SUR L'EMPREMIER

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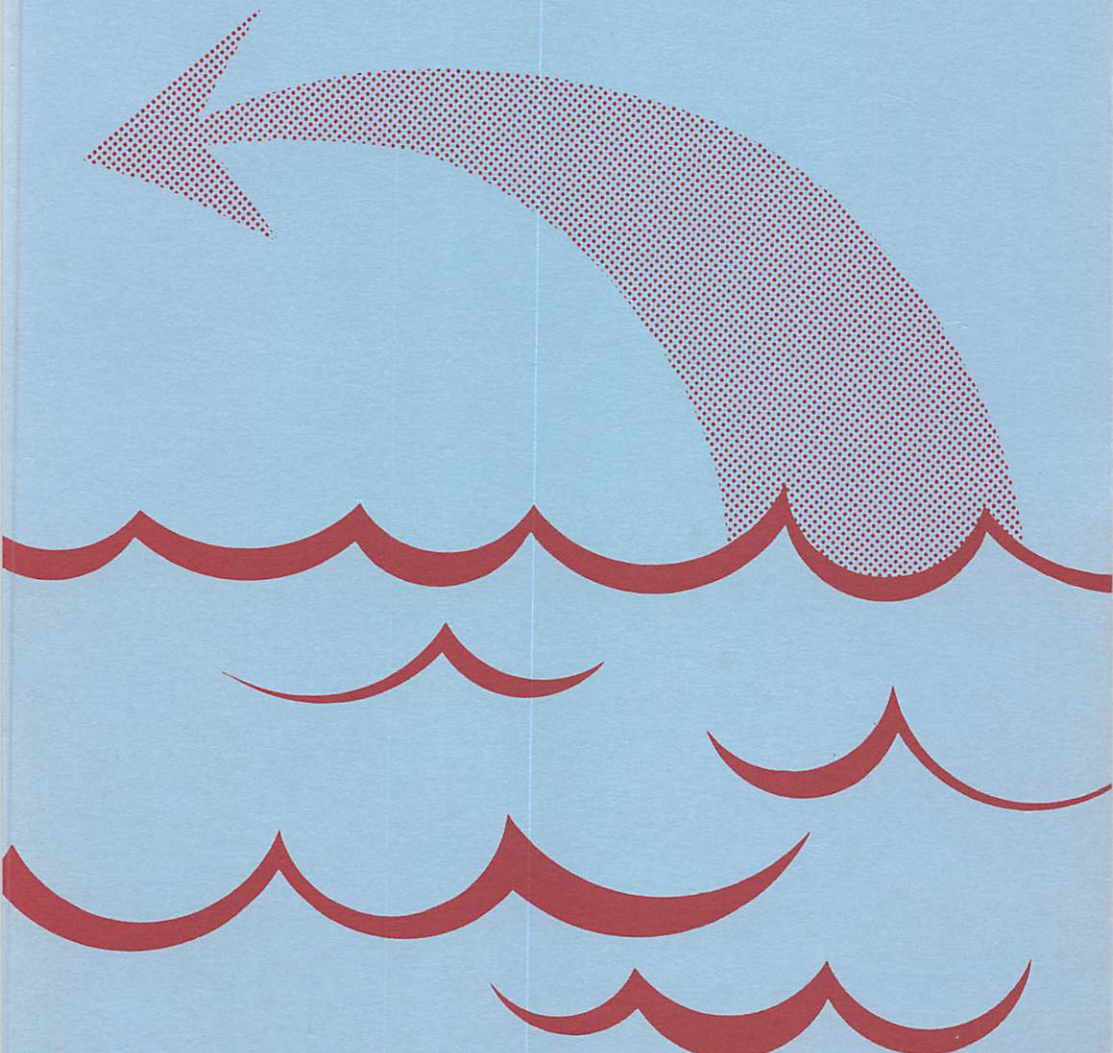

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SUR L'EMPREMIER

LA GAZETTE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ HISTORIQUE DE LA MER ROUGE

Vol. 2, no 4

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SOMMAIRE

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LA SOCIÉTÉ HISTORIQUE DE LA MER ROUGE

La Société historique de la Mer Rouge fut fondée en 1980 afin de regrouper toutes les personnes qui s'intéressent à l'histoire acadienne de la région de Cap-Pelé-Shédiac. La Mer Rouge est un ancien nom français qu'on donnait au détroit de Northumberland.

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LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU RÉVÉREND ANTOINE GAGNON

Fidèle Thériault

Dans son testament rédigé le 21 octobre 1843, l'abbé Antoine Gagnon légua tous les livres de sa bibliothèque *tant imprimés que manuscrits* à son évêque, monseigneur William Dollard. Les exécuteurs testamentaires, ayant besoin d'argent pour payer les dettes de l'abbé Gagnon, en décidèrent autrement et firent vendre à l'encan sa collection de livres. L'inventaire dressé après décès nous apprend que sa bibliothèque contenait 842 livres en plus d'une boîte de livres scolaires. Les 842 livres furent évalués globalement à 156£ et la boîte de livres scolaires à 1£. Il n'existe pas de catalogue de bibliothèque de ce missionnaire, mais nous allons essayer de retracer, avec l'aide du compte rendu de la vente à l'encan, ceux qui ont acheté ses livres.

A l'exception de quelques-uns, les titres des livres ne sont pas donnés. On mentionne qu'il y a 4 volumes de *Burns Justice*, 12 volumes *History of England*, 1 *Time book*, 5 dictionnaires, 2 volumes des méditations de Phelona, 1 bible et 1 livre de loi. En général, on marque le nombre de volumes achetés, mais dans plusieurs cas on va tout simplement écrire *books* ou *lot of books*. Beaucoup d'Acadiens, probablement des paroissiens, achetèrent des livres de la bibliothèque de l'abbé Gagnon. On retrouve les personnes suivantes: Thibeau Babineau, Pierre Belliveau, Dominique Boudreau, Moïse Bourgeois, Martin Bourque, Placide Cormier, Maximin [Gould] Doiron, Eustache Gallant, Sylvestre Gallant, Hippolyte Gaudet, Placide Gautreau, Aimé Hébert, Amand Landry, Damas [White] LeBlanc, David [White] LeBlanc, Pierre LeBlanc,

André Léger, Dominique Léger, François Léger, Jude Léger, Placide Poirier, Joseph Richard, Thaddée Richard, Anselme Robichaud et Suzanne Thériault. Hippolyte Gallant acheta pour la plus grande valeur de livres, soit 4£ , 16 shelins et 25 deniers. Pour ceux dont le nombre de volumes est donné chez les Acadiens, c'est Anselme Robichaud qui en acheta le plus, soit 64 volumes, pour une valeur de 24 shelins, et 23 deniers. Plusieurs Anglophones se portèrent également acquéreur de livres, tel Henry Levington, Richard Scovil, Daniel Hannington et Charles Sheal.

Comme une bonne partie de sa bibliothèque devait être constituée de livres religieux, plusieurs membres du clergé achetèrent des livres. Le père Hugh McGuirk en acheta 140, le père John Sweeney 120, le père Julien Rioux 49, et le père Ferdinand Gauvreau 37. Un total de 346 volumes passa ainsi dans les mains des collègues du père Gagnon. Plusieurs familles de la région de Cap-Pelé - Barachois et la bibliothèque de l'évêché du diocèse de Saint-Jean possèdent encore plusieurs des livres provenant de la bibliothèque de l'abbé Gagnon. Il serait intéressant de les retracer et d'entreprendre une étude plus détaillée sur la bibliothèque d'un missionnaire en Acadie au cours de la première moitié du 19e siècle.

Dans l'état de compte de l'encan, les titres ne sont pas donnés mais tout indique qu'ils furent vendus par série.

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ANTOINETTE WEEDON - MY LIFE[1]

Antoinette Landry-Weedon

The flatland is holding me,
The roots I planted are too deep.
They will not release me,
All I can do is weep.

Weep for the hills and the sea,
The land of my childhood.
I hear them calling me,
I would return if I could.

But I cannot return, so I stay
In the flatland that binds me.
Cry my heart you cannot stray
But dream my heart of the hills and the sea.

In your dreams, at will
Run barefoot in the sand.
Once again climb the hills
And become one with your land.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I came into this world on a Sunday morning at the exact moment that the village church bells were ringing to bring the parishioners to the eleven o'clock mass. I was born in what is

1. These pages are dedicated to my children. It was a pleasure bringing you up. I love each of you. Now that you are all parents you may understand me better. If during the years I dit anything to inflict hurt, I am sorry. I love you all.

known today as Cap-Pelé. When I was born it was known as Dupuis Corner, located in New Brunswick on the shore of Northumberland Strait. Being a village, there was only one resident doctor. He had been called on an emergency, so I was delivered by his nurse in the house where I grew up, on a beautiful summer day, August 30th, 1913.

Sometime during the nine months of my mother's pregnancy, she suffered a bout of typhoid fever which affected her health and also mine. I was born very small and sickly.

My mother was Élize Porelle. She was the daughter of Dosithée Porelle and Antoinette Roy (or King), the fourth of nine children, two boys and seven girls. She was born February 12th, 1882.

My mother was five feet, six inches tall with blue eyes and blonde hair. She was a wonderful person to her family and all the neighborhood. Although she was not a nurse, she was called upon for all sicknesses, accidents and births. She would prepare the patients for the doctor. She had delivered babies but would not cut the cord. She waited for the doctor.

Dosithée Porelle, my maternal grandfather, was a veteran of the American Civil War. He enlisted in April 1861 and served until April 1865. He was wounded twice and was decorated for bravery on several occasions. He was a Canadian and enlisted when the Americans asked for volunteers. He served for the North under General Grant. My grandfather was born at Saint-André, New Brunswick on October 15th, 1840. I was fifteen when he died, December 27th, 1928. He was a very good singer and sang at weddings and church socials. In appearance, he was big and blond with beautiful violet eyes. He kept his military bearing to the day he died. One story I often heard is about the day the church was having a procession. My grandfather, in full military uniform, was leading. The priest next to him was carrying the Holy Sacrament. Following, were all the parishioners. It was a church holy day. Two non-believers, passing by in a horse and buggy, stopped to ridicule. My grandfather ordered them to remove their hats and pay respect; they jeered. He then pulled his sword and went to remove their hats. One moved and the sword slipped and cut the tip of his ear. This is in the law records at Nappan, Nova Scotia. He was charged and cleared.

In his later years, my grandfather lived with his son George at Cap-Pelé. He was in very good health. At eighty-nine he was still very active. He decided to go to the lean-to and chop some wood. It was December and fairly cold; he had a stroke, and caught a chill that turned into pneumonia. He was greatly missed.

My maternal grandmother was the daughter of Pierre King and

Bibiane Bourque. She was born at Botsford Portage, New Brunswick on December 8th, 1850. I was fifteen months old when my grandmother died, November 20th 1914. I remember her not at all. I was her name-sake and I have been told by my mother of the things she did for me, such as hiding gold coins under the carpet and getting me to find them. I had several gold coins from her but I can't remember the occasions. My grandmother died from the after-effect of a gall-bladder operation. She was getting ready to leave the hospital when a blood-clot moved to her heart.

My father, Patrick Landry, was the son of Julien Landry and Sylvie Poirier. He was the oldest of eight children, five boys and three girls. Born September 6th, 1875, my father was five feet, eight inches tall, with jet-black eyes and dark hair.

Being the eldest, my father had to leave school after grade six to help his father. My grandfather had a farm and a quarry and he was a mason by trade. He constructed his own head-stone, all complete except for the final date. He was born May 26th, 1852. I know very little of him. He died in 1912 before I was born. Sylvie Poirier, my grandmother, was married to my grandfather on November 23rd, 1874. She died when I was three years old and I cannot remember her.

My father was a self-made man. He was an avid reader and knowledgeable in all aspects of politics. He was a direct descendant of the French Acadians who were expulsed from Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia in 1755. We were brought up in the original house of my great-grandfather.

My father was involved in many things. He had quite a bit of land, of which some was being farmed. He also had a grist-mill, where buckwheat was processed into flour, bran, etc., a grocery store and the agency for stoves, furnaces, furniture and cars. He owned a race horse, *Lake Be Sure, Jr.* We called him Dick. Dick was a pacer, that is, a sulky racer.

