

THE GUARDIAN

Authorized as Second Class Mail Post Office Department, Ottawa. The Island Guardian Publishing Co. Editor and Managing Director, Ian A. Burnett, Associate Editor, Frank Walker. CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew" "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink". CHARLOTTETOWN SATURDAY, AUG. 1, 1953

The Belfast Settlement

Casual visitors looking for Belfast are apt to be puzzled by the difficulty of precisely locating the famous settlement. In truth Belfast has come to mean wherever the Selkirk settlers and their descendants have made their homes along the shores of Hillsborough Bay and Northumberland Strait. When a Belfast man ploughs his field, who is to say that he is not in Belfast?

The men of Skye and Uist who accompanied the fifth Earl Selkirk to found the largest Scottish community in this Province 150 years ago impressed their own character upon their surroundings whatever they might be. It would be difficult to imagine any locality less resembling their original homeland than the landing place at Orwell Bay but no one who visited the community at any time in the past 150 years could long remain in doubt that it was Scottish to the core.

The highlander combined a sentimental attachment to his home with a very practical readiness to leave it to go far afield. Consequently the descendants of the Selkirk settlers are to be found all over the continent and much farther. They retain a loyalty, however, to the original landing place of the "Polly", the "Dykes" and the "Oughton" as to their original highland home. Wherever they may be they retain the highland stamp of interest in religion, education and individuality. A proud people, they are prepared to recognize and approve the pride of others.

They now mark the 150th anniversary of their landing in this country but casual references to genealogies bring out more or less authentic family links back over nearly two thousand years. There is one family, indeed, which claims that it would down the family tree there is mention of a certain Adam and Eve. Be that as it may, the Belfast people are in the habit of making history as well as remembering it.

Reason For Salad Week

The Canadian Horticultural Council which launched Salad Week in 1951 points out that if Canadians would eat as much fresh fruits and vegetables as health and nutrition authorities recommend, the domestic market for home-grown produce would be increased by 43 per cent.

According to the latest figures available, the average Canadian is eating 376 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables per year while the amount recommended for a properly balanced diet by nutrition experts is 537 pounds per capita.

Obesity, which is today's polite term for being "too fat", is becoming the number one health problem for over-fed, under-nourished North Americans. Eating more fresh fruit and vegetables can provide the answer to this dietary difficulty.

Changing food habits is a slow process. The Canadian Horticultural Council does not expect everyone to begin eating salads regularly as a result of Salad Week. But by focussing attention on the importance of eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, Salad Week is gradually helping to build a healthier, better-fed Canada and is also helping to increase the market for the products of Canadian farms.

Research In Bee Culture

There is a regional bee culture laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin, where research workers have an ambitious program before them. They are hoping that they can do more or less, with bees, what other research workers have done with livestock. These are some of the things they hope to do. They want to get:

Queens that will lay more eggs; bees that will live longer and not be so ready to sting, and will resist bee diseases. They want bees that will trip the alfalfa flowers, will swarm less and will not build brace comb.

This is quite an order. Nevertheless, selective breeding has already brought some results. C. L. Ferrar of the University of Wisconsin, says that in 1951 the best line of bees averaged two and one-half times as much as the poorest line, and the highest yield was 363 pounds, which compares with 158 pounds for the average production of 15 lines of bees on test. This average, in turn, was 83 pounds

more than the average for the state. What the research workers hope to do is to develop inbred lines from outstanding queens and cross these to secure three-or-four-way hybrids. The inbred lines would be weak and would have to be maintained and kept pure by proper management and artificial insemination.

Ferrar, who is in charge of the North Central States Bee Culture Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, says that in addition to improved bees, beekeeping itself needs some other revamping. He says it is one of the branches of agriculture which has not mechanized its operations in the last 50 years. He looks forward to central processing plants, which will relieve the average beekeeper from inefficient and expensive honey extraction. There is no reason, he thinks, why honey should not be extracted in separate plants, just as milk is processed by the dairyman in a special processing plant.

Forest Fire Losses

An arresting picture of forest fire losses in Canada has been given by R. M. Fowler, president of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, in a message distributed by the Canadian Forestry Association. The timber consumed in fires each year, he states, would make a stack of four-foot-long logs, four feet high, stretching from Halifax to Victoria.

Fires now are breaking out at the rate of 4,000 per year, Mr. Fowler finds. The Forestry Association adds that during the past ten years the nine mainland provinces have lost 4,373,000 acres of mature timber and 4,400,000 acres of young trees "which were getting ready to restock the nation's woodlands."

It is not merely a question of severe damage to forest industries, although that is serious, indeed, when one considers that the pulp and paper industry is Canada's greatest exporter in terms of dollar value. That is certainly not all, for the forests clothe the land, protect it against the wear and tear of the elements, regulate the runoff on the watersheds and in fact guard the very future of agriculture—still the nation's leading industry.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Lammas Day, the Feast of the Wheat Harvest.

Tomorrow, the 9th Sunday after Trinity, 10th after Pentecost.

