

Mrs. Gertrude Dyke - Moral St.

Tape keeps disappearing - also too much static to understand what is being said

I read your booklet on Silver Islet history and you indicate on the label set but I don't want to leave ~~in~~ anything in that area but what I would like to do is to go back into your own life in the early part of your childhood and talk about as you remember growing up, That is, your personal life story.

A Well among the first things that I remember of course living in Port Arthur, there were board sidewalks all over the place. I imagine they were made of good white pine planks, all over the place, there was no cement at all, and there were cracks and if you happen to drop a nickel or a penny why you could see them through the light of the crack but then it was to get an older brother with a ^{pliers} ~~plighers~~ not ^{pliers} ~~plighers~~ ^{but} ~~with~~ a pick or something to hook up this plank, you see, and get it out. It was quite something that all the young people did as they walked along to see if there be a glint, and if there were ~~with~~ why then finders ~~is~~ keepin you see, and of course there was just one public school. Now the first public school mind you there were two or more that were run by ~~the~~ just Miss somebody or other that would gather a group of children but finally there was a school set up and was two rooms and it was divided, I don't know ^{just} ~~xxxxxx~~ what grades went into which rooms but anyway that's all there was. Q. What year was this? A. It was before my time because that school is now a double house or else four suites next to the Baptist Church in Port Arthur, but when it got too small then a front was put on and that's the front of the Central School over in Port Arthur up on by Gore Park. Well then when the... and the two rooms were at the back of it joined on and when that became too small ~~thetwo~~ two rooms were moved over by the back of the church somebody bought it and made into two or four suites or a double house and then the

present addition I think 8 rooms was put on the back of it and that was the only school there except the Catholic school. Well then about 65 years or more ago there was a new Methodist church being built which is Trinity and the old church was moved down the hill and down Bay Street now Algoma Street to where Secord School is and it made two rooms and that was the first school, what do you call those schools not the central school (primary) anyway it was the first school other than the central school in the city and everybody, everybody had to go to Central school first and then the people that crowded in and built up the south end of Street Port Arthur had this Secord/School to go to. Then I think the next school that was built St. James Street school way down Court Street.

Q. Of all first, Thunder Bay North, Port Arthur, preceded Fort William development? A. Oh no, Port Arthur was ~~fixxxx~~

or Fort William was first, it was the fourth. Q. What we call the East end now must have developed then ~~was~~ what was called Fort William then, near the old Fort? A. Yes, that's way down in the East End there are McLaughlin Street, McTavish and all those Scots names, named after the Hudson Bay men, the whole place most of it has Scots names because most of the Hudson Bay men were Scots. In Port Arthur you walked to school of course. Q. Where was your home then, in what area? A. Well the first home was at this end of Court Street before Bay, there was nothing from Bay Street on (just wilderness) Yes, just wilderness, just swamp, cranberries.

Q. Even in the 40's when ~~xxx~~^{we} moved up here that was still swamp Intercity was largely swamp there? A. Oh yes, well you see in prehistoric time this was a great bay than ran^t up as far as ~~Kakebeka~~ Kakebeka Falls and then they claim that there was a ^tclipping and the water drained here and piled up over on the south shore of Lake Superior but however, it drained out and only wiggling Kaministiquia

River was left to drain it and ~~x~~ it was all swamp right from the height of land at Port Arthur to the mountain, it was all swamp and they declared they could never build a town or a city here because it was, they called it "Frog Town" it was full of frogs, it was a real swamp. Well they started in to build lands and of course the draining just kept on in some part down in the coal dock they pumped the sewage and the ... Q. All of waste that has to be pumped because of A. Up and out you see ~~xxxxxxx~~ but of course Port Arthur is on the hillside so they had to around as well there but Port Arthur was wooden sidewalks and mud or gravel or earth ~~threwed~~ ^{roads}. Q. When you were very young some of the ~~was~~ very well established society in the Lakehead Thunder Bay was very elegant in comparison to the outlying areas? A. Well you see all the settlers came from the east and most of them came from good homes down there and they ~~bxxx~~ brought some very nice furniture with them and as they could they built their own homes. At first there was just the peek-through wooden houses everywhere, well then nice homes were built on what they called the Court Street ridge that is from Court Street and made by the hillside there and the very nice homes were there. It was many, many years afterwards, I suppose, now 60 years or so, when they began to build up in Maridagay ^{Maridagay} and those parts they were open ^{ed} by men that would buy great space and of course up in Maridagay it was swampy, it was a great blueberryppatch up there. Q. This area here out in McIntyre River and out towards Chippewa Park was designed to develop originally as the residential area of the Twin Cities. Industry has crept in? A. I guess those sections out there were finally left to the mosquitoes and roads and they had to think of the centre of the little town or village because after-all the stores were there.