My father was also involved in politics. Liberal to the core, he was a strong supporter of Sir Wilfred Laurier. He was elected as town councillor for the town of Shediac in 1932. In 1936, he started showing signs of illness; he had hardening of the arteries and finally died in September 1942 after a long illness. My mother, with the help of her family took care of him and he never was admitted to the hospital. My father was a kind, gentle man who was wonderful to his family. He never drank any alcoholic beverages and did not smoke until his fifties, when he smoked cigars only.

My father was often called to serve as a juror. When he was called, he would never refuse even though he did not like it. He would be gone for several days; at times for a week or more. When

The Landry family c. 1918 – From left to right: Lina, Léandre, Élise (Dismas sitting on her lap), Alphée à Thomas LeBlanc (farm hand) holding Julien in his arms, Antoinette, Patrick, Clara and Napoléon. (Photo: Le restaurant L'Héritage)

he came home I was so happy to see him I would hide behind the kitchen door and cry. He always knew where to find me.

My father and mother met in Shediac, New Brunswick. They both happened to be at the Weldon House (local hotel) as it was being destroyed by fire. They were married at Cape Bauld (Cap-Pelé), New Brunswick on May 15th, 1903. They had nine children, six boys and three girls.

My older sister, Clara, I never knew well; I was quite young when she left home. I got to know her better when I went to work and shared an apartment with her.

My oldest brother, Léandre, I remember quite well. He was really a very nice person. I will never forget the time he told me freckles were a sign of beauty. I was twelve at the time and very conscious of the freckles across my nose. I felt being the darkest in the family and having freckles on top of that was too much for a twelve year old to take.

Lena, I remember well. On my sixth birthday, she made me a dress that I can still picture today. It was yellow with black embroidery and with panties to match; as was the style of those days.

Napoléon was very quiet; a bit of a loner. His mind always seemed to be occupied; a dreamer.

Julien and Dismas are the ones I grew up with the most. Joseph, the baby; I would love to dress him up and show him off. He was such a smart little boy.

The house next door had several children: we played with them a lot. I was a tomboy and I liked playing with the boys. One day, playing baseball with them, the ball was pitched and sent flying right into my left eye. I had a black eye for a week.

Playing horse-shoe, we used real horse shoes and sticks we stuck in the ground. One day Mathias (the neighbor's son) tossed a stick in the air because there were too many knots in it. It landed on my head. I went home with blood running down my face. I still have the mark on my head.

In winter we did a lot of skating and after a heavy snowstorm we would slide down the snow banks on my mother's cookie sheets. They went faster than a sleigh. We were outdoor children who kept very active.

I had a doll and tin dishes but did not play with them. I preferred boys' games.

My father's horse, Dick, was a great pastime. How we loved that horse. He was practically human. My father had a man (Prime Léger) specially to look after Dick. My brothers, who were young, picked up his profane language and my mother insisted he go. After

that my father looked after Dick himself.

My mother was a fabulous cook and housekeeper. She was always busy. She made bread and home-made butter. In the winter months, when we came home from school she always had a pot of vegetable barley soup simmering on the stove. We'd throw our coats and books and reach for a bowl of soup. It would warm us up and keep us going until supper. We always ate meals at the table as a family. *Poutines râpées* were a delicacy made for special occasions.

During the years I was growing up, my mother was very sick on two occasions that I remember. When I was six or seven, she was in bed for nine weeks with a phlebitis and when I was twelve she was again in bed for quite a while. Doctor Cyr came daily to see her. He had drugs imported from France and she had to eat raw liver chopped up in wine. My father was buying wine by the case.

I remember we went to church with my father and a neighbor lady stayed with my mother. During the service we saw someone go to the altar to speak with the priest. The priest finished the mass; turned to the people and said: *There won't be any sermon today as I have to go administer the last rites to Mrs. Patrick Landry.* We left the church pretty quickly and full of fear for our mother. When we got home the priest and doctor were both there but the crisis was over and she pulled through.

During the time my mother was ill, we had servants to look after us and the house. I remember my father was paying $3.50 monthly; the average wage at the time. With my father being busy at his own affairs and mother in bed, we turned into little savages and drove the servants to distraction.

We had an orchard with cherries and apples. The apples would last until just about Christmas. Every year my father would buy a barrel of apples that he stored in the cellar. On Christmas eve he would take the cover off and the smell of apples would permeate the air and mix with the smell of ginger and cinnamon from my mother's Christmas baking. Those memories remain.

Christmas Eve we were put to bed, immediately after supper to rest, so we would not be tired during midnight mass. At ten o'clock, we were awakened and dressed. We went to midnight mass as a family in a flat-bottom sleigh pulled by horses all decked with bells on their harnesses. The neighbors all did the same. All the sleighs, one behind the other, with all the bells ringing and everyone singing Christmas carols; these are memories that never die. After midnight mass and a *reveillon* (midnight lunch) we were returned to bed.

The best part of Christmas was barley toys. I guess the candy was made with barley water, buy whatever they were, they were the

main part of Christmas. These candies were shaped in all sorts of animals. There were chickens, rabbits, bears, horses and also Santa Clauses. They were between two and five inches tall and were red, yellow or white.

The Christmas I was six, I went to bed after midnight mass but not to sleep. I decided I was going to see that Santa Claus who wandered around at Christmas. I heard a noise in the dining room. I got up and came quietly half-way down the stairs, looked over the bannister and there I saw my father and mother putting a doll in my stocking. I did not tell anyone but it spoilt my Christmas.

I can't ever remember being made to do chores but I remember we would love to do the churning and being rewarded with a large glass of buttermilk. We would also push and shove so we could pull the handle on the washing machine.

We had on the farm; cows, chickens, pigs, horses, geese and sheep. I would enjoy, in the spring, watching the little lambs gamboling in the yard.

I was seven or eight when my mother told us that on our return home from school, we would have a telephone in the house. We ran all the way back from school to try it out. I was nine before we had electricity.

As a youngster I spent more time outside with my father than I did in the house with my mother. My sisters learned all the skills of keeping house buy I was not interested. Whenever my father harnessed Dick to go out somewhere, I was right there and went along. He went about doing the things he had to do or see the people he had to see and I sat there as proud as can be at being with my father.

Now when I think back, my father must have been fairly well to do. We never thought about money. We were loved, fed and dressed and we required little else. There were never extravagances in our childhood.

I remember my mother as being one of the most fastidious persons you could meet. She had long hair which she kept neatly in a bun. I can still marvel at how adept she was at coiling her hair. She would come downstairs in the morning in a neatly pressed housedress with a white starched apron. She had a colored apron that she kept in the kitchen. She would put that on, on top, to do her housework. If someone came to the door she would remove the colored apron and meet them at the door in her starchy white. She had another apron that was worn over the others when she went to feed the chickens and piglets. In the pocket of her apron there were always peppermints which we could have every now and then. A lesson well learned was the time I was six or seven. My mother

had her washing on the clothes line and it started to rain. She asked me to get her clothes and I said no. She managed without me. A while later I noticed she was eating a peppermint and I ran to her to get one too. She looked at me and said: *Little girls who can't help their mothers don't deserve candies.* I was shocked; it was the first time my mother had refused me candies and it was a lesson never forgotten.

My father was a bit of a philosopher. He would quite often quote: *Never leave until tomorrow what you can do today* and *A penny saved is a penny earned.* The fact was that he did not just quote; he practiced those sayings and saw to it that we did too. He was a great reader and we all grew up with the **Arabian Nights.** When he did not read to us he made stories up. They were at times a bit scary and we believed them all.

In his later years, my father went paunchy. I can still see him; he had across his vest a gold chain with a gold fob. He would pull his watch out of his vest pocket and flip open the cover to see the time. I can also see him in his den pounding on his typewriter with two fingers. He was quite good at it too. He was a handsome man; dark eyes and hair but fair complexion. Where I got my complexion from, I don't know; a throw-back from an earlier ancestry.

I was still quite young when Dick (our horse) was put to pasture and replaced by a car. My father's cars were always General Motors' products. He did not like Ford cars.

SCHOOL DAYS

I remember very little about my first years at school. I was seven before I started school; because of frailty. It was a two-room school house with grades one to four in one room and five to eight in another room. The school was heated by a wood-stove in the winter. The teachers had to keep the stove going. There was no running water in the school but there was a pail of cold water on a shelf in the corner of the room for drinking. We had in our desk, our own collapsible metal cup for our own use.

The school yard was quite large but not fenced in. We did not play any organized sports or games at school. We made our own amusement--Hopscotch, London Bridge, Ring Around the Rosie, etc.

Probably what I remember most were the spelling bees; I loved them. Always on the first of May we had the May Pole; a tall pole with ribbons attached to the top. We would each take a ribbon and skip around the pole singing May songs. We always looked forward to our May Pole.

The clothes in those days were quite different. Girls did not

wear jeans; it was dresses and starched petticoats (slips), long stockings with garder belts and bloomers. Hair was worn long, pulled back and tied with a big bow of ribbon on top of the head.

Our school was French but we took some English. I can still remember my first English book. The first page read: *A cat and a rat, A rat and a hat.* I thought it was ridiculous. I could read English quite well but I could not speak it; my accent was atrocious.

Most people in New Brunswick are bilingual; the French learn English and the English learn French and there are no disputes.

I spent seven years in this school and at fourteen I was enrolled in a boarding school (convent). I hated the idea at first but grew to love the place. The teachers (sisters) were wonderful. We wore uniforms. Week-days we wore sailor suits trimmed with red braid and a red necktie. On Sundays it was a black long sleeved, full pleated skirt with stiff white collars and cuffs and again a red tie or bow. There was a regulation about the length of the uniforms; four inches below the knees. The sailor suits were two pieces; the skirt had a bodice and we would tie an elastic around the skirt waist and pull it up to what we thought was a decent length.

Marie-Louise LeBlanc and Martha, her sister, were two of my best friends. We always seemed to get into some sort of trouble but we loved the school and we did alright in our studies. The name of the school was *Académie du Sacré-Coeur* in Saint-Joseph, New Brunswick. I was there for grades nine and ten. My father then decided I should learn more English and enrolled me in a boarding school again, where not a word of French was spoken; Mount Carmel Academy in St. John, New Brunswick.

This school was much further away from home, so I did not see my family often. I went home at Christmas, Easter and June. The teachers (nuns) were very nice and I did learn to speak English. I also learned shorthand (Greg), typing, bookkeeping and all required subjects. We were made to study and yet no pressure was used. My favorite subjects were all maths; arithmetic, algebra and geometry. I also liked composition and spent a lot of time writing poetry. I hated history, especially World and English; Canadian history, I could master.

In the days of the country school we did not use pencil and paper; it was chalk and slate. The slates were made with real slate that would shatter if dropped. These slates had a wooden frame around that was sometimes decorated and sometimes plain. In grade five there were ink-wells in the desks and we used straight pens with removeable nibs. We had different size nibs for different work.

In grades seven and eight we were at the age to be affected by

styles. In the winter we wore overshoes with buckles. We buckled the bottom buckle and let the rest flip-flop as we walked; that was the flapper age. There was a time when Veronica Lake was all the rage. We would wear our hair covering half our face. It drove our mothers wild. They thought we would all go blind.

The country school was about a mile away. We always walked it. In the summer we went home for lunch. In winter we took our lunch to school. One day running back to school after lunch I tripped and I turned to see what I had tripped on. I saw a snake slithering across the road. I was terrified of snakes. I flew to school.

During our school days we were normal young girls who had crushes on movies stars. With me it was Clark Gable. I had books and pictures and spent hours thinking about him. The musician of the day was Paul Whiteman and we all loved his music. I remember one day we were on the grounds of Mount Carmel and someone came outside to tell us that the Lindberg baby had been kidnapped. We all stood there speechless.

While at Mount Carmel Academy, for some reason which I can't remember, we were given a free afternoon. Some of us went to the show. It was Clara Bow in the movie "IT". It was my first talking movie.

I loved school and enjoyed my school years.

