmure Island Business Recalled

ANDREW ARCHIBALD MacDonald, one of the Fathers of Confederation, was born in Brudenell. The MacDonalds had their business established on Panmure Island and the people in the Brudenell area hollowed out big pine logs - they were four to five feet in diameter - and travelled in the crudely shaped boats or canoes to the Island on shopping trips. When MacDonald’s wooden store burned, they brought brick from the Old Country and built a new one. Later the brick building was taken down brick by brick, moved to Georgetown and set up there, where it stood for many years.”

“The MacDonalds - they were pretty close to the Lords of the Isles - came to the Island about 1780, and had the first business house in this part of the province”, Mr. Shaw told me. Later Joseph Wightman started a business at St. Andrew’s point, or Wightman’s Point, as it is commonly called, in the Lower Montague area.

“I HAVE heard that as many as 400 rigs used to travel to the point in those days after a vessel arrived from the Old Country, though I cannot vouch for the truth of the old story”, the Brudenell man said.

The story of the MacDonalds is a big one and I’ll try to deal with it later. I visited Panmure Island sometime ago and talked with Bernard MacDonald, who is a descendant of the man who pioneered large-scale merchandising in that locality approximately 150 years ago.

L. M. Poole who ran the lumber yard where the Navy Barracks is located, planned to build a summer hotel at Brudenell once, but the idea fell through, Mr. Shaw recalled. Chappel’s Almanac called it Brudenn Town but it wasn’t a town. Possibly there were

eight to 10 houses there. There is still evidence of four saw pits at Brudenell - they were used for sawing boards or planks before power rotary saws. There was one on King Square in Charlottetown, I have been told.

An old French cannon was found there and was taken to Scotland by Dr. David Kaye, the first doctor in Georgetown, and the man for whom Mr. Shaw's father was named.

### Ghostly Swish Scares Housekeepers

MRS. KAYE went to Scotland on a sailing vessel and was never heard from again as she apparently went down with the ship. Later her husband had to leave Georgetown, Mr. Shaw told me, because he couldn't get anyone to keep house for him. The housekeepers claimed the house was haunted, as they "could hear his wife's silk dress swishing as she walked through the building."

His grand uncle, John Shaw, a Baptist minister, used to travel to Kingsboro - that's east of Souris - on horseback and he also preached at Brudenell. A powerful preacher, apparently, people walked from as far as Dundas to hear him. Most of the older preachers talked at great length and an old lady known as "Granny Grand River" later heard a sermon of 15 to 20 minutes, and observed disparagingly "when Father Shaw was alive, you would sit there for two hours." She must have appreciated long sermons better than most people do now.

"The beater digger came to the Island about 1880, we got ours in 1884 - and it was made by Lepages in Rustico. Bruce Stewart made a copy of it later."

The old "Blue potatoes" were plowed in deep and pickers had to do a lot of scratching with their hands. He picked once from 12 noon to 8 o'clock in the evening, got 25 cents, and was told by the farmer "that's good pay for one-half day." He picked 10 days for a farmer once and got a cheque for \$3.50. The pay is \$6.00 a day now, he contrasted.

"There has been a revolution in my time in a material sense, but there has been no change in human nature. The old friendly spirit of neighbourliness is lacking. . . . The spirit of adventure is lacking, security seems to be the main desire", this interesting gentleman observed as he glanced back through the years.

THE VETERAN Brudenell man has had many experiences. One of them goes back to his early days, when he fell through the barn loft and landed on his back across the edge of a board. "My back would have been broken except the fall was cushioned by chaff piled up on either side," said Mr. Shaw who managed to crawl to the house perhaps 150 feet away. He was paralyzed next day, but responded to some two months' treatment and made a complete recovery.

LINCOLN DEWAR tells me there has been a tremendous reaction to the Century Farms competition and estimates there will probably be 300 entries in all by closing date which is tomorrow night, February 29.