

I was very proud of our plowmen for the nice work they did. There were 42 plowmen from 22 countries and all tried to do their best. It was a wonderful sight.

At 2 p.m. the red rocket ended the plowing in the stubble. The plowmen paraded back to the marshalling yard and departed by bus for Klekken Hotel. Dinner was served following which the draw for the green land plots was made and a film shown on New Zealand.

October 9th

Again, we had breakfast at 7 a.m. and announcements, and departed by bus to Sorum Gord Contest Fields. The plowmen all paraded to sod plots and plowing started at 10:30 a.m. The sod field was in two runs, the lower half being very wet, so that they had to shorten the lands and make 4 runs on the higher end of the field (this was done the day previous to the contest) and it worked out very nicely.

The Contest ended at 2 p.m. and all paraded back to the marshalling yard. The teams then took up their positions behind the Cairn of Peace for the unveiling ceremony at the Sorum Gord Steinsfjordenger overlooking the Contest field and the Valley of Ringerike.

After the unveiling, the Norwegian National Anthem was played by King Olav's trumpeters while the W.P.O. flag was being lowered. This ended the 13th World Ploughing Contest.

We returned to the Klekken Hotel for dinner and the results. The winners were Eero Rautiainen of Finland who placed first and Fritz Kreeglmeyer, West Germany, second.

As our Canadians, Donald and Carl did not reach the top in the plowing, but they were good sports and certainly were a credit to Canada and made many friends during their stay in Norway.

At 6:30 p.m. we departed by bus to Oslo where the festival evening was held in the famous Oslo City Hall. There was seating capacity for 3,000 and it was overflowing. The King's Trumpeters opened the program, followed by the presentation of the Esso Golden Plough to Finland by King Olav of Norway. The large silver rose bowl for the runner-up, donated by Massey-Ferguson Limited, was presented to West Germany. The King then shook hands with each and every contestant.

The remainder of the program was followed with folk singing and dancing in the Norwegian Native Dress and different kinds of musical instruments, both old and new. It was very interesting and colorful.

After the ceremony at the city hall the Ford Company entertained the contestants, visitors, trip managers, and officials at the Holmengkollakken Ski Jump in Oslo, for an evening of dancing and fun.

October 10th

Breakfast was at 9 a.m. after which each country was assigned to a Norwegian family home for the day.

We were met by the son of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Lindstad who took us to a Norwegian English Church service at 11 a.m., returning to the Lindstad home for a noon luncheon and viewing their farm and family home.

They had purebred Ayrshire Cattle (much larger than ours and darker in color) and a good line of tractor equipment. They grow potatoes, oats, and clover hay. They cut their grain with a binder and hang it on four wires held by stakes to dry as the ground is very damp and the weather very catchy. When dry it is taken to the barn, wires moved over in the field, and more grain or grass hung to dry. They have between 400 and 450 acres of land but can only work around 60 acres in the valley, the remainder up in the hills being used for pasture and forest.

We were told that the average farms are from 20 to 60 acres of farming land, the rest is pasture and forest.

Mr. and Mrs. Lindstad did not speak any English but the son and daughter spoke it very well. In the afternoon the young people took us for a drive to see many points of interest in the area. We returned to Sundvollen late in the afternoon to have supper with our wives.

October 11th

We had breakfast and announcements, following which the buses returned us to the plowing side to take pictures of the Cairn of Peace and to view the plowing. Later we were taken to Fornebu Airport in Oslo where Goodyear Tire Company entertained us with a banquet.

Mr. Kverneland had chartered an airplane and flew us to Kverneland Fabrikk, which was a one hour flight. They flew about 1,200 feet and it was a very bright day and we could see the country and take pictures. Upon arriving at Kverneland Fabrikk we were picked up by two buses and taken to the Kverneland Plow Factory. The tour started at the old blacksmith shop, where the factory first started, and then went on to the large new plant which is five bays, each 300' x 600'. This is where the Kverneland plow is made and they are now making a full line of tillage equipment. We were then entertained at a banquet and everyone was presented with a pewter vase.