TEEN YEARS

Teen years -- it is so hard to remember. So many things have happened since then. Most of my teen years were spent in boarding schools. A typical day was being awakened at six and getting up and dressed. After our ablutions we went to chapel for early mass; then to breakfast. After breakfast we went back to the dormitory to make our beds and clean up our sections. The dormitories were divided into sections and each section had a bed, small dresser and chair and just enough room to turn around. The sections were divided by curtains which we never closed. After bed-making we went to the classroom where our school day began.

At twelve o'clock we went to the refectory for lunch. The first part of the lunch hour was spent in silence while one of the teachers (nuns) would read aloud; always something instructive. After lunch was a period of play outside; winter or summer. We returned to the classroom until four. We had one hour of free time and then supper from five to six. We would return to the classroom at six for one hour of study or homework. After an hour of free time it was back to the dormitory for sleep; and it was lights out at eight-

thirty.

Saturdays were a bit different. We were able to sleep longer and we had one hour of chores, such as dusting, dry mopping, etc. and we also had one hour of crafts such as tatting, darning, or cooking.

Sundays were our best days. The entire afternoon was free for visitors, going for walks, reading or whatever our fancy would dictate.

Sister Dolores and Sister Carmelita were my favorite teachers. They were young and full of fun and were able to ignore our misdeeds.

At home, bithdays were a family affair, with a cake at the supper table and a small gift. The family had a way of making one feel very special for that day.

Summer holidays were lazy days and it was not necessary to go away for holidays as everything we wanted was right there. I loved to go for long walks in the woods with my dog Fido or *Sixty-Cents* as he was called. My pet kitten had just been killed by a car and one of the neighbor's children came to the house to sell puppies. Of course, I wanted a puppy. My father put his hand in his pocket and came out with a handful of change, Sixty-Cents to be exact, which he gave for the dog. Our parish priest was at the house at the time and teased my father for a long time after and the dog's name became *Sixty-Cents*. The priest had just bought a pure-bred for fifty dollars. I still think my dog, mongrel as he was, was still the better dog. The only fear I had of going for walks in the woods was snakes but with Fido along I felt safe.

The beach was a five minute run from the house. We dug for clams, waded, canoed, made sand-castles, etc. We ate a lot of clams, oysters, lobster and fish. On Sundays, quite often, after mass, we would change our clothes and go to the beach with our parents. My mother would bring a large kettle, home-made bread, butter and milk. A fire would be lit and my mother would prepare to steam clams while my father dug them up. There is nothing quite as good as steamed clams, bread and butter and cold milk. Other Sunday afternoons we would go trout-fishing. The summers were never boring.

We did work at times; I remember my brothers and I pulling mustard weeds from a field of oat. We'd cut the grass and clean the yard. I remember how Saturdays I would love to wash the windows so I could see them sparkle. We picked wild strawberries from the hay-fields and cultivated ones from my mother's garden. We picked blueberries by the pailful which we sold. We also picked raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries and choke-cherries. Summers were also a time for reading. By the time I was sixteen I had read all of

Zane Grey's books and Jack London's. I liked Agatha Christie to read in the day time. At night it was too scary. When I started working, I visited librairies and read the best-sellers. Lloyd Douglas was favorite and so was Pearl Buck and the Bronte Sisters.

My best friend was Anna; she was also my cousin. We spent a lot of time together but on some subjects we did not agree. Her supply of records were all *The Carter Family*. I did not like them at all; I never did care for country western. My favorites were Stephen Foster and Schubert, especially *Ave Maria* and *Serenade*. When quite houng I had a special favorite, *Ramona*, that I played constantly.

The gramaphones were operated manually and needed rewinding after each record. The records were all 78RPM and breakable.

I find the teens of today much more grown-up than we were. They are self-assured and self-sufficient. We were more shy and reserved.

BECOMING A YOUNG ADULT

Finally I was grown up, or so I thought, and very anxious to spread my wings. I was classified as an adult but frankly I was not; not really. I was self-centered, stubborn as a mule, independent to a fault and a know-it-all.

I was nineteen in August and started working in September. My oldest brother, Léandre, had gone to Moncton to pick up some supplies for the grocery store. When he came home he said: *Do you want a job? Go see Jake Marks; he needs someone to work in his office.* Jake Marks was a wholesale grocer; his company was called *A.J. Babang Ltd.* Jake also had a farm, a retail grocery store, houses and apartment buildings. He was Jewish and had come from Austria, after the First World War, as a young lad. He told me how he made his first money. As a young boy during the First World War he would buy tobacco and cigarette papers and roll cigarettes which he would sell to the soldiers at a profit. He saved every cent to help get himself established in Canada. He himself, never smoked.

Jake was a very nice person and I worked for him for several years. I started at fifteen dollars per week and graduated to twenty-five. What my salary was when I left I cannot remember. My friends at that time were Lillian O'Blenis, Marg Evans, Béatrice LeBlanc and Pamela Goguen. We were not too interested in boys as we had more fun on our own and we kept quite busy.

The first boy friend I had, at age fourteen, was Euloge Forest.

He lived about two miles away and often came to our house until my mother put her foot down and insisted I was too young for boy friends.

At seventeen, I went around with Philippe Belliveau during two summers. He worked in the United States and spent the summers visiting his family which was not too far from our house. He did propose but I was still in school and could not see myself getting serious with any boys. Marriage and keeping house looked like too much hard work.

When I started working, I moved to Moncton, thirty miles away from home. I lived for a while with my sister in a boarding house. When she got married I took a room and kitchenette. I liked that better. While I was with my sister I met Eleonore McBeth, who also lived in the boarding house, and we became good friends. Eleonore married John Woodhouse. During this time I was going around with Ken Doull but spent more time with the girl friends I had. We seemed to feel more free and have more fun away from boys. So years went by and life was good.

While growing up I had seen so many changes. The kerosene lamp was replaced by electric lights. The gramophone was now an electric record player and the radio with big megaphone was replaced by a sleek modern one. The wood stoves were replaced by electric stoves and somehow kitchens were never quite as cosy again.

It was the 1930's, the depression was upon us and the world was in a turmoil. The stock market had crashed in 1929 and people were committing suicide. Work was scarce. Soup kitchens had been set up for the hungry and life was very unsettled. I was fortunate enough not to have felt the depression and young enough to ignore it.

Suddenly, one Sunday morning in August 1939, England declared war on Germany and Canada started recruiting. My brother Julien enlisted right away. He served with the New Brunswick Rangers in Canada and overseas. They were a reconnaissance outfit so they served mostly at the front line. They were commended by the king.

Jack Weedon, my future husband, had enlisted in Winnipeg with the signal corps. They were posted to Sussex, New Brunswick. The closest city to Sussex was Moncton where I was working. The soldiers would all come to Moncton on weekend passes. The two hotels would soon fill up and the residents would open their homes to accommodate them. Lillian's mother (an aunt who brought Lillian up) was married to the fire-chief and felt it was her duty to do her part at looking after the soldiers. Jack and a friend, Dick Nesby, were given Mrs. O'Blenis' address. Lillian called me to come

over. She said: *It was our duty to entertain them.* I was reluctant at first but I went and that is how we met. Jack came to Moncton often on his motorcycle. A short time later, in July 1940, he was posted overseas.

During this time, in the village of my youth, things were changing. The farmers were leaving their farms to commute thirty miles to work. Jobs were a lot easier to get now in the cities. The district never went back to farming and has since then become a town.

The radio became a necessary part of our life. Everyone listened to the war news and Winston Churchill was on the radio practically everyday. Hitler, in a loud yelling voice, was trying to dominate the air waves. He spoke in German which we did not understand. The Maginot Line, France's invincible protection, fell to the enemy and France was invaded. Everyone was living in fear.

Antoinette in her military uniform. (Photo: Antoinette Weedon)

In January 1942 a call was made for women volunteers. I reported the same day, passed the tests and was sworn into the Royal Canadian Air Force (women's division). Our motto at the time was: *We serve that men may fly.* We did most of the ground duties. I was five feet, one inch and weighed ninety-eight pounds. I did look quite good in uniform but best of all it felt good. I was very patriotic and believed myself a cog in the wheel that would end the war. We were sent to Toronto for training. I forget the name of the building; it was located in downtown Toronto, close to Yonge Street. We spent four weeks in training and were given needles to combat just about any disease. After training we were given a choice of posting; east or west. I really would have liked to go west but my father was very sick so I took a posting to #9 S.F.T.S. in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. My military number was W301091. Jack's number was H38593. I was still in Summerside when my father died on September 12th, 1942. We were at breakfast when I was called to the phone. My brother told me Dad had passed away. I went absolutely wild. I ran to the barracks and started packing. The sergeant came in and calmed me down. She booked me a flight to Moncton and got me a week's pass. Soon after I returned to Summerside we started hearing rumors that the whole station was being moved. Eventually it did happen and we moved to Centralia, Ontario. It was really a nice station and this is where Marcia Pate and I became friends. We visited all the surrounding small towns. Niagara Falls and London were the favorites.

We went to Exeter and there I saw a shocker, something I did not believe existed in Canada. One very good friend was Esther Cohen. On a Sunday afternoon five of us including Esther walked to Exeter and decided to go to a cafe for a cold drink and right there was a sign on the door "GENTILES ONLY". Esther backed away but we got her to come in. Nothing was said, but we did not patronize that place again. By now I had corporal stripes.

December 7th, 1941, a date to remember. Pearl Harbour was bombed and the Americans went to war with the Japanese. France was invaded and England was not on very steady ground. The Americans going to war was a great boon to England. I decided I was going overseas. It was not easy to get a posting to England. Everyone wanted to go and there were only so many postings. I was told that my sergeants stripes were on order and there were no postings for sergeants overseas. I insisted and in August 1943 we sailed on the *Queen Mary* to land in Garrock, Scotland. We had spent four days crossing. We were two hundred and fifty girls and the rest were men. While we were crossing on the Queen Mary we

heard Lord Ha Ha (a British nobleman turned nazi) quote: *We have just sunk the Queen Mary with twelve hundred Canadian service personnel aboard.*

From Garrock we went by train to Bornemouth where we spent two weeks, and then to London. Several of us were posted to the fifth floor in Harrod's. This is where the pay offices were located. We had to find our own living quarters. Three of us took a five room suite in Battersea. We were on Prince of Wales Drive, right across from Battersea Park. In the Battersea Park, where we went for walks quite often, was a battery of Ack-Ack guns. These guns fire in *Z* formation and rarely missed a plane flying over. On the corner of Prince of Wales Drive, a block from where we lived, were large supply tanks of oil. The Germans knew they were there and kept trying to hit them. The Ack-Ack never gave them a chance and the tanks were never hit.

On the fifth floor of Harrod's, where we worked, we each had a ledger to account for. Our ledgers were changing constantly. Some men went missing and others would be killed. The hardest part of all was to keep a straight face and show no compassion when the flyers, who had crashed and suffered burns, came to pick up their pay right after plastic surgery. They were on their way to a country estate to recuperate. They were so pitiful to see and yet we had to pretend that everything was normal and show no emotion.

All ledgers and documents were microfilmed daily and every night at closing time these films were taken seventy feet underground.

The district we worked in was Knightsbridge, so we did a lot of travelling between Battersea and Knightsbridge. We travelled a lot in the underground train (tubes). It would break your heart to see the people who were preparing to spend the night on the platforms of the tubes. They came, adults and children, with pillows and blankets, leaving very little room for the commuters to walk. Either their homes had been bombed or they feared a bombing during the night. The safest place during a bombing is under a staircase. Houses were demolished but the staircases still stood. Unbelievable as it might seem, it was nothing to see a house completely demolished except for one wall still standing with an unbroken mirror still hanging on it.

I was in London for a while before I was able to locate Jack. I had mailed him a letter from Canada to let him know that I was coming to England. The letter came back to me in London a month later with five or six different postmarks. It had done a lot of travelling. London was in complete darkness. It was forbidden to even light a cigarette outside at night.

Jack was posted outside London and when he did come to London we would not wander too far. We went to the *Rising Sun*, a pub at the end of the street or to a show located at a walking distance.

Jack was twenty-four and I was twenty-nine. I could see us as good friends but not married. The age difference did not seem to matter to him and on February 19th, 1944, we were married.

