

Farming—A good but demanding life claim Linkletters of Prince County

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Farming demands the best you can put into it but it's a good way of life and you wouldn't trade for anything else if everyone was like the Linkletter family of Linkletter Road and Linkletter Shore.
Harry Linkletter and his two sons Leigh and Garth operate on a fairly large scale with slightly more than 200 acres of potatoes, several hundred hogs and some feeder cattle on their 500 acres plus development. But they insist, the small farm is still profitable and they can still examples to prove it. "It's not the small farm that has gone out of date, it's the small farmer" they emphasize.
Like most people who grow potatoes on a large scale, the Linkletter family lean to seagoes, and it was a cousin, Fred Severson—his people came from Fredericton in this province—who developed the variety at Fredericton, N.B. some 20 to 25 years ago or more. It was Dracell and MacFadyen who brought the first seago seed to this province, Harry Linkletter told me, but they sold it later.

GROWING SINCE '41
The Linkletters have been growing potatoes since 1941 which was their first crop of any size. They have increased the acreage until last year they had 190 acres of seagoes and 60 of

kennebecs, and they may go slightly higher yet, I gathered. I gathered also that they have found potato production consistently profitable over the years, although it has brought financial headaches to some. "It's like everything else, you have to give it everything you've got", Harry and Garth said as we looked at their largest above-ground storage warehouse that provides completely frost proof storage for more than 30 carloads.

Leigh remained with a group of men in another storage building at Linkletter shore to grade potatoes while his father and brother showed Carmen Smith and me around the establishment.

15 ACRES DAILY
The large-scale operation requires modern machinery and these people harvest up to 15 acres per day with a modern harvesting machine—it harvested 104 acres in seven days last fall in one operation. Two men can handle the operation when the digging is good, although it requires more when conditions are more difficult.

Other machinery has also increased in capacity over the years. The first potato graders would handle about 100 to 150 bags a day—that was back about 1950 or slightly earlier. Modern graders can handle two carloads in the same time. They always aim at 400 bushels per acre, they said, and 500 to 600 of that are saleable spuds. They have 500 acres of land and rent some more. They like a three-year rotation of potatoes, grain and hay. They used to have a dairy herd of Holstein cattle. Now the cattle they are feeders. They also feed 200 pigs at a time, but they feed cull potatoes. Most of the pigs are hoper fed.
Though I came away with a story of potato production, it was a story on machinery development and construction that took me to the Linkletter farms. The men were modest about this phase of their operations but I found that they have a skill in mechanical development that the boys just may have inherited from Bruce Stewart—he was Harry's uncle and originated the machine shop that bore his name at Charlottetown until it was taken over by Charlottetown Marine Industries several years ago.

BUILT HARVESTER
The sons built a potato harvester several years ago which was the most satisfactory machine they had used up to the present commercial one which they like equally well, and they will handle a field just a little faster. The larger two-row type

herd also has to reach a stated standard of milk production. The Mooses' top Landrace sow scored a 90 in advance registry last year to win the Harold W. Gray Memorial Trophy for the highest scoring sow in the province. Their operation was reviewed in this paper several months ago.

The Linkletters came originally from the Orkney Islands, off the coast of Scotland, but they came to this province from the Connecticut area. These people like farming, believe it's the best way of life and Garth at least thinks potato farming is the best for he told me so just as I was leaving and thanking two busy men for taking an hour or more to show us around.

CDA's Dairy Products Division graded 88.5 million lb. of dry skim milk in 1963, about half of total production. Assisted by government grants, Canadian farmers used 1.3 million tons of time on their land in 1962. In 1962 the 220,000 acres planted to the 18 main commercial vegetables in Canada had a farm value of \$85.5 million. Almost 70 per cent of Canada's creamery butter is made in Quebec and Ontario.

The Linkletter farm operation is reasonably large but they know of small farm operations that are successful. They used the W.A. Moose and Son operation as an example and pointed to the fact the farm produces top quality Landrace hogs, a herd of Ayrshire cattle that has topped Canada in production and produced several national production champions in the past few years, along with some of the best registered Shropshire sheep in the country.

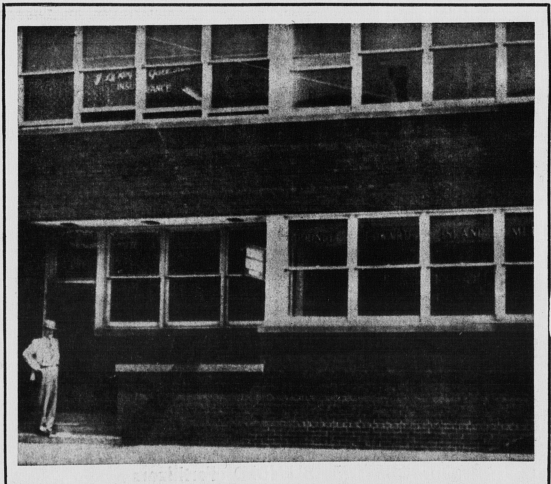
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