

A number of errors - see Ivan Maunat.

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to Sue Maunat
537-9445

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN DUNLOP REID

I was born June 6, 1904 to a dairyfarmer of Boardland, Dunlop, Scotland. We had some sixty cows and four milkmaids to attend to them. We shipped the milk every morning by train to Glasgow. One of the milkmaids looked after my mother's hair every morning, my mother had beautiful long golden hair down past her waist. Another maid did the laundry and the third looked after the housework while the fourth looked after me. They did all this between milking the cows. There were no milking machines in those days. My mother went around with a silk blouse and a dress on all the time.

Dad also had two men in the busy season helping him in the fields. He had ten acres of turnips and ten acres of corn and several fields of oats and hay. We also had a big garden of vegetables and fruit. I remember the gooseberries, great big ones which we sold to my uncle who had a jam factory. The gooseberry bushes lined the road into the farm. My dad raised ferrets, which are like mink only are real tame. These ferrets were used to go down the rabbit burrows and chase out the rabbits and dad would invite his friends for a day of sport shooting rabbits. There were so many rabbits that they spoiled the turnip crops. We didn't bother to eat the rabbits after we shot them.

I was four years old when my father and mother decided to rent the farm and go to Canada, which we did. My father had a brother at Rocky Point on Vancouver Island who had a 700 acre farm which we visited for about a year, during which time my brother Fergusson was born. Later my father saw an ad in the paper for a farmer to take charge of a fruit farm in Salmon Arm which we applied for and got accepted. So we all went to Salmon Arm and farmed the place for about two

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years until one day we received a telegram from Scotland telling us that our tenants at the farm had stolen and sold everything, set fire to our house and had disappeared. The family wanted us to come back to Scotland immediately. We got on the train from Salmon Arm to St. John's, New Brunswick and then by boat to Grenwich, Scotland, and then by train to Dunlop. We found that the fire had been put out before it had done much damage, and dad managed to get back most of the furniture and dairy cows. I started going to school there and for two years we farmed the place again. But then dad sold the whole place and we packed up our belongings and boarded the ship at Grenock, the S.S. Grampain, I remember it well.

The second day on the ship my mother got seasick and went to bed. She stayed there until we were nearly at St. John's. It was awfully rough. Ships did not have stabilizers on them in those days. I remember that it had a load of horses down in the ship's hold, nowadays it would be motor cars. I was running around the deck one day when I bumped into another fellow, we started fighting. His mother came along and stopped us and then took both of us down to her cabin and gave us both a chocolate bar. I then took them to see my mother and father and we have been pals every since. There were two Reid's on the boat and my father used to remember that he and I were the only two in the dining room and sometimes even he had to run - but I sat it out. Finally we arrived at Nova Scotia and got aboard the train to Vancouver and who should be there with us but our friend from the boat and his mother. I remember my mother used to cook our meals on the pot-bellied stove at the end of the coach with the rest of the

passengers. One day dad saw some pretty yellow flowers at the side of the train track when we were coming through the Rockies, so when the train stopped he went out and picked some of them. They were skunk cabbages and nearly stunk us out of the train! We finally arrived in Vancouver and boarded the boat for Victoria where my uncle met us with his team of horses and Democrat Carriage. We were finally off to the long final road to Rocky Point, just past ~~Net~~ chosen and Sooke, just about eighteen miles from the Victoria wharf. Unfortunately, mother caught pneumonia and had to be taken all the way back to Victoria the next day to the hospital.

Dad and my uncle meanwhile, started looking for a suitable farm to buy. They went to R.R. Brown, Real Estate agent in Victoria who told them that there was a farm for sale at Parksville, just north of Nanaimo, Vancouver Island. So they went up there and had a look at that: Then there was property at Piers Island, which is just off the present Ferry Terminal at Swartz Bay. Dad liked that island property but mom asked how they could bring up two boys on an island because we would have to have a boat to take us to school at Sidney every day, so that idea was out. The next day they were taken to see a farm on Salt Spring Island, my uncle had a friend there. The C.P.R. boat came up to Salt Spring Island three times a week, dad got attached to that farm and by then Maw was out of the hospital and dad took her up to see the farm and she said that it was the place for us. Meanwhile my brother and I had been staying with my uncle at Glenrosa, that was the name of his farm at Rocky Point.

The Salt Spring Island farm was a mixed farm with cows, sheep, chicken, pigs, a team of horses and about 100 acres in the middle of Burgoyne Valley at the

south of the Island. There was a little red schoolhouse just across the road which was very handy for my brother and I. Dad gave a corner of our orchard to the Presbyterian Church where my mother was very active for many, many years. *no church consecrated in 1887*

The orchard had over two acres of fruit trees and the farm had two creeks running through it and most of the acreage was fine farming land. The owner before us had just died and his widow had wanted to sell it. The farm had belonged to a Mr. and Mrs. Hill.

On the morning of December 20, 1911, my mother, brother, and I boarded the motor vessel Princess Joan from Victoria headed for Fulford Harbour, Salt Spring Island, which was the head of Burgoyne Valley. We arrived there at about lunchtime where my father met us with his team of horses and Democrat and proudly drove us to our new farm in the middle of the valley. I would be eight years old the coming June 5 and my brother would be 3 the coming May 18, 1912. My father got along fine and bought more cows and chickens and things but my mother was lost. She said "Look what I left behind to come to this!" She had to dress herself, do her own hair, cook for all of us, wash clothes and clean the house. She was going back home! But dad was very good to her and got her a maid, Miss Waterhouse, who stayed with us for quite a while to help ma. Mom then began to get along fine and started to mix in with the neighbours and started going out for afternoon teas and getting involved in the church. Dad also felt he needed help with the farming so he got a hired man from Victoria by the name of Mr. Quale. I went to the little red schoolhouse across the road and my first school teacher, Miss Mary Gyves, is still living in Fulford, while my last teacher, Miss Jessie Mouat is now Mrs. R. Toynbee who still lives on

on Salt Spring Island.

