

Harvest Excursion Led To Homesteading In Alberta

(This story of Harry Durant and his harvest excursion from Prince Edward Island to Trochu, Alberta was clipped from Ken Liddell's column in the Calgary Herald by Mrs. Majorie Howard, Margate.)

When Harry Durant is in fine fettle to reminisce, and that's most of the time, it is difficult to decide which of his stories are the best—those of how he got out West or what happened after he arrived.

Mr. Durant, now 77 years, responded first to the call for harvest hands in 1901, and to hear him tell it, his trip from Prince Edward Island was pretty well a bull's ball on wheels.

The harvest excursion of half a century ago, Mr. Durant is convinced, was a villainous scheme to bring West, people who were left so broke they could not get home so they had to stay to settle the country.

BIG MONEY

He was joking, of course, because it was the "big money"—\$150 a day—for threshing in 1916 that so influenced him he retraced in 1902 to gather more of the same, and in 1906 he came back for good.

For the 1,400 harvest hands who left Summerside on that 1901 excursion, to go to Winnipeg was like going to the moon, and most of them would have preferred to have been going to the moon because 1,200 got sick crossing Northumberland Strait to the mainland.

Those in Mr. Durant's bunch were so happy to reach shore that upon boarding their train they unscrewed all their seats in the coach, piled the seats at the end of the car and to music of fiddles and mouth organs proceeded to have themselves a ball that lasted for days on end.

NO MINER

When Mr. Durant returned in 1906 with intention of staying, he somehow was directed to a southeastern British Columbia mining town called Moyie which then, as he recalled, had 5,000 people who found most of their amusement in six licensed hotels.

He went to a mine to get a job but on the way met a party carping for what was left of a man who had met a rather unfortunate accident. The man had been a trifle careless with the result that after the explosion what was left of them was gathered in a basket.

Mr. Durant returned to one of the hotels and got a job as a porter.

TO TROCHU

Then he met a chap who had decided to homestead in Alberta. The man made the decision in the summer but changed his mind in the winter. Mr. Durant negotiated for the land which was at Trochu and which he located after a mighty sad and sore trip of 42 miles on a pony he hired at Olds.

Between farming his own property he worked for Armand Torchu, a French military officer who with two partners, L.C. Eckenfelder and Frank Develier, had established the St. Anne Ranch, about 1904.

It had been Toronto intention, apparently, to establish a corner of France in Alberta. The homesteaders, however, began nibbling into the ranching area. The St. Anne went under as a ranch in 1912. Those of military age returned to France in 1914 and many did not return.

Mr. Durant's choice, sight unseen, of homestead land was a good one because when the town of Trochu grew he was but a mile away. He continued to farm until the Thirties, although in 1910 he built a home in Trochu.

Trochu, he said, was known as a cover exhibition was first held in 1910, and has been known as the PNE since 1946.

Eight fairs are being held on exhibitions this season, with more dates to be set. Among the largest, the Pacific National Exhibition at Vancouver runs from Aug. 22 to Sept. 7. This 15-day Van-

originally as Trochu Valley. The town's development began with building of hotel and general store in 1907. The general store had five departments and was one of the largest in a wide area of central Alberta.

ON THE HOUSE
The Trochu hotel however, lacked the excitement of the early hotels at Moyie where the first drink each day was about the most popular. It was on the house and was known as the "morning's morning."

There was a wholesale liquor firm in Cranbrook and the hotels bottled their own booze. Most were honest, but in some, no matter what brand a customer ordered the contents of the bottle came from the same keg.

"Some printer," recalled Mr. Durant, "must have made a fortune bootlegging those fake labels."

One of Mr. Durant's claims of local fame is the fact that he dug the grave for one of Trochu's first burials in the old cemetery. It was in winter, of course. Mr. Durant was delegated to dig a grave three feet wide, six feet deep and six feet long.

When the funeral party arrived it was found the coffin was eight feet long. The suggestion was made, but not adopted, that the difficulty could be solved by cutting a foot from each end of the coffin, which was a plain affair.

"The mourners, three women and 10 men, stood in the cold for what seemed to be hours before I got the grave big enough to tuck the coffin in to their satisfaction," recalled Mr. Durant. "But what I do remember about the service is the deceased was a Protestant but he was buried by a Catholic priest. The priest was the only man within reaching distance. We did the best we could in those days."

LITTLE SANDS

Mr. James MacConnell of Massachusetts has been visiting at his niece's, Mrs. Stewart McKay, Little Sands.

Mrs. James Harris and three children, who were visiting their mother, Mrs. A. D. MacNeill, Little Sands, left some time ago by plane on return for her home in Ottawa. They planned to fly from Charlottetown to Ottawa. While in Charlottetown they visited Mrs. Harris' sister, Mrs. Alex Stewart and family.

Mr. Ewen Hume of Uigg, Prince Edward Island, and Massachusetts, was visiting relatives in Little Sands.

Dr. Stewart MacDonald and Mrs. MacDonald and family, Charlottetown, are now spending their holidays at the Dr.'s home in Little Sands.

