

When Three Huts Comprised Perth

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Mrs. Mahala Larlee, Perth's "grand old lady," who for 35 years carried the mails to and from Perth station to the Post Office until struck by a train and seriously hurt at the age of 80, acquiring the reputation of the oldest woman postal carrier in Canada, celebrated on Tuesday her 82nd birthday. During the evening, to commemorate the event, a party of Mrs. Larlee's friends gathered at the residence of Mrs. A. E. Hitchcock, Mrs. Larlee's daughter-in-law, and with whom she lives.

When prevailed upon, Mrs. Larlee became reminiscent and described Perth as it was when she first came here on April 5, 1851.

"At that time," said Mrs. Larlee, "Perth contained but eight houses, no log huts. The house we moved into was merely boarded.

"Our neighbors were Frederick Giberson, Mr. Armstrong, Daniel Craig, 'Uncle' John Larlee, James Lovely and John Larlee, our grandfather. Our houses were located from what is now the highway bridge to Larlee Creek. Old Mr. Cochran occupied a house on the hill beyond the gulch.

"We came from Bath where I was born on Nov. 1, 1828. In the party were my husband, myself and one child. We made the trip in a canoe.

"Over in Andover there were only the Perley, Beveridge, Cameron and Murphy families.

"We had no churches nor schools. Clergymen came to our houses to hold services. On one occasion Rev. Charles McMullen would be the preacher; or, Rev. Samuel Hartt, or Rev. Mr. Wormwood."

Mrs. Larlee passed her 82nd birthday in excellent health, and with all her faculties remarkably acute.

"One might say I have never known what it means to experience sickness as I do not remember ever having been sick in my life. My eyesight is good and my sense of

hearing is excellent. Yet I know, only too well, what sorrow is. My husband was instantly killed, having been gored to death by a bull while one of my sons was killed by a train."

When asked to what she attributed her good health and longevity Mrs. Larlee replied quickly:

"To the goodness of God and hard work. Ambition and resolution is the key to one's happiness. I have found it to be so."

Three of Mrs. Larlee's family have lived to ripe old ages. her eldest brother, George Craig, died at the age of 84, while her youngest brother, Daniel Craig of Blaine, Me., is still living at the age of 79. Mrs. Larlee's ancestors were among the first settlers in New Brunswick. They located at Bath about 125 years ago.