My roommates, Jean Hodgson and Doris Humphrey, helped with the preparations. I had to borrow a dress from Dory as mine was still crossing the ocean. The dress was beige with a wide brown belt. I bought a brown hat and brown shoes and the brown leather purse was given to me by the staff. The night before the wedding, Jean, Dory and I made a good supply of sandwiches bought several

After the wedding ceremony, in front of the Sacred Heart Church in Battersea. (Photo: Antoinette Weedon)

cases of beer as all the staff were coming to the wedding and to the apartment after. Upon completing everything we were quite tired and went to bed. We were just closing our eyes when the siren went. We got out of bed and went to the shelter where we spent the night.

The day we were married was a bright warm day and Louis Du Raby, a very good friend, chased all over London to find a taxi. He said: *On your wedding day you don't walk to church, you ride.* He was not successful and I walked with Louis and Jean. Jean was my bridesmaid, Louis gave me away and the best man was an army friend of Jack by the name of Turner. I forget his first name as we always called him Cowboy. He was from Saskatchewan. We were married in Sacred Heart Church in Battersea by an elderly Irish priest. After the wedding we all went back to the apartment for a while. Jack and I then left. We went to a restaurant for supper and caught the six o'clock train for Torquay. We had booked a room at a private hotel. The train was loaded and we managed to get in a little corner, fell asleep and forgot to get off. The next morning when we awoke we were in Plymouth. We took the first train out of Plymouth back to our destination. We had a lovely week in Torquay and the following Saturday we left to come back to London. We arrived in London at ten o'clock at night and we went straight to Prince of Wales Drive. We opended the door and we both froze. All the ceilings were on the floor. Apparently all the week we were away London had been bombed daily. Jack and I cleared everything up, washed and dusted. It was daybreak before we went to bed. Sunday afternoon Jean and Dory arrived. I said: *Why didn't you clean this place up. What for* they said, *They'll come along and mess it up again.* Perhaps their reasoning was good!

Shortly after we were married I became pregnant and had to ask for my discharge. On June 6th, 1944 (D Day) I embarked on the **Empress of Scotland** (**Empress of Japan** which was renamed during the war) to return to Canada. I spent a week in Ottawa and on June 16th, 1944, I received my discharge and went to New Brunswick to stay with my mother.

Our daughter Theresa (Terry) was born November 25th, 1944. She was a beautiful baby and weighed nine pounds and five ounces. It is no wonder the doctor kept me in the hospital for twelve days. It had been a hard birth.

A couple of humorous incidents occured in the hospital (Hôtel-Dieu) which I still chuckle at. One of the nurses asked me how long my husband had been in England. I kept a very straight face and said: *Three years.* The expression on her face was enough to send one in stitches. I did not tell her until the next day that I had just

returned from overseas.

Another was the Sunday following Terry's birth. My mother, Béatrice LeBlanc (Breau) and her husband Léo came to the hospital to take the baby to St. Bernard's Church for christening. Beatrice and Léo are her godparents. The priest who baptised her couldn't get over what a beautiful baby she was. He told my mother he wanted to come to the hospital to meet the mother of such a beautiful baby. He came to my room and asked: *Are you the mother of that beautiful baby*? I said: *Yes.* He looked at me a minute and said: *You must have a handsome husband.* I had a good laugh over that one.

Jack came back from overseas when Terry was eight months old.

RAISING A FAMILY

Up to now my life has been a breeze; free as the wind and no responsibilities. I did not really know what life was all about. Now I had a baby and still I did not feel too held down. I was staying with my mother as Jack was still overseas. My mother would wake me up in the morning with the baby already bathed, in a clean outfit and looking for food. While I was breastfeeding her, my mother would do all her washing; leaving me to eat breakfast at my leisure and do much as I pleased. I still had not learned what life was all about.

Jack came home at the end of July 1945, spent two weeks in New Brunswick and on August 16th, 1945 we arrived in Winnipeg by train.

Life began to show it's ugly head! It was impossible to find a place to live and nearly impossible to buy furniture and appliances. Whenever we heard of a place for rent we would rush to see it. The landlord would ask: *Have you any children*? When we said: *A little girl* it was *Sorry we have no vacancy.* We stayed with Jack's family for three months and we finally found a place at Selkirk and Andrews; an upstairs three room apartment. When we went to look at it we told the landlord we had no children. The next morning I heard the landlord in the hall. I called him in and said: *Sorry we had to do it this way* and showed him Terry in her high chair. He said: *That's OK, I don't mind children.*

We finally got settled in the suite and bought a kitchen suite, living room suite and bedroom suite and also a few odds and ends. We had no choice but had to buy what was available. Pillows, blankets and linens had been given to me by my family and it made things a bit easier. We were both very thankful that we had a

savings account because Jack was unemployed.

Soon after we moved, I went to find a doctor who told me I was pregnant. The doctor was Jacob Hollenberg and to this day is still our family doctor. Our son Robert (Bob) was born May 11th, 1946.

Jack found a job doing carpentry work for Canada Packers that lasted six months. Jack had applied for a job with Winnipeg Electric Railway (Greater Winnipeg Transit); it was privately owned then. He started driving buses and streetcars when Bob was a baby.

I had never really learned to cook, keep house or look after infants. Cooking with a cookbook and what I remembered from the things my mother did, I managed very nicely. Neither Jack nor the children ever complained. As a matter of fact they liked my cooking. Keeping house to me was just plain common sense and cooking after children was the most natural thing. One thing that made life easier was the fact that I always did love children; all children, but especially my own. I could never rest until my children had the best of care, no matter how much time it took. I am by nature a very organized person and that helped a lot. Life was very busy. I learned to cope. I also learned to knit, on my own with a book and I learned to sew.

December 6th, 1947; our son Douglas was born. For some reason this was a very difficult birth (that is according to the doctor). I did not wake up until the next day and I was packed in ice bags.

Jack, at work, had very odd shifts; one mid-morning and one that ended at three o'clock AM. It seemed that I was constantly making meals. This was when I started doing my housework at night. I would spend all the time I could with the children through the day and do the housework after they were asleep; washing, ironing, cooking etc. Everything was going smoothly if it had not been for the fact that I was so tired all the time.

Jack started working a part-time job on top of his steady job. I imagine he was quite tired at times too.

We did not have a car; Jack drove a bicycle to work. If we went anywhere it was by bus. I would not leave the children with strangers so we only went out if it was absolutely necessary.

Jack was working long hours and still we had to be economical to survive. That did not bother me as I was brought up with economy. My mother's words *Eat well and live well but never waste*; waste to her was a crime.

Surprisingly we managed very well. The children were always well fed and well dressed. The two things we thought most important were regular visits to the dentist and the best of shoes. Clothes they did not have a lot of, but they were washed and pressed regularly. I had formed a habit of getting their clothes

ready at night. When they were in bed for the night I would place on a chair beside their beds all the clothes they were to wear the next morning and polish their shoes, so that in the morning it was just jumping into their clean clothes.

When Terry was two and a half and Bob eleven months (Douglas was not yet born) we moved into a five room wartime house. They were called wartime houses because they were built for the returning veterans. They were built as temporary accommodations. It was nice to have a yard for the children to play in. Life was going along smoothly.

Jack came home one day and asked me: *Do you think we could manage with a cut in pay? I have been thinking of applying to the post office. If I get a job with them it will mean a cut in pay for the time being. Of course,* I said, *sure we'll manage.* I was a bit afraid but we still had a reserve in the bank to fall on if necessary. I was pregnant with Nancy at the time. Nancy was born February 4th, 1951 and Jack started working with the post office in July 1951 with a seventy dollar a month cut in pay. His take home pay was one hundred and forty dollars per month. Again we managed by dipping now and then into the reserve. On October 4th, 1952 Jacqueline was born.

When we moved into the wartime house it was on a rental basis at twenty-eight-fifty a month. In 1952 the government decided that the homes should be sold to the veterans for forty-six hundred with a ten percent down payment. We bought the house in September 1952 just before Jackie was born. The interest was four and one-half percent.

I guess I am a glutton for punishment as when Douglas was an infant I took a girl from the Children's Aid Society. They were very short of homes and were asking for help. I took Dorothy Capelle who was nine and a half at the time. She had been badly neglected and was pitiful. I was paid twenty dollars per month to cover the expenses. A fresh haircut, new dress and shoes and she was a beautiful little girl. She looked a bit Oriental but I found out in later years that her mother was Indian and her father white.

Dorothy soon started calling us mom and dad and on her own gave her name at school as Weedon. She so very badly wanted to belong somewhere. She told me in later years how she had been sexually abused in her previous home. She is now married, lives in British Columbia and has a boy and a girl and one grandchild. She has always kept in touch.

There were no schools in the district and it was time for Terry to start school. We registered her in St. Edward's on Arlington Street, a parochial school. Dorothy also went to St. Edward's.

Terry never went to kindergarten. Bob was registered at Faraday school the year he was five.

In September 1952 they both went to Robertson School, a brand new school.

Douglas also went to St. Edward's School for one year because his birthdate is December 6th and the cut-off in those days was November 30th.

The years went by so fast. There were times when the children were extremely noisy or I was so tired, I would start wishing for my previous life and miss my mother. I would sometimes lock myself in the bathroom, away from everyone, and cry for my mother. I also missed the sea, the hills, and being awakened in the mornings by the chug-chug of the fishermen's boats. I even missed the seagulls. I sometime go to visit the museum to visit the *Nonsuch* just to listen to the seagulls and feel nostalgic.

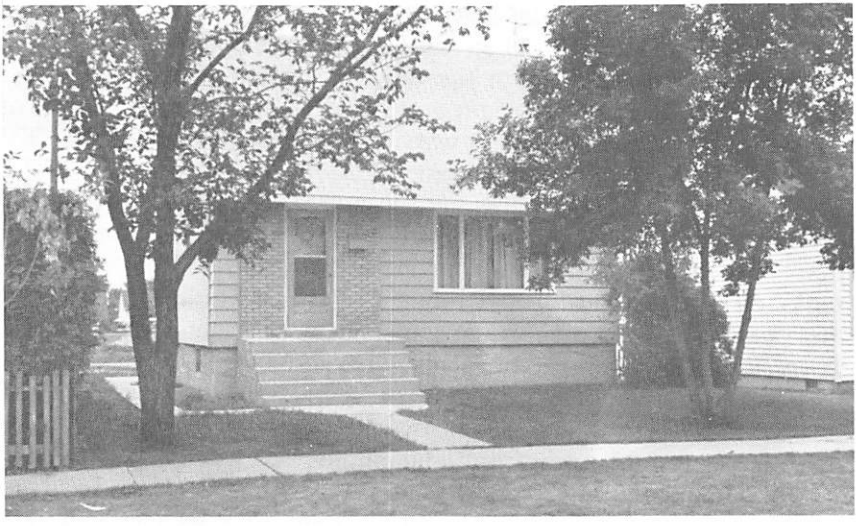
September 1958, the children were now all in school. They came home for lunch but the house felt so quiet and empty. I could not settle down to anything. I had been wound up for so long that I could not unwind. I took a part time job at *The Bay*. This helped settle me down and helped the children grow up. When I was not home they managed very nicely.

In the summer of 1961 Jack decided he wanted a basement under the house. He and some of his friends started digging. The foundation had a five foot cement wall. The dirt was removed and the house was raised. A thirty-two inch wall was added to the foundation with four rows of cement blocks. Five windows were put in and the house lowered. A floor was poured and a gas furnace installed. The house was raised on Labor Day and the furnace was lit October 3rd. It had been a lot of hard work but I also had done my share. Jack's friends were helping him on the house but I fed them. At lunch and supper I was feeding seven or eight men daily plus my children. It kept me busy cooking. Jack had chosen the year well; the entire summer was dry and beautiful.

Jack had grown up in Winnipeg and he had several married friends. They came over quite often but I never had the time to cultivate any close friendships. They had all grown up together and I felt like an outsider. I was much too busy involved and Winnipeg was still a strange city. I never did find anyone to confide in and it made for a lonely life, as all my life I had enjoyed close friendships.

The children all grew up without any mishaps. Terry had her appendix removed and Bob had tonsils, adenoids and appendix. Douglas had his tonsils out when he was three years old. Nancy had her tonsils out and Jackie was the only one who grew up to adulthood without going to a hospital. These were the years when

Jack and Antoinette Weedon's house. (Photo: Antoinette Weedon) I really appreciated Dr. Hollenberg. I had complete confidence in him. Bob and Jackie were the only two with allergies. Bob's was mostly in the spring when he would really suffer with hay-fever. Jackie suffered mostly in the fall. She had a few attacks of asthma. They have practically outgrown their allergies.