Mr. Lester White, Wood Island, East has recovered from his car accident.

Mrs. R. C. MacLeod, Kinross, accompanied her daughter Marian, Mrs. Leafe and Mr. Leafe and daughter to Little Sands, recently to visit at her brother's, Mr. Hugh MacNeills.

Mr. and Mrs. Mrs. Leafe and daughter recently returned from a three months trip to England. (Mr. Leafe's former home). The Leafes reside in Vancouver. Two of Mr. and Mrs. Reginald MacLeod's daughters, Margaret and Florence, Halifax, accompanied the Leafe's to Little Sands to visit relatives at Hughie MacNeill's.

Miss Violet Daley, who is employed in Charlottetown, was spending her vacation at her home in Little Sands.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bruce and family, Bunbury, spend part of their vacation with relatives in Little Sands where they had a tent at the shore.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Bower, Brookline, Mass., spent their vacation in Little Sands visiting relatives.

Mr. A. P. Spencer, Mattapan, Mass., arrived in Little Sands on July 31, to spend his vacation with relatives at Alex Blue's. His brother Wm. H. Spencer and Miss Marian Spencer arrived at the Blue's on Aug. 6, after spending over a month visiting relatives in Fortune, Newfoundland. While here, they visited other relatives, Mrs. Rowan Sencabaugh and Mr. Sencabaugh, Oak Valley. The Spencers, all left here by Car. Aug. 9, by Wood Island and Caribou for their homes in Mattapan, Mass., and Oberlin, Ohio.

Miss Minnie MacLeod, of Boston, Mass., is visiting relatives in Hopefield at the home of Mr. Albert Blue.

Miss Minnie Sicles, and her cousin Miss Edna Thompson, and other girl friends, all of Boston Mass., were visiting relatives and friends in Little Sands recently.

Mr. Nestor Blue, in Victoria General Hospital, Halifax, is expected to be able to soon come to his home in Little Sands.

Mr. and Mrs. Rowan Sencabaugh, Oak Valley, accompanied their son Victor and Mrs. Sencabaugh, and Mrs. Lommori of Toronto, to visit relatives at Alex Blue's Friday evening.

The first coat of the pavement connecting Little Sands to the trans-Canada Highway at Wood Island was completed yesterday, August 12.

Several Little Sands residents attended the exhibition in Charlottetown during Old Home Week. Mr. Neil MacNeill of Little Sands is being congratulated for winning a prize for his mare and foal at the exhibition.

HOWLAN

Arriving in Howlan on Wednesday, August 5, were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gallant of Dorchester, Mass., where they are visiting their relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Arsenault and family have now taken up residence in Harmony where Mrs. Arsenault is going to teach School.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Gallant of Chelsea, Mass., and Mrs. Margaret Seargeant of Paterson, N. J. who spent the past ten days visiting here, left on Wednesday, August 5 on return home.

Miss Patricia Finnan who is employed at Prince County Hospital, as nurses aid, spent her day off at her home in Howlan. Mr. and Mrs. Rosamund Casey and son Eugene of Rumford, Me., who spent a few days with his

folks in New Brunswick, arrived in Howlan on Monday, August 3rd, where they visit Mrs. Casey's folks.

A large congregation attended the solemn high mass and burial service at St. Anthonys on Wednesday, August 5th, at 9 a.m. for the late Mrs. Catherine Gallant who passed away very suddenly at her home at Woodstock.

Mrs. Ernest Arsenault and family who were visiting in Howlan went to Summerside on Thursday August 6, then to Charlottetown on Friday from where they left for their home on Sunday in Halifax, N.S.

Motoring to Egmont Bay on Thursday were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Peters, Mr. and Mrs. Tenis Peters, Mrs. Bertha Arsenault and daughter Sandra where they visited relatives.

Little Miss Paula Perry is the guest of her aunt and uncle, Mr.

and Mrs. Alysse Bernard at Summerside, while her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Perry and little sister Ellen, are visiting relatives in Howlan.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jones attended St. Bernadette Church picnic on Wednesday.

Mrs. J.B. Arsenault returned to her home here on Wednesday, August 5, after being a patient in the Western Hospital.

Frank Gallant and Firmin Perry motored to Summerside on Friday, August 7, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Perry and daughter, Ellen, on the first lap of their journey back to their home at Saint John, N.B. on Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jones and Mrs. Frank Gallant, motored to Summerside on Friday where they visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Cahill and family.

Howlan School got an interior

face lifting on Friday, when some of the ladies turned out to clean it, prior to the opening which will take place very soon.

Congratulations to Diane Gallant and Ernest Gallant on passing the grade X exams. Diane was a Tignish Convent pupil and Ernie went to O'Leary High School.

Bennett Howard and son of Lot 7 were in Howlan recently. Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Carruthers and son Bonnie, and Mrs. Bruce Carruthers motored over to Tamouche, N.S. on Saturday, August 8, where Mr. Carruthers is visiting.