In the spring the sheep had lots of lambs and dad wondered where he would sell them when one night, while reading the Victoria Colonist, the local newspaper from Victoria, he read of a Mrs. Jeffreys starting a mixed grocery store in Oak Bay, near Victoria. We wondered if it were our friends who were on the ship and train, so we went to see her and we were very pleased to see that it was the same people. They were able to sell all the meat that dad could raise and also all the fruits and vegetables from the farm and we dealt with Mrs. Jeffreys for many years. Her son, Frank, would spend his holidays with us. I remember that when the First World War broke out I was down visiting Frank and I looked across the Sea and I could see the battleships coming. I came home as quick as possible, scared to death. The store was still there the last time I was around there, and Frank was still running it. We had our hired hand, Mr. Quale until about 1918 when, one day as he was up in a large plum tree picking plums, a branch that he was standing on broke and he fell down beside mom who was packing plums, he broke his back and we had to send him to the Victoria Hospital, but he died. Dad then said I didn't need any more schooling and I could be the hired man, which I was until 1926 when I started working with the Department of Public Works on road construction. By then we almost had a full-fledged farm and dad hired an old Swede, Frank Assk, to do some blasting of big stumps in the fields. Frank was with us for months before he bought a piece of land across the Fulford Creek behind the present Fulford Hall, where he built a house and lived until he died.

I am ahead of myself, before all of this my mother had forgotten all about her home sickness and went to a Women's Institute Conference in Victoria. She

brought some delegates back to Salt Spring Island and they helped her form the Fulford Harbour Women's Institute. They then called a meeting and appointed delegates to go out and canvass the neighbours for money to build a hall, which they did. One farmer, Mr. J.J. Shaw, said he would donate a half an acre for the building, so they collected enough money together with a Grant from the Government to buy all the material for the hall and then the farmers and neighbours all got together and had a big building bee for about a week to build the new hall. They elected a good carpenter, Mr. Jack Graham, to supervise the building and I was the water boy. That Fulford Hall is still a popular place for dances and Farmer Institute Shows. I remember this work with the Women's Institute made ill feelings between my mother and father because my dad felt she was giving too much money and too much time and they had a fight. My dad packed up and went on a trip to Scotland for a month or so, and my brother and I had to run the place while he was gone.

My dad saw that I didn't like horses and that I was more interested in motors, so, when I had made a lot of money just the year before we decided that we would buy a small caterpillar tractor for the farm and he sold the horses. So we used to take the tractor and go around to the neighbors filling their silos with hay and feed and I was able to collect all the money. We had a silo too, we grew cattle corn and sunflowers to chop up and put in the silo to feed the cows in the winter. One day I was over at Ganges, the biggest village on the island and I saw a Wee McGregor drag-saw in the warehouse and I thought that I could buy one with the money that I had made from filling silos so I promptly sent for one. When it arrived I went sawing firewood for all the farmers and made good money that way. I received one dollar per rick, which is three

dollars a cord for sawing it and they would split and stack it themselves. Sometimes I would charge seventy-five cents an hour. I was the only one around with this kind of a saw and kept very busy with it. Soon my father arrived back home as lively as life again, he had forgotten all his troubles.

In the fall, the Government would let all the farmers work on the roads in order to pay off their farm taxes so I would go and work off my dad's taxes. I guess because I was a good worker (or he was looking for a son-in-law), the foreman would tell me that "You can work here as long as you like", so I did! There were no trucks, they hauled the gravel by wagons and teams of horses. Five or six men would shovel gravel into the wagons and then when we got to where the gravel was to be dumped, the bottom of the wagon, which was made by 2 x 4 timbers with each end whittled down for a hand-hold, a man would be at each end of the timber which would then be twisted to let the gravel fall through and then put the timbers back in place ready for the next load. Each wagon carried about a half a yard of gravel and we usually had four or five farmers' teams of horses depending on the size of the job to be done.

After dad had bought the cat erpillar tractor and sold the horses we had no transportation so when mother saw an ad in the Victoria Colonist paper that a Mr. Montayemput, manager of the Bank of Montreal, wanted to sell their pony and basket-chariot, she figured that that was what we wanted and went to Victoria and bought it. It had a lovely basket with two seats facing sideways and had two rubber wheels and a door at the back. With this came a good sized bay pony which was a good runner like a racehorse which we called "Babe". We also used "Babe" for cultivating the garden.

