

Page 38 - 5 Strays from Our First 10 Years

ISSUE: Issue 31

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1982/6/1

piece in the Key of G and you get two more black keys. Then I tune them the octave higher and the octave lower till I get them. And I think you have to play the same piece in the Key of D to get that last one of those black keys. And that's how I tune the autoharp. I never had any education in music. I don't know one note from another--but you can make a good job on tuning with that. I could tune them off of the organ or off the piano, but it doesn't sound right. But this way, you'll tune it perfect. Amelia Cook: I-Jhen that pit was working-- the one that filled with water--when I was young, it was the prettiest sight, I real? ly enjoyed it. I can still see it. The great big ships laying out there, waiting for coal. They used to ship it by water, you know. I remember another windstorm we had, Daddy said to Mama, "Look at that • light there coming down"--it was blowing and blowing--just like a big ball of fire tossing. That steamer was blowing and blow? ing. And they had no command of her. And she came and went ashore at Port Hood--the only spot that there was all sand. The rest was rocks and everything. She went high and dry. And I can remember Mama tak? ing my brother Pat and me, and I can remem? ber walking around that big steamer--and her high and dry. Then they brought tugs and pulled her off. And we had a tugboat there belonging to the coal company--you might have heard the old people talk about it--the City of Ghent. And she had what they call the dog howl whistle. Well if you'd hear that, it would scare you to death--you wouldn't know whether it was a panther or what. Any? way, that was our tug. She'd come in at night and she'd blow for the harbour, and she'd pull the boats out to the mouth of the harbour, back and forth--she was our tug. And another one that used to be there, the old Strathlorne. She was cut in two in the harbour. One by the name of Amelia ran right slap through her. And they fixed her, and for years she was on the run with freight. I saw her here in Guysborough. Then she was going up the shore here some? where and she broke right in two. And sunk. Oh, the steamers--did I love them! Differ? ent coal boats--oh, there'd be four or five laying in there at a time, waiting for coal. Big black steamers with a red bottom on them. Were they ever lovely! I can see them out there yet. And where that pier was, today that's filled in. People are picking cranberries right where the boats loaded coal. And the band would play at night on those steamers. It was just a band among themselves, aboard the steamer-- and it would kind of drift across the waves--would it ever be nice. Oh, talk. We had an old pig. And whenever that band would play, the old pig would run and he'd jump and he'd play back and forth. Daddy thought there was something wrong with him. He wrote into Family Herald to find out what they had to say about it. And they said, no, it wasn't going to hurt the pig. A lot of p,eople thought he was crazy, when he'd hear the musie--it'd go right to his heart. Ah, the funny things. Jimmy Hannigan talked about guiding fisher? men on the Margaree River in Issue 26. Every? one we talked to was concerned a- bout the decline of the salmon population, and had ideas about the cause of it. Jimmy felt the lack of a good quantity of wa? ter in the river was an important factor. Jimmy Hannigan: If the water was anyways good shape at all, more fish would come in. (What do you

mean by good shape?) Well, I mean if the water was up a good high. Say right now the water is terrible low. Awful low. And it gets warm and the fish don't like it as well. But when there's a fresh? et, a big rain, it cleans the river out and it makes clean water--good cold water for the fish--and they'll come right in. And I'll tell you another thing that's hurting our rivers today--at least in my opinion of it--is lumber woods. (How do you mean?) Well, it won't hold the snow. Where they cut all those woods off miles of it around, the snow in the spring melts as fast as it can. I remember in St. Ann's--I worked in there with 12 feet of snow. (In among the trees?) Yes. Well, you see, that'd take it probably two months to melt. Which kept the river up high. But now it'll wash right out once you get hot weather. There's nothing to hold that snow. And the same with the rain when it's rain? ing: the shade of those trees cooled the (38)