Prince County Hospital has done very well in qualifying for Dominion-Provincial grants totalling \$316,000. The maxim that heaven helps those who help themselves applies to hospitals and governments.

The Battle of the Nile or Aboukir Bay, was fought this date 1798. Napoleon, fresh from the conquest of Italy, had embarked his "Army of England" to take Egypt. He narrowly missed being intercepted by Nelson and his ships were completely defeated and largely destroyed soon after he had landed.

The increases in potato acreage of 8 per cent in this Province, 13 per cent in New Brunswick, 9 per cent in Quebec and 12 per cent in Ontario do not augur well for prices this year, particularly as American acreage has also been increased. It would be a bold prophet, however, who would say that there will necessarily be a surplus.

The Health League of Canada is distributing an illustrated pamphlet on the Schafer method of artificial respiration of those apparently drowned. It is emphasized that attempts to restore breathing should be continued for a minimum of four hours. Early commencement of treatment plays a vital part in its success which means that it is of vital importance that those who chance to be on hand should be familiar with a method of artificial respiration.

The Kalinga Prize for distinguished popular writing in science was presented to the British scientist, Julian Huxley, by Dr. John W. Taylor, Acting Director-General of Unesco, at a ceremony in Paris on July 2, reports Unesco. Dr. Huxley, who was Unesco's first Director-General, had been nominated for the prize by both the Royal Society of Great Britain and the Institut de France. The Kalinga Prize of one thousand pounds sterling, which was established in 1951 by Mr. B. Patnaik, Indian industrialist, is awarded annually for outstanding and continued achievement in the dissemination and interpretation of science to the general public in books, articles, radio programmes or films. The first award, in 1952, went to the French scientist, Prince Louis de Broglie.

Reviewing A Colourful Chapter



1803 1953

The Selkirk Settlers

From "Skye Pioneers and 'The Island'", 1929, By Malcolm A. Macquenn

In 1771 Thomas Douglas, youngest of the seven sons of the 4th Earl of Selkirk, was born. By 1799 his father and all his brothers were dead and he had succeeded to the title. He was destined for the law, and in Edinburgh was an associate of Jeffrey, Ferguson, Scott, and others of the leading spirits in that shining age. He was deeply interested in the problems of his time, and longed to ameliorate the hard lot of his fellow countrymen.

He spent ten years abroad in travel and study, and in 1802, on his return home, proposed a national scheme designed to remedy the social unrest. The next eight years, from 1802 to 1811, were spent by him in an effort to avert the tide of emigration from the Carolinas to Eastern Canada. Thereafter his life was occupied in his endeavors to found the Selkirk Colony on the Banks of the Red River. He wished his fellow countrymen to establish themselves in circumstances providing full scope for their industry, and under the British flag.

He first directed his efforts to Prince Edward Island. Three ships were chartered and about eight hundred passengers embarked to found a new home on his estate on this island. The "Polly" had the greatest number of passengers, most of whom were from Skye. On the ship Dr. Angus MacAuley, agent for Selkirk, she arrived in Orwell Bay, Prince Edward Island, on Sunday, August 7, 1803, and disembarked her passengers near the present Hallsiday's Wharf. The "Dykes" arrived on August 9, and the "Oughton" with the Uist men on August 27. At this time the total population of the Island was but little over five thousand.

Selkirk, who was a passenger on the "Dykes", had planned to arrive before the others so that preparation might be made for their reception; but before he appeared on the scene the "Polly" had disembarked her complement. "I arrived," he writes, "late in the evening, and it had then a very striking appearance. Each family had kindled a large fire near their wigwams, and round these were assembled groups of figures, whose peculiar national dress added to the singularity of the surrounding scene. Confused heaps of baggage were everywhere piled together beside their wild habitations, and by the number of fires the whole woods was illuminated.

"At the end of this line of encampment I pitched my own tent, and was surrounded in the morning by a numerous assemblage of people whose behaviour indicated that they looked to nothing less than a restoration of the happy days of Clanship.

"To obviate the terrors which the woods were calculated to inspire the settlement was not dispersed, as those of the Americans usually are, over a large tract of country, but concentrated within a moderate space. The lots were laid out in such a manner that there were generally four or five families, and sometimes more, who built their houses in a little knot together; the distance between the adjacent hamlets seldom exceeding a mile. Each of them was inhabited by persons nearly related, who sometimes carried on their work in common, or at least were always at hand to come to each other's assistance.

"The settlers had every inducement to vigorous exertion from the nature of their tenures. They were allowed to purchase in fee simple, and to a certain extent on credit, from fifty to one hundred and fifty acres were allotted to each family at a very moderate price, but none was given gratuitously. To accommodate those who had no superfluity of capital they were permitted to pay the value in full in the third or fourth year of their possession.

"I left the Island in September, 1803, and after an extensive tour on the continent, returned in the following year. It was with the utmost satisfaction that I found that my plans had been followed up with attention and judgement. I found the settlers engaged in securing the harvest which their industry had produced. They had a proportion of grain, of various kinds, but potatoes were the principal crop. These were of excellent quality, and would have been alone sufficient for the entire support of the settlement.