I guess, with me twisting his arm a bit, dad figured we needed a motor-car so he saw Gavin Mouat at Ganges and we bought a 1923 Model T Ford pick-up which we kept for about two years. Soon I had money burning a hole in my pocket and I saw a cute 1926 Model T Ford roadster at the National Motor Company window in Victoria. But when I told dad, he said he wasn't buying any more cars but if I wanted to I could but it would have to be a truck. So my cousin and I figured that we could make a cute box at the back of this roadster and when I wanted to I could take the box out and put the roadster parts back at any time. This new roadster was set up like it was coming out of a fireplace in the National Motors Showroom and it was just loaded with extras. It was just before Christmas. With the help of dad's 1923 Ford as a trade-in, I got the new roadster for \$750. I took it down to my cousin's place at Rocky Point and we made a cute box of edge-grain flooring and I varnished it and made it look very neat. I had that car until I got married and then I sold it to my brother. It was about at that time when one Saturday dad and I were out in the field behind the barn and we smelled smoke and on looking up we saw that the Fulford Institute Hall was on fire. We went down as fast as we could and arrived just in time to see the roof cave in and in only a few minutes there was just a pile of ashes. I don't think anyone knew how it happened, it could not be blamed on electricity because there was none, but they had it well insured and started rebuilding a bigger one immediately - but it too burned down after a few years, along with the first Beaver Point Hall.

Our transportation to and from Victoria was by George Lasseter's motor-launch every morning to Sidney and back at night, if you didn't want to sit on the C.P.R. boat for half a day. We went from Sidney by "Flying Line" bus to

Victoria. At this time also, a farmer John Hepburn, at Fulford, had a stall in the City Market in Victoria and he went to Canoe Cove, near Sidney, every Saturday by his own launch. He kept a motor-car there which his daughter drove to town with his produce for the market. I went with them several times to help them start the engine in the boat, it was a Petters engine and you unscrewed a plug from the top of the cylinder, inserted a small cartridge with a fuse at the end, then you lit the fuse with a match, the cartridge exploded and started the motor. This farmer was quite a genius. He had a Cadillac car, a Chevrolet, and an Ivory tractor, and he figured that if he made a scow with three pontoons on the bottom with a propellor on each pontoon which were arranged so that he could back the Cadillac back wheels to turn between two pulleys and the same for the Chevrolet and tractor on the other pontoons, that there would be lots of power to run the scow. The cars and tractor and propellers worked fine but there was too much backwater and the scow hardly moved. I was with them one Sunday afternoon and it took us all afternoon to go up Fulford Harbour a short distance and we were lucky to get back. He built the scow on the beach by the Catholic Church at Fulford Harbour, I wonder what happened to it. About ten years later the M/V "Cy Peck" started a regular ferry run from Fulford Harbour to Swartz Bay.

At this time I was having a grand time with the girls and my new car. We used to give room and board to the school teacher and the minister until my mother thought I was too old for her to keep a nice girl in the house so she quit having the boarders and the neighbour across the road kept the teacher. She wasn't kicked out of their house when their son grew up! Anyway I used to take her out to dances and to picnics. There were seven schools on the island

by then with seven school marms and I think they all stayed at our house at one time or another. I remember the first time I ever played bridge, one night Mr. and Mrs. Eaton who owned and lived in the White Lodge at Fulford, phoned and asked if I would drive them to Dr. Lawson's place at Ganges to a Bridge party because their car had broken down. I agreed to take them but told them that I couldn't play bridge. They said I would before I left for home and they had it all arranged for me to play, which I did. It worked out fine and I have played bridge ever since and I have never had the same hand twice. I remember another night when Mrs. Eaton phoned and asked me to drive them to Central because they had to play for a private dance at the Central Hall. I was to dress up because I was also invited. I had a fine time and, although I didn't know it at the time, my future wife was at that dance. At all the dances on Salt Spring Island Mrs. Eaton played the piano, her husband played the saxophone and Frank Downey played the drums.

In 1923 we got the first government trucks for working on the roads, one at Fulford and two at Ganges. Tom Pengelly and Ed Woods drove the two trucks at Ganges while Cliff Wakelin drove the one at Fulford. The government didn't have any road graders on the island so they had to use three scrapers which were pulled by teams of horses until the government sent over a big Avery tractor converted into a roller. It weighed about twenty tons. They started pulling those scrapers behind the roller and loaded rocks on top of the scrapers so they would dig deeper. This made the roller and scrapers far too heavy for all the culverts and bridges so they had to have a crew going ahead of the roller to strengthen all of these culverts and bridges.

About 1926 mother and I went to Ganges where we watched some men who were unloading a "30" caterpillar tractor off of a scow. It was brand new and they said it was for the government road work, so I looked it over and thought how I would love to operate it. I was used to our caterpillar on the farm and the government was used to me and my caterpillar because I snow-plowed with it all over the island a year or so before. I asked the foreman at Ganges who was going to operate it, but he didn't know. I asked the squire of the island and he told me that they had the operator already picked so mother and I went home.

As I was driving home I said to mother that I was going to write to the Superintendent in Victoria about operating that tractor. The Superintendent's name was Pete Campbell and I knew him personally and I wrote to him. In my own mind I gave a day for my letter to get to Victoria, a day for him to think it over and then on the third day he would be up to see me because I knew the government had a big yacht that the superintendent travelled on. So on the third morning dad and I were in the garden planting potatoes when Frank Crofton, who drove a jitney on the island, stopped at our gate. Our Fulford road foreman and Pete Campbell walked up our path with Frank Crofton when the foreman introduced me saying "here's your man". So we shook hands and Pete Campbell pulled out my letter and said "If this is all true and the foreman and Frank Crofton back you up, then the job is yours". "Mr. Crofton will pick you up tomorrow morning on his way home after taking his passengers to the launch and you can start up the caterpillar and drive it up to the government shed at Central, then we will let you know when we will be starting work. In the meantime get all the instruction books and read up on them and be a good operator for us".