We returned again to Oslo by air, and bus back to Klekken Hotel.

October 12th.

Breakfast was at 7 a.m. and we bid farewell to Klekken Hotel. Three buses took 120 competitors, wives, and officials on a two-day tour of the country visiting Hallingdal Museum at Nesbyen, where typical oldtime homes are carefully preserved and inhabited. Lunch was served with their lovely open-faced sandwiches and good coffee.

We visited Svillo Farm Gol, where the farm is based on a combination forestry, agriculture, milk production, and sheep framing. We then toured on to another well-kept antique, original homestead. Oldtime fiddlers playing greeted us all. They showed us old machinery and log buildings with sod floors. We were served an afternoon luncheon in these old buildings.

The tour ended at 6 p.m. when we arrived at Bergsjf

Hoyfjells, a High Mountain Hotel at Hallingdøl for an overnight stop. The buses we were in were the first ones ever to be driven over this road. We were entertained and banqueted by the Massey-Ferguson Company with typical Norwegian food and a social evening of dancing.

October 13th

We left in the morning at 8:30 (in a rain storm) starting back toward Oslo. We visited the Hemsedal modern hydro plant and another Norwegian museum and had our luncheon there. We toured some very beautiful country roads and the scenery was just wonderful, passing over some roads where buses had never been before, we had to pay a toll at the end for using the farmers' roads, as each farmer had a gate at his line fence which had to be opened and closed as we all went through. It was some distance we travelled on this sort of road.

We arrived back at Oslo at 5 p.m. and immediately were taken to the Viking Hotel for a farewell banquet, guests of Esso Norway. Presentation of W.P.O. badges was made to plowmen and trip managers. Our hosts in Norway presented each plowman with a hand-painted keepsake in memory of their trip. This brought our Norway trip to a close.

October 14th

We bid Mr. and Mrs. Carl Willis farewell as they were going on to Holland, France, and England, returning home on October 22nd.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Dunkeld, my wife and I left for London, England, where we spent some time sight-seeing and visiting friends and relatives. We then travelled on to Scotland for a few days and returned again to England to go on to Ireland.

We attended the Northern Ireland Plowing Match where Donald Dunkeld competed. We stayed in Belfast and were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Reid, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence McMillan, and Mr. John Watt of Esso.

A number of other countries competed in the North Ireland Plowing Match--Germany, India, Switzerland, New Zealand, Australia and Canada. It was a lovely group to be with and we were entertained by the Mayor at the City Hall in Belfast, were banqueted by Esso of Ireland, and attended a farewell banquet given by the Northern Ireland Plowing Association.

We left Belfast on the 5th of November to fly to Preswick, Scotland, leaving there by B.O.A.C. for Montreal and Toronto. Mr. and Mrs. Dunkeld Sr. and Don and Shirley's little family were on hand to meet them, and our son, John Keith, came to Toronto to pick us up.

May I, on behalf of Donald Dunkeld and Dr. Carl Willis, extend our thanks to Imperial Oil Limited, Esso

Norway, Esso Copenhagen, Esso Northern Ireland, the Ontario Plowmen's Association, and the Canadian Plowing Council, for making this trip possible. I'm sure the 13th World Ploughing Contest will never be forgotten by the Canadian group.

SEED LOANED TO ELGIN FARMERS STAVED OFF IMPENDING FAMINE

From a newspaper clipping by A.S. Garrett. The Mr. McAlpine herein mentioned is the grandfather of some of our present citizens.

This is the time of year, when seeding operations will soon be in full swing on Western Ontario farms, that the story of Neil McAlpine, of Fingal, and how he saved the Talbot Settlement from the menace of famine, may be retold. The story has become a tradition in Elgin County, having been passed on from parents to children for generations.

McAlpine, of Scottish origin, was an early settler in the Township of Southwold, not far from Fingal, and seems to have farmed quite extensively at a time when his contemporaries were still engaged in removing the forest primeval, with comparatively few acres cleared.

