

In the time of the Revolution some sterling men called U. E. Loyalists, settled in the Niagara District. King George gave them land in the wilds of Canada where nuts, plums and crab apples grew. They had read that one of the finest trees in Rhode Island sprang from a seed dropped in the grave of Roger Williams, so many tried the experiment of sowing apple seeds, but few apples of any size were produced, and the small ones were often gathered with the wooden scoop. About 1790 John Smith offered his right to 200 acres of land for a cow, but found no buyer; about 1798 he sold it to Jonathan Woolverton, my grandfather, for 40 pounds of York currency, and the said Smith gave five natural apple trees to bind the bargain. About the year 1830 there came a man from England, about fifty years of age and weighing about fourteen stone, and he called himself Peasley, the Grafter. He carried with him scions which he said would bear pound apples, full sixteen ounces to the pound. When at work he took his stand on a wooden chair, clothed in a huge jacket with pockets like the pouches of the kangaroo, in one of which he carried wax and scions and in the other grafting tools. After grafting in our neighborhood, he returned to the Mother Country, and after six years came out again. I remember his joy when he found his word true and saw the pound apple which he said was the Gloria Mundi. I thought of old Santa Claus with his grey whiskers and loud laugh; and "his little round belly that shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly." He hailed from England, but his port and bearing were of the German order. He came out in the reign of George III., and when he swore, it was "Py George," the then popular oath of the U. E. Loyalist; for the king gave them their farms, their government and their church; and that they might not fracture the third commandment, allowed them to swear by his name. He brought the Ribston Pippin, Pearmain, and English Russet. When Peasley's Pearmain, Ribston and Gloria Mundi began to bear, I took a load to Hamilton and supplied that village where Cary kept hotel and Stinson the principal store.

Dr. Beadle was selling trees from St. Catharines, and one Moore, a Canadian, brought a few pears and peaches from Rochester. Delos Beadle had graduated from the Grantham Academy and, I think, was studying law at Harvard. He afterwards took up his father's calling, and at his instigation the fruit growers met in the Chief Magistrate's room in the Court House at St. Catharines. About 1857 A. M. Smith appeared on the scene. He had learned the nursery business with Mr. E. Moody, of Lockport. Mr. Moody came over for Canadian evergreen trees, he stopped at Grimsby to give us some advice about raising peaches. He praised our soil and said he had only one objection to living in Canada and that was that then he could never be president of the United States.

When our Association met at St. Catharines, we were twice surprised. First, at the knowledge of Judge Campbell and Delos Beadle about fruit, climate, and soil, and secondly, at our own ignorance of the fruit we had handled for a term of years. The genesis of our Association budded in St. Catharines. Judge Campbell was the first life member, but did not live to see it bloom. Delos Beadle was the Moses of our exodus, leading us out of our ignorance into the present fruit-bearing stage.

The formal organization of our Association elected W. H. Mills, of Hamilton, as president. He was not of the mills of which it takes ten to make one cent, nor was he a wind mill to crack corn, but he honored the goddess Pomona by cultivating fruit and flowers, and at one of our meetings took us out to see how faithfully he raised the finest plums and pears by the sweat of his brow.

Charles Arnold had rather a set countenance and appeared somewhat cross, and he believed in cross fertilization of fruit and grain, but his crossness was something like the chestnut burr, only on the outside, for we never had a more welcome visit than at his residence when he invited the Association to Paris.

A. M. Smith and the writer were honored with a like visit at Grimsby, when we followed suit and invited the Association to our hearts and homes. I cannot forget the two who brought their wives to add to the sociability of the occasion, Mr. Holton and Mr. Hoskins, of Hamilton. It seemed at once to put a link in the chain of friendship which death alone could sever, and that only for a time.