

Marmora in 1847-48

(Special to The Herald)

Reminiscences of Marmora in 1847-1848 as furnished by Joshua Anderson of Anderson's Island, near Stirling, are interesting and particularly so to descendants of early settlers in this district. Last January Mr. Anderson celebrated his 103rd birthday and is still going strong with a pleasant cheery face upon which no wrinkle can readily be detected, and with faculties wonderfully preserved.

In the fall of 1847 he came to Marmora from Sydney Township to work at "The Works," staying in the village eight months. About the same time as Mr. Anderson came to Marmora, "The Works," after being idle for 24 years, were taken over by a Mr. Van Orman. The foreman was Mr. Lyman Hall. Henry Jones is recalled as the fireman, while another workman was Sam Defue. About 40 or 50 were employed at that time.

Mr. Anderson's duties were to chop cordwood for the charcoal pits. Thos. Campion, son of William Campion, was one who drew the wood. The laborers were paid twelve dollars a month. Mr. Anderson was one of the twelve or fourteen boarders, who boarded at the hotel kept by John and Margaret Brady, and a fellow boarder was Matthew McGrath.

Speaking of Hunter Hays, who established "The Works," Mr. Anderson described him as a man of large build. He had a son named Thomas.

At the time of Mr. Anderson's residence in the village an election came on with Marney and Billy Flint the opposing candidates. The former was successful. Previous to this election, the number of Marmora's voters had been seven as only land owners were allowed to vote. At this election over thirty voted. Mr. Anderson liked his stay in Marmora. He speaks well of the board at Mrs. Brady's.

He recalls a tavern known as Sagitt's Tavern. "There was quite a bit of drinking in those days" he remarked, adding, "They thought I was a temperance man because I didn't join in with them, but I never signed a pledge in my life. I was a self made temperance man." He cannot claim to have abstained from the use of tobacco. Rather he excuses himself for the long practice of chewing, for he does not smoke. When he was young he suffered from toothache and lost his teeth early in life. He was advised to take tobacco for his toothache and "I got so I liked

it," he says.

When he lived in Marmora there was only one church and that the old Roman Catholic Church across the river. Then services were only held in that edifice once a year. In the springtime a priest came up from Belleville to celebrate Mass. The bridge over Crowe River at that time was an old wooden one, and Mr. Anderson said "It was rickety and dangerous, very dangerous."

Residents of Marmora remembered by this grand old man as living at that time were:—John Devolin and Richard Laycock, both of whom were shoemakers. John Crawford, who clerked. William, John and Richard Leonard, three brothers. Patrick Callaghan, who farmed in the second concession of Marmora Township near his own brother, Roderick or Ludwig Anderson. John Sloan, the miller. Michael Shea. Others such as Benjamin Johnson, J. P. and Francis Revoir, who moved into Marmora from Rawdon later were well known to him. "The main part of Rawdon lay as a wilderness" to use his own words but the front part was settled. When he was ten years old he made his first visit to Belleville. There was quite a town there then and its buildings were principally frame. There might have been an odd stone house but he was doubtful.

Carrying Place was of some importance and farmers used to go there for flour. He recalled how an English settler, by the name of Bamber, carried 100 pounds of flour on his shoulder from Carrying Place to his home in Murray Township, 18 miles distant, while his wife trudged along at his side carrying 40 pounds of pork.

Not only did Mr. Anderson work at "The Works," but he was one of those who helped to cut the road through to Healy Falls from Blairton. It was then called "The Iron Road." "I slept with Ezekiel Boyd many a time at his father's house" he remarked. He has only been in Marmora twice since those by-gone days. In 1864 his brother Ludwig was buried in Marmora Protestant Cemetery and he attended the funeral. Previous to this he attended the obsequies of a Mr. Drummond, who was a nephew by marriage.

The earliest recollection Mr. Anderson has is of hearing King George IV's name being mentioned by playfellows. Longevity has marked the maternal side of his family more than the paternal side. It is his belief that one has the prospect of living longer if the mother lives the longer of the two parents, than vice versa. In his own way of saying this, "You inherit long life more so from your mother than from your father." His own mother outlived his father and passed away at an advanced age.

Not only does Mr. Anderson feel proud of his advanced age, but he is pleased to tell you that there cannot be many more like him, who are of the third generation of U.E.L. stock. His faculties, with the exception of a slight deafness, are remarkable. His speech is clear and deliberate. His vision is so good that he can see a crow flying within a quarter of a mile of the house. He can read for a while without the aid of glasses. He has never handled a gun or fish pole, leaving it to his sons to make up for his shortcomings in that respect. He would not care to ascend in an aeroplane, but he can take enjoyment in a car ride. He said in answer to a question, that he was never scared in his life.

In Mr. Anderson and his wife, ten years his junior, who is also wonderfully preserved, one meets the most remarkable old married couple for many and many a mile. Mr. Anderson hopes to be spared to see Marmora again.

MARMORA HERALD
8 AUG 1929
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