Jack and Antoinette Weedon's house. (Photo: Antoinette Weedon)

The children contacted most childhood diseases; i.e. measles, chicken-pox, etc. That was when I would buy them 7-UP. While they were growing up they really thought they were being abused because I would not buy them soft drinks. They had all the milk and fruit juices they wanted but pop and bubble gum were out. On a rare occasion I would buy them root-beer and that was a real treat. They would get 7-UP when they were sick. To this day they do the same with their own children.

I did not find bringing up the children that difficult. The housework I hated and still do but I managed to keep the house fairly well.

Cooking was done mostly in the evenings after the children were in bed. The washing and ironing were time consuming; I had a wringer-washer and clothesline, winter and summer. The clothes

would freeze to the line and my fingers were like ice by the time I brought them in. Ironing I did not like to do but there were no wash and wear in those days.

For the last ten years I have had an automatic washer and dryer but it is not half as appreciated as it would have been some years back.

I was always pregnant or breastfeeding and very very tired all the time.

Jacqueline was two when we first bought a television. I still remember the first program the children watched: *Ramah of the Jungle*. It was a really good program that I am sure the children of today would enjoy. Jackie was busy walking around the TV wondering where it all came from.

The children did not give me too much trouble but I would say the teen years were the worst because of the noise. One would put the TV on while another was playing records and another playing a radio, all at the same time. I thought my head would burst. When they were out with their friends the house was quiet but I would worry until they were home again. I could never go to bed until they were safe at home.

My advice to young people would be, when you get married don't move too far away from your family.

A few years after the basement was in, Jack decided to complete the rest of the house. All the windows were changed. He put cedar siding on the front with bricks around the door. The kitchen was completely torn apart. The kitchen had no outside wall for a whole day. Now the kitchen has a nice large sliding window and two walls completely covered with cupboards. With that completed, the house was now stuccoed, apart from the front. Jack did all the work himself. He then built a garage and levelled the yard. Now the house is really too big for us but we are too attached to it to leave.

THE GROWN-UP FAMILY

The years flew by so fast that suddenly there they were all grown up and independent adults. The noise, the sibling rivalries, the worries are gone as they try to find their niches into the adult world.

Terry was doing her grade twelve and at Christmas she left school to take a job at the *Canadian National Institute for the Blind*. Her boss who was blind, was the coordinator for all job placements. Terry worked in his office and travelled with him. She was his eyes.

She worked there for two years and then took a job as secretary at *Kipp Kelly Ltd.* From there she worked at the No. 1 School Division. She worked at Technical Vocational High School and then Children's Guidance Office and then Elmwood High School. She was married on January 21st, 1967. Three years later Allison was born. Terry worked at Elmwood High until Allison was one and a half.

Bob was having difficulty settling down to a job. He tried just about every job going. He even tried the Royal Canadian Navy until he touched on electricity and he made it his life work. Today he has his contractor's license.

Halfway through grade eleven Doug left school to go north with the *Hudson Bay Co.* He was a store and mail clerk at Rankin Inlet and Holman Island. After two years he came back to finish his grade twelve, attend Red River College and study stationary engineering. Today he has his chief engineer's papers.

Nancy left school a couple of times in grade eleven but went back each time to finish her grade twelve. She took typing, bookeeping, keypunch and computer. She worked as a computer operator at *Cybershare* for quite a while, but she did not like working the night shift. She left and went to work at *Acme Chrome* in the pay office. A while later she joined the city staff and went to work at the West Kildonan Library. Now she is working at the City Hydro in the garage office.

Jackie did not work very long. She was married at eighteen and worked for about a year after marriage at the Inter-Collegiate Press.

The girls stayed home until they were married and stayed in Winnipeg. The two boys spent a lot of time in Calgary but finally settled in Winnipeg.

When Terry was fourteen the style was calf-length, very full skirts and saddle shoes. The Pat Boone era--it was white suede shoes and white jackets. The boys lived in jeans and it took a lot of bribing to get them to wear dress pants. By the time Nancy and Jackie reached their teens the style was tight jeans and casual jackets. By this time the girls were allowed to wear pants at school. Tunics were a must for special occasions. The mini-skirt hit the market. I thought the girls looked rather cute in the short skirts as long as it did not go to extremes.

Children need a lot of understanding; it is a big frightening world they have to face. They should be given the right to express themselves and we should listen. They should be allowed to make their own mistakes and suffer the consequences as long as they realize that we, the parents, are ready to help them if they should stumble. Never talk down to a child; it is very insulting. Give them

credit for common sense or otherwise they will grow rebellious and trouble will arise. Treat your children with respect and they will reciprocate.

The years went by and I grew up. Oh, how I grew up. Life threw me every curve imaginable and all I could do is duck and keep going. I have learned patience and unselfishness. I can look life straight in the face without flinching.

For a while I became vindictive and unforgiving but that is past now.

EARNING A LIVING

When Jack took his discharge from the army, things were still unsettled. Thousands were being discharged daily and going into the job market. Factories were reverting to their original manufacturing after having been making ammunition for four years. They would make jobs available but it all took time.

Jack went back to school for a while rather than sit at home. Eventually he got a job doing repairs at *Canada Packers Ltd.* He knew that was temporary so he applied to *Greater Winnipeg Transit* and somewhere in 1947 he was driving street cars and trolley buses. He found that dealing with the public was no picnic. He would come home very tired and very frustrated. He applied to the post office and in June 1950 he started with the post office as a mail handler at the C.P. Station, loading and unloading mail off the trains. When that job became obsolete he became an inside clerk. That he found was too confining as he was used to working outside so he reverted to carrying mail and this he liked a lot.

One day in 1975 he called me from work and asked me to make an appointment with our doctor as his right leg was bothering him. Dr. Hollenberg diagnosed a black artery and sent him to see Dr. Downs at the Health Science Center. He had a by-pass and two years later he had a by-pass on his left leg. Jack was a very heavy smoker and both doctors told him the blockages had been caused by cigarette smoke. He did not stop smoking until October 25th, 1979. He had a massive coronary on that date at nine-thirty PM. I called an ambulance and at ten minutes past ten he was in the Misericordia Hospital where he spent seventeen days in intensive care. He was fitted with a pacer but it would not work on him and it was removed.

Both Dr. Hollenberg and Dr. Downs told me that he would never work again. He retired from the post office December 30th, 1979.

RETIREMENT

Jack retired and our life style changed. No great change for me but for Jack it was another matter. No more getting up at six o'clock to face the heat or the cold. The pressure has eased but he is still convalescing from a coronary. By the time he retired he was allowed, by the doctor, to walk two blocks and drive his car short distances. His heart healed and mended itself so that today he is able to do most things.

The post office pension is quite satisfactory. He took his Canada pension on disability so that from age sixty to sixty-five he was getting his full Canada pension. Now that he is sixty-five he gets old age pension, Canada pension and post office pension. I get old age pension plus a small Canada pension. Actually we are better off today than when we were bringing up the children or even better off than when Jack was working.

On Dr. Hollenberg's suggestion, Jack joined the Reh-Fit Center and stayed with them for two years, going twice weekly.

Today his health is very good. And mine? Well, my children marvel at my vitality and say: *You are the only one over sixty who does not take some sort of medication*, which I expect is true. Everyone one talks to, has some sort of ailment. Jack takes six different tablets daily.

CREATIVITY

I can do most things passably well but have no outstanding talents. I am just a plain average individual.

The most rewarding achievement of my life, I would say, is bringing up five beautiful children. I am very proud of them and proud of having achieved the result I did. I say I, because Jack was very rarely home and most of the bringing up was up to me.

Creativity was very important when I had to keep five children dressed on a small amount of money. Making do and remodelling clothing to pass on needed a lot of imagination.

MY MOTHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS

My mother's brothers and sisters are all gone now. I remember them as Clara, being the eldest, born November 9th, 1874. She married Émile Gadoury. They had no children. When they were both in their fifties they adopted a little Swedish girl. My uncle Émile was the mayor of a small town in Alberta. One day the city clerk talked to my aunt about a new born baby and no one to care

for it. My aunt had the baby brought to her house. When my uncle came home and saw the baby he would not part with it. He surprised all his friends by sending them invitations to the christening of their daughter on the following Sunday. They called the little girl Lucille. She died of cancer when she was in her forties. She was married and had two children. My aunt and uncle moved to British Columbia when Lucille was quite young.

The next sister, Amélia, born August 14th, 1876 married Patrick Bourque in Portland, Maine where they were both working. They both became American citizens. They had five children. When the children were still young, he died of pneumonia. He had a flu and went to work too soon. Amélia was still quite young with five children to raise. She managed very well. When her children were grown, she brought up her youngest brother's son, Lewis.

The third, a boy, George, born February 6th, 1879, lived all his life in New Brunswick. He was a very successful merchant. He had a grocery and mercantile store. His first wife, Anna, died shortly after they were married. They had no children. A few years later he married Judith. They had eight children. The oldest is Father Oswald Porelle, who was before his retirement, pastor for the parish of Shediac, New Brunswick. The rest are scattered.

My mother was next and then her sister Justine who married Andrew Rogers. She was born November 21st, 1884. They lived in Methuen, Massachusetts where they had a dairy farm. They had several children. One was scalded, as a child, when he fell in a vat of boiling water.

Lavinia was next. She was born September 3rd, 1886. She married Paul Brun of Botsford Portage, New Brunswick. They had no children but they adopted a girl, Mimi, and brought up a boy, Yvon. Yvon was the son of her husband's brother who lived next door with his family. When Yvon was born his mother was very sick, so my aunt looked after him from birth. When his mother got better he still stayed at my aunt's. He always called her mother. Clothilde (Annie), born December 10th, 1888, married William Lemire of Lowell, Massachusetts. I do not remember them at all. They had children which I never knew.

Émerise, the youngest girl, born July 27th, 1890, married Alban Saulnier. They lived in Worcester, Massachusetts. They had two children. When the children were still quite young she left her husband, because of his gambling, and brought up the children on her own. She was my godmother but I hardly remember her.

Jean-Baptiste, the youngest, born November 30th, 1894, lived in Boston, Massachusetts. He married in Boston and a few years later he left his wife and took his infant son to my Aunt Amélia who

brought him up. Jean-Baptiste was stocky, very jolly and devilish; he was a dare-devil with no fear. Even though he had several years of university, his life work was painting flag-poles, the taller the better.

MY FATHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS

My father was the eldest of eight children, four brothers and three sisters. Daniel (married Marie), Honoré (married Lena), Fred I know nothing of and Napoléon who died as a child. Sara married Edmond Gaudet, Madeleine married Napoléon Léger and Émerise who married Fred LeBlanc.

Fred was an uncle by marriage but I remember him well. He loved to read and had a photographic memory. He would come over on cold winter evenings, take the best seat in the room, stretch his legs and begin his narration. He would quote a book from cover to cover in a period of a couple of hours. It really was very interesting.

I have quite a few cousins that I lost track of. By living away, one loses a lot.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Clara, the oldest, was born March 1904. After finishing the local school she went to Moncton to study hairdressing. She worked for a while then married Harry Flanagan. They had three girls and a boy. Clara, now a widow, lives in a senior citizens home in Fredericton. She is eighty and in very good health.

My brother Léandre is next, born July 12, 1906. He was a first class finishing carpenter. He is married to Rina and they have three girls and a boy.

My next sister is Lina, born January 13th, 1908. She married Zachary Robichaud. When Lina was a child she had measles and caught a cold. The measles went to her eyes and she lost the sight of one eye. My father, afraid that she might lose her sight completely, sent her to the blind school in Halifax, Nova Scotia to learn braille. After a year in Halifax she came home and could not speak French. She had acquired the English language. I was afraid of her because I could not understand her. I was three at the time and I vaguely remember. Lina has ten children including identical twin boys.

My next brother is Napoléon, born May 17th, 1909 and married to Hilda. They have two daughters who both live in Toronto.

I am next and then my brother Julien, born September 19th,

1915. Julien is married to Hectorine. Since the war Julien has worked for the New Brunswick Governement. They have seven children; four boys and three girls.

