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## EARLY AGRICULTURE IN NEW BRUNSWICK

**R. P. Gorham of Dominion Laboratory in This City Writes on Farming Along the St. John River**

(Continued)  
The effects of a great post-war trade depression were beginning to be felt in New Brunswick; crop conditions were not good, a large part of the people were dependent upon lumber, and lumber was not selling well. In 1825, a great forest fire swept 7,000 square miles of the most accessible forest and destroyed a number of settlements. The lumber trade on which so many depended was almost entirely ruined. To add to the distress, thousands of destitute people from Europe arrived in immigrant ships and continued to arrive in a seemingly endless stream; 5,000 a year at the Port of St. John alone from 1825 to 1830, 6,000 a year from 1830 to 1835, according to the secretary of the St. John Agricultural Society. A portion went on to the United States but over 30,000 had to be settled in New Brunswick; 7,000 had arrived in 1819 and immigrant societies had been formed to aid them. These were affiliated with the agricultural societies and, under the name of agricultural and immigrant societies, had to locate the people on lands, supply them with seeds, stocks, implements, hand mills, clothing, food, and to supervise their efforts. The St. John society had a major part of this work to do, but all the county societies had some share in it. The procuring of food became a matter of importance. In the speech from the throne in 1825, Sir Howard Douglass said:

"Vast sums are sent from this province in specie for the purchase of foreign agricultural produce. This enormous burden operates as a tax, by foreign industry, upon our food and contributes to raise high above the rate in surrounding countries the wages of labour and to lay the province under corresponding difficulty and disability in every branch of industry. It comes home to us grievously in every operation of our domestic and political economy, and I appeal to your wisdom, to your patriotism, to the real interests and to the public spirit of the country for zealous co-operation in the measures necessary to relieve the province from this most serious difficulty."

The return of customs for 1826 illustrated how imports had increased in five years. They were: flour, 45,203 barrels; bread, 3,169 barrels; corn meal, 16,437 barrels; wheat, rye and oats, 17,163 bushels; fruit and seeds, 16,203 barrels; potatoes, 69,348 bushels; butter and cheese, 105,966 pounds; beans and peas, 1,933 bushels. Potatoes were imported from Pennsylvania flour from New York, grain from Prince Edward Island and New England.

The people of the province were passing through a period of hard

times, with the general fear that the food supply might prove inadequate if there should be a crop failure. Because of rust and midge, wheat was coming to be regarded as an uncertain crop. Oats were more certain and the large areas of burned-over land offered a chance to increase the acreage of this grain. Sir Howard Douglass urged the growing of oats and the establishment of oat mills and kilns for the production of oatmeal. The agricultural societies imported improved seed, the legislature offered aid in the construction of oat mills and these were soon erected in a number of places, primitive in construction but capable of producing food. A society for the improvement of the breeds of horses and cattle was organized and stock importations made. All phases of agriculture received some attention and in the speech from the throne in 1826 the Lieut. Governor was able to say:

"I am happy to inform you that a spirit of improvement in agriculture continues to manifest itself in all parts of the province and that great advancement in modes of cultivation, increased production and improvement in the breeds of cattle have already been produced by those institutions which you have enabled me to form."

The agricultural societies, as a group, held their first stock show at Sussex in 1826, and their second in Fredericton in 1827, while county shows, ploughing matches and various competitions were held by the county societies. The Northumberland society, in the forest-fire devastated area, had two general stores in operation for the supply of seeds, implements and stock. The period from 1816 to 1836 was a particularly dark one in the province, with crop failure, trade depression, fire and a large inflow of immigrants to impose burdens upon the people, but agriculture made more rapid progress than in many years before.

A partial crop failure occurred in 1834 which was particularly felt in the Madawaska settlements; £1,600 was voted for relief purposes and a further sum the following year. This was due to frost, wheat rust, and midge, and one result was the increased production of oats and potatoes.

Next followed political troubles, a reflection of those developing in Upper and Lower Canada between 1835 and 1837. The agricultural societies were deprived of support from government and their activities curtailed to a very large extent.