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So they just kept building houses. Q. Yet there were streetcar tracks moving out to Chippewa Park and streetcar tracks right ~~out to~~ Rosslyn? A. Well the idea was that they would take them out to Rosslyn and you know that bridge that goes ~~right~~ over the Kam River has an upper structure. ^Y You drive through in the lower part, well that was built meaning to have the streetcars go right out through there and if the top deck is on a level with ^{the} hills on each side. There was to be a high level ~~and~~ and go over the bridge right through and span the immediate valley but then trucks came in and the farmers didn't need the ~~the~~ railway to ~~bring~~ bring their produce in and in fact there wasn't such a tremendous population to encourage large farms with the selling of produce in the town, ~~so~~ I understand it ^{is} to be displaced before very long but that bridge must be oh I suppose that's

70 years old or more. Q. There's a story that a woman designed the first bridge across the Kam River? so far its only a myth, I haven't been able to track it down? A. No, I couldn't tell you of that.

Near that bridge, the first bridge that went across and into Flint River Valley and all was there. You turned ~~this~~ ^{this} corner and go across the ~~bridge~~ and you went straight on and it was a level on a river level bridge.

Q. Bigger families ^{possess} ~~pose~~ a collection ~~of~~ there's pictures of 80 ^{the} or 90 ^{- showing people} ~~to Ontario~~ going to Silver Islet for Sunday picnic and very elegant things ~~of~~ ~~to~~ each other packed and so on. Were you

ever a part of the excursion for Sunday afternoon? A. No, we

strictly went to church and Sunday school, we wouldn't go on excursions on Sunday but when we first were out there, Capt. Malloney ~~worked~~

would leave the Port Arthur dock at 10:00 on Saturday night and the

men would scramble to be shut up their stores and get it, and ~~they~~ then

they would reach Silver Islet by midnight and the wives would meet them

there, and help them carry home the basket of fresh meat and so forth.

The men would stay then until 8:00 o'clock Sunday night ^{when} ~~until~~ the

tugs would leave and get into town around 10:00 o'clock Sunday night. It was oh some time after that I suppose what 65 years ago anyway it became a grand spot, Silver Islet. It was the only place where there was a dock, ~~a~~ decent dock and there was no highway, no #17 either way, you couldn't get out of town except by water and so these sailing boats ~~were~~ old boats that were bought down east and brought up here one at a time ~~run~~ ^{when} it was wrecked or scrapped another one would be bought. There were daily excursions ^{to} Silver Islet because that ~~was~~ the only place you could go and the old carpenter shop was fixed up and a hardwood floor put in it and they had dances and then for picnicing why they picniced all over the place ~~wherever~~ they wanted to open their basket. Q. What sort of food would the picnic consist of in those days? A. potato salad, cabbage salad, but not any of the frillies pretty baking now-a-days, sandwiches, cake and pie in the original baking dishes. Q. Would you have a bottle of wine? A. Oh, I never heard of that, I suppose some of them might have, it wasn't the outside drinking that there is now. Q. Has the attitude ~~towards~~ ^{drinking} in Fort William changed ^{very much} in these past fifty years? A. Oh ~~xxxx~~ ya, you see in the olden days there ^{was a hotel or} ~~were they tell~~ a saloon on every corner of Cumberland Street, four corners and four saloons and right from Arthur Street down to well Pearl Street ~~and~~ it was a different type of person that drank, drank abundantly, it was the men that came and worked in the bush and then they would come in and they would spend a good part if not all ~~xxx~~ of their winter's earnings on just getting drunk, and what they haven't spent somebody would relieve them of. Oh it was terrible, and a lot of drunk~~ness~~ but not educated people, not the kind now, well then when how many years ago, ^{was} ~~did~~ alcohol was entirely outlawed and then it got to be considered smart to find a blind keg or be able to sneak in and then the

b

educated people they should have had more sense ~~than~~ ^{to drink} ~~it~~
and it's continued, I hear so many well educated people that could
be fine citizens and there ^{are} just alcoholics and the poor people, well
I guess there's a good deal of drinking of there ~~two~~ ^{too} beer, but you
don't hear so much about that, except in the way of crime, it's
generally drinking ~~and~~ that brings on the crime. So it would look
as if were heading ~~ing~~ for many years that it would be outlawed again.
In catalogues see all of the paraphernalia ~~from~~ ^{for} making wine and beer.