Next is Dismas, born May 15th, 1918. Dismas worked as a carpenter. He is married to Olive and they have five children; five boys and two girls.

Joe, the youngest, was born June 19th, 1922. He was a tubal baby that survived and my mother always called him her miracle baby. He is married to Lucie and they have six boys and one girl.

SOME THINGS I REMEMBER

I remember Hallowe'en in New Brunswick. It was much different than in Manitoba. Hallowe'en was a time for pranks, nothing bad really but thrilling.

On February 2nd, Candlemas Day, we dressed in costumes and went from house to house collecting. Some adult would come along with a horse and sleigh and we would collect meat, potatoes, vegetables, sugar, molasses, butter, etc. which we would deliver to a needy family, except for the bit we would keep for ourselves. We would keep enough molasses for toffee and enough sugar and butter for a fudge. In the evening we would all meet at an appointed house and there we would make candy and have a party.

I remember the rumble seat cars. They were a barrel of fun. I remember, when I was thirteen or so, driving my father's car to go get the mail. The danger was minimal as the car did not go very fast and there were no other cars around.

THE HOUSE WHERE I WAS BORN

Can I really remember and do justice to the house where I grew up? As children, going on our merry way, we pay no attention to details but as we grow older we try to piece together all the little bits of information we remember.

The house of my childhood was a home, a warm loving home. On entering, especially the kitchen, there was a feeling of safety. The walls like huge wings would enfold you and make you feel at ease.

The original house was built by my paternal great-grandfather. My grandfather, his son, did some additions and alterations as did my father. The house is now occupied by my brother Dismas and his wife Olive. Here they brought up their family. The house is still in good condition, sturdy on its foundation but hardly recognizable from all the changes and improvements.

A verandah curled around the entire front. This verandah had a beautiful railing with curlicues at the top of the railing posts. The house itself was green and all the trimmings were white.

The front of the house had two doors, one to the kitchen and one to the main house.

The house faced south and the kitchen and parlor windows were for most of the day twinkling with sunshine that danced through the rooms.

The largest and most important room in the house was the kitchen. It was very large and dominated by a woodburning cookstove that was a beauty in its days. Back of the cooking top were white tiles with bright flowers and above that was a warming oven where suppers were kept warm for late comers and on top of which my mother would put her bread-dough to rise. At the far end of the cooking top was a tank that was kept full of water so we would have hot water for our needs. Behind the stove was a wooden box which was kept full of logs.

How I remember on cold winter evenings pulling a rocker to the open oven door and placing my feet on the door to keep them warm. It was such a warm cosy feeling.

There were always two rockers in the kitchen that we usually fought over; rockers that I remember my mother falling asleep in. We quite often told her *Mom go to bed you are sleeping, vous plantez des clous*. That is still so clear in my memory.

There were a kitchen table, several chairs and my mother's sewing machine where we would usually throw our books and jackets. There were hooks behind the door which we did not use very often.

On the east wall was a door that led into the main house. Pass this door was a piano window that looked into the dining room. There was a shelf below this window where the oil lamps were kept. Each morning the lamps were gathered, cleaned and placed on this shelf ready for the evening. On the north wall was a sink and pump. Next to this was a shelf with a mirror hanging above it. On this shelf was a basin and a dish with a cake of soap and nearby was a towel. Next to this was my father's razor strop. He used a straight razor and I can still see him sliding his razor back and forth on that strop. Above all this was a clock, a pendulum inside a little glass cage that ticktocked the passing years.

Behind the wall was a pantry where everyday dishes, cutlery and linens were kept. There were cupboards and bins. These bins would pull forward at a slant and they would hold a hundred pounds of flour or sugar. I can still hear my father say, as mom would bend down to get flour from the bins, if he could see her slip it was time

for a new bag of flour or sugar. In a corner was a table for baking. From this pantry one door led to the dining room and one to the kitchen.

On the north wall of the kitchen there was also another room that we called the shed. Here were a cream separator and a shelf where cream, milk, etc. were kept always covered with a snowy white cloth. On this shelf also was a product made by my mother which today we would call curd or yogurt. There was always a pan of this product which we dished with a spoon into serving dishes, sprinkled with sugar, ate and enjoyed.

This milk product could be the reason for all our good-health today.

In this shed there were also tools hanging on the walls. There were work clothes and boots and on a peg by the exit door was my mother's jute apron that she used when she went to feed the chickens or piglets. In the winter months quarters of beef or pork would hang there to keep cold or frozen. This was before the years of refrigeration.

Next to the shed door was the basement or cellar door and a door that led to the back stairs. These stairs took you to an unfinished large room the same size as the kitchen. The chimney from the stove went right through this room to enter the outside chimney. It kept the room very warm and cosy.

At one end of this room my mother had, all through the winter months, frames where she would hook rugs or do quilting on bedcovers. At the other end was mostly storage. While my mother was busy at her frames we would spend time looking through old books, read comics from old newspapers and search through boxes to see what we could find. A lot of pleasant hours were spent there.

On the east wall of the kitchen was a door that led into the main house. Here was a fairly large hall. To the left as you entered was the dining room. This room had built-in cupboards that my father had built before I was born or before I was old enough to remember. These cupboards held all kinds of treasures; my father's mustache cup, my mother's pink cup and saucer with white flowers and gold lining, a miniature cup and saucer *(demi-tasse)* that I loved and a pearl, kept in a small velvet bag, that someone had found in an oyster. It also held all my mother's good china and linens.

On the north wall of the dining room was a fairly large window that looked on to the ocean. On the east wall was a reproduction of Millet's *The Gleaners* and on the opposite wall was the *Searchers*. It was of two women with a lantern held high looking out to sea while a storm was raging. A dining table and six chairs occupied

the center of the room.

Straight ahead from the kitchen was our parents bedroom that in later years became my father's den or office. He had a fairly large desk that today would be very valuable as an antique. There was a table with a typewriter. This machine had two sets of keys; capitals and common letters and it also had keys for all the French accents. He used this typewriter a lot, with two fingers only but was quite adept. There were chairs, books, papers and papers; his desk was a fascination. In this room he told us many stories, some from the *Arabian Nights. Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* was a favorite but mostly he told us stories from his imagination which were quite often scary but we believed them all.

Reentering the hall you came to the furnace outlet. It was set in the floor about three feet by three feet in size and the heat was always pouring out. It kept the front rooms and upstairs warm.

On the wall to the dining room was the telephone. It was a box affair with a crank that was used to ring the operator or the local phones. Our first number if I remember correctly was 23, two long rings and three short ones.

Further down the hall there was on the east wall the parlor door and on the west the front stairs that led to four bedrooms. Before coming to the parlor door was a gramophone. Here again was a handle to wind the gramophone after each record. All records were breakable 78 RPM's.

In the living room or parlor there were two windows; one on the east wall and one on the south wall. The one on the south was a large picture window with fancy glass on each side, like cut glass or prisms. In this room were an organ, fancy rockers, sofa, tables and chairs.

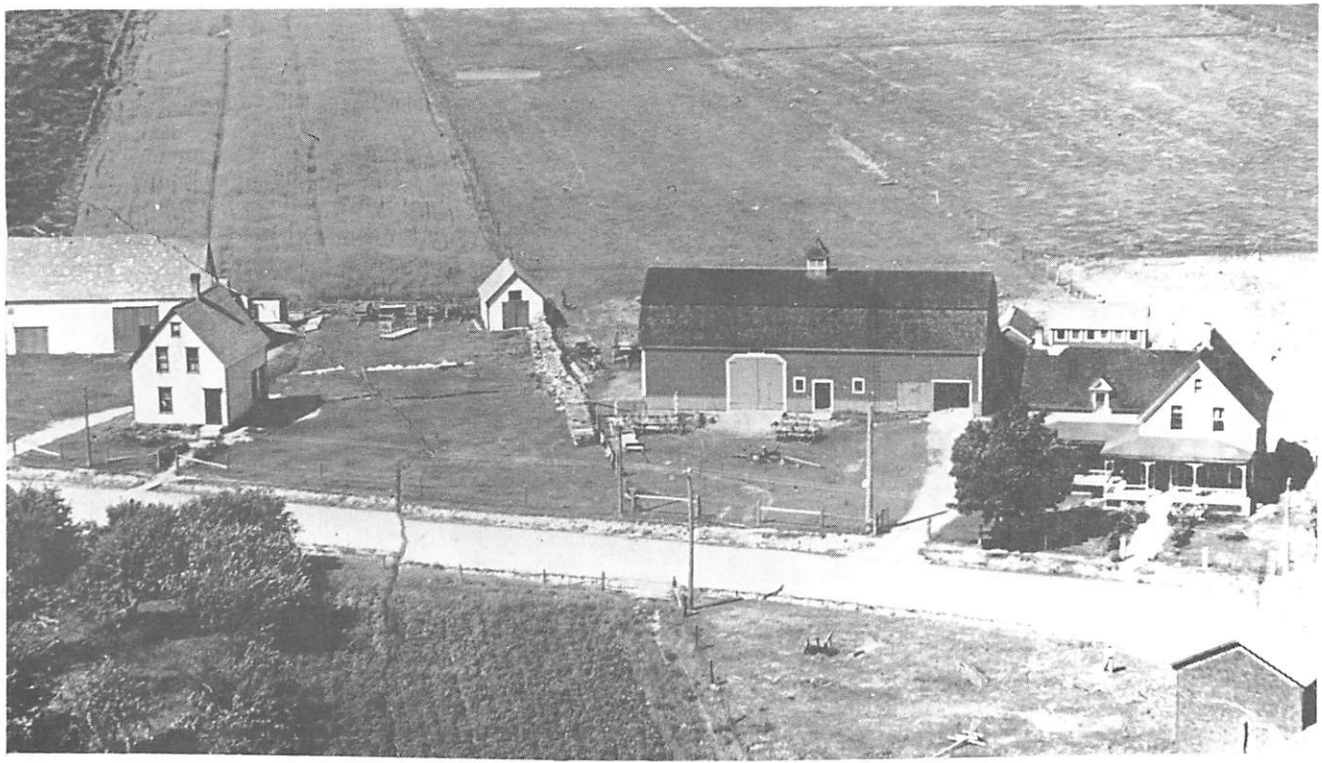
Coming out of the parlor there was the front exit and front stairs. The exit was a porch affair with an inside door with this fancy glass again. In this porch was kept the fire extinguisher and then the outside door that led to the verandah.

The front stairs led to a hall with two bedrooms on each side. Halfway down the hall was a chimney coming from the furnace. This also helped keep the upstairs warm.

There was a double bed in each room, a dresser, and a commode. This commode held a bowl, pitcher and a glass with toothbrushes, and a dish with a cake of soap. There was a bar on the side of the commode for towels. The dresser held our clothes.

The walls of these rooms were papered and my mother would change the paper every few years.

Changing the wall paper was quite a process much more difficult than now. First of all my mother would make a pot of



Patrick Landry's farm, c. 1932. Notice the mill in the foreground. The farm on the left was then occupied by Philias Landry. (Photo: Le restaurant L'Héritage).

paste with flour and water which she cooked for a short while. She would make herself a long table with boards and chairs. She would then cut the paper to length and with a wide brush she would spread this paste all over the back of the paper, place it on the wall and rub it with a soft cloth until it was in place. I usually hung around if she was wall papering as she would ask me to hand her something or move something and I felt so important.

Coming downstairs, as children, we would nearly always slide down the bannister hoping all the while that the knob at the end would hold fast and keep us from flying through.

The front exit led to three steps down to the front yard. At the bottom of these steps was a cement pad and there we played hopscotch. From this pad was a walk to the front gate. On each side of this walk my mother always had dahlias, mostly red. There was a fancy wire fence and then the main highway, known today as the Trans-Canada Highway or number one highway. On the east side of the walk were three apple trees, one large and two smaller ones. Tied to one of the trees and then to the verandah was a clothesline. Here snowy white clothes or bright rainbow colored ones would blow in the wind and grab the sun's rays. On the west side of the walk was a birch tree just next to the gate and then a maple tree; a huge maple tree where we spent many hours in the shade.

I remember my father saying that this tree was planted by my father on the day my oldest brother was born.

