

FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

Young People Are Urged To Show Greater Interest

By J. LINCOLN DEWAR FARM EDUCATION

This is the season when young people think of going back to school but for most, schooling has meant preparation for some of the professions. Not often enough has it meant preparation for farming, fishing, lumbering and the other primary occupations on which the economy rests. Our particular interest at the moment is in training for agriculture and young people are reminded that the college at Truro offers an excellent two-year course in practical agriculture. Generous assistance ports where the scallop fleet is and other fisheries are available operating, then there is an opportunity to have a meal that is really expensive if aspired to in Montreal or Toronto. Finally if the savings effected by having fresh vegetables makes it possible to finance the purchase of a fine steak, then the mushrooms really come into their own. After all here is a good argument in support of pasture which can produce both steak and mushrooms.

PASTURE BONUS

Recent rains have had two marked effects on pasture. The

A little earlier than usual the harvest season has come to the province. This year the crop is spotty, not generally excellent as has been the case for some years. Barley appears to have the edge on the oats some of which is very light indeed. For the livestock farmer there is the prospect of scarce bedding and also of poor stands in the new seeding of grasses and clover.

The growing and harvesting of grain is the one farm operation referred to at any length in the scriptures. There is, of course, occasional reference of certain fruits that were grown in the Holy Land but if there is any emphasis it was on the grain. In this country where the grain combine is the accepted method of harvest it is difficult to realize that over much of the world grain is still being harvested with the sickle as was the case in biblical times. If there is anything to moralize about in this it would appear to be that where a great abundance of labour exists mechanical progress comes slowly. In agriculture it is only when labour becomes scarce that man really concentrates on efficiency of production.

FEDERATION PROBLEMS

Generally July and August produce a lull in the activities of many organizations. The emphasis in this province is quite strongly on the tourist industry and on the sale of hospitality. In this agriculture has an important stake as a ready market is provided for many of our products.

With the coming of September organizations begin to think more actively in terms of service to their members and in the development of programs. With the Federation of Agriculture it appears to be a logical time to think in terms of programs that will improve the position of the farmer and his family. Probably the area of immediate concern is the farmer's income position; this is influenced by two factors—the price of what he sells and the cost of what he buys. This, of course, does not overlook the importance of producing in sufficient volume to influence returns. It would appear a reasonable belief that farm people have not been provided in this economy with equality of opportunity when compared with various other trades and professions. There never has been a critical situation in Canada with respect to the food supply, there has really been a surplus of farm people and society has been able to take it for granted that food would be abundant, available and generally cheap. With a marked decline in the number of farm workers and the end not yet in sight, the cheap food policy appears to be nearing the end of the road. Even under really trying conditions people remained on the land if

there were no alternatives. This situation has now changed and the worker can move readily and does move readily into other employment. In addition, the worker is aware that the benefits of collective bargaining are available in industry along with many fringe benefits that are denied the farmer and the farm worker. Possibly the area just outlined in a general way describes the most important concern of farm organizations. Specifically the Federation believes that the situation can be improved through special policies on farm credit being made available in sufficient amounts and under conditions in keeping with improved agriculture. The farmer's difficulty in competing in the labour market can be improved through the application of unemployment insurance to farm workers. Improvement in both the quality and availability of education for young farm people can place a better foundation under farms for the future. Efficient marketing with provision for more bargaining power for the producer still remains a number one objective. Crop insurance and price supports would appear to be reasonable policies in an economy which provides practically every section of society with security in the way of pensions, fringe benefits and a great variety of welfare.

CORN TOUR

Something new high should be of considerable interest is a tour arranged by the Department of Agriculture of four farms where corn is being grown extensively.

Those interested are invited to keep the date Friday, September 3rd in mind and to be present at all or any of the four farms listed and at the hours noted.

D. Fred MacRae and Son, Wheatley River 9:30 to 10 a.m. Earl MacRae and Son, Brookfield 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Experimental Farm, Charlottetown 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. I. P. MacIsaac and Son, Mermaid 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The corn explosion in Ontario has produced a great deal of interest in the crop and the tour in question provides an opportunity of demonstrating the possibilities here.

FALSE ALARM SOUNDED

SAIGON AP—A false alarm from radar scopes sent Saigon and Bien Hoa air bases into full red alert for 10 minutes Tuesday. Reliable sources said the sensitive electronic gear picked up what appeared to be a fleet of planes sweeping in from the direction of Cambodia, but the blips turned out to be from atmospheric interference.

QUAKE HITS HOKKAIDO

TOKYO AP—An earthquake jolted eastern Hokkaido Tuesday, causing cracks in roads and walls, the central meteorological agency reported. Police, however, said there were no casualties.

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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Old 'Food Balance' Is Historical Item

By NEIL MATHESON Provincial-Farm Editor

I've seen so many unusual things in my travels for "Across the Island" that it takes something really unusual to surprise me now after five years of research. But I saw an article at Dan McLean's home in De Gros Marsh recently that really ranks among the top historical items in this province.

I don't know exactly what people called it, but it is a balance that was used by the immigrants many years ago, to weigh out the food allotments they received each day in the ships that brought them across the Atlantic from the old land. In this case the immigrants came from Scotland, for it was Dan's forefathers who brought it.