Q.

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A. Well the important point is love, but then people in their own home have inner thoughts and and they save the dining room, the living room has an arch way between where the is wooden why because of taste and some people had quite large living uh you know and across the hall ~~was~~ ^{from} there large dining room. This is a comedy I think thing would have a first and they would send to Toronto I think it was coal that was in those days and they would send food sent up by Train and coal into the cubic form and Mrs. McCullen showed me a big form that just looked like a big piece of wood, but that's what she said it just was sent up the other way the coal would be boned at ~~Kixkixand~~ and separated with a fourth meat and put a jelly in ~~in~~ ^a this form and have ~~a~~ some radishes and different things imbedded in the jelly and then they cook this was ~~the~~ a coal you see this was and then the whole thing was sort of levelled itself and that's what turned up here by train and then the night of the diner party I suppose it would be dipped into and it was turned out onto ^a great plack oh ^a huge ^a one ~~and~~ no doubt, and then ~~Miss~~ Mr. there was no bone in it, and he would just slice right down and leave the outside room with jelly and . Then there would be ice cream and before cherries that's about 70 years ago. This was a terrific and we had ~~xxxx~~ girl maid or maids ~~and~~ /and others borrowed and they had all this cleared away and after the ice cream, and the

cake and the cheese cake, and pie oh the cooking would be tremendous
and then there's a dance. Well George ~~Gray~~^{Graham} now they and the
McTabish were the leading socialites in Fort William and this George
Graham's first home was down on the river like the McKellar home
just way down here out straight down and they had lawns and a lovely
that goes
home ~~xxxxx~~ down to the river and they had beautiful and they were
very nice. When they the railway
tracks were moved from down in the East end up here, all those houses
were either raised or moved and her's was moved out to the corner
of Archibald and Metcalfe? on the south corner of Archibald and
? and quite a large house well there's
after he built everything on this side and he built a
great big park and when the other
of the old house there's a garden decorated with
big parlour and then Peter had an
office there . Died off and I was no longer
interested and ~~xx~~ he came down just a meeting about once a year
or once every two years or so, and when he and
there's all the papers were brought to me one time to digest and write
but I was ill and I was ill for a long time
but I happened for whatever I could be any worth
on my bed the box could be geared over and Mr. Langley had brought
so
this here to ~~xxxx~~ when I was so he
took the one day when he was home and gave it to Bill
Langley in his office. They had them kept in a trunk in the basement
of the library, the old library, well it got to be oh not many years
ago somebody wanted to know where those papers were, so I told them
in the library. Well they hunted in the library and then
turned the ~~xxxxxx~~^{thing} inside out couldn't find the
trunk and in the mean time Mr. Langley had just died and one of

daughters

oh was I thrilled because I did my part ~~xxxxxx~~ he ~~got~~ gave them right back to me because he had brought ~~thamx~~ to me and I couldn't tell John go ~~rightx~~ ~~backx~~ find whoever had the key to this trunk and whoever finds ~~xxxxx~~ ~~xx~~ the key I would do my part. Oh that's what happened. Well the older people those that~~w~~ were left, when those older people had joined to form what we call they would alternate the meetings but would be very well attended because there ~~would~~ ^{were} ~~xx~~ more people ~~whx~~ ~~xxxxx~~ and there were some in Port Arthur really new comers although they were elderly and then they progressed to having a building and my mind simply thought well at ~~xxxxx~~ these meetings were over the library and this is why the ... and then you see these new people which was all wanted to revitalize the and do the museum and have about up and coming things was in my surprise I said would become of these Port Arthur people where very impressed, they outside and I said well my goodness are you going to do it? its wonderful to have some ~~xxxx~~ ^{up}side that are going to revitalize it, they didn't even say~~x~~ anything, however, but you see the end of these between these two towns, but of course they're one now but I mean in the west ~~xxxx~~ end isn't died off, it takes a generation of folks to die off. Mind you in the olden days it was a ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{good} thing because they ~~would~~ were quite isolated in the winter, cut off, entirely isolated cut off still and they had good fights just tremendous fights that brought often ~~and~~ ~~xxxx~~ any other day and this kept them alive.