There was a large gate and a driveway that led to the backsteps or kitchen door. Next to the driveway was the barnyard where most often you would see a binder, rake, plow and sometime cows grazing. A beautiful sight in the spring was watching the lambs gamboling all over this yard. This yard was also fenced in but opened to the front yard.

The barn was large and was built when I was around four years old. I have often heard it said that my brother Julien, who was two at the time, fell asleep inside the forms that were laid ready for the pouring of the foundation. It was by chance that one of the men noticed him. At the west end of the barn was the hayloft. There a load of hay would arrive and a huge fork, operated by pulleys and pulled by horses, would grab the hay and empty the load onto the loft in no time flat. Next to this room was a stable for the cows and then there was a large room with a large sliding door painted white with a large red drawing of a horse at gallop. This was a landmark by which our domain was known by everyone: *C'est la place avec le p'tit cheval sur la porte.* This room was like a garage. Here was kept a fancy buggy and later on a car. On the west side of this

room was a stall for Dick (Lake-Be-Sure-Junior). The door was cut in half and we would open the top portion to talk to Dick.

That horse was practically human. He understood everything. I remember the time when Dick taught the ram a lesson. In the yard amongst the sheep was a ram and he was always bucking at Dick. Perhaps he thought Dick would invade his harem but whatever the reason he would not leave him alone. Dick always ignored him until one day when he had enough he grabbed the ram in his jaw and ran around the house. We were in the dining room at dinner when we saw Dick with the ram run across the window. We all ran outside to see. Dick ran around the house three or four times, gave the ram a good shake and let him go. The ram very sheepishly walked across the yard and never bothered Dick again.

Behind the garage part of the barn was where the work horses were kept. This room was entered by a different door from outside. As you entered there was a large bin where the oats for the horses were kept. The horses I remember the most were a pair of Clydesdales that my father bought from Alberta. I still remember the excitement of the day when they arrived by train.

In the yard itself there was a trough where the horses would drink. There was also outside a pump to service the animals.

Behind the barn was a pigsty where there were always several pigs, mostly sows with piglets constantly nuzzling the troughs. A bit to the east was the chicken coop where we would gather eggs daily and in the yard there were chickens, turkeys and geese. There was a white goose that would scare the daylight out of me. The east side of the yard was also fenced in and cordwood would be piled high to be used in the furnace or kitchen stove. At the back of the house there was a large entrance to the cellar. Here were a large furnace, potatoes in their bins, turnips and sugar-beets. There was a machine (a mangler) to chop the sugar-beets which were used to feed the cattle. There were shelves where my mother kept preserves, pickles and crocks of homemade butter. Behind the barn there were several cherry trees that we would climb and fill our stomachs to bursting.

One of my brothers, Dismas was afraid of height and stood under the trees with pleading eyes begging for his share. We usually obliged. Further down there was a duck pond enjoyed by many ducks and at the end of the field was a stream where we would gather frogs and guppies. By the side of the house was a garden swing that gave us many hours of pleasure.

From the barn yard leading into the road was a large gate to accommodate cars, teams of horses or farm implements. Across the road my father had a grist mill where buckwheat was ground into

flour. I can still remember the buckwheat pancakes my mother would make for breakfast, eaten with bacon and molasses. It was really filling and delicious.

On top of the barn was a weather vane; a horse at gallop turning with the wind to show the directions. On both the barn and the house there were lightning rods on the roofs so you felt safer in a thunder storm. Behind the mill was a vegetable garden but especially a large patch of strawberries and then there was an apple orchard. Behind the orchard was an open field where oats or other grains grew. This is where my brothers and I picked mustard weeds. Further down was a bluff or windbreak of trees where I would love to wander.

The land was fenced in and along the fence were raspberries, blackberries, chokecherries, etc. We would spend a lot of time just following the fence, eating, and gathering flowers. Daisies and black-eyed Susans grew in profusion.

The years spent in this home are well remembered. They were the years of my youth, the years that shaped the rest of my life and they are remembered with love.

THINGS I REMEMBER

I remember waking up early in the morning to the chug-chug of the motor boats on their way to visit the nets and the wah-wahs of the seagulls. I missed that when I moved away from the sea. I remember my brothers Julien and Dismas waking me up in the middle of the night to say: *Let's go cook breakfast.* Dismas would bank the kitchen stove while Julien would bring a leg of pork in from the shed and start chopping bacon while I searched for the largest cast iron frying pan on which to place these chopped up pieces of bacon to fry. While it sizzled away I dropped half a dozen eggs. Usually we drank milk or tea. I am sure our mother heard us messing her kitchen but she ignored it and left us to our pleasure. After we finished eating my brothers left me to try and clean up the kitchen while they went to check rabbit snares. Those were the years when we were very young.

I remember when a trip to Moncton, thirty miles away, was quite a chore. It was an all day session. We waited all day for the *Tout rien tout neuf* that we were promised if we behaved. So many memories of childhood, we were very innocent, we were very naive.

I remember working in Moncton and coming home every so often. I would stand beside my brother Joe, the baby of the family, put my hand on his head, rumple up his hair and say: *How's my little brother?* Suddenly I came home one day to find him towering over

me. He put his hand on my head and said: *How's my little sister?* I am five feet one and he grew to over six feet.

I remember Julien calling me to the garden to see a snake that had just swallowed a frog. With a garden hoe he cut the snake and the frog hopped away. I remember sitting in the kitchen with my mother. She was slicing a potato thinly, placing the slices on top of the stove to roast. A little bit of salt and they were delicious.

So many things I remember. I remember the good days. There must have been bad days but those are gone and the good days are remembered such as the family always returning to my mother's table. That table always had room for one more. What is life but the string that binds a family together.

Antoine And Jack on their 30th wedding anniversary in 1974. (Photo: Antoinette Weedon)

LE MOUVEMENT SCOUT DANS LE DIOCÈSE DE MONCTON

Maurice Melanson

Avec le passage des années, différents mouvements de jeunes ou d'adultes prennent naissance ou disparaissent. Les seuls mouvements qui demeurent malgré la marque du temps sont ceux qui répondent véritablement à un besoin de permanence. Il doit en être ainsi du scoutisme puisque ce mouvement existe depuis 1908. Son fondateur, un militaire anglais de profession, lord Baden Powell était un grand éducateur, d'une clairvoyance exceptionnelle. Malgré que le mouvement scout connaîtra des changements au fil des années, la philosophie de base sera toujours la même. *Le Scoutisme est une méthode complémentaire d'éducation qui ne prétend en rien remplacer mais plutôt compléter et renforcer la formation donnée en premier lieu par les trois grandes forces éducatives que sont l'Église, la famille et l'école.* La vie scoute comprend trois étapes: 1) le louvetisme (9 à 12 ans), 2) le scoutisme, branche Éclaireur (12 à 14 ans) et 3) La route: la jeune route (14 à 17 ans) et la route (17 ans et plus).

Dès 1913, des unités scoutes sont organisées en Nouvelle-Ecosse, au Nouveau-Brunswick et à Terre-Neuve. Les troupes scoutes de l'époque étaient affiliées à la *Boy Scouts Association of Canada* qui avait été fondée en 1914. Le mouvement scout va vite se répandre; des adultes sont appelés à devenir chefs de troupe afin de promouvoir le scoutisme et y enseigner ses principes.

Même avant la fondation du diocèse de Moncton comme nous le connaissons aujourd'hui, Mgr Edouard LeBlanc, évêque au siège épiscopal de Saint-Jean, encourageait au début des années 1930, les

séminaristes à assister à Sussex ou à l'Ile-du-Prince-Edouard, à un camp Gilwell en formation scoute organisé par la *Boy Scouts Association* dont le bureau provincial se trouvait à Saint-Jean. Les séminaristes présents étaient: Mgr Léonard Léger qui organise la première troupe scoute française du diocèse à Bouctouche en 1934; Père Emery Doucet qui commencera ce mouvement à Chipman; Père Philippe Robichaud qui va introduire le scoutisme à Saint-Anselme en 1935 et Père Guillaume Pellerin qui fera de même à Shédiac. D'autres prêtres tels que les Pères Oscar Bourque, Lionel Daigle et Camille Léger suivront dans les mêmes pistes, travaillant avec zèle à faire connaître le mouvement scout. C'est en juillet 1936 qu'on verra pour la première fois aux Maritimes, des cours français de Gilwell donnés au Lac Unique (Madawaska). Mgr Patrice Chiasson, évêque de Chatham avait demandé au Père W. Savoie et M. H. Albert d'assister M. R. Pugh organisateur des provinces Maritimes. Ces cours se donnaient pour ceux qui voulaient devenir scoutmestre (chef de troupe). La section française de la *Boy Scouts Association* avait déjà du matériel (drapeaux et inscriptions) et une traduction française de certains livres anglais sur le scoutisme. Les troupes scoutes participaient à un camp annuel; on en verra par exemple à Bouctouche, à Cap-Pelé et au Barachois. L'habit bleu distinguait les troupes du diocèse tandis que l'habit kaki demeurait avec la *Boy Scouts Association.*

Le mouvement scout va continuer à se répandre dans d'autres paroisses du diocèse. C'est en mai 1937 que Mgr L.J.A. Melanson présidera à l'initiation solennelle de la Troupe Sainte-Thérèse de Léger Corner (Dieppe).

Le thème *Le Scoutisme, école de formation* sera préconisé. Malgré que ce mouvement connaît des hauts et des bas, il continue à se répandre tranquillement avec un appui fort des autorités religieuses. La presse apprend à la population diocésaine en juillet 1937 que Mgr Melanson autorise *la célébration quotidienne du saint sacrifice de la messe au camp.* C'est en mai 1937 que l'archévêque de Moncton écrira: *Je n'ai pas à appuyer ici sur la formation toute chrétienne et catholique que l'on doit s'efforcer d'inculquer chez nos petits au dehors de l'école. Il faut s'en occuper et tout de suite. Le scoutisme bien compris et bien dirigé peut nous fournir à cette fin les plus heureux résultats.* Le diocèse comptait déjà plusieurs troupes scoutes: Troupe Saint-Joseph, de Shédiac; Troupe Sainte-Thérèse, de Léger Corner; Troupe Saint-Louis-de-France, Lewisville; Troupe Saint-Anselme; Troupe Saint-Thomas, Memramcook; Troupe du Collège Saint-Joseph; Troupe de Saint-Louis-de-Kent. Une troupe scoute dans la paroisse de la cathédrale de Moncton était à s'organiser. Chaque troupe s'organise des camps à différents

Le rév. Oscar Bourque au milieu d'une troupe scoute au Camp Lajoie en 1934. (Photo: Maurice Melanson)

endroits avec l'aide des prêtres tels que les Pères Oscar Bourque, Guillaume Pellerin, Léonard Léger, Antoine Richard et François Cormier.

Les troupes scoutes de l'époque participent à différentes activités de plein air dans leur localité et parfois tous ensemble. Notons que Saint-Georges était reconnu comme le patron des scouts; sa fête était souligné annuellement par des événements spéciaux. Mais avec l'arrivée de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, le mouvement scout du diocèse de Moncton perd plusieurs chefs de troupe qui s'embarquent dans les rangs de l'armée pour participer aux efforts de défence contre les Allemands.

L'Ordre Social, journal de l'époque, rapporte à plusieurs reprises, au début des années 1940, le départ de ces jeunes chefs.

En plus, le mouvement scout diocésain connaît d'autres problèmes. Affilié à la *Boy Scouts Association*, le scoutisme catholique dans le diocèse de Moncton a des difficultés à fonctionner à l'intérieur des cadres établis. La *Boy Scouts Association* regroupait des troupes de scouts de différentes dénominations religieuses anglaises; les manuels avaient été rédigés en fonction de ces différents groupes. Mais cette association ne représentait pas pleinement les aspirations religieuses et culturelles des troupes scoutes du diocèse de Moncton.

