



Transcripts of personal interviews included in Kincardine Township scrapbook, A2014.003.0558

Introduction

The following 6 interviews about Kincardine Township were carried out by Bruce Krug mainly between 1953 and 1957. He kept his handwritten notes related to the interviews in scrapbooks organized by townships. This transcription was prepared by Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre volunteer Robin Hilborn between Mar. 23 and Mar. 25, 2016.

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Content Warning

These interviews contain outdated language concerning Indigenous people, Black people, and others. Users should be aware that racial slurs, epithets, and derogatory terms may appear in this item and collection. For more information about the Archives' approach to language used in transcripts and descriptions of historical records, see BCM&CC's [Descriptive Language Statement](#).

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Oran Westell

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Interview with Oran Westell, lighthouse keeper at Kincardine, Sept. 1954

This evening Harry Lustig and I visited with Oran Westell, who operates and lives in the lighthouse at the river mouth at Kincardine harbour. Oran started to work on boats when he was 17 years old. He sailed on many of the schooners of Lake Huron during the time they were carrying lumber from Manitoulin Island and the North Shore to the growing cities in southern Ontario of Sarnia, Wallaceburg, Dresden, etc. He recalled that it was about 1918 that sailing vessels disappeared from the Great Lakes as cargo ships.

While working on the boats, Oran took many photographs of ships and also has made a collection of news items and articles from daily papers. These he gratefully loaned to me in my endeavour to get some of the early story of shipping on Lake Huron and especially out of Kincardine.

Oran sailed on the Bert Barnes for two or three years, on the Lyman Davis for two years and on the Sephie for part of a year. Orin started his sailing career at the age of 17 when he started out on the Bert Barnes. At this time the Bert Barnes was owned by Graham Bros. of Kincardine, with Kincardine being its home port. Orin started at \$15 per month and his board. There was a skipper, mate and three deck hands on the ship. The Bert Barnes had three hatches. The Bert Barnes had originally been purchased in the United States. There were three Graham brothers sailed on the Bert Barnes and two on the Lyman Davis. After the first world war, sailing vessels disappeared from the Great Lakes. Graham Bros. sold the Bert Barnes, around 1920. Some time later the Bert Barnes foundered in Lake Michigan with a load of coal.

Graham Bros. of Kincardine also purchased the Lyman Davis in the U.S. and brought it to Kincardine. Two Graham Bros. sailed on the Lyman Davis. Oran sailed on the Lyman Davis for two years carrying all kinds of lumber from Collins Inlet, Bruce Mines and Gore Bay to the river ports of Wallaceburg, Dresden, etc. The sailing vessels were able to go right up the rivers with their loads to these river ports.

During the severe November storm of 1913 Oran was on the Lyman Davis. They were anchored in Manitowaning Bay but the high wind made their ship drag anchor and they were washed up against the dock. Their ship was covered with a thick layer of ice. Graham Bros. sold the Lyman Davis in 1919. The Lyman Davis had three hatches.

Oran recalled that during the November storm of 1913 the schooner Sephie was washed ashore in Smith's Bay on Manitoulin Island, when the ship became waterlogged. "Squealing" Hughie McKinnon was owner of the Sephie in 1913 and his brother was first mate. The Sephie had three hatches.

Oran said that the old shipwreck off the Nine Mile Point south of Port Elgin is that of the schooner Azov. It piled up on the stones offshore there in about the year 1910. "Reddy" McDonald and his father Bert McDonald, both of Goderich, owned the Azov. Reddy, his father and another brother were forced to abandon their schooner the Azov along the American shore of Lake Huron when the ship became waterlogged. They took to their lifeboat and rowed across Lake Huron, arriving on the Canadian shore south of Goderich. Their sister was cook on the schooner Azov. She took to the lifeboat with her brothers and father and it was the sister's job to keep the brothers awake by knocking them on the head. The schooner Azov did not sink along the U.S. shore as McDonalds had anticipated but instead she drifted across Lake Huron and piled up on the stones south of Port Elgin at Nine Mile Point.

George McGaw of Kincardine got a line on the Azov when it was off the Nine Mile Point and he attempted to tow her but was unable to save her. Oran Westell recalled that he and big Tom McGaw were fishing this year off the Nine Mile Point. The lake was full of planks, bundles of shingles which were the cargo of the Azov. He recalled that he and Tom McGaw set nets just after the wreck of the Azov, setting a net whenever they stopped to pick up a bundle of shingles from the cargo of the Azov. Perhaps it was just a coincidence, but that was the best catch of fish that they had all that fall. They had 18 nets set at the time.

Additional notes:

The schooners when fully loaded would draw 8 to 10 feet. In going up the river to Wallaceburg or Dresden, a tug would tow the schooner up the river.

The captain, mate and cook made their headquarters in the cabin at the rear of the schooner while the rest made headquarters in the forecabin.

Jim Reid of Howdenvale sailed on the schooner Kolfage.

Oran has a picture of Kincardine harbour showing the Coronet, Sarah, Quimby and the tug Swan. The schooner Quimby was wrecked south of Point Clarke when Oran was about seven years of age. The Coronet was sunk at the dock at Red Bay.

[newspaper clipping] Sept. 26, 1955, "Oran Westell of Kincardine dies in Ottawa crash". Oran Westell, 64, harbormaster and lighthouse keeper at Kincardine.