Lord Durham's report to the Queen and parliament of England on these troubles contains the evidence of a number of New Brunswick men on agricultural conditions. Dr. Jas. Robb, of Kings College (now the University of New Brunswick) was one who was deeply interested in agriculture, and his summary of conditions in the province was that the colonists who devoted themselves to farming were generally comfortably off, while those who lumbered more than they farmed were not. The latter acquired dissipated habits and were very frequently encumbered by mortgages. He stated that the really great errors in practice were clearing too much land, not manuring the land, outcropping the land, and, as a remedy, he advocated teaching agricultural science in the schools and colleges. He was a strong advocate of the application of science to the practice of agriculture and in this had the support of Lieut. Governor Sir John Harvey, who in the speech from the throne in 1839, strongly advocated the establishment of an experimental farm, or farms, for the province. The Lieut. Governor and Dr. Robb worked earnestly for the improvement of agriculture. The agricultural societies were reorganized after a period of semi-activity and advances made in the importation of machinery for farm use.

The failure of the potato crop through the attack of late blight in 1845 and another great influx of immigrants from Ireland—35,000 of them in three years, many ill and destitute—served to give agriculture another stimulus. It seemed to prosper most in times of adversity. The agricultural societies were forced to cope with new problems; there was agitation for a board of agriculture, a monthly farm journal was started in Fredericton and Professor Johnston was brought from Scotland to make a scientific agricultural soil survey of the province. His report was published in 1850 and had a considerable bearing on future developments. The board of agriculture was formed a few years later, and out of that in time developed the Department of Agriculture as a regular branch of government.

This paper has covered in a brief way what may be called the hand-

## THE PROBLEM OF THE HOMELESS ARMY

**Thousands of Transients Marching Across Dominion From Job to Job Serious One Even Before Depression**

Charlotte M. Whitton, C.B.E., who some months ago, made a survey of social conditions in New Brunswick and found them none too good, is now engaged in writing a series of articles in The Financial Post, in which she deals with the problem of thousands of transients marching across the Dominion from job to job.

In every relief and social problem there stands the casual and unskilled worker—men who shift from one job or industry to another with the change in seasons—men who are often single, homeless transients moving restlessly from place to place particularly in times of economic depression.

It comes as something of a shock to read Miss Whitton's assertion that the last census showed Canada to have well over a million persons working (at that time) as unskilled or semi-unskilled laborers or as odd job farm hands on other than a wage basis. One third of our total wage-earning population, she says, were thus open to seasonal and cyclical unemployment and were already creating a major social problem before the hand of depression struck the Dominion 5 or 6 years ago.

Miss Whitton paints a vivid picture of who these people are—how they lived and existed prior to 1931. She shows how little this country was prepared to handle the problem even in those days and how completely overpowering it has become in the last few years. In a subsequent article she will point the way out and show what must be done to tackle this problem on sound and permanent lines.

Miss Whitton says: The wanderlust is part of the endowment of man. It has been one of the greatest motivations in civilization and on it the histories of tribes and nations have been turned. Moses, Alexander, Kubla Khan, Marco Polo, Columbus, Cabot, Cartier, Drake, Clive, Mackenzie—through an endless roster run the names of the great adventuring pioneers in whose tracks have followed "a thousand wheels, an empire and a king."

In Canada there have been many conditions which would tend to feed this natural instinct especially in our younger men.

**Moving Northward**  
In the first place, the country is vast and partly unexplored with some areas almost unknown. Perhaps mineral wealth or opportunity in lumbering may open overnight to the hardy and courageous. Every little hamlet and country corner in the east has its story of some young fellow who "lit out" for "the city," "the West" or "the States" and made good. For decades, there has been this draw from the older centres and areas of population to the newer, and not only our young men and boys but whole families have yielded to its lure. The population of Canada has shifted west and north steadily since Confederation, until the centre of population today is just north of Saint Ste. Marie where it used to be near Valleyfield, Quebec.

**City Dwellers Predominate**  
In the last 60 years it has also changed from one which was but 18 per cent urban to one in which 50 per cent are city dwellers and but 31.7 per cent live on farms. In the post-war decade the tremendous development in the construction of road and power plants, and in the pulp and paper and, latterly, the mining industry, was bound to lead to concentration of huge volumes of male population not only from all over the country but from the United States and Europe as well.

These population movements in our national life had been natural social phenomena from the opening of the century, in fact in some degree from the beginning of transcontinental railway building nearly two decades previously.