Q. A. Oh yes, because there weren't enough. Q. There wasn't enough

A. Yes ~~xxxxxxx~~ if they want they could have it, you were

in Port Arthur and they were very friendly, those people .

Q. Do things like that ? A. Yes, you see their grandfather came to Ontario when everything

a long time ago to the land if you took the land and you were told that only mining was ~~for the~~ ~~good and the~~ ~~and the~~ ~~the~~ took a fold and you had to hope

cariboo and also to the California gold and therefore be something a miner and you just sent by the Allie Mining Co. who their representative here and they ~~had~~ have prospectors all through the bush. I would expect there would be a thousand prospectors all through the bush, mind you it would be so many miles out where they were and I suppose they were out about ~~the~~ all the substance where they win but Q.

A. Yes, maybe forty years ago, a long time ago, ... Q. Would

A. ~~We~~

A. Well they, yes, that was established by a ~~firm~~ called a ~~son~~ ^{son}, they had six ~~sons~~ ^{sons} and the grandmother and ~~he~~ and my aunt they had six sons ~~and~~, then there was ^{then} and/they had three daughters. Then grandmother and grandfather and the girls at that time were why the sons were all fixed with trad^{es} down east and father was a ~~machinist~~ ^{machinist} and they weren't just ordinary tradesmen they were really ~~supper~~ ^{supper}, I guess all of them had two trades before they were , and of course in those days you were a handyman. There was a University in Toronto father wanted to ~~the~~ us and back home there was from what we found in Toronto. So father and my mother and brothers like a another one has a foundry now and also coal mine next to the one

who has a foundry and something else, and the oldest brother has something call ~~and~~ end of an old building ~~down~~ not an archway, oh my goodness that was very long ago, but only he would he would be back and also with a potter maker and that's very still

. Well they had all these things, the brothers, and ~~my~~ grandmother thought that this was going to be a ~~grain~~ city and there way you had to come here and the west would come here and they coming into this now but she just told the boys they would set up and they would all go in~~x~~ =together, so the day came when they built the Port Arthur Iron Ore ~~in~~ under one roof, and they were all . Q. What year did ?

A. The year, well 92 years ago, 1873, and father was married/before Eva ~~the~~ the first child was born so he stayed down east and he knew the Indians? . He bought them food and came up

in July of that year and the Crothers had been here putting up buildings. The CPR was coming through and it was going through ~~there was~~ no foundry between Toronto and Winnipeg and there was so many

being done so father would that they would be working night and day to set up the and get the

. He had this ~~big~~ little engine that they had set up a boiler to give them the power to run the little engine, it would run all over in the machine shop. Now in the foundry they had to put up a and all kinds of things there and in the blacksmith's shop fordge and all this. Well ~~the~~ ^{it was} the machine shop that was taking ~~the longest~~ the longest and they were trying to get this boiler to get it started but in the meantime it was hard for them to get the material so they set them up ~~as~~ a line and if you know anything about a steam shaft why they or electric~~and~~ & they had a ~~pretty~~ great

overhead and they had leather belts over those between downhill
heal on their and they would sew the machine and
this rubber thing would be belt,,would be to turn the machine
on. So they set them up and then he put extended
the and he put a great big candle and would long
enough for two or three men to stand, but those men could and turn
the handle of this forget the word, it was a anyway
they came back then they could release the strap came on from a small
wheel to a large wheel the large wheel and then back again and

they could turn, I don't know how many men, they could turn
the and then before you have the boiler/^{and}the engine boiler
then you have the cooler working they and then ~~you~~ would
work, most of the night to fill the matter
~~XXXXXXXX~~ /boiler and that was no easy then

they got the little engine going and its a kooky engine but you
and
know the staff/they were well but it was an old man who
would start as long as I could remember but it was a grave price

so much noise, so much going on after
school there were always boys who ^{shop}blacksmith/ around
town that would need men well the blacksmith would ~~he~~ ask him to
help with the fordge you know this sort of .

Q. A. Yes, and ~~I~~ ~~was~~ I
~~xx~~ was awful after school and on Saturdays this nice old boy and I
found out that he was one of the men

he worked

I guess like the handyman
he kept track of everything and