

Harold Taylor

October 23, 1992

Length: 44 minutes and 58 seconds

George Jackson notes that he is at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Taylor located on the southeast corner of Hurd and Church Streets in Bradford. Mr. Taylor will be the main speaker with Mrs. Taylor, Anne Coffey, Joe Saint, Irene Moriarty, and himself also present. George asks about Harold's family history. Harold says his mother was a school teacher and she taught for 25 years at the Amsterdam School on the old Highway 11. The building is still there but is a private residence now. His mother's maiden name was Maude Mary Larkin*. His father died in 1915, just after the war started. His mother was a qualified teacher and taught in England by the time she was 13. She came to Canada in October 1913. His father came to Canada ahead of them in 1912 and worked for a farmer named Ritchie*. His father was also a semi-qualified preacher and he preached in Holland Landing and Keswick. His father's name was Edward and he came over by himself. Harold was born in Kidderminster which is near Somerset in England and his dad was from that area as well. Harold came to Canada when he was four years old. He had two brothers named Herb and Arthur and a sister named Kathleen (Mrs. Johnny Harrison). His mother continued teaching in Amsterdam after his father passed and that was the only school she taught at until she retired. They lived in many different places in the area. Originally, when his mom was teaching in Amsterdam, they lived close to the school in the house where Greg Stein* is now. Then they moved to a little house down behind Pedro Farms*. When they first arrived in this part of the country they lived with the Hounsomes.

Harold's sister was the oldest in the family. His father was an Anglican preacher. The parish he preached at on a regular basis was Holland Landing Keswick and that was in 1913 or 1914. He and his siblings went to the Amsterdam School and were taught by his mother. Then they went to high school in Bradford. At Amsterdam School, Harold remembers attending with Jim Catania, the Bekes, and the Grahams. He completed five years in high school and was in university for a year but it didn't work out for him. He went to Kapuskasing to work at a mill for a while. Then his sister was getting married and they wouldn't give him time off so he quit. He got a job in Bradford working for Professor Day as a foreman along with Tom Fuller. The interviewer would like to go back to discussing his university education for a moment. Harold took Chemical Engineering for one year in Toronto but it was too much for him because he wasn't used to studying. In Kapuskasing he worked at a paper mill owned by Spruce Falls Pulp and Paper Company. Then he came back for his sister's wedding. Professor Day's children went to school at the same time as Harold. He was in Bradford when they dredged the canal but did

not work on it; Tom Fuller worked on it. Harold says the tools had a habit of falling into the canal and Tom was quite a swimmer so he used to dive into the canal to retrieve the tools as part of his job.

George explains that they have been looking for a picture of the barge used to dredge but have been unsuccessful. George asks how they moved the dredge. Harold says that they put it on a steam shovel boarded scow so it would float up to the bank and they would just float it along. The dredge would be mounted on to the barge. George was talking to Marguerite Ramsey whose nephew has a steam shovel that he's restored they're going to get some photos of it. Harold remembers crawling on his hands and knees for miles weeding for Professor Day in the early 1930s. Professor Day started farming in 1929 and grew mostly lettuce. He had an acre of lettuce and made \$900 off of that acre. What finally put Professor Day out of business was that one year he grew 45 acres of celery and he shipped it to Montreal on the railroad. Instead of any money, he got a bill for dumping celery.

After the Dutchmen settled in the marsh, it started to become successful. Professor Day's part of the marsh was what they called the small Bradford marsh but he also owned some land on the big scheme just below the pump house; he had about 100 acres. There was quite a bit of clearing that had to be done before it could be farmed. Harold explains it was mostly removing stumps. By that time someone else had already cleared all the trees. He speculates that it was probably cleared of the trees when the saw mills were running in the 1890s. The stumps were from Pine and Tamarack trees of varying sizes. Some of them were big enough that they needed a tractor to remove them. Harold and his brother tried to go into business for themselves on the marsh but it didn't work out so they went into the greenhouse business. George thinks that Professor Day died in around 1935. Professor Day had a little shed he operated out of near the willow trees; it was a little booth he would sell things out of.