**Casual Labor Grows**  
One result was that a very large proportion of our able-bodied male population was drawn into the ranks of semi- or unskilled labor in these activities, along with those already so employed in farming, fishing, trapping and fur trading. By 1931 there were 425,000 male workers in Canada classified as unskilled laborers in other than the agricultural mining or logging industries, while 478,000 more were listed as farm laborers, 197,000 on a wage basis, 47,000 as fishermen, hunters or trappers and 37,500 as lumbermen.

In these latter groups, 52,000 were development age in New Brunswick agriculture. After 1850, agricultural machinery was rapidly introduced and with the use of machines the culture and production of crops entered upon a new stage of development.  
(THE END)

also on an earning basis. Male workers classified as miners and laborers exceeded 55,000 while mining and quarrying sustained a total of more than 68,000 male workers in all ranks and grades. Longshoremen numbered nearly 5,000, and truck drivers, teamsters and draymen practically 66,000.

**Over a Million in Group**  
Thus some 820,000 of the male population were working in unskilled or semi-skilled labor ranks, exclusive of many of the 300,000 odd farm laborers gainfully employed on other than a wage basis and many thousands of whom would fit into this category.

This represents nearly one third of the total wage earning population of times would be bound to contribute to a heavy volume of unemployment when the basic industries of farming, lumbering, fishing, and mining are subject to the long seasonal suspensions imposed by our climate which also affects activity in many important secondary occupations such as construction, etc.

**Agricultural Employment Shrinks**  
Various factors operated to conceal the significance of these conditions. The heavy harvesting demands of the West drew more than 100,000 harvesters to the grain fields for several weeks of employment which took up the slack for many unskilled laborers from all over the Dominion and enabled them to earn enough to tide over winter idleness until the seeding called them to the fields again. Mechanization on the farm has done much to end that—the tractor and combine displace on the average 14 men and at the rate they were being introduced in the West from 1924 to 1929, we could look to an annual displacement of 100,000 seasonal harvest workers for some years to come.

Homesteading had also made possible seasonal employment of hundreds of thousands of farm workers who in their "off" months fished and worked their own land and at the end of 3 years moved on to it. The disappearance of easily accessible free land revealed the fact that much of our agriculture simply could not afford "hired help the year round," and the wandering, homeless farm laborer came to haunt city streets in his winter idleness.

**Jungle Dwellers**  
Then, there is always in any land, particularly in a young land like Canada, the man in whom the tramp or gypsy strain answers to the call of sky and wood and "jungle," who follows the road as his regular occupation, living on saving garnered by the minimum of employment in the good season or by his wits and takings shunning work and water, but driven by our unkind winter to a few weeks shelter in flophouse or city mission.

**Winter Retreat of the Homeless**  
All these factors were at work to give Canada a serious social problem in the volume of her homeless transient men, long before the depression. They congregated largely in the great city centres, sailors and seamen in the great salt water and fresh water ports, served by the Sailors' Institutes and little social agencies; and others almost entirely in Vancouver, where the wanderer reached his western limit, in Halifax and Saint John where the sea stopped his eastern trek; in Winnipeg, the funnel for the prairie land; in Toronto, the focus of Old Ontario; in Montreal, the great catch basin for those floating down from mining, lumber and construction camps, the end of steel for a great port, the city with the open Meurling Refuge endowed by the wandering Frenchman who in his need had found no bed but the park of the metropolis, and in Ottawa, where hundreds drifted driven by some vague impulse to seek security or file complaint at the seat of government.

(Continued on Page Seven)

### Delinquent Taxes

"Simon Stairs Estate," Parish of Southampton York County, N. B.  
Notice is hereby given that unless the Rates and Taxes assessed in the Parish of Southampton, in the County of York, N.B., together with expenses of advertising, etc. are paid within twenty days (20) from the first publication of this notice, the Real Estate of such property therein mentioned will be sold for the recovery of the said taxes and expenses.

Delinquent Parish and County Taxes.  
Delinquent Road Taxes.  
Delinquent School Taxes.  
The amount is on file at this office of the Secretary-Treasurer, County Court House, Fredericton, N.B.

J. S. SCOTT,  
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Municipality of York.  
Fredericton, N. B.,  
September 12th, 1936.

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Lv. 9.50 a.m.	Moonlight Inn	Ar. 5.00 p.m.
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