Tom McGaw

Pages 163-164 of the scrapbook

Interview with Tom McGaw at Kincardine on Feb. 19, 1956

This afternoon Harold Krug and I called on Mr. and Mrs. Tom McGaw at their home on ___ Street in Kincardine. Tom McGaw is a veteran fisherman and just celebrated his 91st birthday. He was born in Kincardine on Feb. 7, 1865, a son of William McGaw. Tom McGaw recalled his first venture into the world was when he was 13 years of age he went up to Red Bay to assist in the cooking at the logging camp of Mr. Carter of Kincardine, who was taking out hardwood around Red Bay. The logging shanties were at Red Bay. There was no store here but there was a store at Howdenvale, then known as Golden Valley. This was the day of sailing vessels and Mr. McGaw recalled that many sailboats would be moored in the harbour at Red Bay. Mr. McGaw said that a lot of logs were put in booms and towed down the lake to the river (namely to Sarnia).

It was about this time that Mr. McGaw visited Johnston's Harbour and he remembered walking about on the shore and saw an eight-foot-long rattlesnake at the other end of a log which he was sitting upon.

As a young man Tom McGaw and his brother had a sailing vessel and fished out of Kincardine. In the fall of the year they would go up to the Fishing Islands. They went up around October 1st and stayed there until the end of November. They made their headquarters at Snake Island where they had a house. Fishing was principally for herring, which were most plentiful then. If the weather was fine they would set their nets on the nearby reefs but when they feared a blow they set their nets in the deeper water. They principally netted herring but they also netted some trout. They only fished with gill nets but some men stationed on Burke Island fished in that vicinity with seine nets. Tom McGaw and his brother fished for 16 falls at Snake Island.

Tom McGaw recalled that they would take their boat up to Greenock Harbour, Pine Tree Harbour and so forth. He said that one time they left their boat at Pine Tree Harbour and walked with another man along the shore to Deadman's Point and he recalled seeing some human bones laying on the shore there.

Tom McGaw fished out of Kincardine for many years, using a sail boat. He stopped sailing and fishing when he married his wife, ___ of Oxford County. This was 58 years ago. It was in the spring after they were married that he became quite ill and he had to give up sailing and he didn't sail a year after his marriage. When he was married he owned the sailing vessel Coronet. Later he owned the sailing vessel
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Quimby. The Quimby was wrecked off Point Clarke. When McGaw had the Coronet and Quimby he carried on a trade of buying and transporting lumber, etc. at the lake ports along the east shore of Lake Huron. Mr. McGaw said that he was lighthouse keeper at Kincardine for 14 years. At one time he operated a store in Oxford County.

Mr. McGaw said that it would take a little over three hours for him and his brother to travel by sailboat from Kincardine to Snake Island. He recalled that one time they were forced to come in to Southampton because of rough weather and they tied up their boat at the river mouth and stayed at a hotel down at the river mouth.

I asked him if he knew how Snake Island got its name and he said that before he and his brother started fishing up there, a Mr. Lewis was supposed to have walked around the island and killed a total of 66 snakes, hence the name Snake Island.

Mr. McGaw recalled that when he was a boy there were huge flocks of passenger pigeons around Kincardine. He said that he would stand at the edge of the big hill along the lakeshore at the south end of Kincardine and he would knock the pigeons down with a stick. He said that the pigeons didn't seem to be travelling in any definite direction but there were lots of them and they were flying in all directions. He said that they would ship barrels and barrels of these pigeons out by boat from Kincardine. Some of the pigeons were salted before shipping but most of them were put in the barrels unsalted.

He said he used to ship out a lot of barrels of fish when he fished out of Kincardine. The fish were either salted or were in ice.

He said that at one time there were four Tom McGaws living in Kincardine so they were nicknamed "The Tribe".

Tom McGaw said that he knew Frank Belmore of Red Bay quite well. He said that at one time Frank Belmore lived in Kincardine.

[newspaper clipping] "Bruce man, 91, recalls rescue". Thomas McGaw of Kincardine, lighthouse keeper and harbour master, got a gold medal from President Teddy Roosevelt for helping save people from the American schooner Ann Maria, wrecked off Kincardine Oct. 7, 1902.

[newspaper clipping] Death of Thomas McGaw, Kincardine, Friday, March 16, 1956.

Neil "Skipper" McKinnon

Pages 169-172 of the scrapbook

Interview with Neil "Skipper" McKinnon of Con. 11, Kincardine Twp. on May 6, 1957

This evening I called at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Downey on the townline between Glamis and Tiverton. Mrs. Downey, who is quite interested in the history of the area, contacted Skipper McKinnon by phone and he came over and spent the evening at the Downey home and answered the many questions that Mrs. Downey and I asked him.

Neil's father, Captain Hugh McKinnon, was born in Scotland. He came to Canada from the Isle of Tyree, a barren island. He died in 1915 in his 70th year. He was a lake captain and sailed many ships on the Great Lakes. Captain Hugh McKinnon was on the schooner Sephie in the storm of Nov. 9, 1913. The ship was owned by Captain Hugh McKinnon and Bob McMahon at this time. They each had a half interest in the vessel. The ship was loaded with 340 M. ft. of white pine from French River and was bound for Sarnia.