Was I on cloud 9! There were some people at Ganges that could have shot me, I could name several of them. The government got another Ford truck about now and I drove it when I was not operating the caterpillar. One day I was told to go down to the C.P.R. wharf at Ganges and wait for the boat because there was a grader on it for us and I was to pull it off the boat. Soon the Princess Mary from Vancouver came in and I towed the grader up into the front of Mouat's garage where I took a picture of it which I still have. I remember that there was a long tongue and neck yolk together with whipple trees for teams of horses which would normally tow this grader. Since they were going to tow it behind a caterpillar all we needed was a short hitch. We thought it would be a shame to cut the tongue and whipple trees etc., so we made a short one for the caterpillar and the original long ones were put up in the rafters at the red government shed at Central and I believe that they are still up there. We used this little grader for a while but we found that it was too small and kept breaking all the time. In due time they sent us a bigger one and sold the original small grader to Mr. Larson. I could still break the big grader with my caterpillar but it was better and lasted until we got a self-propelled, one man grader which I had to operate.

After the First World War the government had opened up a new right-of-way from Blackburn's Lake around the north side of the Divide to Cranberry Road. There was a high bridge at both ends of this road. They cut the trees and blasted the stumps and then pulled them out with three-horse teams. In order to move the soil from one place to another other than by shovelling it into a wagon, they had a horse scraper that held about a quarter of a yard of soil and a team

of horses would pull that to where they wanted the fill. The driver had to grab two handles and flip the scraper over when he got to where he was supposed to dump. When we got the caterpillar tractor and big grader we went back to work on the Divide road and worked on it where it went around a rock bluff which was solid conglomerate rock. This kind of rock is good for roads so the government got a rock crusher, blasted the rock, and crushed and hauled it onto the road. They got five or six Ford trucks to haul the rock and it was put on the road about six inches thick where I then had to spread it with the caterpillar and grader. Then, towards the end of the day, I had to roll it with that big twenty-ton roller. The regular operator of the roller got laid off when the government changed from Liberal to Conservative. I was a Conservative before so I had to take over. In order to dump the crushed gravel from these new Ford gravel trucks, there was a handle on each side at the front of the iron box and a man had to get on each side and lift up the box to dump it. These trucks held a little more than a yard if they didn't have any hills to climb. There was no automatic spreading of the gravel, it all had to be done by hand. You must remember that these were some of the original Model T trucks made by Henry Ford just after the First World War.

The rock crusher was a real wheelbarrow project. What with their iron wheels being pushed along wooden planks by the men for six days a week hauling the rock from the pit to the crusher. After it was crushed the rock went up a conveyor belt to a hopper and the trucks drove underneath the hopper and got loaded.

This new road from Fulford to Ganges was a godsend to the travellers compared to the old road which went over the **D**ivide. The **D**ivide road was very steep

in several places and several cars had fallen over the edge of the high banks. My dad and three or four others were coming home from Ganges with a team and wagon one afternoon and they had just rounded the corner at the top of one of the hills and started coming down when the britchen strap broke on one of the horses, the wagon jumped forward on them which made the horses bolt down the hill as fast as a bullet. When they got stopped at the bottom they had to turn around and go back up the hill to pick up all the pieces. They were very lucky to have survived it all.

I think it was about 1927 when the government sent me with the caterpillar and grader on a scow from Harbour House beach, Ganges, over to Roberts Bay, Sidney, where we again landed on a beach. I then boarded at the Sidney Hotel with a man they hired from Vancouver to supervise the job. Charlie Grand was a nice man and he got another bed in his room so that it wouldn't cost me so much for room and board. He said that he also wanted my company rather than being alone. I graded all the roads in the Saanich Peninsula except for Beacon Avenue and the main road to Victoria, which were the only roads that were not gravel. Then I pulled gravel trucks filled with gravel off of Bazzan Bay beach which were to be used for the sidewalks of Beacon Avenue. I also drove a Chevy truck that I had been sent to Victoria to bring back. It held about two yards of gravel and we finally got it over to Salt Spring Island for the government. Then I went to Victoria again and brought back a new Pierce-Arrow truck which I drove and it finally went to Salt Spring Island. I also drove a big Day-Elder truck between times while I was working in Sidney. I invested a five cent piece in the cement curb and sidewalks and I wonder if someone has found it yet? I also remember that I got sick from the cement dust in my lungs

and I even started coughing up chunks of cement. They sent me to the doctor but I forget what he did for me. I do remember that I had to wear a respirator after that.

One morning Charlie Grant came to me and said that the Athletic Association had asked him if we would grade their ballpark as they were going to have a game soon. He said there would be no money in it but we could probably do it in a couple of evenings. A few nights later after we had finished the days work a truck backed up to the hotel door and asked where our room was, then two men rolled a barrel of beer wrapped in straw up to our room. It was from the Athletic Association in appreciation of our grading their park. We had lots of beer and lots of friends for a while after that.

After we had finished doing the sidewalks on Beacon Avenue, I was sent to Butchart's with the tractor and grader to help with some new cement roads from West Saanich road to Butchart's Gardens. I boarded in the Todd Inlet Cement Quarry bunkhouse. They had a mess hall and the kitchen cooked for 108 men who were all working on this cement road. I had a good time for about two months and worked with the grader mostly. They are not making cement there any more and the buildings are empty. After this was finished the tractor, grader and I were sent home by scow again to Harbour House beach.