Most of you are familiar with the cheap type of wooden coat hanger. It's a small piece of wood, curved to fit a coat or some other garment, and it has a wire hook in the centre on which it hangs.

THE WOODEN FRAME of the 'food balance' Dan McLean showed me is almost exactly similar to that kind of wooden coat hanger frame. On the top of the wood, at either end, there is carved a niche on which a cord can be hung. Instead of a wire hook, there is a wooden attachment in the centre which can be grasped easily by a human hand, so that it is suspended in the air. A weight of exactly two pounds is hung on one end of the balance. On the other end food was meted-out, until it balanced the two-pound weight.

The two-pound weight was a crude stone wrapped in a bit of tough cloth, with a string to suspend it from the end of the balance.

Dan's mother, Mrs. Jerome McLean, told him that once the food portion for the day was allotted, the travelling family had to get along with it. There were no seconds, there was no second chance. Some of the older people had told her that sometimes people, especially children, died on the ocean because there was not enough food and water to sustain them properly.

Horrible Thought- But Difficult Times

THAT STORY is passed down from early settlers and there's no way of checking into it. But isn't it a horrible thought? Critics should remember, though, that these were difficult times, and perilous journeys. These were sailing vessels and they could make the trip in two months—Rev. Donald Nicholson's people came over in exactly two months—but the trip could actually take much longer. So the food supply had to be rationed strictly. Otherwise it was possible—though it wasn't probable that the lives of all would be endangered by breaking the strict food rationing regime.

Getting back to that old 'food balance'—that's the name I've given it for want of a better one—there's a place for it in the Provincial Museum, if the McLeans are willing to part with it. I saw Dan a few days ago when he dropped in for a chat, but I forgot to tell him.

I was talking to Moncrieff Williamson, curator of the Art Gallery and the Museum, Dan, and he told me he would welcome such a historical item, if it is available.

Old Store Had School Upstairs

GEORGE MACDONALD, St Georges gave me an old stone inkwell that would date back to approximately 1830, his people have told him. George also gave me a piece of an old clay pipe stem. It was found when he was cultivating a roadside field, that had been used for a winter road in days gone by. Mr. MacDonald picked it up this year in cropping time. An old building on the MacDonald place—the father is Augustus MacDonald—is interesting. It was a country store in the old days, and one year school for the pupils of the district was held upstairs. It was after the regular school had been burned, and the upstairs over the store had been used until a new school was built.

The building had been owned by Ronald McCormac, father of Wilfred McCormac in Albany, and the late Pie McCormac whom many remember here, and another son. Land for the school had been given by Ronald McCormac, I was told.

THE BUILDING—It's used as a granary now, I believe—had the steepest pitched roof I have ever seen. We picked up an old cork in the loft where the school had been held. It was made of metal of some type, that would screw into the bottle.

A narrow window, with colored glass, was over the door of the old St. Michael's Church in Launching. The church had closed in 1860, and it was built, perhaps, around 1800, it was estimated by Mr. MacDonald, and by Dan McLean who was with me at the time.

The old church had been a successor to the original log church that had stood opposite the Launching cemetery, or the present Launching school, they told me. The present church was built in 1852 when the one built in 1860 was burned.

Anson Bomber Story Is Interesting

The wreck of an old Anson bomber back of the MacDonald barn brought another story. These bombers were on sale at the local airport sometime after the end of World War Two, and the MacDonalds wanted the big wheels to make a farm trailer. But they found they had to take the entire plane fuselage—the engines had been stripped out previously.

THE MACDONALDS had no desire for a plane, they only wanted the wheels. That meant they had to tow the plane across the old Hillsboro Bridge. And it was too narrow to handle the width of the plane. They trimmed it down as narrow as possible and headed for the bridge, but the RCMP stopped them. Highway traffic was moving at the time, and the Mounties told them they would have to wait until 9 o'clock next morning to get across.

But after waiting until four o'clock in the morning they decided to chance a crossing. They took an hour to get across and they give a lot of credit to an unknown man who followed them closely with his car, so that his headlights showed the way, and they were able to steer the awkward trailing plane across, even though they did get caught at times and had to spend time getting free and start in all over again.

George took me down to the site of an old saw pit that was used in the years when a shipyard was in operation on the opposite bank of the river known as Narrows Creek in those days.

The contours of the pit have long since faded out, but there was a sort of natural elevation on one side, where the upper sawyer stood, and you still could see the lower level where the man below stood. This was before the days of rotary saws for ripping boards, planks, etc. from logs. So the job had to be done the hard way, by manual labor.

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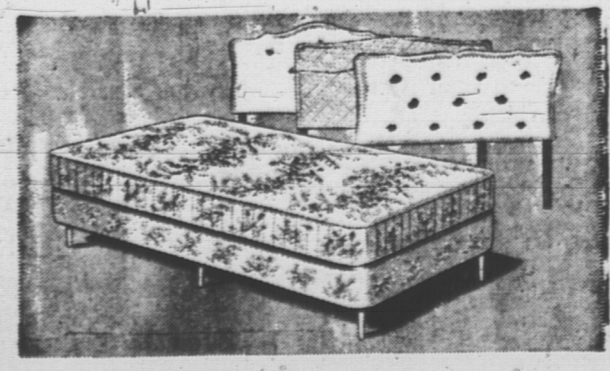
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