When the ship was coming out of the bay (Georgian Bay) the storm hit her and the ship became water logged and they had to let out anchor and ride out the storm.

The ship usually carried a crew of six. They charged \$700 to take a load of pine from French River to Sarnia, or about \$2 per M. ft. Prior to the ownership of the Sephie by McKinnon and McMahon, the ship was owned by the Ontario Lumber Co. of Toronto. Skipper McKinnon recalled travelling on this ship with his father. He said that they carried pine lumber chiefly from French River to Sarnia and ports in that area. In travelling up or down Lake Huron they kept close to the U.S. shore, where there were more harbours of refuge.

In 1917 the Sephie went to salt water. Skipper said that after his father's death in 1915 his mother owned the Sephie and his uncle Peter sailed it. His mother sold the ship to interests from the South Seas. She sold the ship to be delivered in Buffalo. The ship was re-rigged in Buffalo and then went to the South Seas.

The Sephie was called "Yacht of the Lakes", as sailing vessels were becoming few at that time. The Sephie was built in Goderich about 1860 of rock elm. She was built by Williams and Marlon. The ship was named after William's daughter, Sophia Williams. Williams and Marlon sailed the Sephie for a little and then sold her to the Ontario Lumber Co., which used her to bring lumber down from their north shore limits.

Skipper recalled the time that he and Jack Brown of Tiverton were running a line for a schooner and Brown fell between the ship and the wharf into 18 feet of water. Skipper had the yawl boat and kept the ship away from the dock with the oar of the boat. By means of the yawl boat he helped Brown around to the end of the ship and then rescued him.

Capt. Hugh McKinnon sailed the Niagara for Bob Baird of Kincardine. She was a two sticker [two masts]. Baird was a grain buyer. McKinnon had the ship loaded with lumber at Byng Inlet and the Georgian Bay Tug Co. was taking the Niagara out to the channel. It was a narrow channel with rocks on both sides and Hugh McKinnon with his loud voice was yelling to keep her over and just at that she struck. She dragged on the rocks and broke in two in the channel with the load on her. There was a big lawsuit over it and the tug company won. This happened about 1890. The ship was bound for Lake Erie at the time. McKinnon carried lumber by ship to Morpeth quite often.

Captain Hugh McKinnon sailed the Niagara, then the J.N. Carter, then the Fannie Campbell and then the Sephie. These ships all carried grain at first and then later lumber.

Skipper recalled the Azov and the McDonald family. He said that Captain John McDonald, i.e. Bert's father, was a lake captain but that Bert's grandfather, known as John Minister McDonald, was a preacher and never did sail any vessels. Skipper recalled the time that "Reddie" McDonald was sailing as a member of the crew on Hugh McKinnon's ship. They were about to sail and Reddie, who was drunk most of the time, was drunk on this occasion and as the ship was pulling away from the dock he decided that he would like another drink, and he thought he was stepping back on the dock, but instead he stepped overboard and got a dunking.

Some of the lake captains who came from Bruce and Kincardine townships were: Hugh McKinnon; Peter McKinnon (brother of Capt. Hugh McKinnon's wife); John Munroe (Lot 9, Con. II, Bruce Twp.); Angie Munroe (son of John; lived with his father); Archie McGinnis (Lot 14, Con. III, Bruce Twp.; sailed the Sligo); Angus McKenzie of Tiverton (sailed with the Anchor Line, a U.S. fleet; sailed at one time with Capt. Hugh McKinnon).

More lake captains from Bruce and Kincardine townships:

- Kenny McKenzie. He lived in Tiverton in a big house next to the Presbyterian Church. He sailed for the Heinz Lumber Co. of Chicago. When Kenny McKenzie built his brick house at Tiverton, Skipper McKinnon teamed the brick from Lovet brickyard to Tiverton for the house.

- Jack Sleigh, from gravel road near corner of 7th Con. of Kincardine Twp.
- Denny Sutherland of Goderich, sailed the M.L. Brick. She was lost in Georgian Bay. A woman was drowned from this boat.
- Angus McKay, Lot 3, Con. IV, Bruce Twp.
- Kenny Sutherland, brother of Denny Sutherland, sailed the Cataract out of Goderich.
- Murdoch Rowan, sailed the Gordon Campbell. She belonged to the Anchor Line, of U.S. ownership.
- Duncan McFadgen, Lot 16, Con XII, Kincardine Twp., sailed the schooner Katydin. This ship was travelling on the lakes and there was a stiff breeze and the captain of the Katydin fell into the hold and was killed and then Duncan McFadgen, who was a member of the crew, took over the sailing of the ship.
- Jack McDonald, Lot 11, Con. IX.

These early sailing vessels carried lumber on their southbound trip on Lake Huron to Lake Erie and carried coal on their northbound trip to northern ports.

Some of the tragedies of the lakes:

- Jimmie Munroe, son of Capt. Munroe, was drowned about 30 miles up Lake Huron from Point Edward. Jimmie got up in the morning to take his turn at the wheel at 4 a.m. and he walked right over the end of the boat. His body was never found. Capt. Hugh McKinnon was coming down the lake and he saw Capt. Munroe's flag at half mast and learned of the tragedy then. This was in 1898.
- Capt. John Munroe was drowned at Southampton about 1915 when he went out in a small boat with a sail. His body was found later as it floated.
- Dan McKay's two daughters and a Stephens girl were drowned at Inverhuron.
- Jack Wells, Lot 8, Con. II, Bruce Twp., drowned in Milwaukee.
- Alex McLennan, Lot 31, Con. XII, Kincardine Twp., drowned in Milwaukee.
- ___ McLeod, sailor on car ferry across Lake Erie, was drowned in Nov. 9th gale of 1913.

