

# Historical Highlights Recalled On Jubilee



FARM, SUPT'S HOME AS SEEN ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY IN 1910

## Early Days Are Recalled By Farm's Former Head

Early days at the Experimental Farm as told to a reporter by Dr. J.A. Clark, former superintendent, reveal a most interesting and timely story on the 50th anniversary of this institution.

The site chosen by Dr. William Saunders, C.M.G., Director, Dominion Experimental farms, for the Experimental Station buildings in August, 1909, was about one mile north east from Queens Square in the City of Charlottetown, at Latitude 45 degrees 15 minutes North and longitude 63 degrees 12 minutes West. The original land for the farm was bought by the Provincial Government and conveyed to the Federal department of Agriculture by a ninety-nine year lease. Dr. Saunders asked me to meet him that year early in August and we drove out to the "Ravenwood" Property. The first week of August had been fine and dry but from the 8th to the 11th, while we examined and planned the future experimental work, five and one-half inches of rain fell and everything was soaked and dripping.

thick grove of trees. Near the house there were poplar trees of such size and height that they were a landmark that could be seen for miles around, proclaiming "Ravenwood," the former home of Premier J.C. Pope. The limbs of these great trees over-shadowed the residence. When removed, the second saw-log of some of these trees at 25 feet from the ground had a diameter of about 13 inches. A new barn was erected near where the poplars once stood, and a set of standard Fairbank Scales, 10 x 17 feet was placed nearby.

**55 YEAR OLD RESIDENCE**  
There were ten rooms in the main house and seven fireplaces many of them with marble mantelpieces. The one in the basement, which had at one time been in general use, had room for a back-log over 4 feet long. It had andirons and a swinging crane to move large pots in and out from the fire. These fire-places were the only means of heating the house, and it was one man's continuous job to keep them supplied with wood.

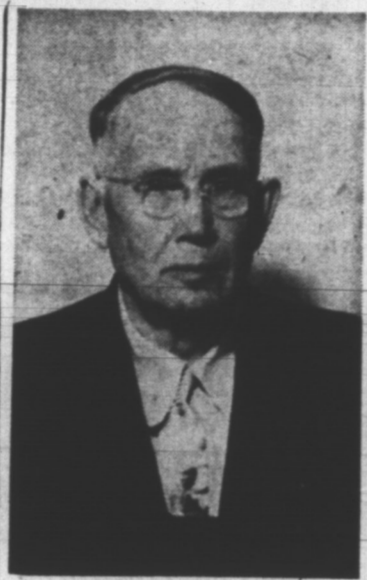
**OTHER BUILDINGS**  
The larger barn stood about where the meteorological instruments are now located. When we entered it, there were pails and tubs on the floor and on the lofts many tin cans or buckets were placed to catch the drips from the many leaks in the roof, which during those four days were leaking like a sieve.

**CLEAR GROUNDS**  
Dr. Saunders authorized the removal of the dilapidated spruce the use of Federal Officers on official visits and another fitted up for the Superintendent's office.

When the contractor put in an extra bill for shingling the eppola on top of the house, Dr. Saunders refused payment, stating that "When he authorized the shingling of the roof it meant all

As we approached the newly acquired farm, from the Mount Edward Road, by the main driveway, which followed great sweeping curves between dilapidated spruce hedges that were about seven feet high on either side, we were completely shut off from the buildings until we were almost to the house. There the hedges circled around a very large oval just to the south of a huge verandah that extended around the 40 x 44 feet two-story house. The verandah sprawled along the west side, crossed the south front and then followed along the east side.

**MAGNIFICENT TREES**  
Many magnificent lindens, elms and horse chestnuts stood on either side of the driveway and back of the circle in front of the house. Looking south from the house, the view of the City and the Hillsboro River was entirely hidden by rows of tall spruce and other trees that extended in a belt from east to west. To the East, between the house and the Mt. Edward Road, there was a



DR. J. A. CLARK  
Supt., 1909 - 1947

the roof that was above his head at that time."