Vers la fin des années 1930, les scouts catholiques du diocèse de Moncton se forment une association en s'élaborant une constitution; un secrétariat diocésain s'est mis sur pied avec un bureau situé au 226 rue Saint-Georges à Moncton. Les réprésentants des scouts catholiques du diocèse continuent à assister régulièrement aux réunions du conseil provincial de la *Boy Scouts Association*. Les officiers pour 1940-1941 étaient: assistant-directeur, Léon Frenette (Shédiac); propagandiste, l'abbé Guillaume Pellerin; secrétaires diocésain, Paul Roy et Yvon LeBlanc; conseillers: Saint-Joseph, Claude Bourque; Bouctouche, Bernard Doucet; Saint-Louis, Frédéric Mazerolle; Saint-Anselme, Roger Bourgeois; Scoudouc, Arthur Belliveau; Collège Saint-Joseph, Armand Poirier. Les autorités religieuses du diocèse continuent donc à travailler avec acharnement à promouvoir le scoutisme catholique à l'intérieur de ces cadres nationaux en ayant recours à des animateurs de l'extérieur du diocèse. Par exemple à l'été 1941, deux camps-écoles diocésains, Gilwell et Akéla prirent place à Dutch Point dans le comté de Restigouche, le premier de ces camps formera des scoutmestres et le second des louvetiers.

En novembre 1949, la presse acadienne rapporte l'élection du nouveau comité de direction représentant les deux groupes linguistiques: patron, William Abraham; président-honoraire, le maire de

la ville; président, W.F. Wheeler; vice-président, Emery L. LeBlanc; secrétaire, Norman MacKendrick; trésorier, J.A. Gaudet; relations publiques, Claire Ganong; commissaire de district, Lloyd Johnson; aumôniers, l'abbé O. Porelle et le Père J.P. Forsey. On trouve sur l'exécutif également: George Robidoux, E.H. Ritzie, W.H. Oram, J.A.S. Gagnon, M.M. Baig, Philias LeBlanc et A.A. Fownes.

La propagande se fait pour relancer le scoutisme dans des paroisses où ce mouvement avait apparemment été présent pendant des années. On voit ce phénomène se produire à Shédiac, à Dieppe et à d'autres endroits. Ce déclin s'était produit dans plusieurs paroisses du diocèse dû à plusieurs facteurs.

Pour se financer, le mouvement scout avait une campagne financière annuelle sous forme de souscriptions et de dons venant de particuliers ou de commerces. Ces fonds allaient pour les costumes, pour de l'équipement nécessaire et pour aider les moins fortunés. On continue également à faire de la propagande pour faire connaître le mouvement à travers le diocèse de Moncton.

Lors des sessions d'entraînement de jeunes scouts, les chefs scouts utiliseront de plus en plus de manuels traduits ou des volumes provenant de l'extérieur. En 1928, le premier manuel français et catholique, **L'Éclaireur**, fut mis au service des troupes françaises du pays. D'autres manuels s'ajouteront à la liste plus tard; au début des années 1950, le Conseil général canadien de l'Association des scouts publie: **De pied-tendre à scout de la Reine.** Il sera distribué par le Conseil provincial dont le bureau se trouvait à Saint-Jean. Ce travail de traduction avait été difficile; M. Henri Albert, M. l'abbé Claude Lévesque et M. l'abbé Donat Albert avaient participé à ce travail. La population scoute acadienne se réjouissait de cet ouvrage.

Dans les années 1950, l'Association scoute du diocèse de Moncton est toujours affiliée à la *Boy Scouts Association* dont l'exécutif provincial en 1955 était composé de : M. G.B. Peat. M.D., président; docteur A.M.A. McLean, vice-président; M. Walter Wheeler, vice-président; M. Eli Boyaner, commissaire provincial; docteur S.A. Hopper, assistant commissaire provincial; M. A.F. Matson, assistant commissaire provincial; M. G.L. Miller, assistant commissaire provincial; M. R.A. Michaud, assistant commissaire provincial; M. G.H. Joyce, trésorier provincial; M.J. Percy Ross, commissaire provincial exécutif. Sur la liste des membres du Conseil provincial on remarque les noms suivants: Mgr Camille-A. LeBlanc, évêque de Bathurst; Mgr Norbert Robichaud, archevêque de Moncton, Rév. Irois Després, Rév. F.E. Archibald, Hamilton Baird, docteur Georges Cormier, Rév. Médard Daigle, J.A. Sylvio Gagnon, J. Arthur Gaudet, R.G. Hayes, Edgar T. LeBlanc, Philias A.

LeBlanc, rabbin L. Medjuck, l'inspecteur J.R. Roy, Charles F. Keith.

Lors de l'Assemblée plénière de l'épiscopat canadien, tenue à Ottawa en octobre 1960, les évêques de langue française se sont mis ensemble pour fonder le Conseil canadien des Scouts et Guides catholiques qui possédera les mêmes droits et privilèges que le Conseil de la *Boy Scouts Association of Canada* et qui dépendra immédiatement du Maître scout du Canada, le gouverneur général de notre pays.

On demandera à maintes reprises la permission de se séparer de la *Boy Scouts Association* mais sans succès; cette dernière association n'acceptait pas la séparation car cela représentait la perte de plusieurs membres. Mais les diocèses français continueront leur travail pour le schisme car les enseignements chrétiens catholiques désirés n'étaient pas dans les manuels de la *Boy Scouts Association* même si certains de ces livres avaient été traduits. Lors d'une réunion à Bathurst le 28 janvier 1961, on organisa le Conseil régional des Maritimes des Scouts et Guides catholiques du Canada. Les scouts de langue française allaient se fonder une association indépendante de la *Boy Scouts Association of Canada*. Or, il s'écoulera quelques années avant d'arriver à une entente de séparation avec cette organisation.

Dès 1961, un Conseil général diocésain des Scouts catholiques du Canada se formera dans le diocèse de Moncton et comprendra: Maurice LeBlanc, président; Omer Brun, premier vice-président; Rév. Robert Lavoie, deuxième vice-président; Dollard Savoie, trésorier; Rév. Paul Arsenault, aumônier; Francis Royer, commissaire diocésain; Ulysse LeBlanc, secrétaire. Le dépôt de *badges* et le quartier général pour le diocèse sera au centre diocésain Assomption à Moncton. Monsieur Charles d'Amour jouera un rôle important dans la réorganisation des scouts français. Certaines paroisses resteront non-enregistrées avec le nouveau conseil pour quelque temps.

Les différentes troupes du diocèses continuent à participer à des camps; des cours pour les chefs de patrouille seront donnés. Des noms tel que le Père Donatien Gaudet, le Père Camille Léger seront familiers dans les rangs du mouvement scout du diocèse. Plusieurs autres religieux et laïques seront impliqués. Un bulletin scout sera publié et distribué à tous les comités protecteurs, les chefs assistants et tous les scouts. Un magasin s'organise pour permettre aux différentes troupes de s'approvisionner en équipement, *badges*, costumes, etc.

Dans les années 1960, le mouvement scout catholique dans le diocèse se répand; le Père Paul Arsenault, aumonier diocésain le décrit bien dans son rapport annuel en 1965: *A la manière d'un petit*

enfant dont les premières années sont d'ordinaire marquées par une croissance rapide et une vitalité débordante, le mouvement scout qu'on avait pourtant qualifié de prématuré, a cependant connu une croissance sans cesse accrue, une vitalité de plus en plus manifeste. Le recensement de 1968-1969 nous indique 19 troupes scoutes dans le diocèse regroupant 325 garçons et répandus dans 9 paroisses.

Au niveau national, c'est seulement en février 1967 qu'une entente est signée entre la *Boy Scouts of Canada* et l'Association des Scouts du Canada devant le gouverneur général Georges Vanier. Ce sera en juillet 1969 que l'Association des Scouts du Canada sera incorporée par une charte fédérale. Ceci voulait dire que les scouts français du pays avaient enfin leur propre association nationale. Notons que les responsables du mouvement au niveau du diocèse avaient travaillé de proche avec l'organisation nationale.

Les années 1970 seront très mouvementées dans le diocèse quant aux efforts émis pour répandre le scoutisme. Il faut faire remarquer que le mouvement avait connu un déclin de sorte qu'en janvier 1973, le district de Moncton ne comptait que trois troupes scoutes francophones: 1) Notre-Dame-de-Grâce à Parkton avec 30 jeunes, 2) la paroisse Christ-Roi à Moncton avec 40 jeunes et 3) la paroisse Sainte-Thérèse de Dieppe avec 35 jeunes. Le mouvement scout était toujours très actif à Cap-Pelé, mais était demeuré affilié à la *Boy Scouts Association*. C'est en ce temps-là que le Conseil d'administration du district a mis sur pied un programme d'expansion. Une personne fut même embauchée à plein temps pour promouvoir le scoutisme dans le diocèse. Une stratégie est adoptée; on travaille à la formation de couples pour l'animation et on regroupe des jeunes de sorte qu'en 1975 le district de Moncton compte 7 troupes: 1) Notre-Dame-de-Grâce à Parkton avec 70 jeunes 2) Sainte-Thérèse à Dieppe avec 40 jeunes 3) l'Annonciation à Pré-d'en-Haut avec 24 jeunes 4) la Visitation à Grand-Digue avec 24 jeunes 5) Sainte-Anne-de-Kent avec 24 jeunes 6) Saint-Anselme à Dieppe avec 48 jeunes 7) Saint-Thomas à Memramcook avec 24 jeunes. Le nombre total d'animateurs-animatrices avait augmenté de 16 en 1973 à 55 en 1975. En plus le scoutisme était toujours très vivant à Cap-Pelé avec une fanfare et un camp.

Les méthodes de formation des jeunes et des personnes impliquées dans l'animation seront plus axées sur la pédagogie et la psychologie. Les animateurs se voient davantage demander de jouer un rôle d'éducateur confié à une partie du bien-être intellectuel et physique du jeune. Plusieurs cours d'entraînement prendront place pendant les années 1970 (i.e. à l'Université de Moncton, sur l'I.-P.-E. et à Restigouche).

Afin d'avoir un lien de rencontre commun pour tous les scouts, l'Association des Scouts du diocèse de Moncton fit l'achat en 1970, près de Pré-d'en-Haut, d'un terrain avec maison qui sera connu comme le *domaine Beaumont*. Ce lieu sera utilisé pour des camps et des cours de formation. Malheureusement le vandalisme devient un problème de telle sorte qu'à l'automne 1973, le domaine sera la proie des flammes. Quelques années plus tard, ce lieu de rencontre sera reconstruit. Malgré ces épreuves, le groupe d'animateurs et d'animatrices continue son beau travail.

Au niveau national, c'est en 1975 que le scoutisme francophone du Canada sera réorganisé en 4 fédérations opérationnelles (l'Atlantique, le Québec, l'Ontario et l'Ouest-Canada). Ceci aidera à uniformiser le scoutisme français canadien, à décentraliser l'ancienne structure nationale pour renforcer la base provinciale, et permettra une plus grande autonomie dans les orientations à donner au scoutisme. Le but reste le même, c'est-à-dire aider des jeunes à devenir de bons citoyens, en cultivant leur santé, en formant leur caractère, en développant leur compétence pratique, en les initiant au service des autres et à la vie en société et en guidant leur recherche personnelle du Seigneur. Les principes et les méthodes du scoutisme sont basés sur la promesse et la loi, auxquelles chaque membre adhère librement.

Les branches (stages de développement caractéristiques de divers âges chronologiques) seront changées un peu pour répondre aux besoins nombreux des différents groupes d'âge: 1) les scouts-louveteaux (9 à 11 ans) 2) scouts-éclaireurs (12 à 13 ans) 3) scouts-pionniers (14 à 16 ans) 4) scouts-aînés (17 ans et plus).

Dans les dernières années, le scoutisme n'a fait que se propager. Le rapport du commissaire de District pour 1985-86 nous en donne la preuve; en 1984-1985, on comptait 18 troupes scoutes comprenant 876 jeunes et adultes. Aujourd'hui, le diocèse compte 24 troupes regroupant 1127 adultes et jeunes. Les personnes qui oeuvrent au sein du conseil d'administration, sur l'équipe de formation, sur l'équipe d'animation, dans les troupes au niveau paroissial et les curés méritent d'être applaudis pour un travail de zèle trop souvent ignoré par notre société.

Avec la présence du scoutisme dans 24 paroisses du diocèse de Moncton aujourd'hui, on ne peut que s'arrêter et réfléchir sur cette organisation qui se compare bien à la parabole du grain de sénevé de l'Evangile - *la petite graine qui produit un grand arbre.*