Shipper McKinnon recalled the Nov. 9th gale of 1913. He was at home on the farm in Kincardine Twp. and it came on snow about noon and during the afternoon a thick snow was falling.

Onward was a Kincardine fishing tug. The owners tried to sink her and it floated to shore again.

References re early lake history: George McGaw, Kincardine; Joe Fisher, behind public school, Kincardine; Dan McKay, Kincardine; George Morrison, Kincardine.

[notecard attached to page 171]

Note from Hilda Downey (Mrs. Geo. H. Downey), Tiverton, to Bruce Krug, Apr. 5, 1957

Dear Mr. Krug,

You asked me if I knew anything about the sailors from my district & all the time I said I knew very little. I still don't know much but I can give you a name of a man who would delight in helping you.

Neil ("Skipper") McKinnon of lot 10, conc. 11, Kinc. tp. is the son of Capt. Hugh McKinnon. He is over 70 yrs but quite spry & not a thing wrong with his memory. I always enjoy talking with him.
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He lives on the concession south of us & only about 2-3 miles distant by road.

If it is convenient for you, & not presuming too much on your kindness, I would like to ask the privilege of listening in with a pen & paper. I need his stories for my work, too.

However, I know it is not always easy to predict when you can make a call & if you cannot include me, please don't worry. Skipper is always willing to repeat his tales.

Hoping this will lead you to some helpful stories,

Sincerely yours,

Hilda Downey

Secord Hunter

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Trip to Kincardine, April 24, 1955

It was a cool, cloudy day when I left Chesley and after I got through Greenock it started to rain. It rained the balance of the afternoon and was quite cool. In Kincardine I called on Secord Hunter and while he was getting ready to go out with me I called on Miss Elizabeth McKenzie, two houses up the street from Secord Hunter.

A Miss Yemen had had an apartment in Miss McKenzie's house, until Miss Yemen died about a year ago. Miss Yemen wrote historical articles for the Kincardine newspaper and had an extensive collection of clippings and scrapbooks. Mrs. McKenzie said that after Miss Yemen's death, her belongings were taken by Mr. Norvall Stewart, a nephew, who lives on Concession 2, Huron Twp., just east of the Ripley sideroad.

Miss McKenzie suggested I contact Miss Fisher, Miss Lauacon and Miss Scaugo of Kincardine re early history of Kincardine.

Secord Hunter and I drove north on Kincardine Main St., passing the brick building which was put up by Kincardine for the Gundy Stove Foundry. This foundry only operated for a couple years, then was used for some time by ___ for a sawmill and is at present used for extracting honey and storing bee boxes by ___. This building stands on the northeast corner at intersection of Durham Rd. and Main St. of Kincardine.

The Main St. continues north as the Lake Shore Road and we followed this road out past Kincardine Hospital. Secord said that Dan McCaskill and his sister lived on the farm just north of the hospital and when the hospital was established Dan and his sister were afraid of becoming infected with disease germs which they thought would be blown from the hospital, so they wore newspaper under their clothing to keep out disease germs. They were very unhappy with the hospital so close to them, and eventually they moved off the farm.

A little further north on the west side of the lake shore road was Captain Rowan's farm, lot ___. Captain Rowan was shipwrecked and drowned and his body was washed ashore at the foot of the cliff on his own farm.

Just north of Captain Rowan's farm, but on the east side of the road, lot ___, there was a hotel in the early days, but only part of the foundation can be seen at present.

At the north end of the Village of Tiverton on the east side of the road, along the creek stood a tannery, but Secord Hunter said that his father dismantled this tannery many years ago to salvage the boiler from the tannery.

Mrs. William Hunter

Pages 257-260 of the scrapbook

Interview with Mrs. William Hunter at her home in Kincardine, Dec. 10, 1953

This evening I motored to Kincardine and called on Secord Hunter of Hunter Bridge & Boiler of Kincardine. Together we called on Secord's mother, Mrs. William Hunter, who lives alone in the east half of a large brick house, originally built by Mr. Baird, grain merchant of Kincardine. Mrs. William Hunter is in her 86th year. She says she was born in Kincardine and has spent all her life here. The house in which Mrs. Hunter lives was built by Robert Baird, who came out from England and established himself as a grain merchant at Kincardine.

At this time grain from as far as Durham was teamed to Kincardine where it was sold and taken away by ship. Later, when the railways were constructed, Kincardine ceased to be an important grain-buying centre.

Mrs. Hunter and Secord got out the old deeds for the property from which we ascertained that the Baird property was made out in Feb. 21st, 1861. This was a school grant land. Another deed in 1872 was registering the transfer of the property from Thomas Baird to Louisa, wife of Thomas Baird. The Robert Baird family were considered to be very wealthy and the elite of Kincardine. Mrs. Hunter recalled that when she was a small girl she played with the daughter of Mr. Garner, who was Baird's gardener. Mrs. Hunter recalled that the grounds about the Baird house were kept in excellent condition.