A few days after returning from Sidney the tugboat and scow operator telephoned me and said that he would like for me to go with him to Quadra Island to pick up a big tractor which the company was seizing for non-payment. He said I would get well paid for the job of driving it off of the beach onto the scow, and then off the scow when we got to Nanaimo. It was a 60 Holt Caterpillar. I said that I would like to but that I couldn't leave the government job so he said that he would speak to them. They let me go for a two weeks leave of absence and I had a fine time. We got the big tractor in a couple of days and took it to Nanaimo. We had a cheery cook and the boss, Bill Hicks of Sidney, had a new tug. He asked me if I would like to stay the full two weeks with him on the tug. I naturally said yes and he said that he had several orders to sort out log booms and take them out beyond the three mile limit of the Vancouver Island West Coast so that some U.S. tugs could pick them up and he wanted me to operate the tugs while pushing the sections of logs together while he and the cook were on the boom. It was fun. One night we were in Nanaimo where Bill Hicks had just started the car-ferry "Minerva" named after his wife which operated between Nanaimo and Gabriola Island. We all got on board "Minerva" and went over to a dance on Gabriola Island. We had a lot of fun for those two weeks and I was sorry when my time was up and he brought me back to the social life on Salt Spring Island with all those school teachers.

At Christmastime every school teacher would have a Christmas concert at their local school together with Christmas trees, Santa Claus and a dance. After the concert they would put the children to sleep on the desks, around the side of the school room while we would dance to the wee hours of the morning. And this continued night after night for seven nights, one for each school, and we

never missed one of them. How did we survive and work each day? I got acquainted with one of the schoolteachers at last. She was from the Central school and we started going steady and finally got engaged. These teachers and their boyfriends went hiking or to beach weiner roasts every Sunday and I have several pictures of this. In about two years we were married, I will never forget the week before we were to get married when the road foreman put me on the wheelbarrow procession at the rock crusher for five days before I was able to leave and go to Vancouver to get married.

I am away ahead of myself, because in May 1929 I bought a 1926 Buick Roadster with a rumble seat in the back to go on my honeymoon in. It was the best car on the island for a while. We took it to North Vancouver and on Sunday we thought we would give the old folks a treat by taking them to White Rock to visit my bride-to-be's cousin. So we did this and nearly got there when the engine started knocking so we stopped and phoned for a tow-truck which towed my new Buick to a local garage. When we got there the garage man started the motor and a chunk of the con-rod flew out one side of the engine, another chunk flew out the other side and the engine stopped. The garage man took the engine apart to find that the crank shaft had broken so we had to phone the cousins who then came and picked us up, and later they took us back home to North Vancouver. The next day I phoned Davis Motors in Victoria and told them of my troubles because the car was guaranteed for a month and that this was only the ninth day that I had had it. So they came over and looked at it and told me that if I were to get the car to their shop in Vancouver they could fix it. A friend of Helen's, my bride-to-be, said he would come with his car and tow the Buick to the shop in Vancouver where they started working on the

motor. It was a real mess and they had to renew almost the whole engine which took about three weeks until one day they 'phoned and said the car was ready. We went over and it was sitting in the middle of the shop purring like a kitten. We were just going to drive it away when the foreman came and asked us to wait until we ~~made~~ were sure who was going to pay the bill as it is about \$600. I said they are paying or it stays here! At that time I had only made a down-payment so when he came back laughing, I guess that they said that they would pay. I found out later that the party who owned the car before had broken the crank-shaft and had it welded and then sold the car. But after all this I had a fine car which lasted for about twelve years.

Now I am about where I wheeled a barrow full of rocks for five days at the rock-crusher. The morning I was leaving for Vancouver to get married I went down to Fulford for some gas. In those days the garage-man had several forty-five gallon drums of gas and coal-oil and diesel and so-on and he had a small handpump. He would unscrew the bung in the drum and inset this hand pump in the selected barrel and start pumping into your gas tank. So I landed on the boat at Ganges with a full tank of coal oil! This bachelor's joke was more embarrassing than the wheelbarrow procession. A young mechanic friend of mine said that we should push it on the boat and we could fix it before we get to Vancouver. We did this but it still wouldn't start until he got some gas out of his car and poured some into my carburetor. My car started then and the smoke filled the boat full of smoke. I nearly got put in jail. Anyway we found out that I had a tankfull of coal-oil. When we got to Steveston he helped me push the car off the boat and away up the wharf before I started it and it smoked and smoked. I kept it going until I got to Helen's place. Next day we drained

all the coal-oil out and put gas in and it ran fine again. Anyway we finally got married at 8:00 November 6, 1929. It was also my mother's birthday so we bought her a big basket of flowers. We spent our first night in the Abbotsford Hotel and next morning left for Seattle where we stayed at the Fry's Hotel for a week. We came back home to Ganges where we had bought a 50 acre block of land with a new house on it from Mr. Bill MacAffee for \$2,100.00 of which we still have eight acres. The United Church minister was living in the house, the Reverend Allen and his very nice family. They had two sons and one daughter who married one of the Mouats. Well they had to find new lodgings. After they moved out we had a great time buying furniture for our new house, a lot of it was wedding presents, then I had to go back to work.

In the spring of 1930 they sent me back down to Sidney by scow with the tractor and grader to work on the new Swartz Bay road for the new ferry that the government was starting in September. They had to straighten and widen about two miles of the old road and make an approach for the ferry wharf. I worked there for about three months. My wife was staying with her parents in Vancouver so, because I was good friends with the boss, every Friday night he would drive me down to catch the Motor Princess for Steveston. I would change my clothes in the crews quarters and leave them there until Sunday night when I came back. I would hitchhike a ride from the boat to North Vancouver to visit my wife who was expecting our first child in August. Her parents had a grocery store on the corner of Keith Road and Moody Avenue. I had to go back to Steveston by bus. Another fellow worker, Frank Evans from Duncan, and I boarded together at the Seagull Inn. He operated a power grader. I was sent home after we were through, and my wife came home and in Aug. our first son was born, Thomas Sinclair Reid, the new ferry started running in September and our little Tom was the youngest and Granny Gyves was the oldest passengers at the grand opening. This new ferry would only hold about sixteen to twenty cars depending on their size. Later they took out some posts and beams and then they could get two or three more cars aboard. In order to be sure to get on the ferry you had to be on the wharf at least an hour before sailing time. Our second son John Dunlop Reid Jr. was born October 1931.