**POND BEAUTIFIED**  
When Dr. Saunders saw the pond that had been excavated near the barn to secure brick-clay for former brickkilns, he immediately said he would order water lilies to beautify it. These arrived in the spring of 1910. Fences were to be erected about the property, cross fences and a Hawthorn hedge that extended from near where the poultry office building now stands down to the railway. The belt of tall

(Continued on Page 7)



RACE TRACK WAS LEVELLED AFTER 1948 UPTON FARM ACQUISITION

## Many 'Farm First' Scored Since Small '09 Beginning

The Experimental Farm for Prince Edward Island was established in 1909. The original lot of land (Pope Property-Ravenwood) approximately 29 acres, was bought by the Provincial Government and leased to the Dominion Department of Agriculture on a long-term lease, for the express purpose of establishing an Experimental Station to serve Prince Edward Island. The original property of 29 acres has been increased to the present Farm of 427 acres.

In 1915 a Field Laboratory, for the purpose of studying potato diseases, was established at the Experimental Farm, Charlottetown, with Dr. Paul A. Murphy, the first Plant Pathologist in Charge. A program of research on potato diseases was initiated and this resulted in the development of a sound inspection service for seed potatoes. The work at the Plant Pathology Laboratory was transferred to the Science Service in 1937, which now maintains a Laboratory and field research plots on the Experimental Farm property.

**FIRST EGG CONTEST**  
Charlottetown No. 80 barley, a two-rowed variety with a marked tendency to drop its awns, was originally selected in 1912 and registered in 1916. For thirty years this variety has been the leading one for Prince Edward Island, and has been popular in many parts of Canada.

The Experimental Farm, through the Illustration Stations,

Canada was set up at the Experimental Farm, Charlottetown, in 1918. This contest created a great deal of interest and was the forerunner of newer and more approved methods of selection and poultry improvement.

An Advanced Registry Station for swine, the first in Canada, was established at the Experimental Farm, Charlottetown, in 1934. This Station is administered by the Production Service but the Superintendent, Experimental Farm, has always been a member of the Advanced Registry Board of the Province.

Abegweit Oats, a cross between Vanguard and Erban, was selected at the Experimental Farm, Charlottetown, and was first introduced to the farmers of Prince Edward Island in 1947. It is still widely grown.

**ILLUSTRATION STATIONS**  
Six illustration Stations were established in 1923. The Magdalen Islands came under our jurisdiction with the transfer of the Illustration Stations to the Charlottetown Farm in 1952.

A series of fertilizer and cultural experiments were started, in co-operation with the Chemistry Division, Ottawa, in 1915, and since that time, data on the value of commercial fertilizers for farm crops has been collected from thousands of plots on the Experimental Farm and Illustration Stations.

sire "Clover Crest New Design", No. X38500, in 1954. The Charlottetown Farm now has three generations of naturally polled Ayrshires in its herd. Some very promising individuals have been bred.

The Experimental Farm, Charlottetown, has played a prominent role in familiarizing farmers with the advantages of fertilized pastures, and grass silage, and has also pioneered in loose housing of cattle and the use of the polled barn structures.

**RESEARCH PROJECTS**  
In recent years the Experimental Farm has played a major role in the establishment of the pick-

ling cucumber industry, as well as the frozen food industry, by the extensive experimentation with fertilizers, weed and pest control, varieties and harvesting procedures.

A considerable amount of research work has been undertaken regarding the establishment of cranberries on upland bogs. Methods of seeding, fertilization, and weed control were among the problems studied.

From 1909-1947, Dr. J.A. Clark was Superintendent of the Farm. It was during his tenure of office that the original buildings were constructed, orchards and ornamental grounds laid out, field tile laid, and rotations and cultural experiments established etc. Under the direction of the present Superintendent, R.C. Parment new land was acquired, new buildings, greenhouses and laboratory built, and many new projects initiated dealing with soil fertility, dairy cattle breeding, breeding improved cereal varieties, horticultural crops for processing, etc.

Weather conditions profoundly affect crop production in Prince (Continued on Page 9)

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