Mrs. Hunter recalled that from the east side of the Baird house at the back end, extended a brick shed which connected up with a large brick stable still further to the east on the lot. In this stable were stalls for six horses in which Bairds kept fine riding horses matched in teams of different colours. The shed connecting the house and stable was constructed in three arches, each arch containing a wagon or coach. Mrs. Hunter recalled seeing the Bairds, when she was a small girl, going riding on their horses, Mrs. Baird wearing a long riding skirt as she sat on her horse.

Mrs. Hunter could not recall much about Gray's castle. She said that a girl friend of her's, namely Anne Fischer, was engaged to be married to Peter Gray, son of Boss Gray who built the castle, but that this marriage never took place.

Anne Fischer's father, namely Ebenezer Fischer, invented the steel horse collar. Before this, wooden horse collars were used. The invention of the steel horse collar was brought on with the coming of the street railways in the cities. The Fischer's first big sale of the steel horse collar was to the Philadelphia street railway. Ebenezer Fischer and Boss Gray formed a company to manufacture and sell iron horse collars, but there was apparently some disagreement, as Gray took over the business and Fischer was eased out. Consequently, relations between Gray's son and Fischer's daughter became poor and they never married. Secord Hunter was saying that a few years ago there were a lot of these old iron horse collars made by Fischer stored in a barn in Kincardine.

Ebenezer Fischer also invented the steel transmission chain, such as is used in conveyors.

Mrs. Hunter believed that the Gray family had originally come from Philadelphia and settled at Inverhuron where he was interested in a sawmill. Mrs. Hunter recalled that when the Grays left their home and the Inverhuron district, they did so quite suddenly and left the house with all its fine furnishings.

Mrs. Hunter suggested that I contact Mrs. Lachlan McKinnon, who has just moved to Kincardine and who lived in Gray's castle at one time.

I asked about the large house at the north end of Kincardine which was converted into Kincardine Hospital. Mrs. Hunter said that this was Grant's home. It was later owned by a Mrs. Gualco and she turned the house over to Kincardine to be used as a hospital. Mrs. Gualco also donated to Kincardine her large private golf course which adjoined the lot on which the house stood.

The large house near Kincardine on the Kincardine-Walkerton highway was built by Frank Herdner. All the windows are plate glass and the partitions between the rooms are solid brick. Kenny McKenzie, brother of Sir Alexander McKenzie, lived in this house. He was a gentleman farmer. At present a Mr. Farrow lives in this house. He brought over a war bride from England and then his father purchased this house and farm for him when he came back to Canada.

Mrs. Hunter recalled that during the early days of Kincardine a Scotch immigrant came out to little Scotland (Williamsburg), which was part of Kincardine. He came out when he was young and worked for his board and clothing. when he grew up he married into the McKenzie family, who were a partner in the firm of McKenzie and Mann, who constructed railroads through the West and made a fortune in doing so. Later this engineering firm was called the Stewart Construction. There were two big railroad construction firms, the Stewart and the Dominion. This young Scotch immigrant was Jack Stewart and he was called "Millionaire Stewart".

I asked Mrs. Hunter if she could tell me something about Elliot Hunter, who was drowned on a fishing trip between Kincardine and the Fishing Islands. Mrs. Hunter said that Elliot Hunter was a brother of Secord's grandfather. Elliot Hunter and his partner were returning from fishing and apparently their boat capsized somewhere between Baie du Dore and Kincardine. It was in November that the mishap occurred and the bodies were not recovered until the following spring when the bodies of both Elliot Hunter and his partner were found washed up on the beach at the foot of the 7th or 9th concessions near Lorne. The bodies when found were partially embedded and covered over with sand. Although the bodies had been in the ice and water all winter the clothes were still on the drowned men. It was by means of some mending that had been done to the shirt cuff of Elliot Hunter, by Secord's Aunt Liza, that the bodies were identified. Aunt Liza recognized her mending on the shirt cuff. The two bodies of these shipwrecked fishermen were buried in Kincardine cemetery.

Mrs. Hunter said that when she was a small girl it was her job to go down to the harbour and get fresh fish for their home. She said that she would watch the many fishermen set out for the day and she would get the finest of fish from these men when they came in with their catches.

Mrs. Hunter recalled that Treallaly Herden was harbour master at Kincardine. He had a son, Harry Herden.

Mrs. Hunter recalled that at the time of Elliot Hunter's funeral, which was held in the spring when the body was recovered, Secord's grandfather Hunter was living in Baden at the time and she remembered him coming to her home to borrow chairs for the funeral.

Coming into Kincardine from Walkerton, as one passes along Princess St. where it goes over a gully, there is a house on the south side of the street and to the east of the gully. this house was originally a tannery and is called the tannery house by the residents of Kincardine.

In the hollow where Broadway St. passes over the river there was at one time a woollen mill.

At the river mouth where the railroad station is today was located the Grange salt well on the south side of the river and Rhitmyer's well on the north side of the river. A third salt well was located on Coombe's flats. The last salt well was closed down in 1928. It was purchased by Canadian Industries Ltd. in 1927 and they operated it for a year before closing it down. Rhitmyer's house was just west of the Robert Baird house. Rhitmyer's house is now owned by Malcolm family. At one time the Coleman Pork Packing Plant

was located in Kincardine behind the present town hall. Coleman moved his plant from Kincardine to London.