Harold was not married at this time (when he started working on the marsh). During the war he was an inspector for the government and started out inspecting copper for shells at Anaconda Brass. He was hassled there for not passing a certain shipment. ... (*name is inaudible*) was the boss and was in town at the time. Harold said that he wanted to be released from his job. Harold took a sample and went down to see him. The boss said that they would find somewhere else for him to work and sent him to the Sault (Sault Ste. Marie). In the Sault, he worked for the government at Algoma Steel. Then he got called up by the army, went on the train, and met his wife (Marguerite) who was headed to Sudbury. They decided to write letters back and forth after that. Marguerite's maiden name was Sullivan and her family lived in North Cobalt. She worked in the Sault at a telephone company and would get off the train in Sudbury to go back to North Cobalt. Her father came from Pembroke. She just has some nieces and nephews in this area.

(George leaves the interview at this point and lets Joe and Irene continue to ask questions) Irene asks Harold who his teachers were in high school. There were four teachers in the school at the time. There was E.J. Keenan as the principal, Jessie Curry (sister of Harvey), Agatha Webb (taught part-time), and Mrs. Seward Lee (they think her maiden name was Stranger*). Harold attended school with Gordon Faris (who became head of Hydro), Harley Cummings, Harvey Curry, Evelyn Ritchie, Marion* and Elvin* Evans, and Lou Neilly. There were about 40 students in his class from 1921 to 1926. Harold does not remember taking part in school fairs in high school, just for public school. He participated in a school fair in Queensville and won a prize there (which was a hen) for best ... There was no physical education in high school but they would play baseball if someone brought a ball and bat. Irene asks if Harold remembers the old fairgrounds in Bradford. Harold remembers sneaking in the fairgrounds to watch the lacrosse games. Many people played lacrosse at that time: Dr. Campbell (the druggist), Ozy* McKinstry, Big Bob and his father, Eddie* Armstrong, Lorne Church, ... Reeves (*first name is inaudible*), and Ollie* Robinson were a few. Harold and Joe say it was the most popular sport in the area. There was a little hockey and baseball played as well. Joe comments that someone said they used to play soccer but neither of them remember that. Harold remembers starting a softball team and they used to play in Dominic ... (*last name is inaudible*) field. There was another little team he played on in Coulson's Hill and they had a girl play catcher named Valerie White.

Harold moved to David Street in 1935 and in that year his mother retired from teaching. That was the first house they lived at in Bradford. His father was 40 when he died. Harold lived on David Street with his mother until about 20 years ago because she became sick. Harold and his wife both lived on David Street and raised their family of three kids. The oldest of their children is Joyce, now known as Mrs. Clark. Their son Arthur lives in British Columbia and is a welder but started off as a plumber; he has two children. Pauline is the youngest. Mrs. Taylor looked after many children while living on David Street and babysitting. She estimates that she looked after 500 children throughout the 30 years that she was babysitting. Then she went to babysit children at their homes, instead of using her home.

While living in Bradford, Harold and Herb worked on the marsh for about three or four years. Harold sold his vegetables when buyers came around every month. He grew onions and carrots but they were too close to the bush and carrot worms put them out of business. After giving up his land on the marsh, he went to work at the Holland River Gardens for about four years. Then he went to work for International, which was a packing plant located where Bradford Shippers is now. He worked there for 15 years until he retired. The head person at International when he retired was Bill Schultz*. Bill Fuller was in the cold storage for a while but then moved over to ... Irene and Joe thank Harold and Mrs. Taylor for their time and note that

they learned a great deal. – Tape cuts out -

** Indicates that the word or name is written as it sounded, and therefore may be incorrect.*

... Indicates that the speaker is inaudible.