Things went along pretty good from then on, only the Depression started and there was no work for anyone. For all the families that were out of work, the Government gave them a week's work on the road every month but if you drove a car you didn't need work. The Government started a new project from Bennett's Corner to Price's Farm between Fulford and Ganges, a distance of one mile, straightening the road. I was lucky because I was operating the machinery and had to work all the time to keep the others working. We cleared a straight road from one end to the other, they fell trees, blasted rocks and stumps and levelled the ground. They bought a big scraper called a Fresnal to pull behind the caterpillar. It held maybe a yard of dirt, was about six feet long and two feet wide and round. You pulled a rope to fill it and when the weight got to the back of it it would tip up and slide until you wanted to dump it. You then pulled the rope again and it would roll over to the first notch and it would spread. If you pulled it to the next notch it would dump the whole load and then slide along until you were ready to reload. I have a picture that the Superintendent took of it when we were straightening the road by the Creamery on Ganges Hill. I had to start up that big 20 ton roller every afternoon for a couple of hours to roll what rock they had hauled.

I must tell you about this roller. It was a four cylinder horizontal, two cylinders each side of the crank-case which had to be primed with high octane gas. It had a great big fly wheel, about four feet in diameter with spokes in it. You had to climb up the spokes and start swinging, and on the third swing you jumped off hoping it would start - if it didn't you had to try again and again. When it started you got up in the cab and put your foot on the clutch and grabbed a four-foot long lever and pulled the whole engine forward into a big cog, release the clutch and then it would go forwards, and to go in reverse you stepped on the clutch and pulled the whole engine back and into the reverse cog wheel, and you backed up. There was no brake - you had to run it into a bank or put something behind or in front of the rollers in order to stop to change gears. It started running backwards one day with me on it down Creamery Hill and I headed it into the steep bank. Luckily it stopped before it tipped over. To steer it there was a logging chain wrapped around a shaft onto the wheels and the steering column - wrap the chain one way and it would go to the right and the other way it would go to the left. What a contraption! The government soon figured that I had too much to do so they hired a man to operate this roller but he couldn't start it so the superintendent told me that I would send up some ether capsules and that would start it. So next morning there was a great explosion and you could put your hand down between the four cylinders - I guess he used too much ether! I had to pull the roller after that with the caterpillar. After we were through using it there it was sold for scrap iron to Japan. I took a picture of it and the caterpillar and grader on the Ganges Fulford road what is now Arnell Drive, in Hundred Hills subdivision on the Fulford Ganges road.

Talking about that new Fulford to Ganges road there was a high bridge at each end of it but now they are filled in and levelled. I was allowed to drive my car during those days because I had to get to work. We didn't get much wages, all we got for a long time was two dollars a day, but everything was cheap. This was sure a Depression, cigarettes 10 cents to 15 cents a package, gas was twenty-five cents a gallon, tea, coffee and butter was about twenty-five cents a pound, sugar was eight cents a pound and a good pair of blue denims was ninety-five cents and the same for a good shirt. Woodwards in Vancouver sent out a ninety-five cents sheet every month and we sent our order there mostly. We must have worked on that road for two or three years until things really went bad and they closed down everything - no work! Then, somehow, Gavin Mouat managed to talk the government into building a big consolidated school in Ganges and most of the material was donated. Everybody that wanted to could work for two weeks voluntarily, then he could work for two weeks for pay. They brought a contractor from Vancouver named Tom Angus. Anyway I got along fine and worked until it was nearly finished.

The second World War broke out when we were nearly finished the school and we thought that we would have to stop but no they let us carry on. Then one day the Army called for volunteers for the war and we all went for examinations. I was rejected, too old I guess, so then Mouat Brothers Store called on me to do their delivering of groceries and produce with their truck, which I did for the duration of the war. Then our third son, Robert Alexander (Robin) was born in Lady Minto Hospital, I paid off both doctor and hospital with firewood at two dollars per cord delivered for our children. I delivered it with my trailer

and Buick car. While working for Mouat's I had three old women that always had something waiting for me to do for them. The worst one lived up a cliff from the beach and always had a big rock that I had to pack up for her rockery. Another time I had a big load of dressed lumber on the truck and I was going up a long steep hill when the truck gave a lurch and all the lumber slid shingle fashion down the hill - I was all alone and just sat down and cried. I had to haul barrels of gas stove-oil and coal-oil and tons of feed and load and unload it all by myself. All I got paid was one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. I strained my side and the doctor put me in hospital for a couple of weeks.