I asked Secord and his mother if they recalled any shipwrecks along the Kincardine shore. They told me about Boiler Beach where lies the boiler from a boat which was used to pull a sailing vessel loaded with lumber off the beach where it had run aground. The captain of the steam vessel screwed down the safety plug and the boiler of the ship exploded when he attempted to pull the grounded vessel free.

Secord recalled an old wreck which laid partially submerged on the bathing beach near the station. He said that Kincardine Kinsmen Club removed this wreck a few years ago to clean up the beach. He didn't know what ship this belonged to.

I asked Hunters if anyone from Kincardine had gone to the Klondike on the great gold rush. They thought that Dr. Nelson Gumaer had gone somewhere in the West in search of gold.

Secord showed me some old photographs. He said that his father had constructed most of the bridges along the Saugeen River. There are 74 bridges along the Saugeen River.

They had a picture of the first rotary snowplow which they made for a man from Allenford who had invented the rotary snow plough. It was called the Ideal Snow Plow Co. Hunters built this first rotary plough in their shop for this Allenford man.

William Hunter invented steel sheet piling, which is used all over today. Unfortunately when Hunter registered his patent he neglected to put on "patent pending", which left a loophole for other companies to patent it for themselves.

Before I left Mrs. Hunter she took me in to her dining room where she had a large dining room table, oval in shape, which table she said was manufactured by John Watson, who had the furniture factory in Kincardine, before Malcolm's took over the factory.

Donald Matheson

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Interview with Donald Matheson at home of his daughter, Jessie (Mrs. Kenneth McGregor) on Broadway St. in Kincardine on Sept. 25, 1954

This Saturday afternoon I had a visit with Donald Matheson in Kincardine. Donald Matheson was born on October 23, 1862 at Lot 1, Con. V, Bruce Twp. Today Mr. Matheson was feeling fine, neatly dressed with a bow-tie and very pleasant to talk to. He has a very good memory of the early days.

His father, Murdoch Matheson, and his mother came from Cape Breton, where they had been married. They came to Goderich about 1846, remained there about four years and then came by boat from Goderich to Inverhuron in 1850.

Murdoch Matheson had a family of eight boys and one girl. The girl was the oldest in the family. She died in Goderich. Before bringing his wife and family to Bruce Township, Murdoch had prospected for a home and had erected a shanty on the 200 acres (Lot I, Con. V), where he eventually brought his family.

When Murdoch brought his family by boat from Goderich another family also came with them in the small boat. The trip was uneventful and they arrived safely at Inverhuron. But at Inverhuron the captain of the ship became drunk, did not tie his ship securely and in a storm which came up that night, the ship was wrecked, spilling the supplies of the two families into the lake. Supplies which Murdoch Matheson and his

wife had been accumulating for four years at Goderich were lost to the waves at Inverhuron. Some supplies were salvaged which were in wooden chests which floated ashore. In one of these chests was an iron tea kettle. In another chest was Murdoch's Sunday trousers with his money in paper Halifax currency in the trouser pocket. The trousers were in the bottom of one of the chests which were washed ashore, and the paper currency was so wet that the printing was hardly legible.

The first house that Murdoch erected was a shanty between his 200 acres. Then he erected a log house on the east 100 acres. Murdoch built toward the back of his farm so as to be near the creek which ran across the property.

Later a brick house was built. This was destroyed by fire in ___. Donald Matheson was living in the house at the time. The fire started in the wainscoting under the roof and soon got out of control. It took place in the forenoon. Donald recalls that he was almost overcome by smoke as he came down the stairs from attempting to fight the fire. After the house was burned Donald lived in the garage on the farm for some time.

When Murdoch Matheson took up his land there were no concession roads cut open but just country roads which had been made so as to be the shortest roads to town. After Murdoch had brought his family to Bruce Twp. he returned to Goderich and drove up seven head of cattle, consisting of three cows, two steers and two other head. The two steers were brought to be used as a team of oxen. The cattle lived on the grass in the beaver meadows in the summer and on browse during the winter. This was principally maple browse from the trees which were being felled. If the cattle ate all the browse, more trees were felled.

Donald Matheson was born about 12 years after his parents settled in Bruce Township. Donald cannot recall his father using oxen. He says they were mostly gone as far back as he can recall. Donald remembers as a boy seeing the first wagon which his father purchased.

It took Murdoch about ten years to clear his 200 acres of land. Murdoch's wife was a husky woman and was a great help to her husband in clearing the land.

It was in 1852 that Murdoch walked to Southampton and registered his 200 acres. Then in the time of the depression he sold 100 acres.

At the age of 17 Donald went to the United States to work with his oldest brother, who was on a lake dredging boat there. Donald spent three years working on a dredging boat. He worked up in the area of Sugar Bay, Sturgeon Bay and Hay Lake. Donald apparently spent the winters during this time on the farm with his father.

It was in the spring when Donald was 21 years of age and he was packing his trunk to go sailing again that summer when he noticed tears in his father's eyes and he realized then that his aging father wanted him to stay at home and look after the farm, as otherwise his father was compelled to hire outside help, which wasn't too satisfactory. So Donald remained at home and spent the rest of his life on the farm.