Albert and Pauline Finnan recently went on a visit to their aunt and cousins, Mrs. Albert Finnan and family at Souris.

Mr. and Mrs. Camillus Gallant and son of Summerside, were to Howlan during the weekend.



AS AUTUMN approaches Canadians from coast-to-coast are getting ready for the more than 610 annual fall fairs scheduled for this season. They range in size from the monster Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto to smaller local fairs like this one at Woodbridge, Ont., where the crowd watches an open-air jump.

Canadian Showmen Are Preparing For Action At Annual Fall Fairs

By THE CANADIAN PRESS
Summer lingers through the land but thousands of Canadians are preparing in barns and farmyards and exhibition buildings for the annual fall fairs.

More than 400 fall fairs are scheduled in Canada, wherever agriculture is carried on, across the country. They range from picturesque fairs maintaining local traditions to the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto, world's largest annual exhibition.

While prize livestock and grains retain a feature place, fairs and larger exhibitions nowadays play a part in showing citizens new industrial developments, and the new ways in which the country's mineral and manufacturing resources are being used.

All continue to provide prize money and other forms of encouragement to those who excel in raising livestock, pet stock and field products.

PIONEER EVENT

Nova Scotia had the first agricultural fair in North America, in 1765, at Windsor on the Minas Basin 50 miles north of Halifax. Nova Scotia residents will see 12 fall fairs this season, the largest being the Nova Scotia Provincial Exposition at Truro, Aug. 25-28.

For New Brunswick eight events have been arranged, the season opening with the Saint John exhibition Aug. 26-Sept. 2. Saint John had its first provincial industrial exhibition in 1851. Another large N.B. show is the Fredericton Exhibition Sept. 7-12, which features special grandstand performances and harness racing, as does the Saint John fair.

In Newfoundland the government-sponsored Newfoundland

Agricultural and Homecraft Exhibition will be held in October. For Prince Edward Island, the provincial exhibition at Charlottetown opened the schedule with its Aug. 10-15 run.

QUEBEC FAIRS

Most of the 68 exhibitions scheduled in Quebec province this year are held in August and September, with Sherbrooke planning a winter fair in October.

Oldest and largest of these is the nine-day Quebec Provincial Exhibition at Quebec City, Sept. 4 to 13. Attendance is expected to be more than 500,000.

During the Quebec exhibition provincial government trophies—the Quebec agricultural merit awards and young farmers' award—will be presented to farmers who rate the best in annual contests sponsored by the Quebec agriculture department.

In Ontario the Niagara Agricultural Society, founded about 1792, apparently held the first fair in Upper Canada and by 1840 there were fairs at London, York, Guelph, Ottawa, Port Hope, Cobourg, Brantford Hamilton and several other places.

The Toronto exhibition to be held Aug. 25 to Sept. 12 was first held in 1846 and was incorporated in 1878 as the Canadian National Exhibition.

WORLD'S LARGEST

Today it is the world's largest annual exhibition. Land, buildings and equipment, occupying 350 acres, are valued at \$50,000,000.

Every year more than 19,000 commercial, industrial and government exhibitors buy up the exhibition's 2,250,000 square feet of display space. The average yearly attendance is about 3,000,000.

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(CP Photo)

Ottawa's Central Canada Exhibition, Aug. 21-29, will go heavy on grandstand and midway events and commercial displays, and will also include livestock exhibits and competitions. The exhibition is expected to be attended by about 400,000.

The Ottawa Winter fair, this year Oct. 25 to 31, will stage a championship livestock show, entered by ribbon-winners from smaller fairs throughout eastern Ontario and Western Quebec. It will also present what is believed to be Canada's largest 4-H calf club show, with more than 500 youngsters taking part.

Elsewhere in Ontario there are about 160 fall fairs, some of the largest being the Lindsay Central Exhibition Sept. 23 to 26, the Norfolk County agricultural fair at Simcoe, Ont., Oct. 6 to 10; the Peterborough exhibition which ran from Aug. 12 to 15; the South Waterloo agricultural society fair at Galt, Sept. 24 to 26, and the big Western Fair at London, Ont., Sept. 14 to 19. The latter draws an annual attendance around 450,000.

WESTERN CELEBRATIONS

Manitoba has scheduled three principal fall fairs. Winkler opening with an agricultural society event on Sept. 3. Others are at Altona and Kelowna. The Calgary Stampede was first on the Alberta list of celebrations, opening last July 6, and the list of more than 28 fairs ends with the show at Vauxhall, in the Medicine Hat area, Sept. 9.

British Columbia boasts 30 exhibitions this season, with more dates to be set. Among the largest, the Pacific National Exhibition at Vancouver runs from Aug. 22 to Sept. 7. This 15-day Van-



NEGRO BOY STANDS ALL ALONE

Jefferson Thomas, right, stands all alone across the street from several Central High School White students in Little Rock, Arkansas, just after school let out for the day. Thomas was waiting for a car to pick him up. Everything went quietly as the school started full classes.

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