

Page 34 - Neil MacNeil and The Highland Heart ISSUE : <u>Issue 58</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1991/8/1

grain, and one of the farm animals along with the horses, the cows and the poultry. He knows the sun and the moon and the stars and he can dream. He knows the cycles of the seasons and each brings its special chores and pleasures. He develops a healthy body and a clear mind. Perhaps the city is more stimu? lating after he has reached maturity, but there can be little doubt that the grown man is the better for having spent his youth close to the soil. Few who have had the experience regret it. I never have.... Without the benefit of physicians, longevity was the rule in Washabuckt and not the exception. Men and women lived into their eighties, their nineties, and occasionally one passed the Aug. 13-18 hundred mark. The person that died in the early seventies was considered to have passed on in comparative youth. Moreover, the old people retained all their faculties almost to the end and kept busy with the duties of the farm and the home. Most deaths came finally from the disintegration of extreme old age, and any one dying from any other cause would be the subject of gossip for a decade or longer. There was only one violent death, a mur? der, in the history of the countryside, so far as I know. My brother Murdoch and I gave this economy without money a good trial and proved its worth, inexperienced though we were. When he was thirteen and I seventeen years old, Father placed us in a furnished house on a farm he owned and then left us to carry on his work in New England. Before departing he put in a supply of food staples, provided us with necessary clothes, and opened an account for us at the local store. For the rest he left us definitely on our own. Special events will include a concert by the Singing Miners "The Men of the Deeps" on Saturday, August 17th at 8 P'. bther entertaining events include: ape Breton EXHIBITION North Sydney, N. S. Tuesday, August 13th through Sunday, August 18th OFFICIAL OPENING TUESDAY, AUGUST 13th ?? Hon. George Archibald officiating ? Bill Lynch Midway Cattle Shows - Dairy & Beef Horse Shows - Light & Heavy Steer & Lamb Show & Sale Horse Pulling Tug-of-War Gymkhana Events 4-H DAY • Fashion Show • Cape Breton Ceilidh NEW FLOWER & CRAFTS BUILDING Large Commercial Display • Large Industrial Display Machinery Displays & Demos EXHIBITORS' LOUNGE Old-Time Fiddlers' Contest I', ('Nightly Dancing 9 to 1 • Music by' (Borderline r' and J George MacNeil & The Herdsmen Restaurant & Lounge Facilities Come One! Come All! Enjoy the Fun in We had to do our own housekeeping, including all the cleaning, washing and ironing, and the cooking and baking, there being no laundries, bakeries or delicates? sens. We had two cows to supply milk and butter, a dozen or so hens to furnish eggs and chickens, and each of us had a horse to ride. We had to feed and care for this farm stock, to plant some potatoes, turnips and other vegetables for our own table, and to cut and make enough hav for the two cows and the two horses, and perhaps some for sale. We also had to cut our own wood in the forest for heating and cooking. Two boys never had more fun. We made quick work of the household and farm chores and thus had plenty of time for riding the countryside on our horses; for shooting game, snaring rabbits, trapping fur-bearing animals; and for fishing in the Lake or the streams. Every week or so we would set a



net and catch a haul of fish or we would spear eels or catch lobsters. At all times we had an abundance of fresh game and fish, which we would cook for ourselves, give to the neigh? bors, or place to our credit at the store. Every day that the weather allowed we were outdoors; and when it did not we stayed at home and cooked and cleaned. We spent the evenings reading, unless there was a frolic or a shindig within riding distance. Soon after Father's departure we got the notion that the farm needed a new bam, and we decided it would be a good idea to surprise him by building one. We started work on the bam by heading into the forest with our axes. During the winter we cut down enough timber to build two barns and hauled the logs to the sawmill. When it had been sawed we ducked our half EX'91 75th Anniversary