Baie du Dore translated from the French means "bay of pike" [doré: pickerel, walleye]. There was a settlement of 254 inhabitants at Baie du Dore before the land was surveyed. This was all destroyed by fire. Only a big grain warehouse escaped the fire. It was moved to Port Elgin after the fire. Mrs. Turner had a hotel at Baie du Dore but it was destroyed in the fire. After the fire Mrs. Turner moved to Tiverton and built the Mansion House. There was a long dock at Baie du Dore. The dock was long so as to extend out in the shallow water.

Fisherman's Bay was given its name at an early date from the fact that many of the settlers went here to fish as the lake trout would come into this bay.

Donald Matheson couldn't recall many shipwrecks along this portion of Lake Huron shore.

He said that he remembered a big barge which went ashore in Fisherman's Bay and another barge which went aground at Baie du Dore. This latter wreck occurred sometime after 1883.

He also recalled that there was a ship called the Carruthers, a big freighter-barge, which was wrecked and he and ___ were detailed to walk along the lake shore near Baie du Dore to watch for the body of the captain, Jack Lowe. Donald Matheson said that he disliked this job very much because he had attended school with Jack Lowe in their early days. Donald never did find Lowe's body nor did anyone else. The ship was not sailing from Baie du Dore area, but from some other port but it just happened that its captain at the time of the disaster in this area was Jack Lowe. Jack Lowe had come from Inverhuron but had moved away from Inverhuron before the grain elevators burned there.

Donald recalled that he remembered when there were four or five grain elevators at Inverhuron. He remembered a combined saw and grist mill about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from Inverhuron shore on the small creek which flows in at Inverhuron. This mill operated by water power at first but later on when flour was no longer ground here the mill was just used as a chopping mill and was powered by steam. There was a sawmill much earlier than this one which was located at the mouth of Inverhuron Creek on the north side of the creek. This was Cook's sawmill. This was before Donald Matheson's time.

The Bruces settled on the 6th Con., Bruce Twp. One of their children, John Bruce, had a hotel at Underwood. Another child, Angus Bruce, remained on the homestead.

Murdoch Calders lived on the 4th Con. of Bruce just below the hill.

Donald Matheson remembered Boss Grey and his castle. He said that Grey was ugly looking but he was kind hearted. He would never pass anyone by along the road but would stop his carriage and give the person a ride. Donald said that Boss Grey gave him rides in his carriage. Once a year Inverhuron Sunday school were invited up to Grey's house. Grey's daughter was Donald Matheson's first Sunday school teacher. Later she went to Regina. Matheson recalled this Sunday school picnic at the Greys, how as a boy he looked with awe at the huge marble fireplaces, the chandeliers and all the other rich trimmings in the house. Supper was served at a big long table and then on leaving each child was given a big bag of candy, much more than one could eat in one day.

Grey came from Philadelphia and settled in Bruce Township. He seemed to be very wealthy as he seemed to have plenty of money to spend. He cleared the land for a farm and erected his huge stone house, obtaining the stone from the quarry on Inverhuron shore. Grey did not seem to be interested in any business in Bruce County.

He had lots of carriages and buggies. He had a big carriage for the family and then another buggy for himself. Grey was great for employment, and Matheson believes that people took advantage of Grey in this respect. Eventually Grey returned to Philadelphia. An auction sale was held to dispose of his household effects and Matheson recalls being at the sale and seeing such things as surveyor's instruments being auctioned.

On the east side of the Grey farm was the Scott farm. Scott and Grey came from the same part of the United States. Scott was a stone cutter. He built a dam on the creek flowing through his farm and erected a sawmill and grist mill. Murdoch Matheson helped with the work, receiving 50 cents a day and came home at the end of the week with his three dollars.

Grey started to build a boat at Inverhuron but he never completed it.

I asked Donald Matheson if he remembered the passenger pigeons. He said that he remembered when the flocks would fly over so that they seemed like a cloud and darkened the sky. He remembered that the pigeons were so thick that one could knock them down with a long pole. He remembered his brothers knocking the birds down but he was too young to handle one of the poles. Donald did shoot at the pigeons with a double barrel muzzle loader using homemade slugs for ammunition. He was ten or 12 years old at this time. He recalled that they would get more pigeons in sugar making time as the men were in the bush then. Other times there were too many boys in the clearings and the pigeons would be

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chased out of the clearings. He recalled that the pigeons nested for one year in the thick cedar and pine swamp to the south of Baie du Dore between Baie du Dore and the little lake further south.

Matheson recalled that crows were much more plentiful in the days when they were clearing the land but that deer and bear were not as plentiful as now days. He remembered Bill Downy as being a crack shot with a muzzle-loading rifle. Downy shot the last bear in the Inverhuron area.

Going back to Baie du Dore, Matheson recalled visiting that place after the big fire and seeing three large sawdust piles which were left from three sawmills. Matheson said that the pine was logged out first. In later years Tommy Robison operated a lime kiln at Baie du Dore.