"That his schemes of settlement were to be a panacea for all the ills disturbing the state was not the expectation of the generous-minded Selkirk. "It will not assert," he says, "that the people look there have totally escaped all difficulties and discouragement, but the arrangements for their accommodation have had so much success that few people perhaps in their situation have suffered less, or have seen their difficulties so soon at an end."

Although the circumstances under which Lord Selkirk intended the Red River district in Rupert's land, and the Belfast district in Prince Edward Island had much similarity, the peculiar isolation under which the Red River settlers lived for upwards of sixty or seventy years led to an intense loyalty to the founder of the colony, and to the colony itself as a social and political institution. A thousand miles of wilderness of lakes, forests, and rivers, lay to the east; the great plains to the south and west, occupied by warring tribes of hostile Indians. There was left one road only of access to the colony.

This meant a trying journey by boat and canoe from the settlement through Lake Winnipeg, and the Hayes or the Nelson River to Hudson's Bay. From there, an ocean voyage in stormy ice-beset northern latitudes to England. All but the bravest shrank from such a journey. From 1812 until 1870 the Selkirk colonists on the banks of the Red River lived largely unto themselves, and to this day they are as loyal to the Selkirk settlement and to the Selkirk tradition as is any Highlander to his own clan chief.

Not so the Selkirk colony on Prince Edward Island. Three years before they arrived the total population of the Island was about five thousand; that of Charlottetown about two hundred and fifty and Charlottetown was a few miles distant from them to the north, a settlement of Loyalists from the

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

THE ESSONDALE WALL

Sir, — Regarding the article under Public Forum in your issue of July 29th on "The Essondale Wall," I greatly appreciate Mr. Martin MacGougans' correction of my notes published on July 4th, and the additional interesting information he has given. I just told the story as I had heard it from a member of the staff of the Department of Administration of the Vancouver School Board. I was unable to learn the name of the "master mason," but did admire the wonderful piece of stone wall at Essondale, and wish to thank Mr. MacGougans for his letter to you.

I am, Sir, etc. J. A. Clark. Charlottetown.

American colonies had founded along Vernon River in 1792. They preferred to endure the hardships incident to founding a new home in the virgin forest under the flag they loved, than live under a government they regarded as alien. The political principles they espoused, the Selkirk colonists, after a generation, ceased to look upon themselves as a separate institution, and merged their lives in the larger life of the little province they lived in.

Their settlement, afterwards called Belfast, a corruption of the French "La Belle Face" was founded on the abandoned site of a French colony whose members were deported to France after the surrender of Louisbourg in 1758. It extended along the coves and creeks from the mouth of the Charlottetown harbor to the Pinette River. A French naval officer who visited the various French settlements on the Island in 1752 reported that the number of settlers in this area was not less than five hundred. Later the whole territory from Vernon River to Wood Islands extending inland a few miles, was, and is now known generally as, the Belfast District.

The clearing had again grown up, but various evidences of the former occupation, the shallow well, the ditch, still existed. The old cemetery that knew the voice of the Cure, M. Gerard, with its pathetic reminders of the transitory career of man, was soon requisitioned by the newcomers to fill the purposes for which it was dedicated, and today former members of a district settled with similar hopes, but alien in race and religion, sleep in undisturbed repose within the sacred confines of the common hallowed spot.

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

THE ELECTION AGAIN

"Now that the Scotch gathering is over," said an acquaintance, "we can really get down to the election!" And I do believe there was more genuine interest in the last month or so in the gathering of the clans than in the fortunes of the politicians. This is not at all surprising when it is considered that the "gathering" takes into its compass the much wider sense of history.

The Scotch, being, as everybody knows, an extremely humble and modest race, don't talk about it, but the record shows that they have contributed more than their quota to the growth and vitality of free political institutions. It has been said that if there were no Scotmen there would be no elections, for there would be nobody to make them interesting. If there be any truth at all in the assertion perhaps it would be a good thing if elections were always held immediately after the gathering before the glow of the event had time to cool in the face of less romantic affairs.

Anyway, whatever the cause, there seems to have been an upsurge of election fervour in recent days. I would judge there are not many people around now as nonchalant about the whole thing as an old man of my acquaintance was when I happened to run into him around the first of July. I asked him, innocently enough, how he thought the election was going. "What election?" he shot back. "You don't mean to say they're going to have another election. I thought Matheson was going to carry on in Jones' place without calling one." He had not even heard of the Federal affair.

A veteran political analyst says that more nonsense has been spoken in this campaign than in any other that he can recall in forty years. And, certainly, he will find a great many to support his view. Without picking out any one in particular by way of illustration, it is amazing the amount of time and energy that has been expended in detailed trivia.

There are politicians in all political groups who seem to revert to a second childhood the moment they stand on a platform or before a microphone. Little personal characteristics and mannerisms of an opponent are exaggerated beyond measure. Things of purely parochial account are disguised as big national issues.

Charges and counter-charges that, even if true, would have no serious significance, are magnified out of all proportion. Alleged statements of other times and circumstances are torn from their contexts and given meanings and importance they were never intended.

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