The Talbot settlers, having undergone the privations and hardships of primitive farming conditions in the new country, had borne up bravely under the struggle. Nevertheless, they were discouraged immeasurably when a heavy frost almost completely destroyed the wheat crop throughout the area. The exact date of this catastrophe is unknown to the writer.

More fortunate than the rest, Neil McAlpine was able to harvest about 3000 bushels of wheat which was stored in granaries on his own property. Having sufficient other means he decided to hold the grain for another season and then sell at a substantial profit.

When in St. Thomas one day, McAlpine was informed that the local miller wished to see him. Upon his arrival at the mill, the miller quickly informed him as to why he had wished the interview. He wanted, he said, to purchase the entire 3000 bushels and offered a price that startled Mr. McAlpine.

In fact the miller offered more than could have been realized had the wheat been ground into flour. Whereupon, McAlpine cautiously asked him what he intended doing with the wheat.

"I intend to sell it for seed grain to the settlers," was the ready response.

Suddenly it broke upon McAlpine just what this would mean. The grain would be used to extort a big profit from the settlers already lying within the shadow of famine.

McAlpine's mind was made up at once to refuse the miller's offer. Hurrying home, he hastily put into effect a plan to

aid the entire settlement--a scheme that worked so successfully as to make his name a household word in the district for years afterwards.

The following day (Sunday), Neil McAlpine went to church early, taking up a position beside the gate.

Soon the people began to arrive and, as they passed through the gate, McAlpine whispered to this effect: "You can get seed grain at my place--bushel for bushel. For each bushel you take at seed-time you will bring me back a bushel after the harvest."

This offer was made to every member of the Presbyterian Church and, after he had returned home, McAlpine realized that there were still many people in the settlement of other denominations -- Baptists, Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics.

Consequently, he put his sons on horseback and sent them to the other churches. A young man stood by the gate of each place of worship and made the same offer as their father had made to the Presbyterians.

On Monday morning people from all over the settlement thronged to McAlpine's. His boys worked in the granary, measuring out wheat and filling the bags. As each settler passed the house with his precious store of seed, Neil McAlpine would hold up his cane and inquire the number of bushels they were taking and again reminding them of the agreement upon which the grain was being loaned.

It is said that the procession, past Mc Alpine's door to the granary and back, lasted intermittently for three days until all the grain was distributed and every family had seed wheat. His generosity in charging nothing in the way of interest and the trust he placed in the honesty of the people is remarkable, to say the least.

Among those aided by McAlpine were an Irish couple and their family who had settled on a bush farm following their arrival in Elgin.

The first year they were only able to clear a small piece of land in which turnips were planted. During the following winter they had scarcely anything to eat but turnips.

When the father arrived home from Neil McAlpine's, the rest of the family were delighted to learn that he had brought a bag of flour as well as the seed wheat. The flour was a gift in order that the children might have bread.

Besides McAlpine's wife had given the man a jug of butter-milk to be used in making scones, and a jug of molasses to

be eaten with them.

Years later, one of the family, when telling the story to a descendant of McAlpine's, declared: "I ate so much that I was sick. To be sure, I'll never forget the time when Neil McAlpine saved the settlement."

This man also told of a visit made the next day by a priest to his father's home in the wilderness.

The mother was a proud woman to be able to place before the priest a meal including wheaten bread. Upon enquiry, she told him the story of the gift of seed grain and flour. Whereupon, as the priest said reverently: "God bless that old heretic, Neil McAlpine!"

Upon hearing this, McAlpine's descendant expressed surprise and reminded the Irishman of the fact his folds (the Irish family) were Roman Catholics while McAlpine was a Presbyterian and an elder in the church.

To which the Irishman replied with vigor: "On Sundays he was a Presbyterian but on week-days he was a neighbor."

The writer is indebted for much of the above information to an account left by the late Peter McArthur, who was a friend of Dr. Hugh A McCallum, the latter a grandson of Neil McAlpine, and from whom he had learned many facts of other days in the Talbot Settlement.



Town Hall, Paynes Mills, Ont.

PAYNES MILLS WOMENS INSTITUTE HALL 1950



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INSTITUTE HALL TAKEN IN MARCH 1961