When we first came to Salt Spring there were two dwelling houses (one is still there) and a feed shed at the Fulford Harbour Wharf, the Catholic Church and at the head of the Bay there was Mr. Blandys grocery store and feed shed - and up the Burgoyne Valley there was the Anglican Church and about another half mile up the Valley there was another store, Mr. Edwards Groceries, and the Post Office. Then a quarter of a mile further was our farm, the school, and the Presbyterian Church and a Parsonage for the minister. Mr. Blandy's Grocery Store was sold to a Mr. Krebs and our grocer Mr. Edwards had just bought a Ford car - the only one around. My cousin from Victoria was staying with us and he could drive this car, so in the middle of the night Mr. Edwards came and asked if my cousin would drive Mrs. Krebs to the hospital to have her baby. He said sure so they started with her and her husband in the back seat and Kenneth driving. Soon Mr. and Mrs. Krebs started talking French and they were unaware that Kenneth could also speak French but he said nothing. Soon he heard a baby cry and by the time they arrived at the hospital it was all over. Kenneth, about eighteen years old, said he learned all he needed to know about having babies. Later on this store was sold to Mr. and Mrs. A. Eaton and they built on to it to make a hotel, which they sold in later years to a Mrs. Collington and her daughter Joan. They got a beer-parlour in and she finally sold it and then later it burned down and it was never rebuilt. The land has a drive-in on it now.

There were only two telephones at Fulford in those days. One at the Mr. Edwards store and Post Office and the other at Ted Ackerman's house because he was the road foreman. We were next to get a telephone so I could keep in touch with the road foreman. After World War I there were three Scottish families who came and bought property along the Beaver Point road and one got a preemption from the government, it was on the north side of the road almost opposite Stone Lake and about a mile in from the road. So by the time he and the government made a road into his place in later years they found out that there could be an alternative route to Ganges if the government continued the road another three miles, because they would connect to Cusheon Lake or Beddis Road. So they started surveying and slashing out a trail in about 1922. I don't know how they did it, by the time I started there there were just stump-holes that had to be filled in with a team of horses and a one-man scraper or by hand. There were a lot of switchbacks with sharp curves that had to be dug around by hand, but it was all sand and it was easily shovelled, until it was wide enough for the horses and scraper to work on it. In later years when graders and bulldozers had arrived they made the road almost straight. This new road cut almost six miles off between Beaver Point and

Ganges, and was called Stewarts Road after the preempter. In those days there was a separate Public Works Department for the south end and the north end of Salt Spring Island. The dividing line was about Cusheon Lake Road.

There was one of the worst forest fires on Stewarts Road which burned hundreds of acres. Everybody that was able to was fighting it, I remember throwing chickens out of the chicken house in the middle of the night and as fast as we threw them out they would come back in. They were all burned - roast chicken everywhere. The next worst fire we had on the island was in the depression years up where Sunset Drive is now. It started on Maple Beach from a campfire and ran up the mountain and covered hundreds of acres. There were no houses or roads there then and the fire lasted for a month or more. We received twenty-five cents an hour plus one meal per day whilst fighting this fire which was in July 1938. The late Gavin Mouat started a subdivision along the beach so he brushed out a road above the beach and connected it to the North End Road. Later the government took it over and it is still called Sunset Drive.

About the late thirties the late Cecil Baker started a silent movie picture show in the Mahon Hall. He had a gas motor and generator out at the back of the hall and an asbestos enclosure in the middle of the room with a big movie camera inside. It was very dangerous for fire but we all thought it was wonderful. Then later an old chap, Olie Garner started to build a big building on the corner of McPhillips and Jackson Avenue in Ganges and he included a real picture house in one corner with projection room at back, a stage, and proper wicket. So in the late forties a Mr. and Mrs. Henn started a sound or talking movie show. This was good until people started buying T.V. sets then the theatre fizzled out, it used to be called the Rex Theater.

My wife thought if we got a maid in to look after the two boys she would like to teach school again which she did for three or four years, so she brought home the money and I brought home the groceries. On May 24th about 1940 my wife's father died on the way home from the May 24th celebrations. Shortly after that her mother sold the store in North Vancouver and came over and stayed with us. She brought about twenty or thirty white Wyndot hens with her so that was my first chickens. So Granny was able to baby sit while Helen taught school. Just a little before this, Kay Henton, from Manitoba came to see us and I got her a job as a nurse in the Lady Minto Hospital. One weekend she came along with a solder boy and finally married him and raised a son and daughter. She used to go riding with me in the truck with her shorts on and the heat would bring out the green cushion on her legs and back in the hot weather. Mouats had a good truck, a big new Dodge, they got it from the Jap ~~one~~. When they were deported Mouats confiscated everything they had. Mouats made an enclosure in the center of their store with fencing wire and sold groceries in there at normal prices and called it cash and carry. So the old people and war widows used to buy their groceries in cash and carry, then put them in a satchel and go over to the regular counter and buy a loaf of bread to be delivered and ask if "Your young delivery boy" would mind leaving this off too. After about three years there I quit and went as a carpenter's helper with Harry Loosemore and Carl Hensen and we renovated old houses, with lumber, gyproc and brickwork. I once built a fireplace and the carpenter packed