Matheson recalled that he attended school in a log school house on the north side of the road about three-quarters of a mile from the lake at Baie du Dore. The school was on a little hill there and a clearing beside the school provided a ball grounds but now this is all grown up with a dense cedar thicket. At noon hour the boys would go down to the lake for a swim. Usually six or eight of them would go and then there would be too many for the teacher to punish them and they would all get off. His first teacher was a Miss McKenzie. She was cross and strict. His next teacher was Miss McFey. She was a motherly old lady. These teachers boarded out in one of the nearby homes. Miss McFey came from Tiverton, where she lived in the house now occupied by the Smith boys.

Donald Matheson went to a log school at Inverhuron first. He liked it better than the Baie du Dore school because there were more of the labouring class at Inverhuron. They called the people living right at Inverhuron the Sandpipers. These people had arrived after all the farms had been taken up and there were only the park lots of 10 acres left at Inverhuron. These people took up these 10-acre lots and did fishing and dock walloping (load and unload ships).

The Beattie ships called at Inverhuron, with a ship calling almost every day. There were the Manitoba, Asia, Ontario, Quebec. There was a different ship for nearly every day of the week. A lot of posts and pavement timber was shipped from Inverhuron. The people took up swamp lots on lake range and cut posts, telephone poles and pavement timber which they shipped out in the summer. This was ready money and so they laughed at the farmers.

When Donald Matheson attended school at Inverhuron some of his school chums were the McLennan boys. He recalled that there were three pupils per seat. He shared a seat with another boy, __, and both he and the other boy were so shy that they would sit facing away from each other. This other boy became owner of a large lemon grove in San Diego, California.

Matheson recalled playing truant from school one time when a large sailing vessel went ashore at the dock at Inverhuron. The ship was loaded with bark. A wrecking crew was called from Detroit to pull the ship off the shore. Matheson and some other boys went down to the beach from school at noon and watched the big tug snort as it tried to float the other ship. This was Donald Matheson's first introduction to a steam pump. Angus Campbell (four years older than Matheson) was going to school at this time. The boys all tried to see who could climb the highest on the rigging of the sailing ship. Angus Campbell could climb away up but Matheson, since he was attempting it for the first time, got only as high as the first cross-arm. After watching the ships for a while, it was too late to go back to school, so the boys went off to Tiverton for the afternoon.

Matheson recalled a murder which took place in the early days at Baie du Dore. Matheson thought that he was about ten years old at this time, as he associated it with about the same time as his mother sent him to tailor McLean with cloth for to make him some clothing. So this would make the time about the year 1872. A man by the name of Johnson got drunk at Baie du Dore and in a drunken rage killed a man by the name of Price by hitting him on the head with a club. Price was killed and Johnson was sentenced to be hung but got off with life imprisonment. Johnson's son, Ed, who apparently was in the fracas, also got a short jail term, of either a month or a year. Ed Johnson was later to become a policeman. Price is buried in the cemetery on the VI Con. of Bruce Twp., at the top of the hill. Matheson recalls going to school and

the pupils would point out the Johnson children and rather shun them because their father was a murderer.

Donald Matheson recalled another murder, this one happening in more recent years, i.e. after Donald Matheson's brick house had burned and he was living in his garage. Dr. Crow was an intelligent Indian from the Saugeen Reserve at Southampton. He had built a shack at the back of the Matheson farm in the bush there, from lumber which he had obtained from the sawmill which was in operation at that time on the farm adjoining the Matheson farm on the east side. Dr. Crowe knew the Bible real well and could quote many portions from it by memory. He preached on occasion to the Indians at Southampton. Matheson recalled that one of Dr. Crow's outstanding sermons was "He having put his hand to the plough and looking back is not fit for the kingdom". Dr. Crow was living with his family in this shack on the Matheson farm at the time of the murder. He and the other Indians were quite superstitious and were very much afraid of ghosts. They would shoot point blank at what they thought were ghosts.

The Crow family had been hunting and had four or five coon in their possession. It was becoming dark when they saw three men walking through the field near their shack. Mrs. Crow held a torch in the doorway while her son Donald took aim with his rifle and fired at the man who was wearing a combination jacket and trousers, much similar to coveralls with brass buttons down the centre of the front. Young Crow believed that he was firing at a game warden who was coming to check up on him for shooting coon, but instead of this he shot and killed almost instantly a McKay boy who with two other young men had been looking at their cattle which they were pasturing on Donald Matheson's farm. The McKays lived on the 2nd Concession of Bruce Twp. The other two boys lived below the hill on the 4th Con. of Bruce. When their companion was shot, the other two boys fled to their home, leaving young McKay where he had fallen. Matheson was living in his garage at the time and as soon as the boys arrived home, a phone call was put through to Matheson to inform him of the murder. Matheson said he immediately took his gun and hid in the bushes along the road in front of his farm and waited for the murderer but after waiting for some time without seeing anyone, he realized that he was rather foolish to be sitting along the road with a gun so he returned to his dwelling.

The Crow family drove to Southampton by car after the murder. Dr. McCrimen of Tiverton was called to the scene of the murder. Matheson recalls that he went with the doctor to where the body was laying. It was a dark fall night and a wind was blowing and when they reached the body, leaves had already been blown over the body. Young McKay was pronounced dead, having apparently died almost instantly. Matheson helped carry the body out to his buildings, from where it was removed to Tiverton.

Trial was held later at which the Campbells, Strouds and others of the district testified against the Crow family. Dr. Crow fought the case in court and through his clever oratory was able to free his son of any penalty for the murder of McKay.