*totally
interior
purchased
from
John
Assets*

bricks and mortar for me. I also built several chimneys and added on to some. Incidentally, my fireplace worked and still is. When I worked at the new school the last piece of flooring we put on inside every door has Hanson, Seymour, Loosemore and Reid written under that board. Later on the government got a nice new power grader with a cat and the road foreman asked if I would like to come back and operate this nice new grader, and I did. Road wages were pretty good now, they paid forty cents an hour for labourers and a little more if you were driving a truck or any machinery, so I worked there until 1948 when I got a nervous breakdown and the doctor advised me to quit and start a new adventure. So I built a big long double-deck chicken house and kept about 800 laying hens in them. I couldn't make much money by sending my eggs to the market place so I started selling them at the door to private people, the bakeshop and a couple of small stores at Ganges and did well. Then I thought I didn't have enough to do so I bought a small bulldozer and went out doing custom work between times. I did well with that also, I opened up a gravel pit and sold gravel at three dollars a load. I made a ramp and pushed the gravel onto the trucks with my bulldozer. I also had two milkcows with a couple of fat calves and two pigs, which I kept one and sold the other - that paid for the feed for the two. We had a good Creamery at Ganges and I took the cream down and they supplied us with butter. A while before all of this I needed a barn so some of my neighbors suggested having a work-bee to put up the barn. So I did, I got all the timbers out of the bush, peeled them and hewed them square and had everything ready when fourteen of the neighbors and friends gathered and we put up all the framework in a day. I went down to Fred Crofton at Harbour House Hotel and I bought a five gallon barrel of beer from him. So we had lots of bait. Helen had two or three of their wives in the kitchen helping her with the meals. I covered the barn with shakes that I split out of one big cedar log. The barn was two stories, sixteen feet by thirty and I dug out a basement under it to keep cows, keep calves, and the two pigs were at the other end.

In later years I got rid of the cows and pigs and I put chickens in the barn, then I had about a thousand hens.

About now, I had to work harder so I built a greenhouse and started raising plants and I sold them all over the island and the outer gulf islands, and made well. I built a dutch oven at one end of the greenhouse and had the stovepipe along the full length of the building. I built a bench on top of the stove pipe which was a wonderful place to germinate seeds. On top of the Dutch oven I built a square to sterilize the soil, the dutch oven was made with reinforced cement six inches thick and about three feet square and it burned wood. I sold most plants for three dozen for a dollar, when I got better established I got two trailers and would load them up and take them down to Ganges on Saturdays and I rented a little information booth that the Chamber of Commerce had and sold the plants by where the firehall is now. I used to average around a hundred dollars every Saturday at first - towards the end of the season things slackened off and I quit and the people came to the house for their plants. I have pictures of all this.

About now I got awful close to the barn with my gravel pit so I figured it was about time to move it so I got two logs for skids pointed them and fitted

them under the barn by lifting it up, then I got the biggest bulldozer on the island, Nels Degnan's, and I had to get the telephone man to come to disconnect the wires to let the roof of the barn clear them as it was taken down the road. I also had a couple of hundred hens in the barn. Anyway the bulldozer hooked onto it and pulled it down the road and a young fellow with a movie camera took pictures of us pushing it from behind down the road and into the bottom of the gravel pit. To level it, I stood with a block to put under one of the skids while Nels was lifting one end with the bulldozer. The end broke off and came down and caught my hand, then they had to jack it up again to free my hand. I went down to the doctor but nothing was broken but my hand was black and as sore as - - - -, it was a long time before it healed. We didn't have any cows or pigs then but we had two calves raising for beef down at the bottom of this gravel pit which was about twenty-five feet deep. We found two pockets of clam shells down in the gravel.

When I started raising chickens wheat was a dollar and a half per hundred pound sack and laying meal was two twenty-five, but kept going up all the time until it was four sixty and six dollars when I quit. I used to send for five hundred day old chicks, sexed, and had a propane brooder to keep them warm. I guess our fourth child a girl, Margaret, was born by now. Were we happy, the only girl in five generations. Our whole family used to go for a holiday for two weeks or more every year, we have been all through the States and British Columbia by car within the last thirty years. Before that you were considered a sissy if you wanted to stop for a holiday. I remember once, Tom wanted to go to Seattle and wanted me to go with him, so I told the boss and he said "Well that's silly, holding us up to go to Seattle". But next day when he talked it over with his office he told me I could go. I was grading the road down by Price's corner and he told me to park the grader well off the road because it will sit there until you come back - so I did and we were gone for a week. Tom bought an accordian and I bought four new pistons for my Ford and a hydraulic jack. When we came back next day my grader was still there but nobody would hardly speak to me.

My wife, I, and all my family belonged to a square dance club, first the Eighty Club and then the Wagonwheels and then at last the Salty Wheels. About five years ago they made my wife and I life members. We used to have fun and they gave us a carved plaque to hang over our gate, which I did. My young family used to invite all their young friends to our house after the dance and Bill Palmer would call the dance and they would dance at our place until their mommys were mad. We had a square by ourselves when two of the boys brought their girls. I used to light the fireplace and put the coffee pot on and ma, with some help, would get the refreshments - somebody would always bring some refreshments and they would all have a glorious time. But by and by, the family and other people's families grew up and headed out for themselves and the parties broke up. We used to have a wonderful time at New Years, all the women would try and outdo the other with cooking and everybody would bring ham, turkey, plum pudding, pies, salads and potatoes and jellied salads, cakes, relishes almost everything imaginable and we would put it all out on a smorgasbord table and everybody would help themselves, go someplace to eat it and come back for more. This used to start after twelve o'clock and last until daylight every year until they grew up and left - there used to be between

fifty or sixty there. It was the only entertainment without liquor at it and everybody knew that. I have lots of pictures of this and Margaret our daughter grew up and became a nice big girl. She went with four other girls to Wabash Landing in the Yukon as maids in a hotel for two months. In the meantime Helen and I made plans to visit Scotland which we did through the Triple A club and we left from Vancouver by train to Montreal where the Expo Exhibition was being held which we saw. Next day we boarded the Empress of England for Grenock which took six days and we had a lovely time. We left Jack and Robin at home to look after the place. We had a wonderful time and came back on the Carmaina, a Cunard Line, very nice but very rough.

